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## **Partners Team Up to Host Entrepreneurs' Discovery Day**

*By Monica Abeita, Regional Development Corporation for Northern New Mexico Connect*

New Mexico innovators will pitch their discoveries to a panel of experts — and get a shot at up to \$10,000 in funding — at the next HD3 Discovery Day on Dec. 8 in Santa Fe. The event takes place at the Railyard District headquarters of the High Desert Discovery District (HD3), a nonprofit entity that helps entrepreneurs give their discoveries a better chance at success in the marketplace. Discovery Day is a collaboration of HD3 and the Northern New Mexico Connect program's Los Alamos National Security Venture Acceleration Fund (VAF).

At its first Discovery Day in May, HD3 ([www.hddd.org](http://www.hddd.org)) received more than 20 applications from all over the state and selected 10 projects to present to a panel of seasoned entrepreneurs, business trailblazers, management professionals, investors and others involved with the HD3 Entrepreneurs' Forum. Six of the most promising concepts moved forward with HD3's assistance. For the December event, panelists will hear eight of the most marketable ideas. The deadline for applicants was Nov. 11.

“Discoveries are more likely to be positively shaped and generate wealth for New Mexico if innovators have the opportunity to share, discuss and strategize about their challenges, opportunities and ideas with people who can provide experienced, unbiased, unvarnished and market-facing advice,” said Michelle Hoeft, who founded HD3 to match scientific and technical talent with the business and investor expertise residing in New Mexico.

Discovery Day presenters must have a clear and protected intellectual property path for their discovery and an understanding of the market need or problem the discovery seeks to serve or solve. Ideas must have a measurable potential to become a high impact product or high growth enterprise, and the innovator must be clear about what capital, expertise and other resources are needed to commercialize the product. He or she must be able to articulate what that capital would be used for.

Presenters have 45 minutes to explain their ideas and answer questions posed by panelists. All presentations are conducted in a private setting that allows the maximum protection of sensitive and proprietary business and technological information as well as the uninhibited exchange of ideas. All Discovery Day discussions remain confidential.

HD3 advisers have extensive experience in matching technology opportunities with market needs, Hoeft said. They are experts in product development, investment strategy, marketing and

sales, management, valuations and exit strategies. Advisers also have connections to contacts and resources that can promote the most promising discoveries.

Co-hosts VAF and HD3 will award small investments of up to \$10,000 to the most promising ideas. Entrepreneurs interested in participating in the next Discovery Day should visit [www.hddd.org](http://www.hddd.org). For other opportunities, visit [www.nnmconnect.net](http://www.nnmconnect.net).

*Finance New Mexico is a public service initiative to assist individuals and businesses with obtaining skills and funding resources for their business or idea. To learn more, go to [www.FinanceNewMexico.org](http://www.FinanceNewMexico.org). Sponsored by:*

