

AMERICAN  
**MADE**  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

# GHP PATHs Prize

Partnerships to Accelerate Training & Hiring  
for Geothermal Heat Pumps



## Rules and Guidelines

DECEMBER 2024

# Preface

The U.S. Department of Energy's Partnerships to Accelerate Training & Hiring for Geothermal Heat Pumps (GHP PATHs) Prize will be governed by 15 U.S.C. §3719 and this Official Rules document. This is not a procurement under the Federal Acquisitions Regulations and will not result in a grant or cooperative agreement under 2 CFR 200. The Prize Administrator reserves the right to modify this Official Rules document if necessary and will publicly post any such notifications as well as notify registered prize participants.

Date	Modification

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# 1 Executive Summary

The **Partnerships to Accelerate Training & Hiring for Geothermal Heat Pumps (GHP PATHs) Prize** is part of the American-Made Challenges program, which is your fast track to the clean energy revolution. Funded by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Geothermal Technologies Office (GTO), we incentivize innovation through prizes, training, teaming, and mentoring, connecting the nation's entrepreneurs and innovators to America's national labs and the private sector.

[Geothermal heat pumps \(GHPs\)](#) are a mature technology for the efficient heating and cooling of residential and commercial buildings. GHPs work by moving heat from one place to another rather than creating it through combustion. This process uses less energy than traditional heating and cooling systems, resulting in significant cost savings over the long term. GHPs take advantage of constant underground temperatures to heat buildings in the winter and cool them in the summer. GHPs can be used to heat and cool a single house, a single business, or an entire community (college campus, neighborhood, etc.); can be implemented as part of new construction or retrofitted to existing buildings; and can work in urban, suburban, and rural environments and across all climate zones. Despite their many benefits, the widespread deployment of GHPs faces several workforce and adoption barriers, including the complexity of certification processes, the cost of certification for installers, limited training opportunities, and a lack of industry collaboration.

This prize initiative seeks to address key workforce barriers in the industry and to promote the growth and sustainability of the GHP industry. The intent of the prize is to support partnerships formed by organizations actively involved in workforce development, such as workers, certification and training providers, industry associations, employers, nonprofits, unions, accelerators, municipalities, utility companies, etc. The prize will acknowledge and award efforts aimed at training and hiring the current and next generation GHP workers in all communities.

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## **Partnership Examples** *(this list is not exhaustive)*

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A U.S.-based heating, ventilating, and air-conditioning company that traditionally installs air-source heat pumps partners with a geothermal heat pump service company and a local community college to cross-train their current installers and maintenance personnel and recruit sales engineers.

A U.S.-based workers' union works with a local geothermal heat pump design and installation company to establish a pathway for upskilling its members to meet current geothermal heat pump labor needs.

A U.S.-based clean energy nongovernmental organization partners with small heating, ventilating, and air-conditioning companies to develop training programs and make hiring commitments for workers.

A U.S.-based trade school offers geothermal heat pump design and installation courses and partners with a regional architecture or building development firm and a national geothermal heat pump manufacturer to create an apprenticeship program for its graduates.

A U.S.-based water well drilling company partners with an engineering design firm to create an apprenticeship program to train candidates from underrepresented groups and students interested in geothermal heat pump design and installation.

A U.S.-based residential and commercial geothermal heat pump inspection service company partners with a municipality to develop a training for GHP inspectors and project managers in community buildings.

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# 1.1 Prizes

The GHP PATHs Prize offers a total prize pool of **\$3,000,000** in cash in three phases:

- **Phase 1—Connect.** Competitors will submit a narrative describing their vision for building a sustainable pathway to training and hiring in their defined region. Up to **20** winning teams will receive **\$40,000** each in cash and will be eligible to compete in Phase 2.
- **Phase 2—Engage.** Competitors formalize commitments between engaged partners. Competitors analyze in detail the gaps and needs of the GHP workforce in their defined region and propose a workforce development program containing a realistic, sustainable training plan and hiring strategy. At the end of Phase 2, up to **8** winning teams will receive **\$150,000** each in cash and be eligible to compete in Phase 3.
- **Phase 3—Execute.** Competitors execute their proposed workforce development program and submit results, including the number of workers trained and new hires as well as planned long-term commitments to develop the GHP industry in the defined region. Winners of Phase 3 will receive a portion of the remaining **\$1,000,000 Prize Pool**.

The following figure summarizes the prize phases.



# 1.2 Key Dates

## Certification Track

- **Phase 1—Submission Opens:** December 10, 2024
- **Phase 1—Submission Closes:** 5 p.m. ET on February 12, 2025
- **Phase 1—Winner Announcement:** March 11, 2025 (anticipated)
- **Phase 2—Opens:** March 11, 2025 (anticipated)
- **Phase 2—Submission Closes:** 5 p.m. ET on June 18, 2025 (anticipated)
- **Phase 2—Winner Announcement:** July 16, 2025 (anticipated)
- **Phase 3—Opens:** July 16, 2025 (anticipated)
- **Phase 3—Submission Closes:** 5 p.m. ET on November 13, 2025 (anticipated)
- **Phase 3—Winner Announcement:** December 17, 2025 (anticipated)

## 1.3 Eligibility and Competitors

### All Phase Eligibility

The competition is open only to private entities (for-profits and nonprofits); nonfederal government entities such as states, counties, tribes, and municipalities; academic institutions; and individuals, subject to the following requirements:

- Private entities must be incorporated in and maintain a primary place of business in the United States.
- Academic institutions must be based in the United States.
- An individual prize competitor or group of individuals competing as one team who are not competing as part of an incorporated private entity must all be United States citizens or legal permanent residents.
- Individuals competing as part of an incorporated private entity may participate if they are legally allowed to work in the United States.
- DOE employees, employees of sponsoring organizations, members of their immediate families (e.g., spouses, children, siblings, or parents), and persons living in the same household as such persons, whether or not related, are not eligible to participate in the prize.
- Individuals who worked at DOE (federal employees or support service contractors) within six months prior to the submission deadline of any contest are not eligible to participate in any prize contests in this program.
- Federal entities and federal employees are not eligible to participate in any portion of the prize.
- DOE national laboratory employees cannot compete in the prize.
- Entities and individuals publicly banned from doing business with the U.S. government such as entities and individuals debarred, suspended, or otherwise excluded from or ineligible for participating in federal programs are not eligible to compete.
- Individuals participating in a foreign government talent recruitment program<sup>1</sup> sponsored by a country of risk<sup>2</sup> and teams that include such individuals are not eligible to compete.
- Entities owned by, controlled by, or subject to the jurisdiction or direction of a government of a country of risk are not eligible to compete.
- To be eligible, an individual authorized to represent the competitor must agree to and sign the following statement upon registration with [HeroX](#):

I am providing this submission package as part of my participation in this prize. I understand that I am providing this submission to the federal government. I certify under penalty of perjury that the named competitor meets the eligibility requirements for this prize competition and complies with all other rules contained in the Official Rules document. I

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<sup>1</sup> Foreign Government-Sponsored Talent Recruitment Program is defined as an effort directly or indirectly organized, managed, or funded by a foreign government, or a foreign government instrumentality or entity, to recruit science and technology professionals or students (regardless of citizenship or national origin, or whether having a full-time or part-time position). Some foreign government-sponsored talent recruitment programs operate with the intent to import or otherwise acquire from abroad, sometimes through illicit means, proprietary technology or software, unpublished data and methods, and intellectual property to further the military modernization goals and/or economic goals of a foreign government. Many, but not all, programs aim to incentivize the targeted individual to relocate physically to the foreign state for the above purpose. Some programs allow for or encourage continued employment at United States research facilities or receipt of federal research funds while concurrently working at and/or receiving compensation from a foreign institution, and some direct participants not to disclose their participation to U.S. entities. Compensation could take many forms including cash, research funding, complimentary foreign travel, honorific titles, career advancement opportunities, promised future compensation, or other types of remuneration or consideration, including in-kind compensation.

<sup>2</sup> DOE has designated the following countries as foreign countries of risk: Iran, North Korea, Russia, and China. This list is subject to change.

further represent that the information contained in the submission is true and contains no misrepresentations. I understand false statements or misrepresentations to the federal government may result in civil and/or criminal penalties under 18 U.S.C. § 1001 and § 287 and 31 U.S.C. §§ 3729–3733 and 3801–3812.

In keeping with the goal of growing a community of innovators, competitors are encouraged to form multidisciplinary teams while developing their narrative. The [HeroX](#) platform provides a space in which parties interested in collaboration can post information about themselves and learn about others who are also interested in competing in this contest.

### **Phase 1 Eligibility**

- A single entity may only submit one application as the lead competitor to this prize. Entities may participate as part of a partnership on multiple applications.
- All organizations that are part of the partnerships must be formed in and maintains a primary place of business in the United States and territories.

### **Phase 2 Eligibility**

- Only winners of Phase 1 are eligible to compete in Phase 2
- All organizations that are part of the partnerships must be formed in and maintain a primary place of business in the United States.

### **Phase 3 Eligibility**

- Only winners of Phase 2 are eligible to compete in Phase 3
- All organizations that are part of the partnerships must be formed in and maintains a primary place of business in the United States.



# 2 Background

## 2.1 Prize Background

The **Partnerships to Accelerate Training & Hiring for Geothermal Heat Pumps (GHP PATHs) Prize** is part of the American-Made Challenges program, which is your fast track to the clean energy revolution. Funded by DOE, we incentivize innovation through prizes, training, teaming, and mentoring, connecting the nation's entrepreneurs and innovators to America's national labs and the private sector.

Geothermal heat pumps (GHPs)<sup>3</sup> are a mature technology for efficient heating and cooling of residential and commercial buildings. GHPs take advantage of constant underground temperatures to heat buildings in the winter and cool them in the summer. Heat pumps work by moving heat from one place to another rather than creating it through combustion. This process uses less energy than traditional heating and cooling systems, resulting in significant cost savings over the long term. GHP can be used to heat and cool a single house, a single business, or an entire community (college campus, neighborhood, etc.); can be implemented as part of new construction or retroactively added to existing buildings; and can work in both urban and rural environments. The GHP industry is expected to reduce energy costs for residential and commercial consumers and provide greater reliability and consistency in building heating and cooling. Widespread GHP deployment would likely incentivize local job creation in the drilling and heating, ventilating, and air-conditioning sectors across the United States. Despite their many benefits, the deployment of GHPs faces several workforce and adoption barriers such as:

- **Complexity of certification processes.** The certification process for GHP design, installation, and inspection may be complex and require specialized knowledge, making it difficult for individuals to obtain certification.
- **Certification cost for installers.** Certification programs and apprenticeships can be costly to develop and implement, especially for smaller organizations or communities with limited resources.
- **Limited training opportunities.** There may be a shortage of training programs and educational resources focused on GHP systems, limiting the number of individuals who can become certified or gain experience through apprenticeships.
- **Lack of industry collaboration.** Collaboration between industry stakeholders, certification bodies, and educational institutions may be lacking, hindering the development and implementation of effective certification and apprenticeship programs.

This prize initiative seeks to address key workforce barriers in the industry and to promote the growth and sustainability of the GHP industry. The prize intends to support partnerships formed by organizations actively involved in workforce development such as workers, certification and training providers, industry associations, employers, nonprofits, unions, accelerators, municipalities, utility companies etc. The prize will award efforts aimed at training and hiring current and next generation GHP workers in all communities.

## 2.2 Prize Phases

The **Partnerships to Accelerate Training & Hiring for Geothermal Heat Pumps (GHP PATHs) Prize** comprises three phases to address key workforce barriers in the industry and promote the growth and sustainability of the GHP industry:

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.energy.gov/eere/geothermal/geothermal-heat-pumps>

- **Phase 1: Connect.** Competitors submit a narrative describing their vision for building a sustainable pathway to training and hiring in their defined region. Up to 20 winning teams will receive \$40,000 each in cash and will be eligible to compete in Phase 2.
- **Phase 2: Engage.** Competitors formalize commitments between engaged partners, analyze in detail the gaps and needs of the GHP workforce in their defined region, and propose a workforce development program containing a realistic training plan and hiring strategy. At the end of Phase 2, up to 8 winning teams will receive \$150,000 each in cash and be eligible to compete in Phase 3.
- **Phase 3: Execute.** Competitors execute their proposed workforce development program and submit results, including the number of workers trained and new hires. They also describe their planned long-term commitment to GHP industry development in the defined region. Winners of Phase 3 will receive **a portion of the remaining \$1,000,000 Prize Pool.**

## 2.3 Program Goal Requirements

Only submissions relevant to the goals of this program are eligible to compete. The Prize Administrator must conclude that all the following statements are true when applied to your submission:

- The proposed solution is related to the GHP industry.
- The majority of activities that are described in and support the submission package are performed in the United States and have the potential to benefit the U.S. market.
- The proposed solution represents an innovation that will move the industry beyond its current state.
- The proposed solution is not dependent on new; pending; or proposed federal, state, or local government legislation, resolutions, appropriations, measures, or policies.
- The proposed solution does not involve the lobbying of any federal, state, or local government office.
- The proposed solution is based on fundamental technical principles and is consistent with a basic understanding of the U.S. market economy.
- The submission content sufficiently confirms the competitor's intent to commercialize early-stage technology and establish a viable U.S.-based business in the near future with revenues that do not solely depend on licensing fees of intellectual property.

## 2.4 Find Help—The American-Made Network

The American-Made Network cultivates resources and builds connections that enhance, accelerate, and amplify competitors' efforts. The objective is to link participants with the people, resources, financing, perspectives, and industry expertise necessary for long-term success.

The network includes:

- **Prize and network administrator.** DOE has partnered with the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) to administer the American-Made Challenges. As the administrator, NREL helps competitors locate and leverage the vast array of national laboratory resources. NREL also connects elements of the network with the competitors.
- **Power connectors:** Connectors are organizations that support innovators during prize challenges. Power connectors are connectors who are deeply involved with prize program execution,

recruitment, and support, and receive funds to expand and amplify DOE's and NREL's efforts. These organizations perform a variety of tasks for specific prizes that advance program successes, extending the reach and improving the diversity and inclusivity of the network overall.

## 2.5 Additional Requirements

Please read and comply with additional requirements in the Appendix.

**COMPETITORS WHO DO NOT COMPLY WITH THESE REQUIREMENTS MAY BE DISQUALIFIED.**

# 3 Phase One: Connect

## 3.1 Goal

Competitors will submit a narrative describing their vision for building a sustainable pathway to training and hiring in their defined region. Competitors will define their region size (town, county, city, state, multistate), analyze the GHP market, identify gaps and needs regarding workforce in their defined region, plan the implementation of a sustainable workforce development program, and outline a preliminary partnership.

## 3.2 Prizes

Up to 20 winners receiving \$40,000 each.

## 3.3 How To Enter

Go to [HeroX](#) and follow the instructions for registering and submitting all required materials before the phase deadline. Competitors can also form teams or find partners through the [HeroX](#) platform.

## 3.4 Important Dates

Refer to the timeline on [HeroX](#) for relevant dates and deadlines.

## 3.5 Plan Phase Process

Phase 1 consists of the following steps:

- **Activation and submission.** Competitors will submit a narrative defining their region size (town, county, city, state, multistate), analyzing the GHP market, identifying the major gaps in and needs of the workforce in their defined region, describing the implementation of a sustainable workforce development program, and outlining a preliminary partnership. Competitors will submit letters of support or commitment from potential partners. Competitors will complete their submission packages and submit them online before Phase 1 closes.
- **Assessment.** The Prize Administrator screens submissions for eligibility and completion and assigns subject matter expert reviewers to independently score the content of each submission. The reviewers assess the following competitor activities:
  - **Problem-solution fit.** Develop a credible solution concept to a real-world problem facing the industry. Perform substantive due diligence to gather feedback and validate that the proposed solution addresses an existing problem and is technically feasible.
  - **Partnership capabilities.** Form an exceptional and committed partnership to accomplish the stated goals of the proposed solution.
- **Announcement.** After the winners are publicly announced, the Prize Administrator notifies them and requests the necessary information to distribute cash prizes. After winning Phase 1, competitors develop their solutions in accordance with their plan to compete in Phase 2.

## 3.6 What to Submit

A complete submission package for Phase 1 should include the following items:

- Cover page
- Summary slide (will be made public)

- Narrative document
- Letters of support or commitment.

### 3.6.1 Cover Page Content

List basic information about your submission, including:

- Project title
- Partnership name
- Short description
- Key project members (names, contact information, and links to their professional online profiles)
- Other partners (if any)
- Your city, state, and nine-digit zip code.

### 3.6.2 Submission Summary Slide (Will Be Made Public)

Create a public-facing, one-slide submission summary that introduces your partnership and/or organization and your mission. There is no template, so competitors are free to present the information in any format. Any text must be readable on a standard printed page and a conference room projection and should be in at least 14-point font.

### 3.6.3 Narrative

Address each of the content bullets below, keeping in mind that they are only intended as guidance; you decide where to focus your answers. The individual responses do not have a word limit, but **the aggregate response to these topics must not exceed 2,500 words**, not including captions, figures/graphs, or references. A word count must be included at the end of your submission. You may also include **up to five (5) supporting images, figures, or graphs**. The reviewers will score the responses based on the content you have provided that is within these limits. Your submission could:

- Introduce your partnership and partner organizations, including shared mission, vision, and goals.
- Define the region in which your partnership intends to develop its workforce program; this could be at the level of town, county, city, state, or multistate.
- Describe the region's current adoption of GHP technology.
- Describe the regional GHP workforce, including the gaps in GHP deployment and the needs identified by the local workforce.
- Demonstrate that your partnership and/or partners have experience in at least one of the fields of heating and cooling installation and services, drilling or earth work, community development, and/or workforce training and hiring.
- Demonstrate that your partnership and/or partners are representative of relevant stakeholders in the region, including labor and community organizations and any impacted tribal entities.
- Identify the staff and other resources required to complete a sustainable workforce development program in your defined region and demonstrate access to or a plan to obtain the identified resources.
- Identify how, if successful, your partnership's proposal would support GHP deployment in the United States.

### 3.6.4 Letters of Support or Commitment

Attach one-page letters (of support, intent, or commitment) from relevant entities to provide context. Letters of support from partners or others that are critical to the success of your proposed solution will likely



increase your score. General letters of support from parties that are not critical to the execution of your solution will likely not factor into your score. Please do not submit multipage letters.

## 3.7 How We Determine and Award Winners

The Prize Administrator screens all completed submissions and ensures that the teams are eligible. Then the Prize Administrator, in consultation with DOE, assigns subject matter expert reviewers who independently score the content of each submission. The reviewers will be composed of federal and nonfederal subject matter experts and representatives with expertise in areas relevant to the competition. They will review the competitor's submission package according to the criteria above.

### 3.7.1 Reviewer Panel Scoring

The scoring of submissions will proceed as follows:

- Experts will review each submission individually and assess the response from the competitor to each statement described in Section 3.6.3.
- Reviewers will score each section on a scale from 0–5, depending on the degree to which the reviewer agrees that the submission reflects the statements for consideration.
- Each section score will be added together to generate a total score for the submission.
- The total scores from each reviewer will be averaged to produce a final score for the competing partnership/organization. This score will inform the judge's decisions on prize awards.

### 3.7.2 Score Weights

- **Cover page.** 5% of final score
- **Summary slide (will be made public).** 5% of final score
- **Narrative document.** 70% of final score
- **Letters of support or commitment.** 20% of final score.

### 3.7.3 Final Determination

DOE will designate a federal employee as the judge before the final determination of the winners. Final determination of the winners by the judge will take into account the reviewers' feedback and score as well as application of program policy factors.

### 3.7.4 Announcement

Approximately 30 days after the contest closes, the Prize Administrator will notify the winners and request the necessary information to distribute the prizes. The Prize Administrator will then publicly announce the winners.

## 3.8 Additional Terms and Conditions

See Appendix for additional requirements.

**COMPETITORS THAT DO NOT COMPLY WITH THE ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS IN APPENDIX 1 MAY BE DISQUALIFIED.**

# 4 Phase Two: Engage

## 4.1 Goal

Competitors formalize commitments between engaged partners. Competitors analyze in detail the gaps in and needs of the GHP workforce in their defined region and engage in a workforce development program containing a realistic training plan and a hiring strategy.

## 4.2 Prizes

Up to 8 winners receiving \$150,000 each.

## 4.3 How To Enter

Go to [HeroX](#) and follow the instructions for registering and submitting all required materials before the phase deadline. Competitors also have the ability to form teams or find partners through the [HeroX](#) platform.

## 4.4 Important Dates

Refer to the timeline on [HeroX](#) for relevant dates and deadlines.

## 4.5 Plan Phase Process

Phase 2 consists of the following steps:

- **Progress and submission.** Competitors execute agreements, memoranda of understanding, or similar commitments. Competitors submit an updated narrative including detailed gaps and needs of the GHP workforce in their defined region and a description of their engagement in a workforce development program with a realistic training plan and hiring strategy. Competitors will complete their submission packages and submit online before Phase 2 closes.
- **Assessment.** The Prize Administrator screens submissions for eligibility and completion and assigns subject matter expert reviewers to independently score the content of each submission.
- **Announcement.** After the winners are publicly announced, the Prize Administrator notifies them and requests the necessary information to distribute cash prizes. After winning Phase 2, competitors develop their solutions in accordance with their plan to compete in Phase 3.

## 4.6 What to Submit

A complete submission package for Phase 2 should include the following items:

- Cover page
- Updated summary slide (will be made public)
- Pitch video
- Workforce development program plan
- Executed agreements or memoranda of understanding.

### 4.6.1 Cover Page Content

List basic information about your submission, including:

- Project title

- Partnership name
- Short description
- Key project members (names, contact information, and links to their professional online profiles)
- Other partners (if any)
- Your city, state, and nine-digit zip code.

## 4.6.2 Updated Submission Summary Slide (Will Be Made Public)

Make a public-facing, one-slide submission summary that introduces your partnership and/or organization and your mission. There is no template, so competitors are free to present the information in any format. Any text must be readable on a standard printed page and a conference room projection and should be in at least 14-point font.

## 4.6.3 Pitch Video (Will Be Made Public)

A video of no more than five minutes that addresses the criteria in the following table:

Online Public Video	
<p><b>Suggested content from competitor:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Clearly defined region</li> <li>● Challenges to deploying geothermal heat pumps in the region</li> <li>● Information about the partnerships formed</li> <li>● Plan to address the identified challenges</li> <li>● Outline for the action plan and the next steps if the partnership wins.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reviewers will provide a single score on a scale of 0–5, based on whether the video depicts:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A clearly defined region.</li> <li>● Clearly defined challenges.</li> <li>● A strong overall summary of the partnerships formed.</li> <li>● A thoughtful and realistic consideration of next steps.</li> </ul>

Post your publicly accessible video online (YouTube , Vimeo, etc.), ensure that all images and visuals can be publicly used free of copyright restrictions. Please note that if the link to your video cannot be accessed by the Prize Administrators, your submission will be marked ineligible for missing materials.

Be creative and produce a video that conveys the required information in exciting and interesting ways, but do not focus on time-consuming activities that only improve production value (i.e., technical elements such as décor, lighting, and cinematic techniques). Assistance from others with experience in this area may be helpful.

## 4.6.4 Workforce Development Program Plan

You should address each of the considerations in the table below. The content bullets are only suggestions to guide your responses; you decide where to focus your answers. Individual responses do not have a word limit, but **the aggregate responses must not exceed 5,000 words**, not including captions, figures/graphs, or references. A word count must be included at the end of your submission. You may also include **up to 10 supporting images, figures, tables, or graphs**. The reviewers will score based on the content you provide.

<b>Narrative</b>	
Max 5,000 words with up to 10 supporting images or figures (PDF)	
<b>Results of engagement</b>	
<p><b>Suggested content from competitor:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Briefly describe your partnership and your goals and objectives in applying for this prize</li> <li>List the partners that have been engaged and their roles and responsibilities for the prize.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reviewers will provide a single score on a scale of 0–5, based on these considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The submission clearly outlines the partnership, goals, and objectives.</li> <li>The goals and objectives of the submission align with the prize goals and objectives.</li> <li>The partners listed, and corresponding roles and responsibilities, encompass fields of geothermal heat pump-related services, community development, and/or workforce training and hiring.</li> </ul>
<b>Workforce gaps and needs</b>	
<p><b>Suggested content from competitor:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide further detail on the workforce gaps and needs that the geothermal heat pump industry faces in your region, as outlined in Phase 1.</li> <li>Describe the current geothermal heat pump industry workforce competencies required in your region. What skills are required for designing, installing, inspecting and operating geothermal heat pumps in your defined region? How does the skill set of your existing workers need to change? How many new workers are needed to support your geothermal heat pump activities and in what roles/positions?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reviewers will provide a single score on a scale of 0–5, based on these considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The submission offers a comprehensive overview of the existing workforce, including the total number of employed workers and a breakdown of roles/positions, outlining the gaps and needs.</li> <li>The submission effectively articulates the essential skill sets necessary for geothermal heat pump deployment services, demonstrating a thorough understanding of the workforce needs and technical competencies.</li> <li>The submission provides clear and logical estimates or projections of the number and type of new workers needed to support geothermal heat pump services in your region.</li> </ul>
<b>Workforce training plan and budget</b>	
<p><b>Suggested content from competitor:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe the workforce training plan for which you will use the prize funding, including the number and types of</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reviewers will provide a single score on a scale of 0–5, based on these considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The submission clearly defines the training plan, including the number and</li> </ul>

<p>participating workers, training activities, and importance to the overall success of the partnership mission.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Describe the plan to address either or both of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>New worker training.</b> Develop and propose plans to train new geothermal heat pump workers in the skills they need to be successful</li> <li>○ <b>Existing worker training.</b> Develop and propose plans to train existing workers with the new or advanced skills needed to support geothermal heat pump deployment.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Provide additional detail on the training partner(s) who will be supporting the training funded by this prize. Who will be providing the training, and what are their credentials?</li> <li>● Provide a budget for your program that includes training, apprenticeship, and certification.</li> </ul>	<p>types of participating workers, a detailed breakdown of training activities, their relevance to the identified workforce needs, and an assessment of how this effort will contribute to the advancement of geothermal heat pumps in the region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The submission details the qualifications and credentials of experienced training provider(s), highlighting their expertise in delivering effective training programs aligned with the geothermal heat pump industry’s needs. The training partner(s) either have curriculum and training materials prepared or have presented a plan for the development of training materials. The training partner(s) have demonstrated experience reaching the desired worker pool for training.</li> <li>● The submission provides a detailed timeline and breakdown of the planned budget for training activities, including a clear allocation of funds and description of use.</li> </ul>
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**Workforce hiring strategy**

<p><b>Suggested content from competitor:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Describe the plan to address either or both of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b>New worker recruitment.</b> If proposing training for new workers, what is your plan for recruitment of new, interested individuals? What are your recruitment targets and timeline?</li> <li>○ <b>Existing worker recruitment.</b> If proposing training for existing workers, what is the plan for recruiting workers interested in geothermal heat pumps.</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Provide a budget that includes recruitment activities.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reviewers will provide a single score on a scale of 0–5, based on these considerations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The submission outlines a clear and well-defined plan for recruiting individuals interested in the proposed training. It demonstrates a strategic approach to attracting suitable candidates from a diverse pool and/or retaining skilled workers from your current workforce.</li> <li>● The submission includes clear and achievable recruitment and/or retention targets and a realistic timeline if recruiting new workers.</li> <li>● The proposal includes a realistic budget for the recruitment and training activities.</li> <li>● The submission outlines the potential of the participating organization(s) to sustain an enduring training and placement program for the next 10 years.</li> </ul>
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## 4.6.5 Executed Agreements or Memoranda of Understanding

Attach letters (of support, intent, or commitment) from other relevant entities to provide context. Letters or agreements from/with partners or others that are critical to the success of your proposed solution will be considered in scoring submissions. General letters of support from parties that are not critical to the execution of your solution will likely not factor into your score. The level of support or commitment demonstrated will be strongly factored into scoring (e.g., contingent binding agreement would be more impactful than a nonbinding letter of support).

## 4.7 How We Determine and Award Winners

The Prize Administrator screens all completed submissions and ensures that the teams are eligible. Then the Prize Administrator, in consultation with DOE, assigns subject matter expert reviewers who independently score the content of each submission. The reviewers include federal and nonfederal subject matter experts and representatives with expertise in areas relevant to the competition. They will review the competitor's submission package using the criteria above.

### 4.7.1 Reviewer Panel Scoring

The scoring of submissions will proceed as follows:

- Experts will review each submission individually and assess the response from the competitor to each statement in the criteria described in the tables in Section 4.6.3 and 4.6.4.
- Reviewers will score each section on scale of 0–5, depending on the degree to which the reviewer agrees that the submission reflects the statements for consideration.
- Each section score will be added together to generate a total score for the submission.
- The total scores from each reviewer will be averaged to produce a final score for the competing partnership/organization. This score will inform the judge's decisions on prize awards.

### 4.7.2 Interviews

DOE may decide to interview a subset of competitors. The interviews would be held prior to the announcement of the winners and would serve to help clarify questions the reviewers may have. Participating in interviews is not required, and interviews are not an indication of a competitor's likelihood to win.

### 4.7.3 Score Weights

- **Cover page.** 5% of final score
- **Updated summary slide (will be made public).** 5% of final score
- **Pitch video.** 20% of final score
- **Workforce development program plan.** 45% of final score
- **Executed agreements or memoranda of understanding.** 25% of final score.

### 4.7.4 Final Determination

DOE will designate a federal employee as the judge before the final determination of the winners. Final determination of the winners by the judge will take into account the reviewers' feedback and scores, application of program policy factors, and the interview findings (if applicable).

## 4.7.5 Announcement

Approximately 30 days after the contest closes, the Prize Administrator will notify the winners and request the necessary information to distribute the prizes. The Prize Administrator will then publicly announce the winners.

## 4.8 Additional Terms and Conditions

See Appendix for additional requirements.

**COMPETITORS THAT DO NOT COMPLY WITH THE ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS IN APPENDIX 1 MAY BE DISQUALIFIED.**

# 5 Phase Three: Execute

## 5.1 Goal

Competitors execute their proposed workforce development program and submit results including number of workers trained, new hires, and planned long-term commitments for GHP industry development in the defined region.

## 5.2 Prizes

The number of winners and exact prize amounts for Phase 3: Execute have yet to be determined and will be finalized before Phase 3 opens. Winners of Phase 3 will receive **a portion of the remaining \$1,000,000 Prize Pool.**

Contest	Winners	Prize
Phase Three: Execute	To be determined	\$100,000 to \$400,000

## 5.3 How To Enter

Go to [HeroX](#) and follow the instructions for registering and submitting all required materials before the phase deadline. Competitors can also form teams or find partners through the [HeroX](#) platform.

## 5.4 Important Dates

Refer to the timeline on [HeroX](#) for relevant dates and deadlines.

## 5.5 Plan Phase Process

Phase 3 consists of the following steps:

- **Progress and submission.** Competitors submit results of their workforce development program proposed in Phase 2, including the number of workers trained, a description of roles and new skills acquired, the number of new hires, the impact of the hiring strategy and a plan for a long-term commitment to developing the GHP industry in the defined region. Competitors complete their submission packages and submit online before Phase 3 closes.
- **Assessment.** The Prize Administrator screens submissions for eligibility and completion and assigns subject matter expert reviewers to independently score the content of each submission.
- **Announcement.** After the winners are publicly announced, the Prize Administrator notifies them and requests the necessary information to distribute cash prizes.

## 5.6 What to Submit

A complete submission package for Phase 3 should include the following items:

- Cover page
- Updated summary slide (will be made public)
- Workforce development program results

## 5.6.1 Cover Page Content

List basic information about your submission, including:

- Project title
- Partnership name
- Short description
- Key project members (names, contact information, and links to their professional online profiles)
- Other partners (if any)
- Your city, state, and nine-digit zip code.

## 5.6.2 Results Summary Slide (Will Be Made Public)

Make a public-facing, one-slide summary slide that succinctly presents the final results of Phase Three. There is no template, so competitors are free to present the information in any format. Any text must be readable on a standard printed page and a conference room projection and should be in at least 14-point font.

## 5.6.3 Workforce Development Program Results

You should respond to each of the following considerations. The content bullets are only suggestions to guide your responses; you decide where to focus your responses. The individual responses do not have a word limit, but **the aggregate responses must not exceed 5,000 words**, not including captions, figures/graphs, or references. A word count must be included at the end of your submission. You may also include **up to 10 supporting images, figures, tables, or graphs**. The reviewers will score the responses based on the content you provide.

<b>Workforce Development Program Results and Future Planning</b> Max 5,000 words with up to 10 supporting images or figures (PDF)	
<b>Results of workforce development program</b>	
<p><b>Suggested content from competitor:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Provide the results of the training plan, including the number of new and existing workers trained, professional profiles, and training programs completed.</li> <li>● Include a timeline for finishing any incomplete necessary training and/or apprenticeship(s) or certification(s).</li> <li>● Provide the results of workers placement into relevant jobs and impact of your executed hiring strategies.</li> <li>● Outline how your partnership will provide ongoing support for business development in the geothermal heat pump industry, market adoption, education, and other related activities in the defined region, including the anticipated number of workers this program will train in the next 10 years.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Reviewers will provide a single score on a scale of 0–5, taking the following statements into consideration:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The proposal provides successful results of the training plan, including the number of new and existing workers trained, their professional profiles, and the training programs they completed.</li> <li>● The proposal includes a timeline and budget for finishing any incomplete necessary training and/or apprenticeship(s) or certification(s).</li> <li>● The proposal describes the results of workers’ placement into relevant jobs, including metrics of any impacts of the executed hiring strategies on the employers, employees, and communities.</li> <li>● The proposal explains how your partnership will provide business</li> </ul>

	<p>development, market adoption, education, or other ongoing support to the geothermal heat pump industry in the defined region.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The program provides a clear pathway toward reaching the number of anticipated additional trained workers over the next 10 years.</li> </ul>
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## 5.7 How We Determine and Award Winners

The Prize Administrator screens all completed submissions and ensures that the teams are eligible. Then the Prize Administrator, in consultation with DOE, assigns subject matter expert reviewers who independently score the content of each submission. The reviewers will include federal and nonfederal representatives with expertise in areas relevant to the competition. They will review the competitor’s submission package according to the criteria above.

### 5.7.1 Reviewer Panel Scoring

The scoring of submissions will proceed as follows:

- Experts will review each submission individually and assess the response from the competitor to each statement in the criteria described in the tables in Section 5.6.3.
- Reviewers will score each section on a scale from 0–5, depending on the degree to which the reviewer agrees that the submission reflects the statements for consideration.
- Each section score will be added together to generate a total score for the submission.
- The total scores from each reviewer will be averaged to produce a final score for the competing partnership/organization. This score will inform the judge’s decisions on prize awards.

### 5.7.2 Interviews

DOE may decide to interview a subset of competitors. The interviews would be held prior to the announcement of the winners and would serve to help clarify questions the reviewers may have. Participating in interviews is not required, and interviews are not an indication of a competitor’s likelihood to win.

### 5.7.3 Score Weights

- **Cover page.** 5% of final score
- **Updated summary slide (will be made public).** 10% of final score
- **Workforce development program results.** 85% of final score

### 5.7.4 Final Determination

DOE will designate a federal employee as the judge before the final determination of the winners. Final determination of the winners by the judge will take into account the reviewers’ feedback and scores, application of program policy factors, and interview findings (if applicable).



## 5.7.5 Announcement

Approximately 30 days after the contest closes, the Prize Administrator will notify the winners and request the necessary information to distribute the prizes. The Prize Administrator will then publicly announce the winners.

## 5.8 Additional Terms and Conditions

See Appendix for additional requirements.

**COMPETITORS THAT DO NOT COMPLY WITH THE ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS IN APPENDIX 1 MAY BE DISQUALIFIED.**

# Appendix: Additional Terms and Conditions

## A.1 Requirements

Your submission for the **Partnerships to Accelerate Training & Hiring for Geothermal Heat Pumps (GHP PATHs) Prize** is subject to the following terms and conditions:

- You must post the final content of your submission or upload the submission form online before the prize's phase submission period closes. Late submissions or any other form of submission may be rejected.
- All submissions that you wish to protect from public disclosure must be marked according to the instructions in Section 10 of Appendix (Section A.10). Unmarked or improperly marked submissions will be deemed to have been provided with unlimited rights and may be used in any manner and for any purpose whatsoever.
- You must include all the required elements in your submission. The Prize Administrator may disqualify your submission after an initial screening if you fail to provide all required submission elements. Competitors may be given an opportunity to rectify submission errors due to technical challenges.
- Your submission must be in English and in a format readable by Microsoft Word or Adobe PDF. Scanned hand-written submissions will be disqualified.
- Submissions will be disqualified if they contain any matter that, in the sole discretion of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) or the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL), is indecent, obscene, defamatory, libelous, and/or lacking in professionalism, or demonstrates a lack of respect for people or life on this planet.
- If you click "Accept" on the [HeroX](#) platform and proceed to register for any of the prizes described in this document, these rules will form a valid and binding agreement between you and DOE and are in addition to the existing [HeroX](#) Terms of Use for all purposes relating to these contests. You should print and keep a copy of these rules. These provisions only apply to the prize described here and no other prize on the [HeroX](#) platform or anywhere else.
- The Prize Administrator, when feasible, may give competitors an opportunity to fix non-substantive mistakes or errors in their submission packages.
- As part of your submission to this prize, you will be required to sign the following statement:

I am providing this submission package as part of my participation in this prize. I understand that I am providing this submission to the federal government. I certify under penalty of perjury that the named competitor meets the eligibility requirements for this prize competition and complies with all other rules contained in the Official Rules document. I further represent that the information contained in the submission is true and contains no misrepresentations. I understand false statements or misrepresentations to the federal government may result in civil and/or criminal penalties under 18 U.S.C. § 1001 and § 287, and 31 U.S.C. §§ 3729-3733 and 3801-3812.

## A.2 Verification for Payments

The Prize Administrator will verify the identity and role of all competitors before distributing any prizes. Receiving a prize payment is contingent upon fulfilling all requirements contained herein. The Prize Administrator will notify winning competitors using provided email contact information for the individual or entity that was responsible for the submission. Each competitor will be required to sign and return to the Prize Administrator, within 30 days of the date on the notice, a completed NREL Request for ACH Banking Information form and a completed W9 form (<https://www.irs.gov/pub/irs-pdf/fw9.pdf>). In the sole

discretion of the Prize Administrator, a winning competitor will be disqualified from the competition and receive no prize funds if: (i) the person/entity does not respond to notifications; (ii) the person/entity fails to sign and return the required documentation within the required time period; (iii) the notification is returned as undeliverable; or (iv) the submission or person/entity is disqualified for any other reason.

In the event of a dispute as to any registration, the authorized account holder of the email address used to register will be deemed to be the competitor. The "authorized account holder" is the natural person or legal entity assigned an email address by an Internet access provider, online service provider, or other organization responsible for assigning email addresses for the domain associated with the submitted address. All competitors may be required to show proof of being the authorized account holder.

## A.3 Teams and Single-Entity Awards

The Prize Administrator will award a single dollar amount to the designated primary submitter, whether it consists of a single or multiple entities. The primary submitter is solely responsible for allocating any prize funds among its member competitors or teammates as they deem appropriate. The Prize Administrator will not arbitrate, intervene, advise on, or resolve any matters or disputes between partnership members or competitors.

## A.4 Submission Rights

By making a submission and consenting to the rules of the contest, a competitor is granting to DOE, the Prize Administrator, and any other third parties supporting DOE in the contest, a license to display publicly and use the parts of the submission that are designated as "public" for government purposes. This license includes posting or linking to the public portions of the submission on the Prize Administrator or [HeroX](#) applications, including the contest website, DOE websites, and partner websites, and the inclusion of the submission in any other media worldwide. The submission may be viewed by DOE, the Prize Administrator, and judges and reviewers for purposes of the contests, including but not limited to screening and evaluation purposes. The Prize Administrator and any third parties acting on their behalf will also have the right to publicize competitors' names and, as applicable, the names of competitors' partnership members and organization, who participated in the submission on the contest website indefinitely.

By entering, the competitor represents and warrants that:

- The competitor's entire submission is an original work by the competitor and the competitor has not included third-party content (such as writing; text; graphics; artwork; logo; photographs; likenesses of any third party; musical recordings; or clips of videos, television programs, or motion pictures) in or in connection with the submission, unless (i) otherwise requested by the Prize Administrator and/or disclosed by the competitor in the submission, and (ii) the competitor has either obtained the rights to use such third-party content or the content of the submission is considered to be in the public domain without any limitations on use.
- Unless otherwise disclosed in the submission, the use thereof by the Prize Administrator, or the exercise by the Prize Administrator of any of the rights granted by the competitor under these rules, does not and will not infringe or violate any rights of any third party or entity, including, without limitation, patent, copyright, trademark, trade secret, defamation, privacy, publicity, false light, misappropriation, intentional or negligent infliction of emotional distress, confidentiality, or any contractual or other rights.
- All persons who were engaged by the competitor to work on the submission or who appear in the submission in any manner have:

- Given the competitor their express written consent to submit the submission for exhibition and other exploitation in any manner and in any and all media, whether now existing or hereafter discovered, throughout the world
- Provided written permission to include their name, image, or pictures in or with the submission (or, if a minor who is not competitor's child, competitor must have the permission of the minor's parent or legal guardian) and the competitor may be asked by the Prize Administrator to provide permission in writing
- Not been and are not currently under any union or guild agreement that results in any ongoing obligations resulting from the use, exhibition, or other exploitation of the submission.

## A.5 Copyright

Each competitor represents and warrants that the competitor is the sole author and copyright owner of the submission; that the submission is an original work of the competitor or that the competitor has acquired sufficient rights to use and to authorize others, including DOE, to use the submission, as specified throughout the rules; that the submission does not infringe upon any copyright or any other third-party rights of which the competitor is aware; and that the submission is free of malware.

## A.6 Contest Subject to Applicable Law

All contests are subject to all applicable federal laws and regulations. Participation constitutes each participant's full and unconditional agreement to these Official Rules and administrative decisions, which are final and binding in all matters related to the contest. This notice is not an obligation of funds; the final award is contingent upon the availability of appropriations.

## A.7 Resolution of Disputes

DOE is solely responsible for administrative decisions, which are final and binding in all matters related to the contest.

Neither DOE nor the Prize Administrator will arbitrate, intervene, advise on, or resolve any matters between partnership members or among competitors.

## A.8 Publicity

The winners of these prizes (collectively, "winners") will be featured on DOE's and NREL's websites.

Except where prohibited, participation in the contest constitutes each winner's consent to DOE's and its agents' use of each winner's name, likeness, photograph, voice, opinions, and/or hometown and state information for promotional purposes through any form of media worldwide, without further permission, payment, or consideration.

## A.9 Liability

Upon registration, all participants agree to assume any and all risks of injury or loss in connection with or in any way arising from participation in this contest. Upon registration, except in the case of willful misconduct, all participants agree to and, thereby, do waive and release any and all claims or causes of action against the federal government and its officers, employees, and agents for any and all injury and damage of any nature whatsoever (whether existing or thereafter arising, whether direct, indirect, or consequential, and whether foreseeable or not) arising from their participation in the contest, whether the claim or cause of action arises under contract or tort.

In accordance with the delegation of authority to run this contest delegated to the judge responsible for this prize, the judge has determined that no liability insurance naming DOE as an insured will be required of competitors to compete in this competition, per 15 U.S.C. § 3719(i)(2). Competitors should assess the risks associated with their proposed activities and adequately insure themselves against possible losses.

## A.10 Records Retention and Freedom of Information Act

All materials submitted to DOE as part of a submission become DOE records and are subject to the Freedom of Information Act. The following applies only to portions of the submission not designated as public information in the instructions for submission. If a submission includes trade secrets or information that is commercial or financial, or information that is confidential or privileged, it is furnished to the Government in confidence with the understanding that the information shall be used or disclosed only for evaluation of the application. Such information will be withheld from public disclosure to the extent permitted by law, including the Freedom of Information Act. Without assuming any liability for inadvertent disclosure, DOE will seek to limit disclosure of such information to its employees and to outside reviewers when necessary for review of the application or as otherwise authorized by law. This restriction does not limit the Government's right to use the information if it is obtained from another source.

Submissions containing confidential, proprietary, or privileged information must be marked as described below. Failure to comply with these marking requirements may result in the disclosure of the unmarked information under the Freedom of Information Act or otherwise. The U.S. government is not liable for the disclosure or use of unmarked information and may use or disclose such information for any purpose.

The submission must be marked as follows and must identify the specific pages containing trade secrets or confidential, proprietary, or privileged information: "Notice of Restriction on Disclosure and Use of Data: Pages [list applicable pages] of this document may contain trade secrets, confidential, proprietary, or privileged information that is exempt from public disclosure. Such information shall be used or disclosed only for evaluation purposes. [End of Notice]"

The header and footer of every page that contains confidential, proprietary, or privileged information must be marked as follows: "Contains Trade Secrets, Confidential, Proprietary, or Privileged Information Exempt from Public Disclosure." In addition, each line or paragraph containing proprietary, privileged, or trade secret information must be clearly marked with double brackets.

Competitors will be notified of any Freedom of Information Act requests for their submissions in accordance with 29 C.F.R. § 70.26. Competitors may then have the opportunity to review materials and work with a Freedom of Information Act representative prior to the release of materials. DOE does intend to keep all submission materials private except for those materials designated as "will be made public."

## A.11 Privacy

If you choose to provide [HeroX](#) with personal information by registering or completing the submission package through the contest website, you understand that such information will be transmitted to DOE and may be kept in a system of records. Such information will be used only to respond to you in matters regarding your submission and/or the contest unless you choose to receive updates or notifications about other contests or programs from DOE on an opt-in basis. DOE and NREL are not collecting any information for commercial marketing.

## A.12 General Conditions

DOE reserves the right to cancel, suspend, and/or modify the prize, or any part of it, at any time. If any fraud, technical failures, or any other factors beyond DOE's reasonable control impairs the integrity or proper functioning of the prize, as determined by DOE in its sole discretion, DOE may cancel the prize. Any performance toward prize goals is conducted entirely at the risk of the competitor and DOE shall not compensate any competitors for any activities performed in furtherance of this prize.

Although DOE may indicate that it will select up to several winners for each prize, DOE reserves the right to only select competitors that are likely to achieve the goals of the program. If, in DOE's determination, no competitors are likely to achieve the goals of the program, DOE will select no competitors to be winners and will award no prize money.

DOE may conduct a risk review, using government resources, of the competitor and project personnel for potential risks of foreign interference. The outcomes of the risk review may result in the submission being eliminated from the prize competition. This risk review, and potential elimination, can occur at any time during the prize competition. An elimination based on a risk review is not appealable.

## A.13 Program Policy Factors

Although the scores of the expert reviewers will be carefully considered, it is the role of the prize judge to maximize the impact of the prize funds. Some factors outside the control of competitors and beyond the independent expert reviewers' scope of review may need to be considered to accomplish this goal. The following is a list of such factors. In addition to the reviewers' scores, these program policy factors may be considered in determining winners:

- Geographic diversity and potential economic impact of projects.
- Whether the use of additional DOE funds and provided resources are non-duplicative and compatible with the stated goals of this program and DOE's mission generally.
- The degree to which the submission exhibits technological or programmatic diversity when compared to the existing DOE project portfolio and other competitors.
- The degree to which the submission is likely to lead to increased employment and manufacturing in the United States or provide other economic benefits to U.S. taxpayers.
- The degree to which the submission will accelerate transformational technological, financial, or workforce advances in areas that industry by itself is not likely to undertake because of technical or financial uncertainty.
- The degree to which the submission supports complementary DOE-funded efforts or projects, which, when taken together, will best achieve the goals and objectives of DOE.
- The degree to which the submission expands DOE's funding to new competitors and recipients who have not been supported by DOE in the past.
- The degree to which the submission enables new and expanding market segments.
- Whether the project promotes increased coordination with nongovernmental entities toward enabling a just and equitable clean energy economy in their region and/or community.

## A.14 National Environmental Policy Act Compliance

This prize is subject to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) (42 U.S.C. § 4321, et seq.). NEPA requires federal agencies to integrate environmental values into their decision-making processes by considering the potential environmental impacts of their proposed actions. For additional background on NEPA, please see DOE's NEPA website at <http://nepa.energy.gov/>.

Although NEPA compliance is a federal agency responsibility and the ultimate decisions remain with the federal agency, all participants in the **Partnerships to Accelerate Training & Hiring for Geothermal Heat Pumps (GHP PATHs) Prize** will be required to assist in the timely and effective completion of the NEPA process in the manner most pertinent to their participation in the prize competition. If applicable, participants may be asked to provide DOE with information on fabrication and testing of their device such that DOE can conduct a meaningful evaluation of the potential environmental impacts.

## A.15 Return of Funds

As a condition of receiving a prize, competitors agree that if the award was made based on fraudulent or inaccurate information provided by the competitor to DOE, DOE has the right to demand that any prize funds or the value of other non-cash prizes be returned to the government.

ALL DECISIONS BY DOE ARE FINAL AND BINDING IN ALL MATTERS RELATED TO THE PRIZE.