



Accelerating the Transition to  
Advanced Clean Energy Technologies

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**VERTical Innovation Cluster Announces Inaugural Board**  
*Industry-Led Coalition Is Accelerating Deployment of Advanced Clean Energy Technologies*

**RICHLAND, Wash.** – Advanced clean energy industry leaders from across the U.S. will serve as inaugural VERTical board members. The board’s initial meeting is today.

VERTical is an industry-led innovation cluster working with business and labor to solve national supply chain, workforce, capital and other challenges impeding the widescale deployment of next-generation nuclear and other advanced clean energy technologies. The coalition’s efforts facilitate a thriving industry able to lead the transition to a zero-carbon future and stimulate economic growth first in the Pacific Northwest, then nationwide.

Founding board members include:

- **Board Chair Ken Langdon**, General Manager for Nuclear Development at Energy Northwest (Washington)  
Langdon is a U.S. Navy veteran with vast experience in nuclear operations, site readiness and supply chain.
- **Frederick P. Hughes**, PMP, Vice President Project Direction, Mission Solutions Nuclear & Civil Group at Fluor Corporation (Idaho)  
Hughes has significant experience assembling and directing high-performance project teams and delivering projects on schedule and budget.
- **Jeff Whitt**, President of Framatome U.S. Government Solutions (Virginia)  
Whitt has extensive experience in nuclear reactor fabrication, design and technical management, and expanding U.S. infrastructure and capabilities.

Reducing carbon emissions in every sector of the economy is imperative, and advanced clean energy technologies like next-generation nuclear are an essential part of a sustainable, all-of-the-above clean energy strategy.

VERTical was established in January 2022 and is administered by Port of Benton. Washington State Department of Commerce has invested in VERTical as part of its first cohort for funding through its [Innovation Cluster Accelerator Program](#). Learn more about VERTical board members, priorities and projects at [WashingtonVERTical.com](http://WashingtonVERTical.com).

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