

Inclusive Energy Innovation Prize



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Connector Guidelines

September 2021

Introduction

Through the Inclusive Energy Innovation Prize, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) aims to fund organizations for ongoing and/or proposed activities related to climate and clean energy that support, build trust, and strengthen relationships and partnerships with disadvantaged communities. Specifically, this prize seeks to enable and enhance business and technology incubation, acceleration, and other community-based and university-based entrepreneurship and innovation in climate and clean energy technologies. Up to 10 organizations will share a total prize pool of up to \$2.5 million.

The goals of the Inclusive Energy Innovation Prize are to:

1. Enable clean energy and climate innovation, and entrepreneurship programming and capabilities at colleges and universities that serve large populations of students underrepresented in STEM, Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs), community colleges, and undergraduate institutions.
2. Create or increase participation in clean energy and climate-smart job training and job placement/hiring, including programs that target participation from disadvantaged communities, including formerly incarcerated individuals and youth transitioning out of foster care. Workforce training could cover identifying energy efficiencies and greenhouse gas inventories, renewable energy manufacturing, and deployment.
3. Foster grassroots innovation related to just and equitable clean energy deployment through activities focusing on community-centric networks and bottom-up solutions for sustainable development, based on the needs of the communities involved
4. Identify and fund activities that will help disadvantaged communities become aware of, apply into or otherwise secure DOE funding or other federal, state, local government or private (for-profit or nonprofit) funding, in support of the government's Justice40 goals.
5. Enable the development of replicable clean energy transitions that deliver just and equitable benefits to disadvantaged communities in support of the government's Justice40 goals.

With these goals in mind, the Inclusive Energy Innovation Prize Administration team seeks the support of the Connector Network to ensure potential competitors are well prepared to develop a quality application and execute on the tasks outlined in their Phase 1 Impact Plan. These Connector Guidelines describe the Recognition Rewards for both phases of the prize with increased involvement in Phase 2.

Connectors

Connectors are organizations that seek to support the efforts of competitors in the Inclusive Energy Innovation Prize. Connectors must be U.S.-based organizations (not individuals) that have the capacity to connect competitors to mentoring, supporting resources, or introduce them to possible supplementary sources of funding. Connectors that are successful in helping competitors win Phase 1 of the Inclusive Energy Innovation Prize or support the execution of their Impact Plan in Phase 2 will earn Recognition Rewards. Connectors can be incubators, universities, think tanks, industry groups or any U.S.-based organization that provides support activities, such as:

- Recruiting competitors new to DOE funding to apply for the Inclusive Energy Innovation Prize
- Helping competitors refine their Impact Plan, work with mentors, or connect with investors
- Assisting competitors in the preparation of their Submission Packages
- Raising non-federal funding to support this program and its participants
- Providing access to resources, tools, and facilities



Connectors who support competitors that go on to win Phase 1 or compete in Phase 2 will earn payments outlined the table below. Connectors can use the American-Made Network Matching Tool to create a profile highlighting your capabilities and to connect with competitors that could use your expertise. Entities interested in participating as a Connector can visit the following site to sign up and apply: <https://americanmadechallenges.org/connect.html>.

Power Connectors, or those organizations already under contract with the Prize Administration team to play a more substantial role in the competition in amplifying DOE and NREL's efforts, are not eligible for Recognition payments.

Inclusive Energy Innovation Prize Connector Recognition Reward Opportunities

Recognition Reward	Anticipated Number of Rewards	Dollar Amounts	Details*
Phase 1: Supporter	1 Connector per winning Phase 1 team (10 Competitors)	\$2,500 per Competitor	Distributed to Connectors that support competitors during the application process who are selected as Phase 1 winners.
Phase 2: Mentor	1 Connector per winning Phase 2 teams (3 competitors)	\$10,000 per Competitor	Distributed to Connectors that mentor winning competitors during Phase 2 as they execute on their Impact Plan outlined in Phase 1.
	1 Connector per non-winning Phase 2 teams (7 competitors)	\$2,500 per Competitor	Distributed to Connectors that mentor non-winning competitors during Phase 2 as they execute on their Impact Plan outlined in Phase 1.
<i>*Power Connectors and National Laboratories are ineligible to receive recognition rewards.</i>			

Phase 1: Supporter

Connectors who significantly help competitors during Phase 1 as a Supporter may receive Recognition Rewards. To receive payment, submit which competitor you have helped in Phase 1 to the AMN@nrel.gov email address. The Connector must either be listed in a winning competitor's submission package for Phase 1 as a supporting organization or confirmed by the competing team.

Phase 1 assistance may include mentoring, coaching, crafting their submission package, identifying SMART goals, exploring voucher opportunities and introductions to investors, partners, researchers, experts, or potential customers.



Connectors can receive **\$2,500** per team for helping a competitor win Phase 1. A Connector may help multiple teams win and receive multiple Recognition Rewards. The winning competitor will be asked to identify a single Connector who provided the most support. Even if a team works with multiple Connectors, only one may be identified to receive a Recognition Reward.

After winning the contest, teams will be contacted by the Prize Administrator to confirm the Connectors listed in their submission on HeroX or reported by Connectors. If no Connector mentored a winning competitor in an impactful way, there is no obligation for a competitor to identify a Connector. A competitor should identify a Connector only if a Connector helped them win the contest. If a competitor does not designate a Connector, no Recognition Reward will be disbursed. Power Connectors are ineligible to receive Supporter payments, even if a winning team lists them on their submission.

Phase 2: Mentor

Connectors who significantly help a team during Phase 2 as a Mentor may receive Recognition Rewards. To receive payment, submit which competitor you have helped in Phase 2 to the AMN@nrel.gov email address. The Connector must either be listed in a winning competitor's submission package for Phase 2 as a supporting organization or confirmed by the competing team.

Phase 2 assistance may include mentoring, coaching, execution on their Impact Plan, or introductions to investors, partners, researchers, experts, or potential customers.

Connectors can receive **\$10,000** per winning team and **\$2,500** per non-winning team they support in Phase 2. A Connector may help multiple teams win and/or compete in Phase 2 and receive multiple Recognition Rewards. At the conclusion of Phase 2, competitors will be asked to identify a single Connector who provided the most support. Even if a team works with multiple Connectors, only one may be identified to receive a Recognition Reward.

After the conclusion of Phase 2, teams will be contacted by the Prize Administrator to confirm the Connectors listed in their submission on HeroX or reported by Connectors. If no Connector mentored a winning competitor in an impactful way, there is no obligation for a competitor to identify a Connector. A competitor should identify a Connector only if a Connector helped them win the contest. If a competitor does not designate a Connector, no Recognition Reward will be disbursed. Power Connectors are ineligible to receive Supporter payments, even if a winning team lists them on their submission.

