Biden-Harris Administration Announces $13.5 Million Investment to Equitably Grow Solar Energy Workforce

Funding from President Biden's Investing in America Agenda Will Support Creation of Quality, Clean Energy Careers, and Supercharge America's Clean Energy Future

WASHINGTON, D.C. — As part of President Biden's Investing in America agenda, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) today announced 12 projects, whose work will span more than 13 states, selected for negotiation to launch training partnerships that expand the solar energy workforce in underserved and underrepresented communities, as well as create career pathways with thousands of good-paying jobs. The selectees include partners from industry, tribal organizations, unions, community colleges, and state and local governments. The $13.5 million program, including $10 million from President Biden's Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, supports the Biden-Harris Administration's goal of equitably boosting economic opportunities across America while achieving a 100% clean electricity grid by 2035.

"President Biden's Investing in America agenda is accelerating the clean energy transition, resulting in the creation of hundreds of thousands of good-paying jobs and boosting our growing clean energy economy," said **U.S. Secretary of Energy Jennifer M. Granholm**. "That's why DOE is working to jump-start solar energy careers, especially in underserved communities, developing the long-term structures needed to deliver these jobs over the next decade."

President Biden's Investing in America agenda is growing the American economy from the bottom up and middle-out – from rebuilding our nation's infrastructure, to creating a manufacturing and innovation boom powered by good-paying jobs that don't require a four-year degree, to building a clean-energy economy that will combat climate change and make our communities more resilient.

According to the 2022 U.S. Energy and Employment Report, the solar industry comprises over 330,000 employees and added 17,200 new jobs in 2021 – an increase of 5.2 percent. The report also found that while the solar industry is more diverse than some other energy industries, the overall energy workforce lags in Hispanic (17%), Black (8%), and Indigenous worker (1%) representation. With solar power potentially contributing up to one third of the U.S. electricity supply, there is a need for more equity and inclusivity in the industry.

DOE expects that the industry will need to grow to between 500,000 and 1,500,000 workers by 2035 to achieve the Biden-Harris Administration's decarbonization goals. These jobs should be accessible to workers from all backgrounds, provide competitive wages and benefits, and offer opportunities for union membership.

The Advancing Equity through Workforce Partnerships Funding Program selections announced today will directly address the need for diversity and inclusion. After two years of gathering information and engaging stakeholders, DOE designed this program to foster the development of

workforce programs that facilitate the rapid deployment of solar energy technologies while growing and supporting an inclusive workforce.

Selectees

-- Award and cost share amounts are rounded and subject to change pending negotiations --

Adaptive Construction Solutions

Location: Houston, TX
DOE Award Amount: $1,100,000
Awardee Cost Share: $0
Principal Investigator: Carlos Pulido
Project Description: This project is developing a pre-apprenticeship program in Texas to recruit, train, and retain a diverse workforce in construction trades needed by utility-scale solar energy projects. The pre-apprenticeship program will link directly with the Department of Labor approved Registered Apprenticeship Programs, sponsored by partner employers. The program will lead to increased employment in rural areas throughout Texas, clearer pathways to family sustaining jobs, transferable skills and certifications, work experience, as well as safer working practices.

Amicus O&M Cooperative

Location: Boulder, CO
DOE Award Amount: $1,500,000
Awardee Cost Share: $150,000
Principal Investigator: Amanda Bybee
Project Description: This project is working to expand training and certification tracks for solar Operations and Maintenance (O&M) professionals across the country. In partnership with the North American Board of Certified Energy Professionals, and other strategic workforce development organizations, employers, and workers, this work will create a new North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP) certification around O&M for solar facilities. It will use Amicus's network of employers to place newly trained workers in jobs and increase equity, safety, and professional quality in the solar O&M workforce.

CEC Stuyvesant (DBA Solar One)

Location: New York, NY
DOE Award Amount: $750,000
Awardee Cost Share: $0
Principal Investigator: Sarah Pidgeon
Project Description: This project seeks to update and strengthen solar curriculum in pre-apprenticeship, workforce training, community college, and high school career and technical education programs through partnerships with these schools. The project team will build connections between workforce agencies and solar companies to create advancement pathways

for entry-level workers and develop resources to increase minority- and women-owned business enterprise participation in New York City and Newark, NJ.

Cook County, Illinois

Location: Chicago, IL
DOE Award Amount: $1,100,000
Awardee Cost Share: $75,000
Principal Investigator: Irene Sherr
Project Description: This project aims to convene, align, and leverage the diverse stakeholders in the solar installation and workforce ecosystems in the Chicago area by establishing a solar collaborative and ongoing action committees to build partnerships that benefit minority workers and small business owners. This work will strengthen workforce training pipelines to align with local solar industry demand, while centering on quality jobs.

Crater Lake Electrical Joint Apprenticeship Training Center

Location: Central Point, OR
DOE Award Amount: $1,500,000
Awardee Cost Share: $0
Principal Investigator: Lance Corely
Project Description: This project is developing a union-based electrician pre-apprenticeship course for high school students in underserved rural and tribal communities in Southern Oregon and Utah. The course will use a mobile educational unit that will allow instructors to bring resources for hands-on learning opportunities directly to high school students in rural and underserved communities, ensuring all participants are afforded an equitable learning opportunity.

Emerald Cities Collaborative

Location: Seattle, WA
DOE Award Amount: $725,000
Awardee Cost Share: $0
Principal Investigator: Winnie Wakaba
Project Description: In partnership with union-led training centers, this project is developing solar installer trainings and union-based electrical pre-apprenticeship programs in the state of Washington for Black, Indigenous, and People of Color. It will provide entry-level employment for apprentice candidates and pilot pathways to solar installer positions that can provide living wage employment and relevant work experience as students prepare for apprenticeships and other training.

Kern Community College District

Location: Bakersfield, CA
DOE Award Amount: $1,000,000
Awardee Cost Share: $200,000
Principal Investigator: David Teasdale

Project Description: This project is developing solar installation career-track training and electrical apprenticeship readiness training. The program will offer opportunities for union membership through the pre-apprenticeship program, as well as career-track business development training, accessibility-focused outreach and recruitment, and enhanced entrepreneurship opportunities in solar energy technology for participants from disadvantaged communities in California's Central Valley.

Power52 Foundation

Location: Columbia, MD
DOE Award Amount: $1,400,000
Awardee Cost Share: $85,000
Principal Investigator: Cherie Brooks
Project Description: This project is developing a partnership model with local employers and community partners to expand access to solar training, career pathways, and quality jobs for individuals in disadvantaged communities. The team aims to scale Power52's existing solar energy training program to three new sites around Baltimore, Maryland.

Red Cloud Renewable

Location: Pine Ridge, SD
DOE Award Amount: $1,500,000
Awardee Cost Share: $0
Principal Investigator: John Red Cloud
Project Description: This project aims to increase recruitment, training, and career placement in the solar workforce through Red Cloud Renewable's apprenticeship readiness program that provides family-centric services and in-person training to place Native American women in careers in the solar workforce across the country.

Solar Landscape

Location: Asbury Park, NJ
DOE Award Amount: $850,000
Awardee Cost Share: $800,000
Principal Investigator: Todd Menadier
Project Description: Led by industry professionals, this project is partnering with community-based organizations, vocational training facilities, and corporate partners to provide quality training programs in commercial solar installation in New Mexico, Maryland, Colorado, and other states. The program will offer virtual courses, hands-on roofing and solar installation training, train-the-trainer opportunities, scholarships, and other workforce development opportunities in states with growing community solar markets.

University of Louisiana at Lafayette

Location: Lafayette, LA
DOE Award Amount: $1,000,000
Awardee Cost Share: $2,200,000

Principal Investigator: Terrence Chambers
Project Description: This project is working to create the Louisiana Solar Corps, a statewide solar workforce training and apprenticeship program that simultaneously addresses the issues of climate resilience, clean energy transition, and energy justice. The project team is developing an open-source curricula for solar training courses to establish eight new degree programs at five community colleges and four universities, including Historically Black Colleges and Universities, that are geographically distributed across the state.

Worksystems

Location: Portland, OR
DOE Award Amount: $1,000,000
Awardee Cost Share: $0
Principal Investigator: Kelly Haines
Project Description: This project is developing training and job placement resources for diverse jobseekers to enter quality jobs in solar installation and related occupations, including union electrical careers across the Portland metro region. The training resources will be delivered through apprenticeships, pre-apprenticeships, and on-the-job training agreements.