



**Empire State
Development**

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Contact: Elle Hanna
315.470.1800
ehanna@centerstateceo.com

GENIUS NY Announces Round Three Finalists

Five Teams from Around World to Receive a Total of \$3 Million in Investments and Participate in Year-Long Accelerator in CNY

Program is supported by “CNY Rising” the region’s comprehensive strategy to revitalize the community and grow the economy

Syracuse – GENIUS NY, a business accelerator program at CenterState CEO’s Tech Garden, today announced the five finalists companies selected for its third round. These startup drone companies will participate in the year-long program and will compete for a total of \$3 million in direct investment, with one grand prize of up to \$1 million and four \$500,000 awards.

“We are excited to welcome these latest innovative entrepreneurs to Central New York for Round Three of the GENIUS NY competition,” said Empire State Development President, CEO & Commissioner Howard Zemsky. “This unique contest supports UAS startups in developing the next-generation technologies that will further support the burgeoning drone industry in the region.”

The five companies will move into The Tech Garden, in Syracuse, in January to begin competing for \$3 million in investment. The companies were selected from a pool of more than 350 submissions. Finalists include teams with international and regional representation.

The five finalists selected for GENIUS NY 3.0 finalists are:

EagleHawk (Buffalo, NY): EagleHawk is a drone powered technology company revolutionizing the way commercial roofs are inspected and managed. In just two years, EagleHawk has inspected over 500 buildings and 11 million square-feet of rooftop, and is helping customers detect unknown issues, mitigate risk, and reduce roof maintenance costs.

Vermeer (Brooklyn, NY): Vermeer is an augmented reality drone solution that enables anyone to capture aerial photos, videos and data. A user can now design their aerial shot in an augmented reality environment and then send it to a drone to execute autonomously in the real world.

Civdrone (Israel): Civdrone develops fast, reliable and autonomous marking solutions on enterprise drones for the construction industry. Digitalizing and automating land surveying services will increase productivity and shorten time of construction while lowering its costs.

Sentient Blue (Italy): Sentient Blue develops efficient, more environmentally friendly micro gas turbine based power plants for use in unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) to increase flight endurance.

ResilienX (Syracuse, NY): ResilienX is focused on improving safety in the autonomous traffic management ecosystem. Their products will increase system resilience and operational uptime

by automating fault detection and contingency management, benefiting adopters through decreased expenditures in operations, regression testing and maintenance.

The year-long competition is the largest business accelerator competition for the UAS industry in the world. Previously, the program awarded three grand prizes of \$1 million, \$600,000, and \$400,000 and three runner-up prizes of \$250,000 each with an additional \$250,000 available for follow-on funding. Doubling the investment for the finalist teams in this round will provide them with an even greater opportunity to succeed and grow their business in Central New York.

“These companies were selected from an incredibly competitive pool of applications,” said Rick Clonan, vice president of Innovation and Entrepreneurship at CenterState CEO. “This year’s applicant pool and high-growth finalists are a reflection of the success of prior rounds and the program’s overall impact on participating teams. As round three teams join the innovation ecosystem we have created at The Tech Garden, they too will benefit from a network of resources needed to rapidly grow their companies as previous participants have.”

Recent announcements by GENIUS NY teams demonstrate the quality of the program, which is funded by Empire State Development in a model similar to Buffalo’s highly successful 43North program. Teams from GENIUS NY round one and two continue to hit growth milestones and have attracted outside investments, made connections and established partnerships with local businesses, and have made hires or currently have openings.

“This region is committed to making the investments and providing the resources these companies need to scale in the region,” said Rob Simpson, president of CenterState CEO. “We have seen the impact this targeted ecosystem has had on accelerating the growth of GENIUS NY companies to date, and how those successes have in turn supported regional efforts to lead the unmanned systems industry.”

The advancement of the GENIUS NY program builds on the progress of *CNY Rising*, the region’s award-winning strategic plan to generate robust economic growth and community development. Throughout the program, teams will engage with community leaders, mentors, and advisors from leading companies in Central New York while also participating in tourism activities. The goal is to encourage all participants to put down roots and stay in the region following the conclusion of the program.

“We are excited to welcome these teams to grow their businesses in Onondaga County. We know that local businesses are the backbone of our economy and help create a more vibrant community,” said Onondaga County Executive, J. Ryan McMahon. “We are committed to providing them the support they need and showcasing why Central New York is an exceptional place to grow a business.”

“GENIUS NY has served as a catalyst for growth at Oneida County’s UAS Test Site at Griffiss International Airport by fostering new business innovation in the Central New York UAS Corridor,” said Oneida County Executive Anthony J. Picente Jr. “I’m sure this year’s round of finalists will continue in that tradition, and provide a huge benefit to not only the county and our partners at CenterState CEO, but all of New York State, as we work together to move the industry forward.”

All five of the round three teams will begin the program in January focused on enhancing their business plan, and will pitch their technologies at an event in April to a panel of judges and audience of more than 250 people, where the grand prize and runner up awards will be decided and announced.

To learn more about GENIUS NY visit www.geniusny.com.

About CenterState CEO

CenterState CEO is an independent and forward thinking economic development strategist, business leadership organization and chamber of commerce; dedicated to the success of its members and the prosperity of the region. We serve as an advocate and resource for smart business, catalyze and facilitate regional growth, and promote community prosperity through results-driven partnerships, planning and problem-solving. www.centerstateceo.com

About GENIUS NY

GENIUS NY, which is funded by Empire State Development and housed at CenterState CEO's The Tech Garden in Syracuse, will invest more than \$3 million in five companies over the course of the year-long competition – making it the largest business accelerator competition for the UAS industry in the world. The advancement of the GENIUS NY program builds on the progress of *CNY Rising*, the region's award-winning strategic plan to generate robust economic growth and community development. In addition to the investments, the program also offers company stipends, incubator space, resources, programming and mentorship.

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