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Harvard Engineer Michael Aziz Joins Top U.S. Innovators In Fueling Nation's Clean Energy Future

First-of-its-Kind Clean Energy Impact Fund to Connect Top Researchers With Philanthropists

Cambridge, Mass. – In an effort to bolster the nation's clean energy future, Harvard engineer [Michael Aziz](#) has been selected, along with other top innovators around the nation, to participate in a first-time [Clean Energy Impact Fund](#).

The fund – created by [Benefunder](#), which is building the first marketplace for research funding – is a unique philanthropic-based initiative designed to spark a passionate appeal to donors who want to have a direct impact on solving some of our nation's biggest energy issues.

The Clean Energy Impact Fund will focus on advancing all areas of clean energy, including basic and applied research, with an emphasis on commercializing new methods and technologies. Benefunder's clean energy innovators includes 40 researchers from some of the top research institutions in the country, including Harvard, Duke, University of California, San Diego, Cornell, The University of Texas at Austin, Rice, and Georgia Tech. These innovators are working on promising new breakthroughs in power production, storage, and delivery, as well as policy. Opportunities for funding these initiatives will also include impact investments in promising technologies that might be too risky or early for more traditional funding.

“Benefunder is combining efforts in the clean energy space to develop a diverse portfolio of researchers whose efforts to promote energy efficiency and protect our nation's natural resources will enhance our economic growth. As a member of this fund, my hopes are to advance my research and help move these efforts forward,” said Aziz, a materials and energy technologies professor at the Harvard John A. Paulson School of Engineering and Applied Sciences who is developing safe, cost-effective storage for intermittent solar and wind-generated electricity.

Benefunder hopes to create the nation's largest Clean Energy Impact Fund. Benefunder's strategy is to diversify resources to a wide range of top clean

energy researchers – from renewable energy technologies to energy efficiency, and infrastructure and resources –with equal periodic distributions to all researchers in the fund, and regular milestone updates to donors. Donors can make contributions of any size, and funds will be distributed to researchers on a quarterly basis. As research results in new company formation, the fund will also provide early-stage investment capital for select opportunities.

“By reversing the traditional expensive and time-consuming grant funding model, Benefunder is putting more resources in the hands of innovators,” said Benefunder Cofounder and CEO Christian Braemer. “Our nation’s academic research institutions are one of our most important infrastructures. Increasing funding in the clean energy space is one of the wisest investments we can all make, and Benefunder is here to make it easy, fun, and efficient, while allowing donors to make a deeper impact for current and future generations.”

About Benefunder:

Benefunder is a foundation for innovation that has created a new funding channel for research while providing philanthropists with a smarter and more meaningful way to give.

Through our Charitable Impact Fund, we connect donors with the nation’s top innovators across all fields of study, including life sciences, technology, the environment and education, and the arts and humanities. Benefunder -- named the [Best Do-Gooder StartUp](#) in 2015 -- has the largest active researcher portal in the United States, with more than 650 top researchers who are working on both basic research and breakthrough treatments and solutions that will greatly impact and benefit society. More information at www.benefunder.org.

Benefunder Media Contact:

Andrea Siedsma

asiedsma@benefunder.org

760-840-0494