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## LEADING SMART CITIES ACCELERATOR URBAN-X BY MINI - GRADUATES SEVENTH STARTUP COHORT IN FIRST-EVER ONLINE DEMO DAY

*Seven early-stage startups graduate from accelerator built by automaker MINI and venture fund Urban Us, showcasing technology solutions to combat the climate crisis and to build city resilience*

**Brooklyn, N.Y., April 21, 2020--** [URBAN-X](#), the leading accelerator for startups reimagining city life backed by MINI and Urban Us, today graduated its seventh cohort of companies in its first-ever virtual Demo Day. From cities across the globe, seven founders presented their solutions online to an audience of investors, customers and public-sector leaders, showcasing hardware and software solutions to combat the world's climate emergency and other emerging challenges impacting cities.

URBAN-X, launched by MINI in 2016 as part of the brand's innovation practice and in partnership with venture firm Urban Us, invests up to \$150,000 in up to 10 companies building solutions to address the most complex challenges cities face today. Now in its seventh cohort, seven startups today showcased solutions ranging from drone infrastructure for emergency response, EV charging software, novel materials inspired by nature to decompose air pollution, automated sewage assessment, predictive analytics for the construction and energy industries, and IoT-based solutions for food safety and cold-chain integrity.

"Building creative solutions for a brighter urban life is in our DNA," said URBAN-X Managing Director, Micah Kotch. "As the need for solutions for local resilience has come into clearer focus across the world over the past weeks, we could not be prouder of the dedication Cohort 07 has shown in addressing large-scale challenges to improve city life."

**The full list of Cohort 07 companies includes:**

- [ChargeLab](#): Making electric vehicle charging simple through an open EV charging management platform.
- [Therma](#): Building technology to ensure food safety and waste reduction from farm to fork.
- [EVA](#): Provides drone infrastructure and airborne logistics for vertical takeoff and landing transportation in healthcare and emergency response.
- [Firmus](#): Leverages AI and historical data to help construction companies learn from previous mistakes and automatically detect errors in the early stages of design.
- [Hades](#): Provides automated assessment of sewer infrastructure, improving public health and environmental protection.
- [Metalmark](#): Develops novel materials for highly efficient catalytic decomposition of air pollutants, making clean air globally accessible and affordable.
- [Unety](#): A SaaS-enabled marketplace for sustainable finance that automates underwriting to reduce the time and costs of each transaction.

Today's event marks the start of teams seeking additional investment to grow their companies and served as a demonstration of the product and business development milestones hit during URBAN-X's 20-week accelerator program.

Responding to real-time challenges as the crisis around COVID-19 has emerged, [EVA](#) is deploying its high throughput drone docking stations to aid in COVID-19 response efforts. EVA began working with partners in Europe and New York State to combat supply chain disruptions and support delivery of essential goods to healthcare institutions, pharmacies and home-bound elderly populations. Other companies that have deployed their technology to help cities respond to COVID-19 include current and alumni URBAN-X companies: [AO Air](#), [Circuit](#), [Food For All](#), [GreenQ](#), [Near Space Labs](#), [Numina](#), [Therma](#), [Thrilling](#) and [Upshift](#).

"MINI is committed to agile innovation, collaboration and entrepreneurship to build meaningful solutions that improve quality of life in cities in unexpected ways," said Mike Peyton, Vice President, MINI of the Americas. "Cohort 07 exemplifies these qualities, which are needed now more than ever as we provide support to one another across the global community."

**The event will be livestreamed [here](#) beginning at 1:00 p.m. ET.**

URBAN-X has a proven track record in helping early-stage companies secure funding from leading investors. In fact, 80% of URBAN-X companies have gone on to raise their next round of capital.

“Cities are central not just to climate action, but to resilience as well. This is especially apparent today,” said **Shaun Abrahamson, URBAN-X Investment Committee and Managing Partner at Urban Us**. “We are thrilled to support the founders of Cohort 07 now and into the future, and to continue to invest in driven entrepreneurs improving city life through URBAN-X.”

In addition to investments that URBAN-X and Urban Us made as part of the accelerator program, funds and individuals that have invested in URBAN-X portfolio companies include Fred Wilson, Brad Burnham, Edgar Bronfman Jr., BMW i Ventures, Draper Associates, Fontinalis Partners, Ekistic Ventures, Wireframe Ventures, Fifth Wall Ventures, Samsung NEXT, Story Ventures, Kairos, and UL Ventures.

URBAN-X Cohort 08 will launch this summer and will be the first URBAN-X class to be conducted completely online. URBAN-X looks for the brightest startups creating disruptive and scalable solutions across sectors such as public health and safety, food, water, energy, construction, mobility, and more. With an existing portfolio of companies in public health and safety, paired with the unprecedented health and economic challenges resulting from COVID-19, this also includes new companies that can aid in COVID-19 response efforts and related impacts, such as solutions for first responders and those on the frontlines of the pandemic; those that support elderly, vulnerable and isolated populations; and those that ease pressures on government services.

### **About URBAN-X**

URBAN-X is the leading accelerator for technology and design startups reimagining city life. Founded by MINI, URBAN-X helps early-stage companies from all over the world address modern urban challenges across sectors like transport, real estate, local government, food, water, waste and utilities.

Twice a year, URBAN-X selects up to 10 startups for its competitive, five-month program of product and business development. The accelerator invests \$150,000 in each startup and puts them to work with a dedicated, in-house team of engineering, design and business experts; involves working trips to Munich, San Francisco and other major cities; and culminates in founders presenting to an audience of investors, thought leaders and media.

URBAN-X has a global reach unparalleled by any other urbantech accelerator and the startups have access to a network of over 2,000 partners around the world, including entrepreneurs, investors and public-sector leaders, who have volunteered to support the founders through the URBAN-X program. During the year, URBAN-X leadership visits cities worldwide -- in the U.S., Europe, Asia, and beyond -- to meet entrepreneurs and individuals shaping the future of urban life.

URBAN-X is based in Greenpoint, Brooklyn at A/D/O, a creative space founded by MINI and dedicated to exploring the boundaries of design. Find URBAN-X on Twitter & Instagram at @urbanxaccel and on Facebook at facebook.com/urbanxaccel.

### **About MINI in the US**

MINI is an independent brand of the BMW Group. In the United States, MINI USA operates as a business unit of BMW of North America, LLC, located in Woodcliff Lake, New Jersey and includes the marketing and sales organizations for the MINI brand. The MINI USA sales organization is represented in the U.S. through a network of 122 MINI passenger car dealers in 39 states. MINI USA began selling vehicles in the U.S. in 2002 with the introduction of the MINI Cooper and MINI Cooper S Hardtops. Since then, the MINI Brand in the U.S. has grown to encompass a model range of five unique vehicles.

**Journalist note:** Media information about MINI and its products is available to journalists on-line at [www.miniusanews.com](http://www.miniusanews.com).

### **About Urban Us**

Urban Us is the leading early stage investor for startups re-imagining cities. Cities will soon be home to 70% of the global population, who now face unprecedented risk from climate change. Our 2014 and 2016 funds achieve top quartile performance for investors while also generating substantial public benefits. Urban Us recently launched our third fund to continue our focus on founders reimagining cities.

The Urban Us platform includes the Urban Us network, a resource for urbantech focused founders, investors, partners and customers. URBAN-X, in partnership with MINI, supports early stage teams with company building and fundraising. Perl Street serves teams needing access to non-equity capital for project finance, asset finance and inventory finance. Our newest partnerships will help startups access partners and customers in Asia.

Before Urban Us, the Urban Us team had three exits and ran a VC fund and municipal finance for Citi. Notable investments before Urban Us include Trialpay, Blue Bottle Coffee, Refinery29 and ZocDoc. The Urban Us portfolio includes 53 investments across real estate, infrastructure, energy, water, waste, food, transportation and public administration including health and security. Notable investments include, Bowery Farming, Starcity, Mark43, One Concern, Future Motion, Skycatch, BRCK and Rachio.

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