



DEI Advisory Committee

November 14, 2024

Welcome In!

Please, take a moment to arrive.



Our Time Today

- 1. Who's in the Room**
- 2. DEI Committee Background and Context**
- 3. Current Priorities**
- 4. Closing**



Introductions



- **Name**
- **Pronouns**
- **Work and Passion Areas:** Briefly share areas of work or personal passion related to equity and clean energy.
- **Motivation for Participation:** What brings you into the space?

Background and Context

Purpose:

- Structured platform for stakeholders to engage in dialogue, provide input, and offer feedback on the Agency's equity initiatives
- Ensure the implementation of IPA-related equity initiatives of the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA) are informed by diverse perspectives, thereby enhancing the effectiveness and inclusivity of these programs



Aims to:

- Strengthen Stakeholder Feedback and Outreach
- Enhance Program Relevance
- Support DEI Implementation

Operational Considerations

Meeting Frequency

- The Advisory Committee will convene quarterly.

Attendance

- Members involved in the Advisory Committee should expect to participate in 4-6 meetings per year. In the event a member is unable to attend a meeting, they may send a replacement, if possible.

Committee Members

- The IPA DEI Advisory Committee will be composed of 10-15 members from the following segments of the clean energy sector: Community Based Organizations (CBOs), Community Action Agencies, Equity Eligible Persons (EEPs), Equity Eligible Contractors (EECs), Environmental Justice Advocates, Coalitions, Clean Energy Companies, Unions, and Educational Institutions.

Record Keeping

- The IPA will keep administrative records of the meetings and will post attendee lists, agendas, meeting notes, materials, and schedules on the IPA website.

Operational Considerations

Norms for Productive, Focused, Affirming Spaces...

- **Focus on Systems**
- **Move Up/Move Up**
- **With and Not For**

What are other meeting norms you would like to see in this space?

Overview of IPA's Equity Initiatives

- CEJA strengthens equity and diversity requirements for IPA-administered incentive programs and procurements
- Implementation of the new CEJA provisions include:
 - **Equity Accountability System (EAS)**
 - Minimum Equity Standard
 - EEC Category of Illinois Shines
 - Equity Bid Adjustments for Competitive Procurements
 - **Data Transparency and Accountability**
 - EAS Assessment
 - Racial Disparity and Availability Study
 - **Energy Workforce Equity Portal**
 - **Outreach, Stakeholder Engagement & Partnership Development**

Current Priorities

- **Energy Workforce Equity Portal**
- **Small and Emerging Business Hub**
- **EEC Ownership Stakeholder Feedback Process**
- **Outreach and Partnership Development**
- **Racial Disparity & Availability Study**

Topic Generation

What additional topics or priorities would you like to explore with the DEI Advisory Committee?

EEC Ownership Stakeholder Feedback Process

Directed from our Long Term Plan, the Illinois Commerce Commission has asked that we conduct a stakeholder feedback process to identify enhancements to the EEC certification process.

Aim to gather input from various stakeholders, including EEPs, Approved Vendors, Designees, clean energy small businesses, and community organizations.

The feedback will focus on alternative strategies for demonstrating control or active management by EEPs, demonstration of socio-economic status of the majority owner EEP(s), and to deter manipulation of the EEC category without unduly burdening EEPs.

What methods and approaches can we take to create comprehensive, inclusive, focused stakeholder feedback process to best inform this topic?

Energy Workforce Equity Portal

- Accessible, online tool that connects clean energy companies participating in Illinois Shines and utility-scale REC procurements with Equity Eligible Persons.
- The portal is designed to:
 - Help individuals find out whether they qualify as Equity Eligible Persons and register.
 - Connect EEPs with prospective employers and find jobs.
 - Allow clean energy companies to register, post jobs, recruit EEPs and verify EEP status of current employees.
 - Help Equity Eligible Persons find information on workforce training programs and more.
 - Provide list of current EECs and qualified job training programs to help employers to meet the MES.

EnergyEquity.illinois.gov



How can the Energy Workforce Equity Portal be meaningfully implemented into your spheres to enhance unitization?

Small & Emerging Business Hub

- The IPA has recently launched the **Small & Emerging Business Hub (Hub)** to bring together key resources, tools, and information to help businesses get started and seize opportunities in the state's solar economy.
 - **Step-by-step process of participating in Illinois Shines and Illinois Solar for All.**
 - **Resources for small businesses to start, but also guidance to help them grow.**
 - **Grants and funding opportunities to help small & emerging businesses to address their needs and fuel their growth.**

Where in your spheres can the Hub be of service? Are there conversations happening or communities who don't yet know about it but should?



Small & Emerging Business Hub

Small and emerging businesses play a crucial role in Illinois for several reasons: they are a platform for entrepreneurship, they provide career opportunities, services, social and community benefits and strengthen local economies. However, launching a new venture in the solar energy industry can be challenging for small business owners and entrepreneurs. Start-up costs, obtaining technical expertise and certifications, access to capital, and understanding and navigating the policy and regulatory environment are some of the hurdles facing business owners.

The Illinois Power Agency (IPA) launched the Small & Emerging Business Hub (Hub) to bring together key resources, tools, and information to help businesses get started and seize opportunities in the state's solar economy. As the Agency in charge of the state's two solar incentive programs, the IPA wants to ensure the market develops equitably.

- Learn About Illinois Solar Incentive Programs
- Browse Small Business Development Center
- Discover Grants & Funding Opportunities
- Connect with Workforce & Training Programs

Closing

Our Gratitude

Feedback Forms to Follow

Next Steps:

- All Materials Posted on the Website
- Next Meeting in Q1 of 2025
- Agenda and Meeting Invitation

