



ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT
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Two New Mexico projects advance in \$160M innovation competition *Projects focus on quantum technology and water innovation*

SANTA FE — New Mexico is making national waves with two homegrown initiatives, Quantum Moonshot and Energized Watershed, named among just 29 semifinalists in the U.S. National Science Foundation's (NSF) \$160 million Regional Innovation Engines competition.

Selected from nearly 300 proposals nationwide, the two semifinalist projects highlight New Mexico's rising profile in science, technology, and economic development.

"We're building a future where New Mexico families benefit from cutting-edge science and sustainable innovation," said **Rob Black, Cabinet Secretary of the New Mexico Economic Development Department**. "Our state's strength lies in advancing diverse technologies that will fuel economic growth and long-term prosperity."

The Quantum Moonshot, led by Elevate Quantum with the New Mexico Economic Development Department, Sandia National Laboratories, Los Alamos National Laboratory, and the University of New Mexico, aims to establish the state as a national leader in quantum research, commercialization, and workforce development.

"This effort and our advancement to the semifinals drives home that New Mexico, Colorado, and the Mountain West is a global destination for research, commercialization, and impact for quantum," said **Zachary Yerushalmi, CEO, Elevate Quantum**. "This advancement builds on decades of work of New Mexicans, Coloradans and citizens across the region to build a safe and thriving American economy."

The University of New Mexico-led Energized Watershed coalition of 50+ organizations across New Mexico, the Navajo Nation, and Far-West Texas, is dedicated to solving critical water shortage challenges by innovating new technologies to efficiently capture, recycle, treat and reuse water; produce and distribute energy security; and generate predictive hydrological process models to increase U.S. economic and national security and advance America's energy dominance.

"Reliable water resources underpin our region's ability to attract and grow manufacturing and AI-based industries while improving community health," said **Ellen Fisher, UNM's vice president for research**. "Pulling together global talent at New Mexico's universities, national labs, communities, and private sector will rapidly innovate, advance, and deploy solutions starting on day one."

If selected, the initiatives could receive up to \$15 million over two years, and potentially \$160 million over a decade, to tackle regional challenges through innovation.

NSF semifinalists will now advance to a live virtual review, with final selections expected in early 2026.

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EDD's mission is to improve the lives of New Mexico families by increasing economic opportunities and providing a place for businesses to thrive. EDD's programs contribute directly to this mission by funding workforce training and infrastructure that supports business growth, helping every community create a thriving economy.



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