Taking climate hardware from laboratory to first plant

A lecture series for accelerators and incubators, by Emin Askerov, author of *The FOAK Frameworks*

Many climate-hardware startups stall after the pilot, when the task changes from proving the technology to building the first plant. This first-of-a-kind (FOAK) stage is where plans meet suppliers, contractors, customers, and investors; where delays eat up cash; and where founders stop knowing everyone on their team by name.

Why it matters for your cohort

- **Your founders will meet this gap.** Between a working pilot and a financed first plant lies what investors call the missing middle, a range of roughly $40m to $100m in which due diligence costs a lot relative to the size of the investment.
- **The usual advice rarely helps.** Most guidance on first plants comes from investors, regulators and academics, and it tells founders how to pitch. These lectures come from the founder's chair and cover the relationships that decide the outcome: customers, suppliers, the team and investors.
- **Founders leave with decisions.** Every lecture ends with a one-page exercise and a question to take into the next meeting with a customer, supplier or investor. Programme managers get concrete work to review in office hours.
- **The material is tested.** Emin helped build Russia's first large-scale wind farms and its first wind-turbine factory, and he interviews founders of first-of-a-kind companies on his podcast.

What the cohort learns

Block	Lectures	Covers
Strategy	1–3	Whether the technology deserves to scale; goals, resources and timeline; the business after the first plant
Build	4–6	Sizing the pilot, demo and first plant; site and supply chain; construction and contractors
Customers	7–8	Finding corporate buyers; negotiating a binding long-term purchase contract (an offtake)
People	9–10	Mapping talent and hiring; leading the team
Money	11–13	De-risking and capital stacking; managing investors; life after the first plant

Book it the way that suits your programme

Each lecture lasts 35 minutes and stands alone, so the series can be cut to fit any calendar.

Format	What it includes	Time
Half-day workshop	The core four lectures on strategy, building, customers and money	About 3.5 hours with breaks
Stage-matched track	Three or four lectures picked for the cohort: pre-seed and seed (1, 3, 7, 9), pilot and demo (4, 5, 6, 8), or raising and beyond (11, 12, 13)	2 to 3 hours
Seven-week sprint	One or two lectures a week, with each week's exercises reviewed in office hours	7 sessions
Full course	All 13 lectures, once a week, with exercise pages discussed at the start of the next session	13 weekly sessions

Single lectures can also be booked on their own. To discuss dates, format and fees, contact Emin Askerov at info@askerov.pro.