

Energy-Specific



FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

December 16, 2024

State and Federal Funding Announcements

The **Minnesota Department of Commerce** seeks to work with and facilitate connections with local and Tribal governments, utilities, businesses, communities and other entities interested in energy-related partnerships. The opportunities outlined below are funded by state and federal energy programs.

Of Note: FOAs are now called NOFOs

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has replaced DOE Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOAs) with Notices of Funding Opportunity (NOFOs) as the vehicle to issue competitive solicitations from the Department. Past announcements and existing FOAs will not change or require any action. Learn more about NOFOs in OMB's revision to the [2024 Uniform Grants Guidance](#).

Recent and Expected Federal Funding Activity

The federal government issues a variety of announcements related to federal funding opportunities: Requests for Information (RFI), Notices of Intent (NOI) and energy Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOA and NOFO). More information can be found on the Commerce Federal

Funding Opportunities [web page](#) or by clicking the links below.

To facilitate a quick review of this newsletter, the subject matter of included items is previewed here; full details can be found in the body of the newsletter.

[Funding Opportunity Announcements \(FOA\), Administrative and Legal Requirements Document \(ALRD\), Notice of Funding Opportunity \(NOFO\), Requests for Applications \(RFA\)](#)

- Artificial Intelligence for Interconnection (AI4IX) Program
- DOE Community Energy Connectors: Regional Clean Energy & Economic Development Support

[Tribal Governments Funding Opportunities & Items of Interest](#)

- Tribal Energy Development Capacity (TEDC) Grant
- Tribal Energy Equity Summit – Save the Date

[Notice of Intent \(NOI\)](#)

- Distributed Wind Competitiveness Improvement Project

[Guidance on IRA Tax Credit Programs](#)

- Election to Exclude Certain Unincorporated Organizations Owned by Applicable Entities from Application of the Rules of Partners and Partnerships – Final Regulations
- Investment Tax Credit (Section 48) Final Rules

[Prizes/Awards](#)

- Industrial Energy Storage Systems Prize
- Energy Storage Innovations Prize – Round 2

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- Solar Technologies Office Fellowship
- Equitable Community Solar and Energy Assistance Fellowship
- National Wind Energy Art Challenge

[Webinars](#)

- J3400 State of the Market: Getting Ready for MY25

- Known Unknowns: Key Energy Efficiency Trends in the New Year

[Workshops, Meetings, Conferences](#)

- Better Buildings, Better Plants 2025

[Publications/Videos/Webpages](#)

- Hydrogen Shot: Water Electrolysis Technology Assessment
 - GeoBridge: Connecting Communities to Geothermal Information and Opportunities
-

BIL Funding Opportunity Announcements (NOFO)

- **Artificial Intelligence for Interconnection (AI4IX) Program**
 - [Information & Application](#)
 - **Deadline:** January 10, 2025
 - **Office Hours:** December 17, 2024 | 1:00 PM CT | [Register](#)

The DOE's Grid Deployment Office, through a Partnership Intermediary Agreement, has opened an initial funding opportunity for up to \$30 million available to accelerate the interconnection process for new energy generation through the introduction of artificial intelligence techniques. The new Artificial Intelligence for Interconnection (AI4IX) program will develop partnerships between software developers, grid operators (including Regional Transmission Operators (RTOs) and Power Marketing Administrations), and energy project developers to modernize the interconnection application process and significantly reduce the time required to review, approve, and commission new generation interconnections across the country.

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Other Funding Opportunity Announcements (FOA/NOFO)

- **DOE Community Energy Connectors: Regional Clean Energy & Economic Development Support**
 - [Opportunity Announcement](#)
 - **Deadline:** January 28, 2025

- **Informational Webinar:** December 18, 2024 | 2:00 PM CT | [Register](#)
- **Office Hours:** January 14, 2025 | 2:00 PM CT | [Register](#)

DOE's Office of State and Community Energy Programs is seeking to establish a network of regional partner organizations, led by an administrator, to provide technical assistance and capacity building support to communities. The initiative will serve [Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant](#) (EECBG) Program entities (local, state, Tribal, and territorial governments), and connect them with one another, key stakeholders, community-based organizations, funders, industry, and other organizations in the region that may work together to advance local clean energy, energy efficiency, and economic development initiatives.

Through this Community Energy Connectors initiative, DOE aims to support EECBG grantees and EECBG state subgrantees as they pursue place-based, community-driven economic development and environmental opportunities through clean energy deployment. DOE is seeking applications from both individual organizations and teams of organizations. Teams are strongly encouraged. An ideal team will consist of one Administrator and 5-10 Regional Partners.

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Tribal Governments Funding Opportunities & Items of Interest

- **Tribal Energy Development Capacity (TEDC) Grant**
 - **Deadline:** January 16, 2025
 - [Information & Resources](#)

The TEDC grant program will develop Tribal managerial, organizational, and technical capacity needed to maximize the economic impact of energy resource development on Indian land. The TEDC grant gives Tribes the ability to develop or enhance their business and regulatory environment for energy resource development including, but not limited to, evaluating business models and asset ownership options, and enhancing Tribal codes for EV charging networks and related infrastructure.

- **Tribal Energy Equity Summit – Save the Date**
 - May 5 – 8, 2025 | St. Paul, MN
 - [General Information](#)

- Detailed information to come

Interactive conversations on subjects such as energy access, interconnection challenges, and overcoming financial barriers will be led by expert Native facilitators. Leading Tribal and industry experts will host conversations on long-term energy planning, innovative financing, and leveraging beneficial tax legislation. The summit aims to foster listening and learning for all attendees and the cultivation of partnership opportunities that are beneficial for Tribes.

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Notice of Intent (NOI)

- **Distributed Wind Competitiveness Improvement Project**
 - [Read the NOI](#)

DOE's National Renewable Energy Laboratory intends to release a request for proposal (RFP) under the Competitiveness Improvement Project (CIP) to support continued innovation in small- to mid-scale distributed wind energy systems in early 2025.

The CIP is specifically designed to support small businesses in multiple phases of the product development cycle—from prototype design through a certified and commercialized unit, including supporting innovation of existing products.

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Guidance on IRA Tax Credit Programs

- **Election to Exclude Certain Unincorporated Organizations Owned by Applicable Entities from Application of the Rules of Partners and Partnerships – Final Regulations**
 - [Final Regulation](#)

The Department of the Treasury and the Internal Revenue Service released final regulations to help entities that co-own clean energy projects access tax credits through direct (elective) pay. This guidance provides greater clarity and flexibility for direct pay eligible entities that want to jointly invest in clean energy projects, e.g., a tax-exempt entity co-investing in a clean energy project with a for-profit developer, or multiple tax-exempt entities or governments that are

seeking to jointly invest in clean energy projects.

- **Investment Tax Credit (Section 48) Final Rules**

- [Unpublished Final Rule](#)

The Department of the Treasury and the IRS released final rules on the Section 48 Energy Credit, known as the Investment Tax Credit (ITC). The final rule clarifies or revises information on offshore wind, geothermal heat pumps, biogas, definition of “energy project,” co-located energy storage, and hydrogen storage.

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Prizes/Awards

- **Industrial Energy Storage Systems Prize**

- **Deadlines:** Phase 1 Submission Deadline: April 8, 2025
- [Information & Rules](#)

The Industrial Energy Storage Systems Prize is a \$4.8 million challenge sponsored by the DOE’s [Industrial Efficiency and Decarbonization Office](#). This prize supports the acceleration of market adoption for cost-effective thermal energy storage technologies that can be charged by thermal or electrical sources, and provide heating, cooling, and/or power to industrial facilities.

To accommodate a variety of industrial sectors, the prize invites submissions of thermal energy storage solutions across a range of temperatures of industrial relevance. Competitors may submit up to one application to each of the following three categories:

~ Industrial cooling energy storage

~ High temperature (>300°C) industrial energy storage

~ Industrial thermal storage for hybrid cooling, heating, and power

- **Energy Storage Innovations Prize – Round 2**

- [Information](#) | [Official Rules](#)
- **Deadline:** April 21, 2025

DOE's Office of Electricity has opened a second round of the Energy Storage Innovations Prize. This single-phase, \$300,000 competition places a focus on less conventional use cases (e.g., remote and/or underserved communities and extreme climate) and innovative (less mature) energy storage technology solutions, across all duration scales, to advance the market landscape. Submissions will be judged on how innovative the use case and solution are, the strength of the plan, and other unique benefits including equity, supply chain considerations, and other factors.

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Scholarships/Student Competitions/Fellowships

- **Solar Technologies Office Fellowship**
 - [Information & Application](#)
 - **Deadline:** January 15, 2025

DOE's [Solar Energy Technologies Office \(SETO\)](#) drives research, manufacturing, and market solutions to make the abundant solar energy resources in the United States more affordable and accessible for Americans. It is SETO's mission to implement national renewable energy policy through the creation of competitive funding opportunities for solar research, development, and demonstration. This Fellowship is based in Washington, D.C. Applicants must be currently pursuing, or have completed requirements for, a Bachelor's, Master's, or Doctoral degree.

This Fellowship is typically offered as an initial one-year appointment with a second year offer to extend the appointment, contingent on an annual review. Learning opportunities may include:

- ~ Collaborating with the active project management of SETO awards
- ~ Engaging with stakeholders across industry, national labs, universities, and more
- ~ Participating in strategic planning for SETO and other DOE initiatives
- ~ Analysis and generating reports on current topics within the solar industry

- **Equitable Community Solar and Energy Assistance Fellowship**
 - [Information & Application](#)
 - **Deadline:** December 30, 2024

The [Equitable Community Solar and Energy Assistance Fellowship](#) offers energy professionals the opportunity to work with state and regional organizations to support the implementation of the [Clean Energy Connector](#). This online tool aims to make community solar subscriptions that include verified savings and strong consumer protections more accessible to households participating in government-run low-income support programs, beginning with HHS's Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).

The fellowship is open to professionals in fields relevant to community engagement, communications and education, energy affordability, and clean energy. Fellowship candidates must demonstrate interest and experience in renewable energy, community engagement, and state policies and programs. The opportunity is open to candidates with bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degrees, as well as established professionals with relevant post-degree experience.

- **National Wind Energy Art Challenge**
 - [Information](#)
 - **Deadline:** February 28, 2025

KidWind, supported by the U.S. Department of Energy's Wind Energy Technologies Office, invites students from kindergarten through 8th grade across the United States to create artwork on the theme "*Beautiful Wind Energy.*"

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Webinars

- **J3400 State of the Market: Getting Ready for MY25**
 - December 17, 2024 | 1:00 PM CT | [Information & Registration](#)

Learn how the Joint Office of Energy and Transportation worked with industry to develop SAE J3400, the current state of compatible EV charger deployment, which 2025 model year vehicles

J3400, the current state of compatible EV charger deployment, which 2025 model year vehicles are expected to use the J3400 connector, and more.

- **Known Unknowns: Key Energy Efficiency Trends in the New Year**
 - January 9, 2025 | 12:00 PM CT | [Register](#)

DOE's Better Buildings presents a discussion with key industry leaders on what may impact the residential energy-efficiency landscape in the new year.

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Workshops/Meetings/Conferences

- **Better Buildings, Better Plants 2025**
 - April 30 – May 2, 2025 | Capital Hilton, Washington DC | [Register](#)
 - [Information](#)

The Department of Energy's Better Buildings, Better Plants Summit will host engaging and interactive sessions, as well as opportunities to network with industry peers and experts. This annual event provides the opportunity for partners and key stakeholders to explore emerging technologies and share innovative strategies in energy efficiency, resilience, water, and waste reduction.

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Publications/Videos/Webpages

- **Hydrogen Shot: Water Electrolysis Technology Assessment**
 - [Download the Report](#)

DOE has released a [report](#) that highlights ways to reduce the cost of producing clean hydrogen via [electrolysis](#). The report shows that electrolysis has the potential to achieve the aggressive [DOE Hydrogen Shot™](#) goal of reducing clean-hydrogen production costs to \$1 per kilogram (kg), and it details innovations needed, along with the necessary advancements in manufacturing, technology efficiency, and integrated energy systems.

- **GeoBridge: Connecting Communities to Geothermal Information and Opportunities**
 - [Go to the Web Site](#)

DOE's Geothermal Technologies Office has created GeoBridge, a centralized repository that provides easy access to geothermal information, covering everything from home geothermal heat pump installation to careers in geothermal, from educational tools to cost savings opportunities for businesses.

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Energy-specific funding opportunities, Commerce is here for you

The **Minnesota Department of Commerce** seeks to work with and facilitate connections with local and Tribal governments, utilities, businesses, communities and other entities interested in energy-related partnerships. The opportunities outlined here are funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) and other state and federal energy programs. Stay updated by clicking **subscribe** below and e-mail us at fedquestions.commerce@state.mn.us.

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