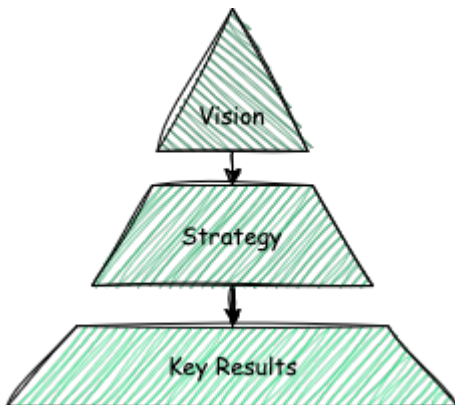


Culture, Vision and Values

What you can expect from our culture and distributed work environment.

- [Vision, Strategy, Key Results](#)
- [Collaboration Tools](#)
- [Values](#)
- [Culture - how we work](#)
- [NFE is a Social Venture!](#)
- [Co-op Resources from Startup.coop](#)

Vision, Strategy, Key Results



Vision

Thriving Communities



Strategy

Advancing Sustainable, Reliable, Affordable Energy through resilient Community Owned Microgrids. We build and operate these microgrids and teach others how to do the same.



Key Results

Completed

- Find Partners and advisors and cofounders
 - Dansturn - Grid Operations
 - Hillary - Metering Technology
 - Michael Goldbach - Advisor
- Attend Microgrid Conference in Dallas, April 2025 and connect with the community
- Register NFE as a Utility Company in Uganda
- Set up collaboration tools for NFE team
 - [Email and Calendar](#)
 - [Wiki / Documentation](#)
 - [Time tracking](#)
 - [Website](#)
 - [Group chat](#)
 - [Video calling](#)
 - [Meeting Scheduling](#)

- [Version Source Control](#)
- [Customer Help desk](#)
- [Customer Relationship Management \(CRM\)](#)
- [Project Management](#)
- Evaluations and sourcing for
 - [Metering Partner](#)
 - [Payment Processing Provider](#)

Now

- Pilot microgrid in a small community of 8 to 10 homes
 - Bulk (discounted billing) through UEDCL
 - Test smart metering hardware
 - Test monitoring and steering software for meters
 - Test customer post paid billing
- Connect with Linux Foundation energy community for collaboration on Microgrid software
- Find hardware partners in China
- Connect with 2 potential customers
 - Bugolobi flats
 - ?
- Publish one or two knowledge base articles
 - Share about Smart metering (finding a vendor and deciding on communication protocols)
 - Payment/Vending systems: Evaluating uganda's online payment ecosystem
- Financial Transparency - Publish our finances on open collective

Next

- Bellavista microgrid
 - 1st customer onboarding (sign MOU)
 - Enable smart metering
 - Enable customer post paid billing
- Introduce BESS for Pilot customer
 - Test power backup offering

Later

- Enable BESS for Bellavista
- Enable Solar PVs for Pilot
- Start using open source software for running the microgrid

Collaboration Tools

Overview

This page contains useful tips for working at NFE and for various tools we use. These tools can be found at dashboard.NearlyFreeEnergy.com

Email and Celandar with NextCloud

[Email and Calendar](#)

Documentation with Bookstack

[Wiki / Documentation](#)

Kimai for Time tracking

[Time tracking](#)

Company Website with Wordpress

[Website](#)

Group Chat with Matrix and Element

[Group chat](#)

Code Repository with Gitea

[Version Source Control](#)

Customer Help desk with Freescout

[Customer Help desk](#)

CRM with Espo

[Customer Relationship Management \(CRM\)](#)

Project Management with Plane

You can access plane [here](#) and their [documentation](#).

Video Calls with Jitsi

Jitsi is an important part of GitLab's strategy for communication between team members. As such, extra care needs to be given to ensure the safety and integrity of data. For how to use Jitsi, refer to their [official documentation](#)

Scheduling Meetings with Calcom

Most of our work is asynchronous but we'll occasionally need to meet with each other and with external stakeholders. This is what Calcom is for. It's [Free Software](#) like most of our tools so you can search online for more information on how to use it. Here's how you can set up your NFE account.

In Nextcloud Calendar, hover over the link icon to the right of the calendar in question, e.g. Personal, and you see an edit icon. Click the edit icon:

image.png

You'll see a pop-up like the following. You will want to click the + for "Share link" and then click the resulting clipboard icon that copies the link to the clipboard:

image.png

Then, you'll want to go to your Cal.com pop-up for configuring CalDav and paste the link:

image.png

Then continue the process of connecting to your Nextcloud calendar via CalDav, confirming event creation:

image.png

Complete the remaining steps. You can leave video settings for later. Confirm your availability times. Add a profile photo / avatar.

Values

Collaboration

We are better Together: If you want to go quickly, go alone but if you want to go far, go together

Curiosity

Always learning, frequently questioning and listening.

Community

Default to Openness. We want to learn and build in public so that others who care about what we are working on can also learn and consider contributing to our mission. They'll be a few things that need to be private like our customers contact information but we aim to be open about how and what we are working on. So when in doubt, just share it.

People first

Relationships count most, invest in them. We want to give each other room to center our lives around family and friends, not our jobs.

Managers of One

People need to be reminded more often than they need to be instructed. What it means to be [a manager of one](#).

Culture - how we work

Most of our work is asynchronous, this is the best way for people in different timezones, schedules and places to effectively collaborate. The people at Gitlab wrote [a good guide on asynchronous work](#), please go read it.

Here's some tips from Aaron

- Lean on element/matrix to start conversations about something you are inclined to "have a meeting or call" about. You'll be surprised by how much progress you can make on something without scheduling a meeting.
- Expect that progress might feel slower than having everyone in the same room at the same time.
- You need to get better at writing your thoughts and ideas out. We really very heavily on written communication to collaborate
- If you have an idea or suggestion, make use of our bookstack library and create a page for it as we discuss it.

NFE is a Social Venture!

Our Identity

We, **Nearly Free Energy (NFE)**, operate as a **social enterprise** — a mission-driven business committed to providing affordable, sustainable energy solutions while generating profit in a responsible and inclusive manner.

Our Purpose

Nearly Free Energy exists to:

- Advance access to **sustainable, reliable, affordable electricity** for every community;
- Support **energy independence and resilience** through microgrid innovation;
- Create **local economic opportunities** by empowering households, cooperatives, and small businesses to manage their energy needs

Our Core Principles

We are guided by the following values:

People-Centered Impact

We prioritize the needs, dignity, and aspirations of the communities we serve. Our solutions are co-designed with our users, and we strive to create long-term value and inclusion.

Environmental Stewardship

We commit to environmental sustainability in our products, services, and operations — advancing renewable energy efficiency solutions to reduce reliance on fossil fuels.

Financial Sustainability

We operate for profit to ensure our longer-term viability. We reinvest earnings in innovation, infrastructure, and impact — balancing financial returns with social outcomes.

Transparency and Accountability

We share our goals, progress, and challenges openly with our stakeholders. We maintain integrity in our dealings with customers, employees, partners, and investors.

Community Partnership

We build local capacity and respect local knowledge. We collaborate with community organizations, public agencies, and other enterprises to maximize shared value.

Governance and Decision-Making

- Our leadership team is accountable for balancing financial, environmental, and social performance in all major decisions.
- Impact and profit are both KPIs in our internal planning and reviews.
- We welcome regular feedback from our customers, partners, and employees to help shape our direction.

Reporting and Learning

- We will publish a **Social Impact Report** at least once a year to document progress toward our mission.
- We will share lessons learned, challenges faced, and areas for improvement in line with our commitment to transparency.

Our Long-Term Vision

We envision a world where energy is:

- **Sustainable** — powered by renewable resources
- **Affordable** — enabling families and businesses to thrive;
- **Community-owned** — unlocking local prosperity and autonomy.

Till every community can sustain their energy needs.

Co-op Resources from Startup.coop

We also encourage you to check out our [free Lean Co-op course](#) if you haven't already and see if there are local resources within the [Cooperation Works](#) network who can continue to help you refine your vision!

We have also listed advocacy, technical assistance, financing and general startup resources on the [build](#) and [resource](#) pages of our website. And have provided a list of additional resources below:

- [Network for Developing Conscious Communities DC and Baltimore CoopNomics Academy](#)
- [Solidarity as a Business Model: a Multi-Stakeholder Cooperative Manual](#)
- [Webinar on Worker Self Directed Nonprofits: Workplace Democracy in Nonprofit Organizations](#)
- [Co-op Law: Resources for Worker Cooperatives](#)
- [Establishing a Worker Cooperative for Business Succession Planning](#)
- [Becoming Employee Owned: a Small Business Toolkit](#)
- [Think Outside the Boss: How to Create a Worker-Owned Business](#)
- [The FCI Guide to Starting a Food Co-op](#)
- [A Technology Freelancer's Guide to Starting a Worker Cooperative](#)