

# Inclusive Energy Innovation Prize



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

## PHASE ONE

## Official Rules

September 2021

# Preface

The U.S. Department of Energy's Inclusive Energy Innovation 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
October 8, 2021	Clarification on timeline and eligibility criteria.
November 23, 2021	Addition of Recognition Rewards for the Connector Network and a reference to the support mechanisms for competing teams included in Section 2.4.



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# 1 Executive Summary

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE) and the Office of Economic Impact and Diversity (ED) are launching the Inclusive Energy Innovation Prize.

Through this prize, DOE seeks to identify and support:

- Organizations that are community-centric and have experience in successfully engaging with disadvantaged communities
- Organizations that promote environmental, climate, and energy justice and demonstrate strong community ties
- Organizations that can use their experience to serve as bridges between DOE and disadvantaged communities
- Clean energy grassroots innovation related to technology advancement in climate and clean energy with a focused impact on disadvantaged communities.

## 1.1 Prizes

Phase One of the Inclusive Energy Innovation Prize invites teams to submit narratives describing proposed activities that will align with the goals of this prize. These submissions will be reviewed by DOE and external experts selected by DOE. Up to 10 winning teams will receive \$200,000 each in cash to carry out the activities described in their impact plans. The winning teams will also receive in-kind mentorship and other support services during the 12-month period following winner announcements.

Phase Two of the Inclusive Energy Innovation Prize is anticipated to open 12 months after the Phase One winner announcement, during which Phase One winners will be eligible to compete for a total of \$500,000 in bonus prizes based on their activities during Phase One.

## 1.2 Key Dates

- **Phase One Submission Opens:** September 30, 2021
- **Phase One Submission Closes:** 5 p.m. ET on February 25, 2022
- **Phase One Winner Announcement and Awards:** March 2022 (anticipated)
- **Phase Two Opens:** March 2023 (anticipated).



## 1.3 Eligibility and Competitors

The competition is open only to private entities (for-profits and nonprofits), non-federal 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 with majority domestic ownership and control.
- Academic institutions must be based in the United States.
- An individual prize competitor or group of competitors 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.
- Entities and individuals identified as a restricted party on one or more screening lists of Department of Commerce, State and the Treasury are not eligible to compete. See Consolidated Screening List.
- This prize competition is expected to positively impact U.S. economic competitiveness. Participation in a foreign government talent recruitment program<sup>1</sup> could conflict with this objective by resulting in unauthorized transfer of scientific and technical information to foreign government entities. Therefore, individuals participating in foreign government talent recruitment programs of foreign countries of risk are not eligible to compete. Further, teams that include individuals participating in foreign government talent recruitment programs of foreign countries of risk<sup>2</sup> are not eligible to compete.
- As part of your submission to this prize program, 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

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<sup>1</sup> Foreign government talent recruitment program is defined as an effort directly or indirectly organized, managed, or funded by a foreign government to recruit science and technology professionals or students (regardless of citizenship or national origin, and 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 physically relocate 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> Currently, the list of countries of risk includes Russia, Iran, North Korea, and China

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.

In keeping with the goal of growing a community of innovators, competitors are encouraged to form multidisciplinary teams while developing their concept. 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.

## 2 Background

DOE is pursuing efforts to enable an inclusive and just entrepreneurial innovation ecosystem<sup>3</sup> in climate and energy technologies.

Advancing equity,<sup>4</sup> civil rights, racial justice, and equal opportunity is the responsibility of the entire government. The administration wants to create opportunities for all. As part of the government's approach, DOE is taking a number of proactive steps to diagnose and eliminate barriers to equal opportunity. In particular, through this prize, DOE aims to support efforts by organizations and groups to remove barriers to DOE programs, specifically in climate and energy technologies.

### 2.1 Prize Background

EERE supports research, development, demonstration, and commercial application (RDD&CA) of renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies. ED works to identify and ensure that everyone is afforded an opportunity to participate fully in DOE's programs, opportunities, and resources.

DOE funds RDD&CA activities in climate and energy technologies through its 17 national laboratories and a variety of mechanisms encompassing external competitive solicitations. In addition, DOE programs support building and sustaining an innovation ecosystem for climate and energy technologies, encompassing early career and workforce development, entrepreneurial programs and resources for individuals and organizations, and support for communities and regions.

The Biden administration has set ambitious goals to address climate change, including achieving a 50%–52% reduction from 2005 levels in economy-wide net greenhouse gas pollution by 2030 and reaching net zero emissions economy-wide by no later than 2050.<sup>5</sup> Achieving these goals will require a combination of innovative solutions and acceleration of the deployment and implementation of climate and energy technologies, policies, and processes, with environmental and climate justice as key considerations.

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<sup>3</sup> The innovation ecosystem is defined as “the evolving set of actors, activities, and artifacts, and the institutions and relations, including complementary and substitute relations, that are important for the innovative performance of an actor or a population of actors” (Grandstrand, Ove and Holgersson, Marcus. 2020. “Innovation Ecosystems: A Conceptual Review and a New Definition.” *Technovation* 90-91(2020) 102098. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.technovation.2019.102098>).

<sup>4</sup> The term “equity” means the consistent and systematic fair, just, and impartial treatment of all individuals, including individuals who belong to disadvantaged communities that have been denied such treatment, such as Black, Latino, and Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other persons of color; members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons; persons with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality. Executive Order 13985, “Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government” (Jan. 20, 2021).

<sup>5</sup> “FACT SHEET: President Biden Sets 2030 Greenhouse Gas Pollution Reduction Target Aimed at Creating Good-Paying Union Jobs and Securing U.S. Leadership on Clean Energy Technologies,” Washington, D.C.: the White House. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/04/22/fact-sheet-president-biden-sets-2030-greenhouse-gas-pollution-reduction-target-aimed-at-creating-good-paying-union-jobs-and-securing-u-s-leadership-on-clean-energy-technologies/>



In addition to setting goals to significantly reduce pollution and greenhouse gas emissions to decarbonize the economy, the administration also announced the Justice40 Initiative. This government-wide initiative has a goal of delivering 40% of the overall benefits of relevant federal investments in climate and energy to disadvantaged communities, and it tracks performance toward that goal. ED will lead this effort at DOE, and will inform equitable research, development, and deployment within DOE.

Improvements are needed to make the clean energy innovation ecosystem more inclusive and accessible to individuals from groups historically underrepresented in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM), and disadvantaged communities. The Justice40 initiative, in concert with the administration's climate and decarbonization goals, will aim to address these inequities.

DOE is taking steps to understand the structural barriers to entry into its funding opportunities and other forms of assistance to help meet its climate and justice goals and move toward ultimately eliminating those barriers and making DOE-supported projects equitable and inclusive. In June 2021, DOE released a request for information (RFI) on [Inclusive Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Climate Technology](#) and held the [Inclusive Innovation and Entrepreneurship Roundtable with the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory](#). These efforts were aimed at characterizing the programmatic, operational, and other internal measures that DOE could implement to remove existing structural barriers. The goals of this prize are informed in part by responses received to the RFI and feedback from the roundtable.

## 2.2 Prize Goals

The Inclusive Energy Innovation Prize aims to fund organizations for ongoing and/or proposed activities related to climate and clean energy that support, build trust, and strengthen relationships and partnerships with disadvantaged communities. Specifically, this prize seeks to enable and enhance business and technology incubation, acceleration, and other community-based and university-based entrepreneurship and innovation in climate and clean energy technologies.

As defined in the Office of Management and Budget Memo M-21-28: Interim Implementation Guidance for the Justice40 Initiative,<sup>6</sup> whether a specific community is disadvantaged is based on a combination of variables that may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Low income, high and/or persistent poverty
- High unemployment and underemployment
- Racial and ethnic residential segregation, particularly where the segregation stems from discrimination by government entities
- Linguistic isolation
- High housing cost burden and substandard housing
- Distressed neighborhoods
- High transportation cost burden and/or low transportation access
- Disproportionate environmental stressor burden and high cumulative impacts
- Limited water and sanitation access and affordability
- Disproportionate impacts from climate change
- High energy cost burden and low energy access
- Jobs lost through the energy transition
- Access to healthcare.

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6 M-21-28 (whitehouse.gov): <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/M-21-28.pdf>



All use of the terms “disadvantaged community” or “disadvantaged communities” throughout this document can be understood as referring to the definition set forth above and in Memo M-21-28.

The goals of the prize are to:

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

## 2.3 Anticipated Prize Impact

Successful prize submission narratives will demonstrate that the team or organization involved has the capability to successfully implement programs that will achieve one or more of the goals of this prize.

The winners of Phase One of the Inclusive Energy Innovation Prize will receive cash awards of \$200,000 each. Phase One winners will be eligible to participate in Phase Two of the prize, anticipated to take place 12 months following Phase One awards, during which time it is anticipated that a total of \$500,000 will be awarded to up to three teams.

It is expected that Phase One funds will enable the winning organizations to fund proposed programs for approximately one full-time-equivalent person and carry out related activities that may include actively engaging with disadvantaged communities in their regions, building relationships through workshops and other events, providing technical support, and facilitating connections with technical expertise and academic institutions. These are examples of potential activities, and organizations are encouraged to think creatively about specific activities that play to their strengths and serve their communities.

Successful organizations will not necessarily need to have significant expertise in “deep tech” support and incubation and/or in working with or being embedded in large research institutions. Rather, DOE seeks to identify and support organizations that are community-centric and have experience in successfully engaging disadvantaged communities and/or in promoting environmental, climate, and energy justice. Successful organizations will demonstrate strong community ties and will show how they will serve as bridges between DOE and innovators with whom DOE has not previously engaged.

Additionally, DOE seeks to support and recognize clean energy grassroots innovation related to technology advancement from disciplines beyond science and engineering, which accelerate climate and clean energy technology development and adoption with a focused impact on disadvantaged communities. This may include innovations in processes related to siting, financing, and community ownership of clean energy and climate solutions at the local or state level.





## 2.4 Competitor Support Mechanisms

To ensure competitor success, the Inclusive Energy Innovation Prize Administration team is providing access to a network of supporters for competing teams. The following mechanisms have been formalized for competitors to leverage to ensure they are able to develop a high-quality application or support the execution of the Impact Plan in Phases 1 and 2 of the prize.

### 2.4.1 Connector Network

Connectors are organizations that seek to support the efforts of competitors in the Inclusive Energy Innovation Prize. Current Connectors are included on the [American-Made Network](#), and competitors are free to reach out to organizations best suited to provide needed support. Connectors that are successful in helping competitors win Phase 1 of the Inclusive Energy Innovation Prize or support the execution of their Impact Plan in Phase 2 will earn Recognition Rewards. Connectors can be incubators, universities, think tanks, industry groups or any U.S.-based organization that provides support activities such as:

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

The following table outlines the potential Recognition Rewards that Connectors can earn in support of Inclusive Energy Innovation Prize competitors. Additional information on the process for receiving Recognition Rewards is available in the [Connector Guidelines](#).

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



## 2.4.2 Power Connectors

Power Connectors are Connectors who play a more substantial role in the competition and receive funds to expand and amplify DOE and NREL's efforts. These stakeholders work to identify and support participants in Phase 1 and provide targeted support for the execution of Impact Plans in Phase 2. Power Connectors are ineligible for all Recognition Rewards. Power Connectors are rewarded for efforts that:

- Increase the number of new, high-quality competitors
- Expand the network of partners, resources, and tools
- Increase the diversity of funding sources for competitors and the program
- Produce engaging and well-attended national demo day showcases
- Expand the number of manufacturing and technological challenges addressable by the program
- Provide leadership and support within the increasingly robust American-Made Network

Updates on training sessions, mentorship contacts, and office hours will be posted on the [HeroX platform](#) periodically and competitors are encouraged to leverage these opportunities.

# 3 Submission Requirements and Review Process

## 3.1 Prizes

<b>Phase One Prizes</b>	Up to 10 cash prizes of \$200,000 each and in-kind mentorship services following the winner announcements
<b>Phase Two Prizes</b>	Up to three awards totaling \$500,000, selected based on performance during Phase One

## 3.2 How To Enter

Go to [HeroX](#) and follow the instructions for registering and submitting all required materials before the deadline in the following Important Dates section or as displayed on the HeroX website. Competitors also have the ability to form teams or find partners through the HeroX platform.

## 3.3 Important Dates

- **Phase One Submission Opens:** September 30, 2021
- **Phase One Submission Closes:** 5 p.m. ET on February 25, 2022
- **Phase One Winner Announcement and Awards:** March 2022 (anticipated)
- **Phase Two Opens:** March 2023 (anticipated)



## 3.4 What To Submit

The following items constitute the submissions package for the Inclusive Energy Innovation Prize and must be submitted through the HeroX platform. Each is described in more detail below. Competitors may provide multiple submission packages for review; however, each submission must be materially different in the content and topic to be considered. If multiple submissions from the same competitor are too similar, only the last submission received will be scored and considered for prizes.

The following items are required for each submission:

Item	Will Be Made Public <sup>7</sup>	Scored Item
Cover Page	Yes	No
Summary Slide	Yes	No
Three-Minute Video Pitch	Yes	Yes
Impact Plan	No	Yes

### 3.4.1 Cover Page Content (Will Be Made Public)

The Cover Page, included in your final submission, will be made public. List basic information about your submission, including:

- Title
- Team name
- Short description
- Link to your three-minute, online video pitch
- Key project members (names, contacts, and links to their professional online profiles)
- Other partners (if any)
- Your city and state.

### 3.4.2 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-pt font.

### 3.4.3 Scored Items: Three-Minute Video Pitch & Impact Plan

The scored items in the submission package are the impact plan and a three-minute video pitch.

#### Three-Minute Video Pitch

Produce a three-minute video that will help the reviewers and public understand your organization and your planned activities. Suggested content for the video includes a concise summary of your experience in working with disadvantaged communities, planned activities, the anticipated impact, and an

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<sup>7</sup> Competitors who do not want the impact plan or other documents to be made public will need to mark them according to the instructions in Appendix 1 (Section A.10).



introduction to your team. Be creative and convey your information in a fun and engaging way, but do not expend time on labor-intensive activities that only improve production quality (e.g., technical elements such as décor, lighting, and cinematic techniques). Reviewers will focus on the content, not the quality, of the video production. Upload your video online to a publicly accessible platform (e.g., YouTube, Vimeo).

## Impact Plan

Write a detailed impact plan in a narrative format describing your team/organization, planned activities, resources and capabilities, and anticipated impacts. There is a template that will be made available on the HeroX platform to use in drafting the impact plan. The impact plan should be guided by the Anticipated Prize Impacts stated in Section 2.3 of this document.

The total length of the impact plan cannot exceed **5,000** words. You may include up to **five** supporting visualizations or graphics. The impact plan must be submitted as a PDF, via the HeroX platform, along with the other submission documents. Information contained in hyperlinks to external sources will not be reviewed or considered by the reviewers or the judge.

## Criteria

There are four criteria that need to be addressed in the three-minute video pitch and the impact plan:

- **Criterion 1:** Experience in Engaging and Supporting Disadvantaged Communities
- **Criterion 2:** Proposed Activities During Phase One of the Prize
- **Criterion 3:** Resources and Capabilities to Execute Prize Goals
- **Criterion 4:** Vision and Anticipated Long-Term Impacts

Both the video pitch and impact plan should collectively describe the proposed implementation plan and address all four criteria.

## 3.5 Review Criteria and Suggested Content

The impact plan and video pitch will both be scored 1–6, as shown here, on how well they address the statements in each criteria.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

The following table explains the manner in which the scores for each submission will be calculated.

Criteria	Number of Scored Statements	Percentage of Total Score	Total Possible Points
Criterion 1	4	18%	24
Criterion 2	10	46%	60
Criterion 3	4	18%	24
Criterion 4	4	18%	24
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>132</b>



The following tables describe the content that the team/organization (competitor) should provide in the video pitch and impact plan to successfully address each criterion. The right-hand column contains the scored statements that the reviewers will be using for each of the four criteria. Individual reviewers will assign a score between 1 and 6 for each scored statement after reviewing the project submission. The left-hand column includes suggested content that addresses each criterion. The suggested content provided is not mandatory, and you will not be judged against it. Rather, these are examples of details to include to help guide your responses and you are welcome to use other information as you see fit.

<b>Criterion 1: Experience in Engaging and Supporting Disadvantaged Communities</b>	
<p><b>Suggested Content Competitor Provides</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A description of the mission of the competitor and how it aligns with one or more goals of the prize stated in Section 2.2 of this document</li> <li>● A description of experience/expertise of the competitor in working with disadvantaged communities</li> <li>● A description of types of activities the competitor has carried out in providing entrepreneurship and innovation support</li> <li>● A description of types of activities the competitor has carried out in securing funding from federal, state, or local government or private (for-profit or nonprofit) funding</li> <li>● A description of strategies the competitor has used to effectively engage with disadvantaged communities</li> <li>● A description of experience the competitor has in working successfully on promoting renewable energy development, addressing climate change and energy justice issues</li> <li>● A description of experiences, insights, or lessons learned by the competitor from strategies that have been ineffective or unsuccessful in promoting renewable energy development, and addressing climate change and energy justice issues</li> <li>● A description of established practices the competitor has used to evaluate the success or failure of previous efforts and incorporate lessons learned into subsequent efforts.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Each Statement Scored on a 1–6 Scale</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The competitor has demonstrated that they have experience in successfully working with disadvantaged communities</li> <li>● The competitor has a history of successfully engaging with disadvantaged communities and/or the capability to successfully engage with disadvantaged communities</li> <li>● The competitor has demonstrated experience and current capability in promoting climate and energy justice</li> <li>● The competitor has clearly articulated practices to evaluate the success or failure of their efforts and has plans to incorporate lessons learned into subsequent efforts.</li> </ul>

## Criterion 2: Proposed Activities During Phase One of the Prize

### Suggested Content Competitor Provides

- A description of proposed activities the competitor aims to carry out that will meet one or more of the goals of the prize stated in Section 2.2 of this document
- A description of strategies and methods the competitor can use to build trust and strengthen relationships and partnerships with disadvantaged communities to understand and assist such communities in overcoming barriers to entry into DOE funding in furtherance of the government's Justice40 goals
- A description of activities and methods that can help identify and foster grassroots innovation related to just and equitable clean energy deployment
- A description of credible methods and metrics to evaluate the competitor's progress of activities through specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound (SMART) goals
- A description of ambitious yet achievable deliverables that the competitor will accomplish during the 12 months after receiving funding from this prize
- A description of planned outreach and engagement activities and strategies that the competitor will use to engage disadvantaged communities.

### Each Statement Scored on a 1–6 Scale

- The competitor's proposed activities are aimed toward meeting one or more of the goals of the prize and are well-reasoned and likely to achieve the stated goal(s)
- The competitor's proposed activities are likely to increase participation in clean energy and climate-smart job training and job placement/hiring, including programs that target participation from disadvantaged communities
- The competitor's proposed activities are likely to enable innovation and entrepreneurship programming and capabilities at colleges and universities that primarily serve students underrepresented in STEM
- The competitor's proposed activities are likely to foster grassroots innovation related to equitable clean energy deployment based on the needs of disadvantaged communities
- The competitor's proposed activities are likely to result in increased access to federal, state, or local government or private funding for disadvantaged communities
- The competitor's proposed activities are likely to enable the development of clean energy systems that deliver just and equitable benefits to local communities in support of the government's Justice40 goals
- The competitor's proposed activities are likely to build trust and strengthen relationships and partnerships with disadvantaged communities
- The competitor's metrics to evaluate success and the relevant SMART goals are well-suited for providing an accurate indication of success in meeting one or more of the goals of this prize and align with the relevant community
- The competitor's end-of-year deliverables are achievable and will yield measurable success in meeting one or more of the prize goals
- The competitor has described an engagement and outreach plan for reaching the relevant disadvantaged communities and the plan has a high likelihood for success.





### Criterion 3: Resources and Capabilities To Execute Prize Goals

Suggested Content Competitor Provides	Each Statement Scored on a 1–6 Scale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A budget for the proposed activities</li> <li>● A description of staff resources the competitor can use to execute the proposed plan, including but not limited to staff experienced in promoting justice, diversity, equity, inclusion, entrepreneurship, and other activities described in Section 2.2 of this document</li> <li>● A description of outreach and engagement strategies and platforms that the competitor will use to work with disadvantaged communities to execute the proposed plan</li> <li>● A description of other resources and strategies the competitor plans to utilize to execute the proposed plan, which may include technical resources.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The description of proposed activities and associated proposed budget are of adequate detail and indicate that the activities are achievable</li> <li>● The staff resources that will be available to the competitor are adequate for achieving the stated goals</li> <li>● The outreach and engagement strategies and platforms that the competitor will use are appropriate for effectively working with disadvantaged communities</li> <li>● The competitor has demonstrated that they will have access to the necessary resources and capabilities to execute their proposed plan.</li> </ul>

### Criterion 4: Vision and Anticipated Long-Term Impacts

Suggested Content Competitor Provides	Each Statement Scored on a 1–6 Scale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● A description of the competitor’s role in enabling a just and equitable transition to a clean energy economy in the relevant community and region</li> <li>● A description of anticipated impact of the proposed activities after 2–5 years</li> <li>● A description of strategies the competitor will employ to secure ongoing funding to build upon the proposed activities to ensure sustainability of the proposed activities</li> <li>● A description of progress toward a clean energy transition that the competitor could achieve with ongoing funding beyond the initial award from this prize.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● The competitor’s description of their role in enabling a just and equitable transition to a clean energy economy is ambitious yet achievable</li> <li>● The description of expected results from the competitor’s efforts after 2–5 years is achievable, impactful, and in line with DOE’s climate and justice goals described in Section 2 of this document</li> <li>● The competitor’s strategies to secure ongoing funding in the next 2–5 years are likely to yield a sustainable funding stream for the competitor</li> <li>● The provided description of what the competitor will be able to do with ongoing funding toward enabling a just and equitable transition to a clean energy economy in their region and/or community are ambitious, achievable, and in line with the goals of this prize.</li> </ul>



## 3.6 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 submitted video pitches and impact plans according to the evaluation criteria described in Section 3.5.

### 3.6.1 Reviewer Panel Scoring

The scoring of submissions will proceed as follows:

- Experts will review each submission (impact plan and video pitch) individually and assess the response from the competitor to each statement in the four criteria described in the tables in Section 3.5.
- Reviewers will score each statement 1–6, depending on the degree to which the reviewer agrees that the submission reflects the statement.
- Each statement score will be added together to generate a total score for the submission, which can be up to 132 points as described in the table in Section 3.5.
- 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.

### 3.6.2 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.

### 3.6.3 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).

### 3.6.4 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.

## 3.7 Additional Terms and Conditions

See Appendix 1 for additional requirements. **COMPETITORS THAT DO NOT COMPLY WITH THE ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS IN APPENDIX 1 MAY BE DISQUALIFIED.**



# Appendix 1: Additional Terms and Conditions

## A.1 Requirements

Your submission for the Inclusive Energy Innovation 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 February 25, 2022, before the prize's Phase One 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 1 (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 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 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.

## 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; (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 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 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, 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' team members and organization, which participated in the submission on the contest website indefinitely.

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 and/or disclosed by the competitor in the submission, and (ii) competitor has either obtained the rights to use such third-party content or the content of the submission is considered in the public domain without any limitations on use.
2. Unless otherwise disclosed in the submission, the use thereof by Prize Administrator, or the exercise by Prize Administrator of any of the rights granted by 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.
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 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; 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.

## 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 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. 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, 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 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.

## 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 non-duplicative 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 Inclusive Energy Innovation 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 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 non-cash prizes be returned to the government.

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



# Inclusive Energy Innovation Prize



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

**PHASE ONE**

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**Official Rules**

September 2021