

Czero Inc. gets \$67,500 grant

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Big news to the tune of \$67,500 came to Guy Babbitt and Czero Inc. earlier this week.

The Governor's Energy Office announced Monday that the company, which is new to Fort Collins, was one of 13 in the state to receive a portion of the \$656,000 in New Energy Economic Development grants.

"It's not a lot of money, but it's enough to move the project forward," Babbitt said.

Czero Inc., originally based in Colorado Springs, will work with the Engines and Energy Conversion Laboratory and Colorado State University's colleges of business and engineering to further develop its hydraulic hybrid retrofit kit - a kit that will boost energy efficiency, reduce fuel consumption and cut back on emissions.

Building off the idea of electric hybrids, Czero's technology replaces electricity with hydraulics and high-pressure fluids, Babbitt said, making it ideal for large vehicles such as trucks and buses that frequently start and stop.

Czero is working to create a low-cost kit for developing nations, but Babbitt is sure Americans will start to see the same kind of technology appear in new trucks in the United States.

"There's going to be a huge market for older trucks that still have a lot of life left in them," he said.

The 13 winning companies were chosen from among 52 applications submitted to the Governor's Energy Office, said Megan Castle, communications director.

The Czero grant was near the top of the list, with only two other companies receiving more money.

This is the second grant the company, which started in September, has received. Babbitt said the money will be used to help pay for proof of concept and for the "second wave" of hardware.

"We're really excited the state of Colorado is putting these funds together and making them available to companies like ours to bring this technology out and make it more widespread," Babbitt said.

This is the second time NEED grants were distributed, totaling more than \$1 million, Castle said. Whether the grants will continue depends on next year's budget.

"We hope we will be able to offer these because we believe this is tied directly to stimulating economic development," she said.