

# Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Clean Energy Education Prize: Round 2 Inspire Track Official Rules

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

HBCU Clean Energy  
Education Prize



JANUARY 2025

# Preface

The U.S. Department of Energy’s Historically Black Colleges and Universities Clean Energy Education 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.

The following table describes changes that may be implemented on this rules document.

Date	Modification

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# 1 Executive Summary

The U.S. Department of Energy’s (DOE’s) Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) Clean Energy Education Prize Round 2 Inspire Track aims to advance clean energy programming opportunities for younger students and clean energy connections for historically Black Colleges and Universities. The goal is to inspire HBCU-hosted summer or academic break educational programs that engage K–12 and community college students in clean energy topics.

## 1.1 Prizes

The HBCU Clean Energy Education Prize Round 2 Inspire Track offers a total prize pool of \$600,000 in cash across two phases. In Phase 1, up to 12 winning teams will receive \$40,000 each and will be eligible to compete in Phase 2 to win an additional \$10,000 each.

In Phase 1, HBCUs will work to develop an educational program to be hosted on their campus during a summer or academic break. Their proposal will describe the plan of action, including proposed timing, partners, program goals, number of students served, and ages of students served, for example. Up to 12 winning HBCUs from Phase 1 will receive \$40,000 each and will be eligible to continue into the second phase.

In Phase 2, winning teams from Phase 1 will run their programs and report on metrics that showcase program impact, including the number of students who participated in the program, success stories, lessons learned, and more.

All winning HBCUs from Phase 1 are potentially eligible to win in Phase 2, but teams must provide complete documentation through the submission process for Phase 2 and must demonstrate the successful completion of their proposed educational programs in their Phase 2 submission. Up to 12 winning HBCUs will receive an additional \$10,000 in Phase 2.

Contest	Winners	Prizes
Phase 1 (Planning)	Up to 12	\$40,000
Phase 2 (Implementation)	Up to 12	\$10,000

## 1.2 Key Dates

- **Phase 1—Opens:** January 8, 2025
- **Phase 1—Informational Webinar:** 1 p.m. ET on January 28, 2025
- **Phase 1—Submission Closes:** 5 p.m. ET on February 27, 2025
- **Phase 1—Winner Announcement:** Late March 2025 (anticipated)
- **Phase 2—Opens:** June 2025 (anticipated)
- **Phase 2—Submission Closes:** 5 p.m. ET on August 11, 2025 (anticipated)
- **Phase 2—Winner Announcement:** September 2025 (anticipated)

## 1.3 Eligibility and Competitors

### All-Phase Eligibility

The competition is open only to HBCUs, and all prize winnings will be paid out directly to HBCUs using their legal tax IDs. HBCUs are expected to build partnerships throughout the prize competition, but all prize funding awarded will go to the HBCU specifically. If an HBCU wants to split prize funding with a partner organization, it will be the sole responsibility of the HBCU to provide that funding to partners, contractors, or other participating organizations.

- Academic institutions must be based in the United States or U.S. territories and be defined by the U.S. Department of Education as an HBCU.
- Each HBCU can lead only one submission through this prize program; however, HBCUs are allowed to be a partner on other HBCU submission packages. If an institution submits more than one proposal, only the proposal that receives the highest score will be considered for an award.
- 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 the information contained in this submission will be relied on by the federal government to determine whether to issue a prize to the named competitor. 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.

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<sup>1</sup> A 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 U.S. 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.

In keeping with the goal of growing a community of innovators, competitors are encouraged to form multidisciplinary teams while developing their concepts. The HeroX platform provides a space where 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**

- Please see eligibility requirements above.

**Phase 2 Eligibility**

- Only winners of Phase 1 are eligible to compete in Phase 2.

# 2 Background

## 2.1 Prize Background

The HBCU Clean Energy Education 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.

Clean energy technology challenges are vast. We need everyone to get involved to develop new solutions and businesses for the benefit of the planet. The talents of all are needed, from young, inquisitive students looking for learning opportunities to successful college students interested in furthering their career potential in clean energy opportunities.

Historically, HBCU students have not always had enough access to the levels of STEM programming (research and curriculum) that can lead to eventual careers in clean energy industries. The HBCU Clean Energy Education Prize is geared toward improving learning opportunities for younger generations, connecting them with early educational opportunities with HBCUs, and building robust programming that provides higher-level educational opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students. Building these programs will enhance offerings for HBCUs and make these colleges and universities an even more desirable choice for many students.

The prize requirements will ensure HBCUs partner with other universities that have already developed successful clean energy programs and strategies. Potential connections can be made between the university partners that will advance programming, share ideas, share curricula, enable scholarship programs, implement student exchange programs, and more.

The second round of the Inspire Track of the prize focuses on developing new summer programs (including the expansion of existing programs) or other programming during academic breaks that may last 1–6 weeks. We will also consider evening or weekend programs during the academic year. This prize should advance the HBCU's connection with their local community, build educational programming for students (K–12 and/or nearby community colleges), and develop long-term programming.

These programs should focus on student education and access to clean energy technologies, solutions, policies, research, careers, engineering principles, design, manufacturing, recycling, or basic education (depending on the level of students targeted). Examples of possible topic areas include renewable power (solar energy, wind energy, water power, geothermal energy), sustainable transportation (bioenergy, hydrogen and fuel cells, vehicles), and energy efficiency (buildings, advanced manufacturing and materials, decarbonization). Programs may focus on a single topic or on a wider variety of clean energy topics.

Competitors in this phase are encouraged to review the following ten DOE Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy's technology areas when considering their curricula for these programs.

**Advanced Materials and Manufacturing Technologies.** The Advanced Materials and Manufacturing Technologies Office furthers energy-related materials and manufacturing technologies to increase domestic competitiveness and build a clean, decarbonized economy.



**Bioenergy.** The Bioenergy Technologies Office supports research, development, and demonstration to enable the sustainable use of domestic biomass and waste resources for the production of biofuels and bioproducts.

**Buildings.** The Building Technologies Office develops, demonstrates, and accelerates the adoption of cost-effective technologies, techniques, tools, and services that enable high-performing, energy-efficient, and demand-flexible residential and commercial buildings in both the new and existing buildings markets, in support of an equitable transition to a decarbonized energy system by 2050, starting with a decarbonized power sector by 2035.

**Geothermal.** The Geothermal Technologies Office works to reduce costs and risks associated with geothermal development by supporting innovative technologies that address key exploration and operational challenges.

**Hydrogen and Fuel Cells.** The Hydrogen and Fuel Cell Technologies Office focuses on research, development, and demonstration of hydrogen and fuel cell technologies across multiple sectors enabling innovation, a strong domestic economy, and a clean, equitable energy future.

**Industrial Efficiency and Decarbonization.** The Industrial Efficiency and Decarbonization Office accelerates the innovation and adoption of cost-effective technologies that eliminate industrial greenhouse gas emissions.

**Solar.** The Solar Energy Technologies Office accelerates the advancement and deployment of solar technology in support of an equitable transition to a decarbonized economy.

**Vehicles.** The Vehicle Technologies Office provides low-cost, secure clean energy technologies to move people and goods across the United States.

**Water.** The Water Power Technologies Office enables research, development, and testing of emerging technologies to advance marine energy as well as next-generation hydropower and pumped storage systems for a flexible, reliable grid.

**Wind.** The Wind Energy Technologies Office invests in energy science research and development activities that enable the innovations needed to advance U.S. wind systems, reduce the cost of electricity, and accelerate the deployment of wind power.

Some examples of programs that would fit the intent of the prize include:

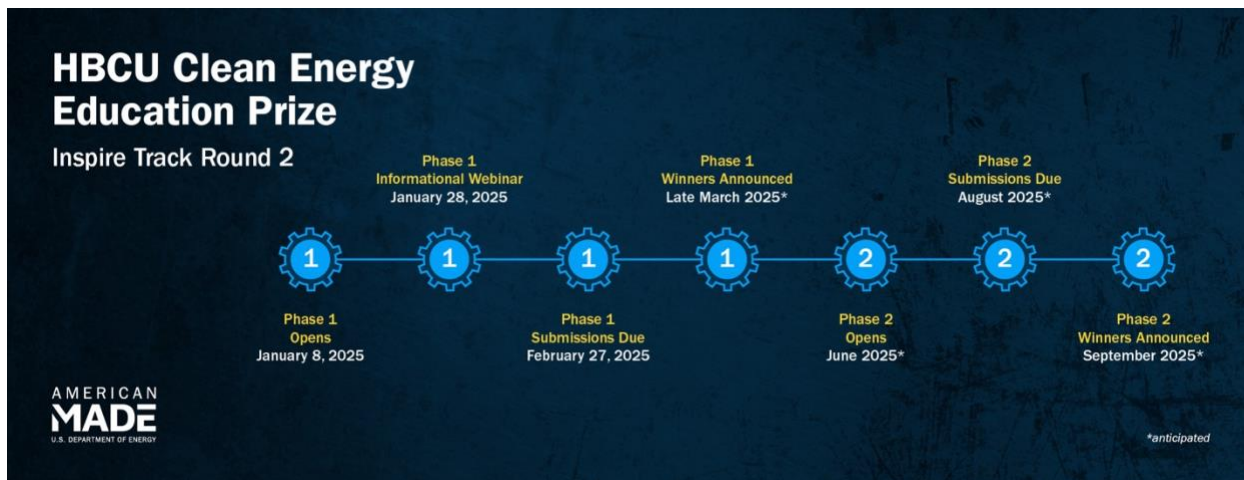
- Summer camp or summer bridge programs at the HBCU that last 1–6 weeks
- Programming that offers educational content and access to HBCU facilities (any time frame)
- Programs that take advantage of shorter school breaks (e.g., over the winter holiday season or spring break)
- Programming that includes opportunities to stay onsite at an HBCU campus
- School-to-school partnership programs that tie an HBCU to a specific elementary school, trade school, community college, or other relevant partnership.

## 2.2 Prize Phases

The HBCU Clean Energy Education Prize contains two phases—Planning and Implementation—to incentivize the successful implementation of educational programs focusing on clean energy.

**Phase 1— Planning:** In Phase 1, HBCUs will work to develop a plan for an educational program to be hosted on their campus over a summer or academic break. It should describe the plan of action, including proposed timing, partners, program goals, number of students served, ages of students served, and any other relevant details. Winning teams will be awarded \$40,000 to fund the implementation of their program and continue into the second phase.

**Phase 2—Implementation:** In Phase 2, winning teams from Phase 1 will get a chance to continue to develop their program plans, run their programs, and provide initial metrics that showcase program impact, including the number of students who participated in the program, success stories, and lessons learned. They will win additional \$10,000 for fulfilling these requirements.



## 2.3 Prize 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 program is related to clean energy education and workforce development efforts.
- The programs that are described in and support the submission package are performed in the United States and U.S. territories and have the potential to benefit the U.S. market.
- The programs are based on fundamental technical principles and are consistent with a basic understanding of the U.S. market economy.

## 2.4 Additional Requirements

Please read and comply with the additional requirements in Appendix A. Additional Terms and Conditions.

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

# 3 Phase 1 (Planning)

## 3.1 Goal

The goal of Phase 1 is for HBCUs to develop an educational program to be hosted on their campus that introduces students to clean energy topics and educates them on potential clean energy careers. This should include a plan of action, including proposed timing, partners (e.g., industry, nonprofit, government), staffing, program goals, number of students served, ages of students served, and other relevant details.

## 3.2 Prizes

Up to 12 winners receiving \$40,000 in cash each.

## 3.3 How To Enter

Go to [HeroX](#) and follow the instructions for registering and submitting all required materials before the Phase 1 deadline. Competitors also have the ability to 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 Process Overview

Phase 1 consists of the following steps:

1. **Activation and Submission** – Competitors will propose and design a summer or academic break educational program to host on their HBCU campus. The proposal should include relevant details about the personnel required, outreach planned, and topics covered. Competitors complete their submission packages and submit online before the phase closes.
2. **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 reviewer criteria assess the following competitor activities:

**Program Curriculum** – Define the clean energy and educational topics that will be included in the program, including an overview of daily activities.

**Staffing and Budget Plan** – Share who will be instructing student participants on each topic and demonstrate proper staffing levels. Provide a detailed budget plan for the program.

**Hands On Experiences/Field Trips** – Include plans for hands-on learning activities, which may include field trips, site visits, and guest or visiting speakers.

**Proposed Deliverables** – Clarify learning objectives and outcomes for students participating in these programs, and a description of how this will be measured (e.g., pre- and post-surveys, interviews).

3. **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:

- 90-second video (public)
- Cover page and narrative, including HBCU description, team information, past experiences and similar programs, capabilities and relevant staff background, and ways the proposed program will be impactful for the students and the college/university
- Summary PowerPoint slide
- Letter of support from a top-ranking official from the HBCU's administration (e.g., president or dean) that provides the institution's support for competing in the prize and signifying support for the new programming.

The following details provide more guidance on what information to provide and how reviewers will evaluate and score your submission. Reviewers will evaluate your submission by assigning a single score for each scored submission section, based on their overall agreement or disagreement with a series of statements.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Non-Responsive	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

### 3.6.1 Online Public Video (Will Be Made Public)

Post your publicly accessible 90-second video online (e.g., YouTube, Vimeo). 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 values (i.e., technical elements such as décor, lighting, and cinematic techniques). Assistance from others with experience in this area may be helpful.

### 3.6.2 Cover Page Content

List basic information about your submission, including:

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

### 3.6.3 Narrative

You should answer each of the following two questions. The content bullets are only suggestions to guide your responses. You decide where to focus your answers. The individual answers to the four questions do not have a word limit; however, **the aggregate response to these two questions 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 (see template for details). You may also include **up to five supporting images, figures, or graphs**. The reviewers will score the questions based on the content you have provided.

<p><b>Narrative</b></p> <p>Maximum 2,500 words and five supporting images or figures (PDF)</p>	
<p><b>Question 1 – The Program</b></p> <p>What is your proposed program, and what students will be targeted for participation?</p>	
<p><b>Suggested content competitor provides:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Explain why the program will be impactful for the HBCU and the local community.</li> <li>● Describe the student groups you will target for this program and how you will conduct outreach efforts to tell the local community about this program.</li> <li>● Provide information about how many students will potentially be served by participating in the program and where will they be housed (e.g., on site, off site).</li> <li>● Provide lesson and outreach plans, including the clean energy topics that will be included in the program and an overview of daily activities.</li> <li>● Introduce your project team, explain how it came together, and highlight the knowledge and skills that make it uniquely capable of achieving success.</li> <li>● Highlight your team’s diversity and experience and the track record that makes it likely to succeed in the price competition (e.g., whether you have experience running similar programs).</li> </ul>	<p><b>A single score on a scale of 0–6 is provided for each of the following statements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The project team has past experiences, capacity, and staff capabilities that should lead to a successful program.</li> <li>● The program will provide clean energy educational programming for students in the K–12 or community college age ranges.</li> <li>● The team has fully developed a program idea that can be successfully implemented and will make a positive impact for the students and the HBCU.</li> <li>● The program description is reasonable to accomplish within the timeline provided in the HBCU’s plan.</li> <li>● The plan outlines how a substantial number of students will be impacted by the program in the near term and for the long term.</li> <li>● The plan outlines clear attainable objectives that can be quantitatively measured pre- and post-program.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Question 2 – The Approach</b></p> <p>How are you planning to implement the program?</p>	
<p><b>Suggested content competitor provides:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Describe how the programming will be implemented. Detail the staffing plan and ensure proper coverage (e.g., graduate students, lab techs, or local professionals).</li> <li>● Provide a detailed budget plan for the program, including staffing, travel, and other</li> </ul>	<p><b>A single score on a scale of 0–6 is provided for each of the following statements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The program has a clear path for a successful outcome, and the HBCU has properly planned for the implementation of the program.</li> <li>● The outreach strategy is reasonable to engage the students for whom they are</li> </ul>

<p>student services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Describe your outreach strategy (e.g., social media, local TV and radio, visits to local schools) for engaging with the local community, students, and schools.</li> <li>• Describe your plans for longer-term program sustainability.</li> <li>• Describe partnerships you have, or will you be seeking, to help make the program successful.</li> <li>• Clarify learning objectives and outcomes for students participating in these programs, including a description of how this will be measured (e.g., pre- and post-surveys, interviews, etc.).</li> </ul>	<p>developing the program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The program has a high potential for success and a high likelihood that the program will be sustainable into the future.</li> <li>• The HBCU intends to continue funding this program into the future.</li> <li>• The learning objectives are clear, and a plan for measuring student outcomes is well described.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Reviewer Recommendation</b></p>	
<p><b>Suggested content competitor provides:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is no direct corresponding submission requirement for this score. Rather, it is an overall assessment of all materials submitted in HeroX.</li> </ul>	<p><b>A single score on a scale of 0–6 is provided for each of the following statements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This HBCU should be strongly considered for a prize.</li> </ul>

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

Make a public-facing, one-slide submission summary that introduces your team 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 in a standard printed page and a conference room projection and should be in at least 14-point font.

### 3.6.5 Letter of Support From HBCU Administration

Include a letter of support from a top-ranking official from the HBCU’s administration (e.g., president or dean) that provides the institution’s support for competing in the prize and signifies support for the new programming. This component is required, and submissions lacking this letter of support will not be considered for an award.

### 3.6.6 Letters of Support or Commitment (Optional)

Attach one-page letters (of support, intent, or commitment) from other 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 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 competitor's response to each statement under the four criteria described in the tables in [Section 3.6.3](#).
- Reviewers will score each section on a scale from 1–6, 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 team/organization. This score will inform the judge's decisions on prize awards.

### 3.7.2 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 of winning.

### 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 scores, application of program policy factors, and the interview findings (if applicable).

### 3.7.4 Announcement

Approximately 60 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 A](#) for additional requirements.

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

# 4 Phase 2 (Implementation)

## 4.1 Goal

In Phase 2, winning teams from Phase 1 will continue to develop their program plans, run their programs, and provide initial metrics that showcase program impact, including the number of students who participated in the program, success stories, and lessons learned.

## 4.2 Prizes

Up to 12 winners receiving \$10,000 each.

## 4.3 How To Enter

Go to [HeroX](#) and follow the instructions for registering and submitting all required materials before the Phase 2 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 Process Overview

Phase 2 consists of the following steps:

- 1. Progress and Submission** – Competitors should describe how their educational program was implemented, including relevant details such as curriculum covered, staffing, and details of field trips or other hands-on activities. Competitors complete their submission packages and submit online before the phase closes.
- 2. 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 reviewer criteria assess the following competitor activities:
  - Program Curriculum** – Which clean energy and educational topics were included in the program? Was the provided overview of daily activities clear?
  - Staffing and Budget Plan** – Was the staffing plan for instructing student participants on each topic clear and appropriate to the subject matter? Was a detailed budget for the program provided?
  - Hands On Experiences/Field Trips** – Were hands-on learning activities included in the program, which may have included field trips, site visits, and guest or visiting speakers?
  - Proposed Deliverables** – Were the learning objectives and outcomes for students participating in these programs detailed? Was a description of how this was measured (e.g., pre- and post-surveys, interviews) included?
- 3. 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:

- 90-second video (public)
- Cover page and narrative, detailing team information, relevant staff background, and how the proposed program has impacted the students and the college/university
- Summary PowerPoint slide

The following details provide more guidance on what information to provide and how reviewers will evaluate and score your submission. Reviewers will evaluate your submission by assigning a single score for each scored submission section, based on their overall agreement or disagreement with a series of statements.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Non-Responsive	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

### 4.6.1 Online Public Video (Will Be Made Public)

Post your publicly accessible video online (e.g., YouTube, Vimeo). 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 values (i.e., technical elements such as décor, lighting, and cinematic techniques). Assistance from others with experience in this area may be helpful.

### 4.6.2 Cover Page Content

List basic information about your submission, including:

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

### 4.6.3 Narrative

You should answer each of the following four questions. The content bullets are only suggestions to guide your responses. You decide where to focus your answers. The individual answers to the four questions do not have a word limit; however, **the aggregate response to these four questions 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 (see template for details). You may also include **up to five supporting images, figures, or graphs**. The reviewers will score the questions based on the content you have provided.

## Narrative

Maximum 2,500 words and five supporting images or figures (PDF)

### Question 1 – The Program Update

How did the HBCU implement the proposed program?

#### Suggested content competitor provides:

- Describe what you have accomplished so far and the approach taken to implement the program.
- Introduce any updates or new additions to the project team (e.g., whether a third-party contractor or expert was brought on).
- Describe the student groups were targeted for this program and the recruiting efforts you have used so far (e.g., social media and visits to local schools).
- Provide the lesson plans that have been used for the program.

#### A single score on a scale of 0–6 is provided for each of the following statements:

- The project team has successfully implemented the program in alignment with the goals.
- The program has provided clean energy educational programming for students in the K–12 and/or community college age ranges.
- The team has successfully developed and implemented a program idea that will make a positive impact for the students and the HBCU.
- The plan outlines how a substantial number of students were impacted by the program in the near term and for the long term.

### Question 2 – Successes and Materials

What was your outreach strategy? How did students respond to your program?

#### Suggested content competitor provides:

- Describe any success stories, lessons learned, and adjustments you made to your plan.
- Provide an update on your recruiting efforts, including how many students were contacted, their backgrounds, and which age groups they were in (e.g., K-12, or community college).
- Include links or screen captures to marketing materials, blog posts, photos, videos, educational materials, or other information that showcases the success of the programming.
- Include the pre- and post-program surveys measuring student impact, and other qualitative data collected during the program.

#### A single score on a scale of 0–6 is provided for each of the following statements:

- The program has proven successes and will help the HBCU continue successful programming in the future.
- Students were successfully included in some form of programming that led to a connection with the HBCU.
- The surveys and qualitative data shared demonstrate positive student outcomes resulting from participation in the program.

<b>Reviewer Recommendation</b>	
<p><b>Suggested content competitor provides:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is no direct corresponding submission requirement for this score. Rather, it is an overall assessment of all materials submitted in HeroX.</li> </ul>	<p><b>A single score on a scale of 0–6 is provided for each of the following statements:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The HBCU should be strongly considered for a prize.</li> </ul>

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

Make a public-facing, one-slide submission summary that introduces your team 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 in a standard printed page and a conference room projection and should be in at least 14-point font.

## 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 will be composed of federal and nonfederal subject-matter experts with expertise in areas relevant to the competition. They will review the competitor’s submission package according to 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 competitor’s response to each statement under the four criteria described in the tables in [Section 4.6.3](#).
- Reviewers will score each section on a scale from 1–6, 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 team/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 of winning.

### 4.7.3 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 scores, application of program policy factors, and the interview findings (if applicable).

## 4.7.4 Announcement

Approximately 60 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 A](#) for additional requirements.

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

# Appendix A. Additional Terms and Conditions

## A.1 Requirements

Your submission for the prize is subject to the following terms and conditions:

- You must post the final content of your submission or upload the submission form online by 5 p.m. ET on the prize deadline date, before the prize's phase submission period closes. Late submissions or any other form of submission may be rejected.
- 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 handwritten 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 nonsubstantive 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 the information contained in this submission will be relied on by the federal government to determine whether to issue a prize to the named competitor. 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 W-9 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, (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 consisting of a single entity 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 team members or competitors.

## A.4 Treatment of Submission Materials

The elements of the submission that are designated as public will become publicly available as part of this prize. Therefore, these elements must not include trade secrets or business-sensitive, proprietary, or otherwise confidential information.

If it is necessary to share trade secrets or business-sensitive, proprietary, or otherwise confidential information, it should only be done in an element that is NOT designated as public. Any 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 submission must be marked as follows and 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 or 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 or 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.

DOE, the prize administrator, and any other third party supporting DOE in the contest assume no liability for the public disclosure of any information in the elements designated public and for any unmarked information any element NOT designated as public.

Furthermore, by making a submission and consenting to the rules of the prize, the 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 elements of the submission that are designated as public and any unmarked information in the elements of the submission that are NOT designated as public for government purposes, including posting or linking elements on websites or publicizing the submissions and competitors in the media and other announcements. The competitor is granting to DOE, the prize administrator, and other third parties a limited license to use or disclose any properly marked information for evaluation purposes only.

## A.5 Representation and Warranties

By entering, the competitor represents and warrants that:

1. 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, logos, photographs, likeness of any third party, musical recordings, clips of videos, television programs, or motion pictures) in or in connection with the submission, unless (i) otherwise requested by the prize administrator or disclosed by the competitor in the submission, and (ii) the competitor has acquired the necessary rights to use and to authorize others, including DOE, to use the submission, as specified throughout the rules.
2. To the best of the competitor's knowledge, the use of the submission in the prize, including any use by DOE or the prize administrator, does not and will not infringe upon 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.
3. All persons who were engaged by the competitor to work on the submission or who appear in the submission in any manner have:
  - a. 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;
  - b. Provided written permission to include their name, image, or pictures in or with the submission (or, if a minor who is not the competitor's child, the 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; and
  - c. 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.
4. 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 team members or among competitors.

## A.8 Publicity

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

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 identify the specific pages containing trade secrets, 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 or confidential, proprietary, or privileged information that is exempt from public disclosure. Such information shall be used or disclosed only for evaluation purposes."

Where necessary, materials should be marked as noted in Section A.4. Such information will be withheld from public disclosure to the extent permitted by law. 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.

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 failure, or any other factor 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

While the scores of the expert reviewers will be carefully considered, it is the role of the prize judge to maximize the impact of prize funds. Some factors outside the control of competitors and beyond the independent expert reviewer 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, the below 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 nonduplicative and compatible with the stated goals of this program and the DOE 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/>.

While NEPA compliance is a federal agency responsibility and the ultimate decisions remain with the federal agency, all participants in the 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. 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 Definitions

Prize administrator – Prize administrator means both the Alliance for Sustainable Energy, operating in its capacity under the management and operating contract for NREL, and the Integrated Strategies Office. When the prize administrator is referenced in this document, it refers to staff from both the Alliance for Sustainable Energy and Integrated Strategies Office staff. Ultimate decision-making authority regarding prize matters rests with the Director of the Integrated Strategies Office.

## A.16 Return of Funds

As a condition of receiving a prize, competitors agree that if the prize 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 noncash prizes be returned to the government.

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