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**CCG Catalyst Consulting, Arizona Bankers Association Announce
The Arizona Fintech Council**

New initiative will connect fintechs across the world with US financial institutions to drive product and service innovation.

PHOENIX (Jan 26, 2021) – [CCG Catalyst Consulting](#) (CCG Catalyst) and the [Arizona Bankers Association](#) (AzBA) have partnered to create the [Arizona Fintech Council](#) (AZFC) to spur economic growth in the state and bring viable and promising fintech companies to Arizona’s Fintech Sandbox.

The Council will initiate new opportunities for member financial institutions and selected fintechs to connect with each other, evaluate startups’ readiness to work hand in hand with financial institutions on innovative new products and services, and aid in arranging proofs of concept (PoCs) with participating financial institutions and fintechs in Arizona’s regulatory sandbox.

“The unique nature of our state’s fintech sandbox law and our relationship with the national consultancy of CCG Catalyst put us in a position to maximize this economic development opportunity to bring these transformational companies to Arizona,” said Paul Hickman, President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) at the Arizona Bankers Association.

The Fintech Council and the Arizona Sandbox are unique given there are no domicile restrictions on the financial institutions or fintech applicants. The Arizona Fintech Sandbox eases regulatory burdens for fintechs while allowing them to partner with financial institutions testing innovative products and services. It is a great opportunity for new entrants whether it be startups or established companies new to the US marketplace. Participating financial institutions can enter prospective partnerships with, invest in or outright acquire some of the participating fintech companies.

Participants will include diverse institutions of the AzBA, which includes member financial institutions of all sizes, ranging from community, regional, super-regional and financial

institutions with more than \$1 trillion in assets. Select institutions that are not AzBA Association members may also participate, and other stakeholders from government and academia will also join the Council's ranks.

Leading Arizona organizations including the Arizona Commerce Authority (ACA), Arizona Technology Council (AZTC), Greater Phoenix Economic Council (GPEC) and Sun Corridor, Inc. (SCI) will also work to entice fintechs to come to the state and help them partner with financial institutions.

"Under Governor Ducey's leadership, Arizona was the first state in the nation to establish a fintech sandbox program, demonstrating our commitment to embracing the emerging technologies that will shape our future," said Sandra Watson, Arizona Commerce Authority President & CEO. "The Arizona Fintech Council will further advance our state's reputation as a hub for innovation in the financial services industry, and the ACA is proud to participate in the effort alongside partners statewide.

Arizona State University (ASU) will also partner with the Council to make connections for its students who have interest in the financial services industry. Ranked number one in innovation by U.S. News & World Report for the sixth year running, ASU offers a strong talent pool and will be an asset for new and emerging fintechs looking for further growth and expansion.

"At Arizona State University, we are always looking at data that informs us about what is ahead in workforce development and preparing students for jobs that may not even yet exist," said ASU President Michael M. Crow. "The plans for advancement and the work that will be done through the Arizona Fintech Council is exciting because of what it can do to help companies prepare and new companies emerge to meet the opportunities ahead and the kind of talent and skills needed to drive successful outcomes. Cultivating a mindset of transformation helps growing areas of our economy, such as Fintech, prosper and we look forward to working together."

The Council will facilitate connections through regular summits, where fintechs selected with CCG's Catalyst recommendation will showcase their ideas to member financial institutions. If a member institution seeks to partner with one of the presenting startups on a PoC, the Council will then refer an application to the Arizona attorney general for approval and inclusion in the sandbox program.

As a leading bank and fintech consulting firm, CCG Catalyst advises our clients on strategy related to financial services and the fusion of banking and fintech. Bringing this partnership together with AzBA and enlisting the support of numerous financial institutions, regulatory agencies, and public innovators such as ASU, ACA, GPEC, SCI and AZTC will bring new opportunities to the financial services community locally and across the nation, said Paul Schaus President & CEO of CCG Catalyst. Scarlett Sieber, CCG Catalyst's Chief Strategy and Innovation Officer will lead the fintech effort. Miranda Jenkins, the firm's Chief Operating Officer will manage the fintech program. The combination of banking and fintech is a natural progression within the industry and CCG Catalyst is excited to be part of this evolution."

About CCG Catalyst Consulting

CCG Catalyst is a global management consulting firm specialized across the financial services industry. We advise our banking and fintech clients on the direction and future of the industry. Leaning on our wealth of experience and proven track record of delivery, we bring continuous innovation to support our clients, improve their performance and create lasting value across organizations.

For more information visit www.ccgcatalyst.com and follow us on Twitter [@CCGCatalyst](https://twitter.com/CCGCatalyst) and [LinkedIn](#).

About The Arizona Bankers Association

AzBA is the 117-year-old trade association for Arizona's community banks and financial services industry. The Association represents banks taking deposits statewide, from Yuma to Tuba City and all points in between.

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