

Inclusive Innovation and Entrepreneurship Roundtable

June 22, 2021

12:30–4 p.m. Eastern Time

Advancing equity, civil rights, racial justice, and equal opportunity is the responsibility of the entire U.S. government, including the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE). DOE is taking a number of proactive steps to diagnose and eliminate barriers to equal opportunity by enabling an inclusive and just entrepreneurial innovation ecosystem in climate and energy technologies. This roundtable aims to bring together experts in climate and energy justice, entrepreneurship and innovation, and incubation and acceleration services to understand the barriers to entry and the role that DOE can play in lowering them. To learn more about this event, please visit: <https://www.pnnl.gov/events/inclusive-innovation-and-entrepreneurship-roundtable>.

Agenda

12:30–1:15 p.m.: Welcome

Tanya Bowers, Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Manager, Pacific Northwest National Laboratory (PNNL) (Event Facilitator)

Alejandro Moreno, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Renewable Power, Office of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE)

Opening Discussion

What is DOE's experience in new pathways and expanding access to innovation support?
What are the goals and the plans ahead for inclusive innovation and entrepreneurship?

Panelists:

Shalanda Baker, Deputy Director for Energy Justice and Secretary's Advisor on Equity

Kelly Speakes-Backman, Acting Assistant Secretary for EERE

Vanessa Chan, Director, Office of Technology Transitions

Facilitator: Jenn Garson, Acting Director, Water Power Technologies Office (WPTO), EERE

1:15–3:25 p.m.: Workshop Breakout Discussions

All breakouts will occur simultaneously, but there will be two rounds of breakouts so that individuals can participate in multiple sessions.

1:15–2:15 p.m. - Round 1 Breakout Discussion

2:15–2:25 p.m. - Transition/Break

2:25–3:25 p.m. - Round 2 Breakout Discussion

Breakout Groups

1. Structural barriers in DOE funding instruments: This breakout room offers an opportunity to discuss specific barriers within the application processes to acquire DOE funding, such as language, documentation, cost share, and implementation requirements.

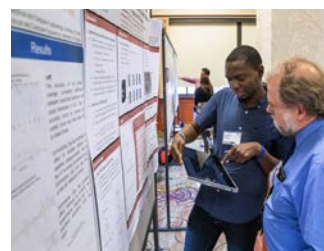
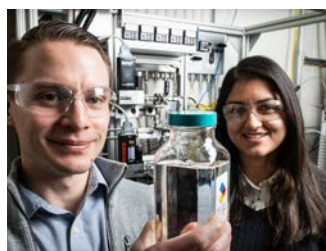
Breakout Room Moderator: Rukmani Vijayaraghavan, Innovation and Commercialization, WPTO, EERE

2. Outreach and community engagement and community capacity building: Engaging communities and creating awareness may limit access to opportunities, similar to barriers in funding instruments themselves. This breakout room will discuss how outreach and engagement with underrepresented populations in Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) fields could support inclusion in DOE funding opportunities. This breakout room will discuss ways in which DOE funding opportunities can reach and enable new networks of talent.

Breakout Room Moderator: Kimberlee Ott, Network Innovation Manager, National Renewable Energy Laboratory

3. DEI requirements on all EERE funding instruments: Future funding opportunities from DOE will require DEI requirements, which include a range of activities. However, the way in which these requirements are specified, implemented, and tracked has yet to be determined in detail. Thoughtful discussion on the importance of these requirements and implementation methods to ensure their success will take place in this breakout room.

Breakout Room Moderator: Ashley Brooks, DEI Lead for WPTO, EERE



Breakout Groups (continued)

4. Creating a STEM pipeline: Inclusive entrepreneurship has roots in inclusive STEM education. Traditional mechanisms for STEM workforce development are in university partnerships, educational exchanges, and collegiate competitions. This breakout room will discuss DOE's role in supporting university STEM programs and recruitment efforts that lead to greater workforce DEI through employment and workforce engagement.

Breakout Room Moderator: Evangelina Shreeve, Director of STEM Education, PNNL

5. Inclusive innovation ecosystem: Many accelerators and incubators recognize the need to reckon with a historic exclusion of underrepresented communities and have begun taking steps to better support and engage these communities. This breakout room will discuss these practices and how the larger innovation ecosystem enables greater inclusion.

Breakout Room Moderator: Sara Hunt, Commercialization, PNNL

3:25–3:50 p.m.: Report Out From Breakout Discussions

Facilitator-led report of breakout room discussions and outcome

3:50–4:00 p.m.: Closing Remarks

Shalanda Baker, Deputy Director for Energy Justice and Secretary's Advisor on Equity

It is the policy of the Biden Administration that:

[T]he Federal Government should pursue a comprehensive approach to advancing equity for all, including people of color and others who have been historically underserved, marginalized, and adversely affected by persistent poverty and inequality. Affirmatively advancing equity, civil rights, racial justice, and equal opportunity is the responsibility of the whole of our Government. Because advancing equity requires a systematic approach to embedding fairness in decision-making processes, executive departments and agencies must recognize and work to redress inequities in their policies and programs that serve as barriers to equal opportunity.

By advancing equity across the Federal Government, we can create opportunities for the improvement of communities that have been historically underserved, which benefits everyone.

As recognized in section 305 of the American Innovation and Competitiveness Act of 2017, Public Law 114-329:

(1) [I]t is critical to our Nation's economic leadership and global competitiveness that the United States educate, train, and retain more scientists, engineers, and computer scientists; (2) there is currently a disconnect between the availability of and growing demand for STEM-skilled workers; (3) historically, underrepresented populations are the largest untapped STEM talent pools in the United States; and (4) given the shifting demographic landscape the United States should encourage full participation from individuals from underrepresented populations in STEM fields.