



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY



Introduction

The American-Made Solar Prize (Solar Prize) is a prize competition designed to energize U.S. solar innovation through a series of contests and the American-Made Network.

The Solar Prize will spur innovation through a series of three progressive competitions that will incentivize the nation's innovators and entrepreneurs to rapidly discover, research, iterate, and deliver new solutions that will expand solar manufacturing in the United States. This approach to rapid product development not only provides cash prizes, but also activates America's energy incubators, investors, universities, national laboratories, and others to help participants achieve their goals. This approach is designed to be flexible, scalable, and to include diverse resources extending beyond solar to other technology domains and sectors. This will simultaneously enable the rapid development of technology while building connections that support commercialization.

Rounds 1 through 4 of the Solar Prize focused on solar manufacturing and hardware components. Solar Prize Round 5 was structured with two tracks that focus separately on hardware and software components to allow more entrepreneurs to compete in the solar innovation space. Solar Prize Round 6 focuses on both hardware and software components in one prize.

Connectors

Connectors are the core component of the American-Made Network and are organizations that seek to support the efforts of competitors in the Solar Prize. Connectors must be U.S.-based organizations (not individuals) that have the capacity to connect competitors to mentoring, business resources, manufacturing resources, or introduce them to possible sources of funding. Connectors that are successful in helping competitors win any of the Solar Prize Contests will earn Recognition Rewards. Connectors can be incubators, universities, think tanks, industry groups or any U.S.-based organization that provides support activities such as:

- Recruiting new and diverse competitors to apply for the Solar Prize;
- Helping competitors refine their innovations, develop business plans, work with mentors, and connect them with investors and industry partners;
- Assisting competitors in the preparation of their Submission Packages to the Prize Contests;
- Raising non-federal funding to support this program and its participants;
- Providing in-kind resources, tools, and facilities to accelerate competitors' abilities to innovate, test, and refine their solutions while reducing technology and business risks;
- Connecting competitors to regional development, prototyping, validation, testing or manufacturing tools, facilities, and expertise.

Connectors who support participants that go on to win the Ready! Contest or compete in the Set! or Go! Contests earn payments outlined in the table below. Entities interested in participating as a Connector can visit the following site to sign up and apply: <https://americanmadechallenges.org/connect.html>.

Connectors are encouraged to use the American-Made Network Matching Tool to create a profile highlighting your capabilities and to connect with competitors that could use your expertise. Connectors and competitors can visit the following site to use the Matching Tool: <https://network.americanmadechallenges.org/>.

Power Connectors and National Labs are not eligible for Recognition payments.

Connector Recognition Reward Opportunities:

Recognition Reward Name	Anticipated Number of Awards	Dollar Amounts	Details*
Mobilize	Up to 1 per winning Ready! Competitor (20 Competitors)	\$5,000 per Competitor	Distributed to Connectors that recruit and/or support competitors who go on to win the Ready! Contest.
Set! Mentor	Up to 1 per winning Set! Competitor (10 Competitors)	\$7,500 per Competitor	Can be split between up to 3 Connectors identified as significant supporters by Set! Contest winners.
	Up to 1 per non-winning Set! Competitor (10 Competitors)	\$3,000 pool per Competitor	Competitors can list up to 3 Connectors, and each Connector identified as significant supporters by competitors who competed in but did not win the Set! Contest will receive a fixed \$1,000 award.
Go! Mentor	Up to 1 per winning Go! Competitor (2 Competitors)	\$10,000 per Competitor	Can be split between up to 3 Connectors identified as significant supporters by Go! Contest winners.
	Up to 1 per non-winning Go! Competitor (8 Competitors)	\$4,500 per Competitor	Competitors can list up to 3 Connectors, and each Connector identified as significant supporters by competitors who competed in but did not win the Go! Contest will receive a fixed \$1,500 award.
*Power Connectors and national labs are ineligible to receive recognition rewards.			

Mobilize – Connectors who significantly help a team during the Ready! Contest may receive Mobilize Recognition Rewards if the following conditions are met:

The Connector must be on the list of approved Connectors on the American-Made Solar Prize website.

- To receive payment, the Connector must be listed in a winning competitor's submission package for the Ready! Contest as a supporting organization.

It is the expectation of the Prize Administrator that competitors will identify Connectors that have significantly helped them win a contest. Such assistance may include mentoring, coaching, crafting their submission package, identifying SMART goals, exploring vouchers opportunities and introductions to investors, partners, researchers, experts, or potential customers.

Connectors may receive \$5,000 for helping a Ready! competitor win the Ready! Contest. A Connector may help multiple teams win and receive multiple Recognition Rewards.



The winning competitor will be asked to identify a single Connector who provided the most support. Even if a team works with multiple Connectors, only one may be identified to receive a Recognition Reward. After winning the contest, teams will be contacted by the Prize Administrator to confirm the Connectors listed in the submission.

If no Connector mentored a winning competitor in an impactful way, there is no obligation for a competitor to identify a Connector. A competitor should identify a Connector only if a Connector helped them win the contest. If a competitor does not designate a connector, no recognition rewards will be disbursed. Power Connectors are ineligible to receive Mobilize payments, even if a winning team lists them on their submission.

Set! Mentor and Go! Mentor – Connectors who significantly help a team during the Set! or Go! Contest may receive a Mentor Recognition Rewards if the following conditions are met:

The Connector must be on the list of approved Connectors on the American-Made Solar Prize website.

- To receive payment, the Connector must be listed in a competitor's submission package for the Set! or Go! Contests as a supporting organization.

It is the expectation of the Prize Administrator that competitors will identify Connectors that have significantly helped them win a contest. Such assistance may include mentoring, coaching, crafting their submission package, identifying SMART goals, exploring vouchers opportunities and introductions to investors, partners, researchers, experts or potential customers.

Connectors may support multiple teams, but per team supported they can receive a maximum of:

- \$7,500 for helping a competitor win the Set! Contest;
- \$1,000 of a \$3,000 pool per competitor that competes in but does not win the Set! Contest ;
- \$10,000 for helping a competitor win the Go! Contest;
- \$1,500 of a \$4,500 pool per competitor that competes in but does not win the Go! Contest.

Competitors may divide the Recognition Rewards among up to three connectors for each Contest. Thus, the total amount a Connector may receive, may be less than the amount above if a team chooses to do this. Winning teams will indicate to the NREL Prize administrator how the designated funds should be split among up to three Connectors, while up to three Connectors identified by non-winning teams will receive a fixed award amount. There is a minimum payment of \$1,500 for a Connector helping a team that wins and any Connector listed on a non-winning competitor's submission form will receive a fixed award of \$1,000 for the Set! Contest and \$1,500 for the Go! Contest. After winning the contest, teams will be contacted by the Prize Administrator to confirm the Connectors listed in the submission and desired payment split if multiple Connectors are listed.

If no Connector mentored a winning competitor in an impactful way, there is no obligation for a competitor to identify a Connector. A competitor should identify a Connector only if a Connector helped them win the contest. If a competitor does not designate a connector, no recognition rewards will be disbursed. Power Connectors are ineligible to receive Mentor payments, even if a winning team lists them on their submission.





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