2025 Frost & Sullivan Institute

Visionary Leadership Best Practices Recognition

Will Heegaard

Environment - NA Region

Congratulations!

The Frost & Sullivan Institute is proud to honor Will Heegaard, Founding Director of the Footprint Project, for his outstanding dedication to delivering cleaner energy solutions to disaster-affected communities. His pioneering work exemplifies resilience, innovation, and a steadfast commitment to building a more sustainable and equitable future.

David Frigstad
Chairman, Frost & Sullivan
Executive Director, Frost & Sullivan Institute

Innovation Focus

Deploying mobile solar and battery storage systems to replace fossil fuel dependence in disaster recovery, while integrating repurposed equipment and community-led deployment models for scalable, sustainable impact.

Environmental Impact

Footprint Project's clean energy solutions cut emissions, reduce waste, and provide resilient power that supports recovery efforts without harming the environment.

50,000+	North America	2025
People provided with emergency clean power access	Regional Impact	Recognition Year

Why Us?

Frost & Sullivan Institute recognizes leaders who not only achieve commercial success but also drive meaningful change across environmental, social, and technological domains. Our evaluation is backed by decades of industry expertise, global research, and a commitment to fostering leadership that creates inclusive and sustainable futures.

Why Now?

As the world grapples with intensifying climate crises, disaster impacts, and energy access inequities, it is vital to recognize those driving innovative solutions for resilience and recovery. Today, more than ever, honoring leaders who challenge conventions and set new benchmarks accelerates the transition to cleaner, more sustainable futures for the communities that need it most.

About Frost & Sullivan Institute

The Frost & Sullivan Institute is a non-profit organization dedicated to leveraging business practices to address global priorities. Our mission "Innovating to Zero" focuses on driving innovations that eliminate critical challenges such as carbon emissions, food and water scarcity, poor healthcare access, and digital exclusion.

Visionary Leadership

Will Heegaard embodies the practical and strategic integration of clean energy innovation into disaster response and recovery. His work reflects the Institute's mission of Innovating Environmental Issues to Zero by bringing sustainable power solutions to the frontlines of humanitarian need. As Founder and Operations Director of the Footprint Project, he has transformed how communities access energy in the wake of crises. Will has built a global model for resilient, clean energy deployment in emergency contexts.

Recognition Criteria

- **Innovation:** Advanced disaster recovery through mobile solar energy systems that replace fossil fuel dependence with clean, resilient power.
- **Implementation:** Footprint Project successfully deployed 250+ kW of mobile solar power and 700+ kWh of battery storage across 25+ disaster missions, repurposing commercial solar equipment to reduce waste and ensuring long-term sustainability through training and community education.
- **Impact:** In 2023, Footprint Project supported over 25 resilience hubs with cleaner energy infrastructure after disasters, delivered 30,000+ hours of renewable power to communities in crisis, trained 110 responders in rapid renewable deployment, and contributed 1,200+ volunteer hours to resilience partners.
- **Global Alignment:** Partnerships with mutual aid networks, non-profits, and local stakeholders to "Build Back Greener" and create scalable, climate-resilient energy infrastructure for vulnerable communities worldwide.

Key Accomplishments

Hurricane Helene Response & Recovery:

Deployed solar power solutions to Florida and Western North Carolina after one of the largest hurricanes to hit the continental U.S., delivering critical electricity for medical needs, refrigeration, and community hubs. Supported over six affected states, aiding residents in areas with more than 14 inches of rainfall, unprecedented flooding, and millions left without power.

Microgrids for Maui:

Partnered with local relief efforts and Hawai'i's solar industry to launch Footprint Project's largest disaster mission to date, assessing 27 sites and deploying 18 solar + storage microgrids that serve over 1,000 people daily without fossil fuels. Mobilized $600,000+ in donations, 500+ volunteer hours, and sustainable power for critical community hubs, schools, farms, and relief operations after the August wildfires.

Solar Generators Light Up Ukraine:

In response to the 2022 invasion, collaborated with international partners to deliver 25 solar generators, a solar trailer, and critical lighting equipment to hospitals, shelters, and refugee sites, benefiting civilians and first responders. Distributed 64 surgical LED headlights to 15 hospitals, 800 LED winter hats, 600 solar reading lamps, and other vital tech to support medical care, education, and safety in conflict-affected areas.

Lighting the Way to Recovery in Mississippi:

Delivered mobile solar generators, a solar-powered shipping container office, and portable battery packs to support healthcare access and community recovery after EF4 tornadoes struck the Mississippi Delta. Partnered with local hubs, enabling Delta Health Center, Zion Baptist Association, and the Fannie Lou Hamer Center for Change to serve residents in disaster-hit areas, with ongoing training to strengthen long-term resilience.

> *"Will Heegaard's work exemplifies how disaster response can integrate clean energy solutions without sacrificing speed or effectiveness, proving that sustainable power can be a powerful tool for both community resilience and long-term environmental stewardship."*
>
> *- Sakthi Kumararaja, Associate, Frost and Sullivan Institute*

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