



# BUILDING A GLOBAL GREEN CHEMISTRY INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM: LESSONS LEARNED AND NETWORKING OPPORTUNITIES FROM THE GLOBAL GREENCHEM INNOVATION AND NETWORK PROGRAM

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## INTRODUCTION

The transition toward safer and more sustainable chemical production is essential for reducing the risks posed by persistent organic pollutants, mercury, microplastics, and other hazardous substances. Green chemistry addresses these challenges by promoting the design of products and processes that reduce or eliminate hazardous chemicals at the source.

The Global Greenchem Innovation and Network Program is a multi-country initiative coordinated by the Center for Green Chemistry and Green Engineering at Yale University, implemented by UNIDO, and supported by the Global Environment Facility (GEF). The program connects Serbia, Peru, Uganda, Jordan, Ukraine, and Indonesia with the aim of strengthening green chemistry innovation, supporting entrepreneurs, and developing sustainable alternatives to hazardous chemicals and industrial practices.

The program combines three main components: capacity building through a global innovation network, establishment of national green chemistry accelerators, and demonstration and scaling of green chemistry solutions in selected industrial sectors.

## GREENUP ACCELERATOR

The GreenUp Accelerator supports startups developing green chemistry and green technology solutions through structured mentorship, financial support, networking, and investment-readiness activities.

The first cohort included 10 startups selected through application screening, pitching, and expert evaluation. Based on their development stage, the startups were divided into two tracks:

- **GREENUP STARTERS:** early-stage startups receiving mentorship and financial support;
- **GREENUP SCALERS:** more advanced startups receiving intensive mentoring, ecosystem exposure, and investment-readiness support.

A network of 26 mentors from academia, research institutions, industry, investment funds, and innovation-support organizations participated in the program. Each startup was connected with lead mentors and subject-matter experts in business development, regulation, financing, and circular economy.

The program culminated in a Demo Day attended by more than 70 participants, including investors, companies, policymakers, researchers, and innovation-support organizations. The event enabled startups to present their solutions, establish new contacts, and initiate discussions on investment, partnerships, and further technology development.



## CONCLUSION

The GreenUp Accelerator demonstrated that structured mentorship and active involvement of diverse stakeholders can accelerate the development and market readiness of green technologies.

Demo Days, workshops, and networking activities are particularly important for connecting innovators with investors, industry partners, researchers, and policymakers, and for translating innovative ideas into practical applications.

The Global Greenchem Innovation and Network Program provides an effective model for building integrated green chemistry ecosystems through capacity building, startup acceleration, demonstration projects, and international collaboration. Continued cooperation among countries, institutions, companies, and innovation programs will be essential for scaling green chemistry solutions and achieving long-term environmental and sustainability goals.

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