Giving Green

Top Climate Nonprofit Spotlight: Future Cleantech Architects

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Giving Green classifies Future Cleantech Architects (FCA) as one of our top nonprofits for addressing climate change. We have recommended FCA since 2024.

Hard-to-abate sectors—such as heavy industry, baseload power, and aviation—require significant technological advances to decarbonize, yet funders and governments often neglect them. FCA works to close these innovation gaps by (i) engaging with policymakers to prioritize research, development, and demonstration (RD&D) and advance commercialization for critical interventions and (ii) coordinating and contributing to the innovation ecosystem to advance scientific knowledge for these applications.

We specifically assessed FCA's work to decarbonize heavy industry, reduce emissions from aviation and shipping, and advocate for cross-sector prioritization of scarce resources, such as green and low-carbon hydrogen. We were impressed by FCA's in-house expertise, depth of engagement with technical research, and sophisticated understanding of the innovation and policy landscapes. Despite being a relatively new organization, FCA has developed an effective track record of shaping EU policy by 1) providing policymakers with technical insights to clarify impactful and cost-effective policy pathways and 2) introducing new narratives into policy discussions. We see FCA's unusually high level of requests for input and participation from policymakers as a strong signal that it is a trusted and valuable contributor to EU policy. FCA has also contributed to international climate discourse through engagement with intergovernmental organizations, such as UN Climate Change.

We think FCA fills a critical gap in the climate policy ecosystem by connecting lessons and learnings from its 'boots on the ground' technical work to high-level policymaking. We are confident in FCA's strategy and track record, and think it could further expand its impact with additional funds to expand its technical and advocacy capacity.

For more information, see our Nonprofit Evaluation report, a summary below, our *Industry* sector report, and our broader philanthropic strategy reports on *Reducing Aviation Emissions*, and *Reducing Maritime Shipping Emissions*.

What Is Future Cleantech Architects?

Future Cleantech Architects (FCA) is a climate innovation think tank based in Germany. FCA was founded in 2020, and its work focuses on neglected and hard-to-decarbonize sectors, including heavy industry, aviation, and firm power.

How Could Future Cleantech Architects Help Address Climate Change?

FCA promotes and advances innovation in hard-to-abate sectors by engaging with policymakers to prioritize RD&D and leading consortia on technical research in these sectors. We believe its efforts will accelerate the transition towards clean industrial processes and energy systems. FCA's priority sectors include heavy industry, clean firm power, aviation, shipping, and construction.

What Does Future Cleantech Architects Do?

FCA uses the following strategies to promote innovation in hard-to-abate sectors:

- Educating key decision-makers on the most efficient and cost-effective mitigation strategies for hard-to-abate sectors.
- Helping policymakers design and implement effective climate policies and funding mechanisms.
- Continuously monitoring the innovation landscape. Building and coordinating research consortia to address technological bottlenecks.
- Participating in influential discussions at intergovernmental platforms, such as COP.

What Is New in 2026?

In 2026, the European Commission asked FCA to contribute to the technical and policy design of the second EU auction on clean industrial heat, worth €1 billion (around $1.1 billion USD). This followed the success of its contributions to the first auction in 2025, which awarded €400 million in grants to innovative projects. It was also asked for input for the European Commission's Electrification Action Plan. The final plan directly

referenced FCA's case study on the role of thermal storage in electrifying industrial heat. FCA also secured two amendments to the Parliament's proposal for the EU's Grid Package, which strengthened the role of grid-enhancing technologies. FCA also brought a delegation of EU policymakers to learn about the techno-economic challenges innovators face during its Future Cleantech Festival.

What Would Future Cleantech Architects Do With Your Donation?

FCA plans to increase its staff count by over 50% in the next 12 months, strengthening its technical capabilities in power electronics, aerospace, and construction; its policy capacity for chemicals and energy markets; and its operational and communications bandwidth. FCA would use additional funding to extend its runway to 1.75 years, ensuring it can make competitive hires to support its expansion plans.

Why Is Giving Green Excited About Future Cleantech Architects?

Due to its focus and expertise in neglected areas of climate mitigation, we think FCA fills a critical gap in the civil society ecosystem. We especially value FCA's pragmatic, holistic, and impact-focused approach to policy advocacy. FCA consistently receives engagement requests from policymakers, resulting in a strong track record of shaping EU and global policy discourse in hard-to-abate sectors.

Key accomplishments include:

- Securing a 5% target for innovative renewables within the EU's Renewable Energy Directive (RED III) framework. FCA saw the 5% target through a two-year legislative process and was publicly credited for its input on the process at COP28.
- Advising the European Commission on the design of its 2025 Industrial Heat Auction, budgeted for €1 billion. FCA also engaged with the Commission to assess the auction's impact after fund allocations.
- Contributing to the European Commission's 2026 Electrification Action Plan by generating evidence, at the European Commission's request, on how thermal energy storage is a cost-effective enabler for industrial heat electrification. The final Plan cited FCA's case study on the dairy industry.

Explore ways to give to FCA and more.

This is a non-partisan analysis (study or research) and is provided for educational purposes. FCA is a registered nonprofit in Germany.