



Equitable Solar Workforce Development: Challenges and Opportunities

February 24, 2023

Agenda

- 1. Housekeeping and introductions**
- 2. Overview: Equitable solar workforce development**
- 3. Federal support around equitable solar workforce development**
- 4. State support around equitable solar workforce development**
- 5. CEJA workforce programs updates**
- 6. Q&A**

IPA Power Hour Webinars

- **Introduction and Scope**
- **Power Hour is a series of educational and informative presentations on a wide range of clean energy topics and emerging issues**
- **Today's Power Hour:**
 - During this webinar, the speakers will discuss equity in the solar industry workforce landscape, highlighting federal and state policies that advance equity in solar workforce development. In addition, the presentation will provide a status update on workforce training programs under CEJA.
 - This presentation is intended for educational purpose only and does not represent a legal interpretation or statement of policy by the IPA or its staff.
 - **Future IPA Power Hour Webinars will cover other topics related to the clean energy economy in Illinois**

Upcoming Webinar

IPA Power Hour 2: On-Site Solar Project Development in Illinois: From Ideation to Implementation

Date: March 31, 2023

Time: 12-1pm CST

[REGISTER HERE](#)

- **Independent State Agency created in 2007**
- **Agency duties include**
 - **Development and implementation of procurement plans for electricity supply for utility customers**
 - **Development and implementation of solar incentive programs**
 - **Implementation of the Renewable Portfolio Standard**
 - Development of Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan
 - Conduct competitive procurements for utility-scale projects
 - Manage programs for community solar and solar for homes and businesses



Overview: Equitable Solar Workforce Development

How FEJA and CEJA are Creating a Clean and Equitable Future for IL

Illinois Power Agency Power Hour

February 24, 2023



ELEVATE



Illinois
Clean Jobs
Coalition

How Federal Policy is Driving Climate Action

Recent Legislation and Spend

- \$1.9 Trillion total
- < \$100 Billion used for climate
- Funding mostly distributed

Bipartisan Infrastructure Package (Nov 2021)

- \$550 Billion total
- \$ 5.3 B for buildings
- \$ 55 B for lead pipes
- \$164 B other climate
- Funding being distributed

Inflation Reduction Act (Aug 2022)

- \$ 437 Billion total
- \$ 369 Billion climate solutions
- Funding yet to come

Solar Jobs Census:

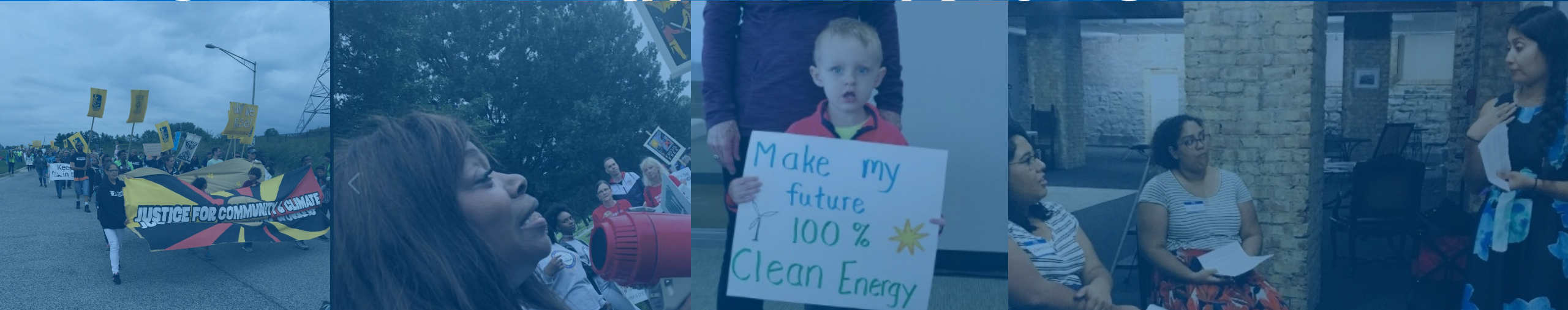
<https://irecusa.org/programs/solar-jobs-census/>



ELEVATE



THE CLIMATE AND EQUITABLE JOBS ACT



Illinois just passed the nation's most equitable and comprehensive climate action legislation. After three years of advocacy and decades of building power for people and the environment, via FEJA and other legislation, Illinois finally put the needs of people and the planet over the demands of fossil fuel interests.



THE CLIMATE AND EQUITABLE JOBS ACT

A COMPREHENSIVE APPROACH



Jobs & Economic Justice



Renewable Energy



Inclusive Financing



Energy Efficiency



Carbon-Free Power



Electric Transportation



Just Transition for Fossil Fuel
Communities



Utility Accountability, Grid
Planning, and Low-income Relief

THE CLIMATE AND EQUITABLE JOBS ACT

BY THE NUMBERS

\$82M/YR

Investment in workforce development and contractor equity programs

\$41M/YR

Investment per year in former fossil fuel communities and workers

\$380M/YR

Investment in new renewable energy

100%

Carbon-free power sector by 2045, with interim steps

50%

Renewable energy by 2040

1,000,000

Electric vehicles in Illinois by 2030

EQUITY AT THE CENTER

40%

Of the benefits and investments in solar power, electric vehicles, and the grid must go to equity investment eligible communities and persons

JOBS AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE

A Community-Centric Approach



ELEVATE



Illinois
Clean Jobs
Coalition

Equitable Workforce Definition

In an equitable workforce, race, ethnicity, gender, and other demographic characteristics no longer predict one's outcomes in the labor market. All people have equitable access to jobs that are safe, pay a living wage, offer benefits, provide career pathways, and opportunities for mobility. The workforce – both public and private – is representative of the general population at all different levels of skill and pay across occupational groups and sectors.

Our strategies are systemic so that equity is permanent.

- Adrian Esquivel (Chicagoland Workforce Funder Alliance)



THE CLIMATE AND EQUITABLE JOBS ACT

CEJA Workforce and Contractor Programs

Workforce training programs



Workforce support programs



Contractor support programs



Illinois
Department of Commerce
& Economic Opportunity
J.B. Pritzker, Governor

Slide Courtesy, IL Dept of Commerce & Economic Opportunity, 2023

THE CLIMATE AND EQUITABLE JOBS ACT



WORKFORCE TRAINING PROGRAMS

CLEAN JOBS WORKFORCE HUBS

If you want to get trained for clean energy careers: 13 workforce hubs across the state, run by community-based organizations, to provide clean jobs training and a career pipeline for equity eligible individuals (Managed by DCEO, up to \$21 million/yr).



ILLINOIS CLIMATE WORKS PREAPPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM

If you want to enter union training programs: Trains equity eligible individuals for careers in clean energy sector construction and building trades (Managed by DCEO, up to \$10 million/yr).

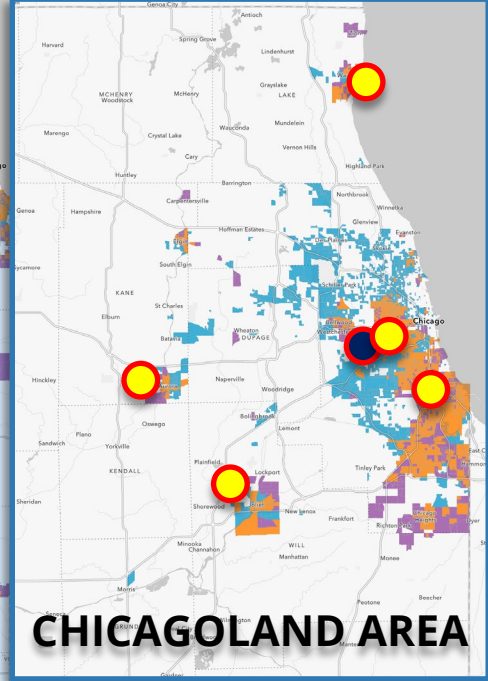
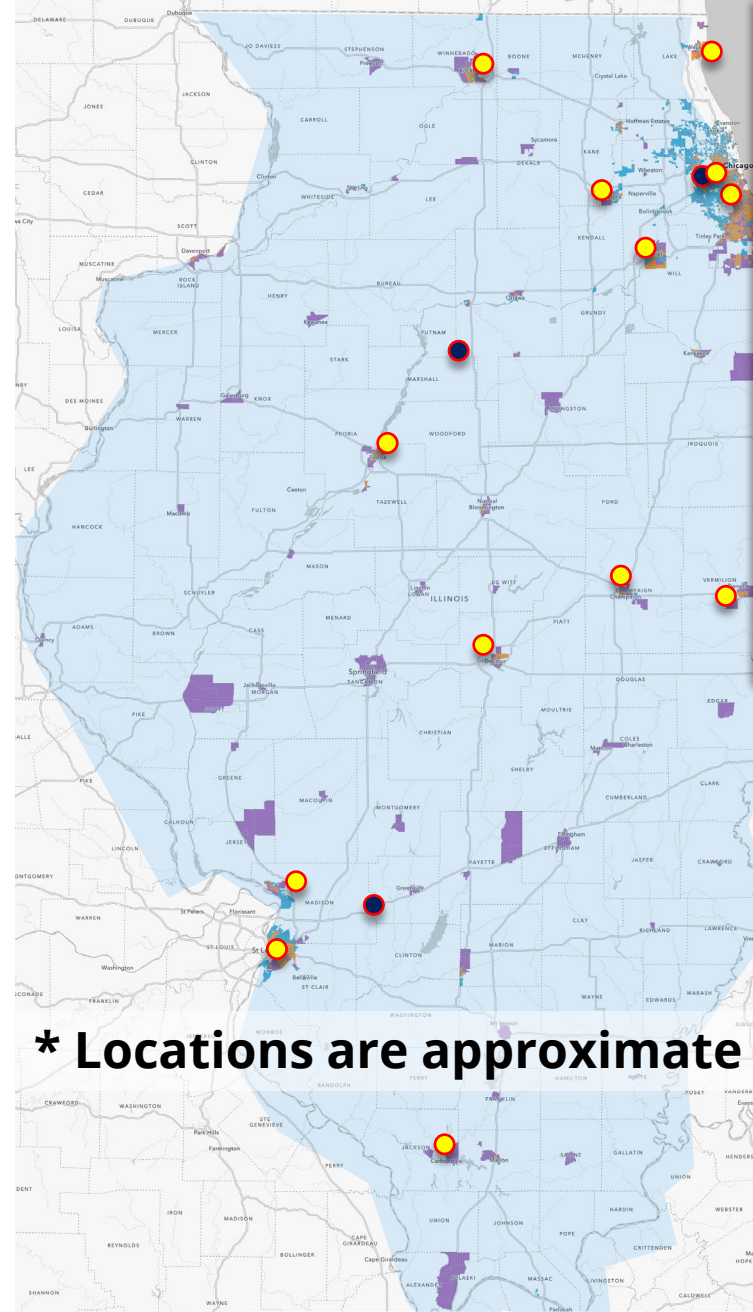


RETURNING RESIDENTS CLEAN JOBS TRAINING PROGRAM

Trains soon-to-be-released people who are incarcerated for jobs in the solar and efficiency sectors (Managed by IDOC, up to \$6 million/yr).

ENERGY TRANSITION BARRIER REDUCTION PROGRAM

Provides resources for publicity, placement and retention to break down barriers to participation in training programs (Managed by DCEO, up to \$21M/yr). Additionally, **Energy Transition Navigators** will provide education, outreach, and recruitment for participation in workforce development programs (Managed by DCEO, up to \$6M/yr).



CHICAGOLAND AREA

Equity eligible individuals are, among other criteria, residents of Environmental Justice or R3 areas

Both an Environmental Justice and R3 area

Environmental Justice area

Restore. Reinvest. Renew. (R3) area

*** Locations are approximate**

THE CLIMATE AND EQUITABLE JOBS ACT



CONTRACTOR DEVELOPMENT

CLEAN ENERGY CONTRACTOR INCUBATOR PROGRAM

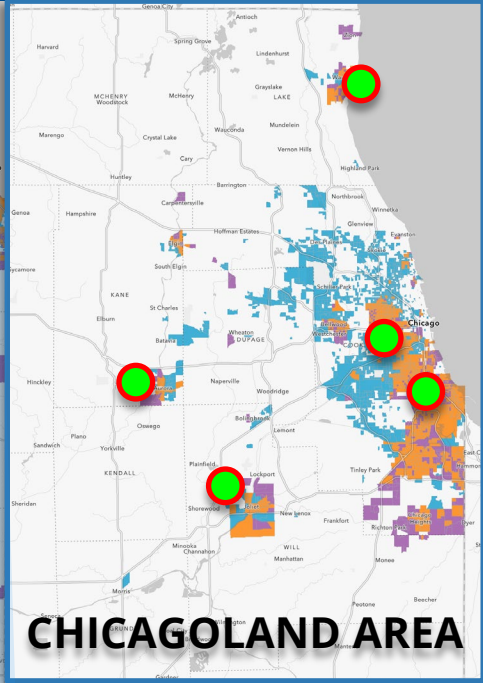
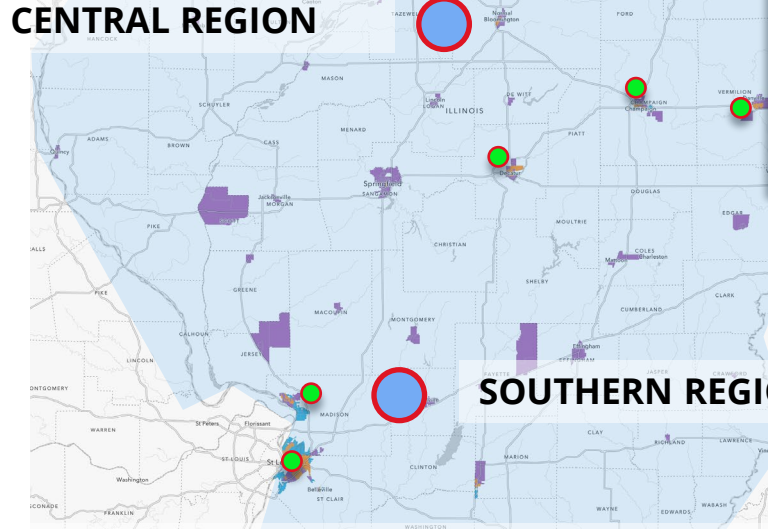
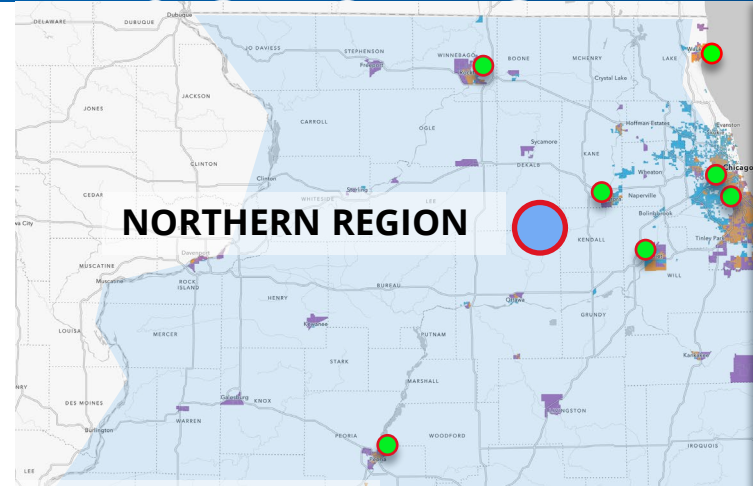
If you want to subcontract on clean energy projects: 13 contractor incubators across the state to provide training, mentorship, and recruitment opportunities for small clean energy businesses and contractors (Managed by DCEO, up to \$21M /yr).

CLEAN ENERGY PRIMES CONTRACTOR ACCELERATOR

If you want to be a prime contractor on clean energy projects: A program for contractors seeking to expand their capacity and fill the role of prime contractor on clean energy projects. The Accelerator offers a structured five-year program with mentorship, operation support grants, business coaching, and assistance applying for certifications, procurement programs, and preparing bids. Cohorts are accepted every 18 months. The program will be operated in three regions: Northern Illinois, Central Illinois, and Southern Illinois (Managed by DCEO, up to \$9M/yr).

PREVAILING WAGE SUPPORT

To address administrative barriers for small clean energy businesses, the Department of Labor will assist contractors with prevailing wage payroll administrative burdens.



*** Locations are approximate**

Equity eligible individuals are, among other criteria, residents of Environmental Justice or R3 areas

Both an Environmental Justice and R3 area

Environmental Justice area

Restore, Reinvest, Renew. (R3) area

RENEWABLE ENERGY

CLIMATE AND EQUITABLE JOBS ACT



Illinois
Clean Jobs
Coalition

THE CLIMATE AND EQUITABLE JOBS ACT



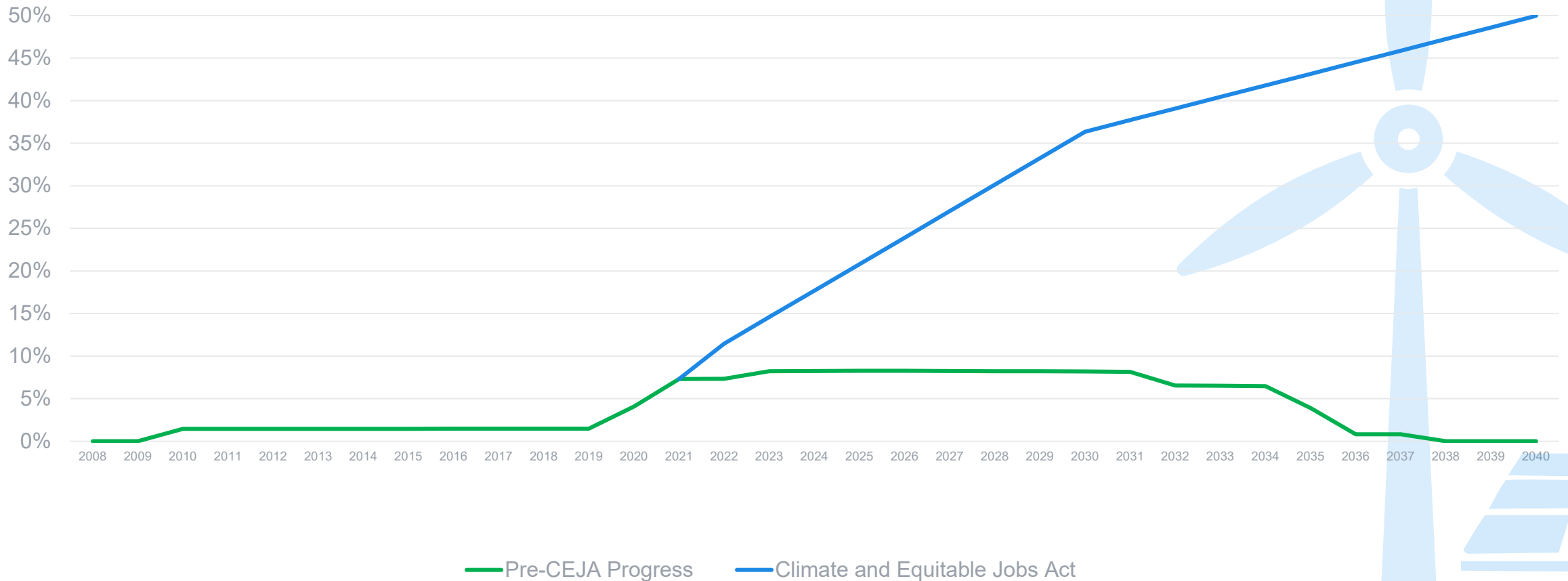
Fixes the “Solar Cliff,” and Increases Renewable Energy to **50%** of electricity in Illinois by 2040.



14,300 MW of New Solar Power by 2030



4,500 MW of New Wind Power by 2030



Important Observations and Lessons Learned from CEJA



High growth industries like Clean Energy have high potential for successful outcomes



It is important to center equity upfront. “You need an equitable process for equitable outcomes



Focusing on Jobs and Retention is critical

- Project approval and incentives are tied to equity provisions
- Establishing ‘networks to connect worker, jobs, and training providers
- Robust metrics and reporting



Progress has been made, but there is still work to be done between organized labor and communities of color on expectations, outcomes, access, and inclusion



Its not just about training – our future workforce needs support systems



ELEVATE

Important Observations and Lessons Learned from CEJA



Address long-standing processes that limit access and create in-equity



Support the government agencies responsible for program implementation



Accountability

- Prioritize Metrics - You can't fix what you can't measure
- Reporting – Actuals vs. Expectations need to be regularly published
- Accountability – Train, coach, and support first – then consequences



Address just transition issues for displaced workers as the economy shifts



Work Together – Start with areas of common understanding and build from there



ELEVATE



Contact Information

- Delmar L. Gillus, Jr.
- Delmar.Gillus@ElevateNP.org
- Chief Operating Officer
- ElevateNP.org
- 773-269-4088

More Information: <https://www.elevatenp.org/>
<https://ilcleanjobs.org/resources/>



ELEVATE

- ElevateNP.org
- info@ElevateNP.org
- [@ElevateNPOrg](https://www.facebook.com/ElevateNPOrg)
- [@ElevateNPO](https://twitter.com/ElevateNPO)
- [@ElevateNP](https://www.linkedin.com/company/ElevateNP)





Federal Support: Equitable Solar Workforce Development



February 24, 2023

WeSolar Overview

WeSolar is one of the nation's emerging leaders in social impact solar development.

Background

Baltimore-based WeSolar is the first black- and woman-owned solar developer in the country. Founded by Kristal Hansley, WeSolar's mission is "to bring under-resourced communities affordable access to local community solar. Charging no upfront or installation fees, WeSolar helps low- to moderate-income Americans save on energy costs, strengthen local communities, and fight climate change.

Mission Statement

Leverage policy, community, and tech to drive justice and equitable participation in the global energy transition while reducing energy poverty.

- 1 Minority Owned, Women Led & Socially Responsible
- 2 Brand loyalty and trusted advisor to low-to-moderate income communities
- 3 Partner with best-in-class leaders to create energy democracy for all
- 4 Nationally recognized for community solar

Business Strategy

WeSolar operates across two main business lines



3rd-Party Community Solar Subscription Origination

Recurring revenue with minimal capital investment



Building projects in markets with community solar policies



Creating synthetic community solar projects in states without policies



- IRA Implementation
 - ITC Bonus Credit Guidance released Feb 13
 - Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund Guidance released Feb 14
- National Community Solar Partnership (NCSP)
 - Community Power Accelerator [CPA](#), a newly created platform to connect developers, investors, philanthropy, and community-based organizations. Its goals include standardizing equitable access to financing, expanding capacity and expertise, and building a robust project pipeline with meaningful benefits to LMI communities.
 - Community Power Accelerator Prize [CPAP](#) will award a total of \$10 million to community solar developers to support their participation in the Community Power Accelerator and help them build the capacity necessary to develop multiple successful community solar projects.
 - Prize awarded in 3 phases. Those who win prize in Phase 1 can compete for Phases 2 and 3. Cannot compete in later phases if you miss Phase 1.
 - **The deadline for Phase 1 is March 15** [2023](#). **Winning applicants will be notified on April 19** (\$50,000 per winning competitor, up to 25 awards).



EPA Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund \$7bn

- February 14, EPA issued a press release
- Objectives: (1) emission reductions, (2) benefits to low-income and disadvantaged communities, (3) mobilize financing and private capital
 - Funding: \$7 billion in financial and technical assistance to projects that deploy residential and community solar, associated storage technologies, and related upgrades (plus a specific note of supporting creation of “high paying jobs”)
 - Eligible entities: States (including territories), municipalities, tribes, and eligible non-profits
 - Awards: up to 60 awards will be offered
 - Timeline: solicitation release in early summer of 2023. Deadlines for applications in early fall of 2023. Awards offered within 120-180 days. All funding is dispersed in 2024.
- Next steps for EJ Communities:
 - Working with allies to inform detailed program design. Meetings pending with DOE and EPA to provide additional input and guidance



ITC Low -Income Bonus Credits

Category 1: Located in a Low-Income Community 700 MW 10%

Category 2: Located on Indian Land 200 MW 10% Category

3: Qualified Low-Income Residential Building Project 200 MW 20%

Category 4: Qualified Low-Income Economic Benefit Project 700 MW 20%

Allocation Process

- Capacity will be allocated by project category, with all allocations for a particular category being announced at the same time. If selected applications exceed the limit for a category, then a lottery or other process will be used to allocate capacity.

Eligibility Criteria

- Guidance is largely silent on eligibility criteria, however, it does note that further guidance will be issued regarding selection criteria, which will include a focus on facilities that:
 - Are owned or developed by community-based organizations and mission-driven entities;
 - Have an impact on encouraging new market participants;
 - Provide substantial benefits to low-income communities and individuals marginalized from economic opportunities; and
 - Have a higher degree of commercial readiness.

Application Process

- Applications will be reviewed by DOE and will be processed by category. Each category will have a 60-day application window after which DOE will complete its review. Applications will first be made available to Category 3 projects in Q3 2023.





State Support: Equitable Solar Workforce Development

Solar for All Workforce Requirements

- **Small and Emerging Businesses**

The Agency shall make every effort to ensure that small and emerging businesses, particularly those located in low-income and environmental justice communities, are able to participate in the Illinois Solar for All Program.

- **Pilot program for residential solar that will provide support for selected small and emerging AVs**
- **Program Administrator dedicating staff to support small and emerging businesses**

- **Job Training requirements cont.**
 - AVs must hire job trainees from eligible job training programs: FEJA-created Workforce Development Programs or Other Qualifying Programs
 - Requirements for total AV project portfolio:

AV # of years in Program	Cumulative Job Trainee Requirement
1	10% of all hours are performed by eligible trainees
2	20% of all hours are performed by eligible trainees
3+	33% of all hours are performed by eligible trainees

- AVs must hire one job trainee on at least 33% of projects in each subcategory
- Website provides catalogue of workforce training programs

Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion (DEI) Under CEJA

- **CEJA strengthens equity and diversity requirements for IPA-administered incentive programs and procurements**
- **Implementation of the new CEJA provisions include:**
 - **The Equity Accountability System**
 - EEC Category of ABP
 - Minimum Equity Standards
 - Prioritization of bids within competitive procurements
 - **Energy Workforce Equity Database**
 - **Racial Disparity Study**
 - **Outreach to Small and Disadvantage Businesses**

Definitions: Equity Eligible Persons

- **Who qualifies as an Equity Eligible Person?**
- **The IPA Act defines "equity eligible person" as "persons who would most benefit from equitable investments by the State designed to combat discrimination, specifically:**
 - **Graduates or current or former participants in the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program, Clean Energy Contractor Incubator Program, Illinois Climate Works Preapprentice Program, Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program, or the Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program, and the solar training pipeline and multicultural jobs program**
 - **Persons who are graduates of or currently enrolled in the foster care system**
 - **Persons who were formerly incarcerated**
 - **Persons whose primary residence is in an equity eligible investment community"**
- **"Graduates of or currently enrolled in the foster care system" means an individual who is currently or was formerly a youth in care of the IL Department of Children and Family Services, or the equivalent agency in another state.**
- **"Formerly incarcerated" means any individual who (i) was sentenced to a term of imprisonment, not including juvenile detention, after the disposition of one or more misdemeanor or felony charges; and (ii) has completed their sentence.**

Definitions: Equity Eligible Contractors



- **The IPA Act defines "equity eligible contractor" as:**
 - **a business that is majority-owned by eligible persons, or a nonprofit or cooperative that is majority-governed by eligible persons, or is a natural person that is an eligible person offering personal services as an independent contractor.**

The IPA has defined "majority-owned" to mean owning at least 51% of the corporate entity for a business or holding a majority of governing board positions for nonprofits and cooperatives.

Program Requirements and Features: Minimum Equity Standard

- **A Minimum Equity Standard is a minimum percentage of project workforce for participating projects that consists of equity eligible persons.**
- **Applies to ABP and utility-scale wind, solar, and brownfield projects**
- **EEC AVs automatically comply.**

- **Beginning in Program Year 2023-2024**
- **At least 10% of project workforce for each entity must be comprised of Equity Eligible Persons (EEPs)**

- **By 2030**
- **At least 30% of the project workforce for each entity participating in a procurement program is comprised of EEPs**

Program Requirements and Features: Equity Eligible Category in ABP

- **The EEC Block is a designated capacity block available for DG and CS projects submitted by EECs.**
 - **EECs may apply for Advance of Capital up to 50% of contract value after contract execution in this block**
 - **Only EEC AVs may submit projects to this category**
 - **EEC AV may not reassign to another AV not designated as EEC for at least six years**
 - **EEC certified AVs are NOT limited to EEC Block**
 - **Any type of project is eligible**
- **CEJA requires minimum 10% of program capacity, increasing to 40% by 2030**

Data Transparency and Accountability: IPA Energy Workforce Equity Portal



IPA created an online portal that provides information on the equitable workforce transition for Approved Vendors, potential EEPs, and the public.

The Portal includes:

- Employment opportunities for Equity Eligible Persons and Equity Eligible Contractors**
- Map of Equity Investment Eligible communities**
- Applications to be certified as an EEP or EEC**
- List of current EECs**
- List of EEPs looking for employment (visible only to verified employers)**

Data Transparency and Accountability: Demographic & Geographic Data Reporting



CEJA requires IPA to collect demographic and geographic information about project workforce from Approved Vendors.

IPA has integrated this into Part II project application in ABP.

Data Transparency and Accountability: Racial Disparity Study



Section 1-75 (c-15) of the Public Act 102-0662 directs the Agency to conduct a racial disparity study for the purpose of assessing discrimination in the clean energy economy in Illinois.

Expected start: 2024

The general purpose of the study will be:

- Review of the State's renewable energy sector for access, participation and utilization of contractors with a specific emphasis on minority owned /disadvantaged workers
- “Measure the presence and impact of discrimination on minority businesses and workers in Illinois' clean energy economy”
- Provide recommendations how to adjust the Equity Accountability System to ensure standards of meeting its goals

Labor Requirements Under CEJA

- **Section 1-75(c)(1)(Q) of IPA Act requires the following project types to comply with Prevailing Wage Act:**
 - **New utility-scale solar, wind, and brownfield site projects**
 - **New solar projects participating in ABP, except:**
 - **Projects serving residential buildings (single-family or multi-family)**
 - **Projects no more than 100kW in size that serve "houses of worship"**
 - **Large DG projects that were on a waitlist as of Dec 14, 2021**
 - **Any construction that occurred before September 15, 2021 (pre-CEJA), does not need to comply**

Project Labor Agreements

- **Section 1-75(c)(1)(Q)(2): new utility-scale wind, solar, and brownfield site projects must be "built by general contractors that must enter into a project labor agreement"**
 - **Only projects larger than 5 MW**
- **IPA Act defines "project labor agreement" as a "pre-hire collective bargaining agreement that covers all terms and conditions of employment on a specific construction project"**
- **Project owner files with IPA at least 60 days before construction starts or no more than 30 days after execution of the REC contract**



CEJA Workforce Programs

IPA Power Hour CEJA Workforce Programs Updates

Feb 23, 2023



Illinois
Department of Commerce
& Economic Opportunity

JB Pritzker, Governor

CEJA Workforce and Contractor Programs

Workforce training programs



Workforce support programs



Contractor support programs



Clean Jobs Curriculum Development



Research and Stakeholder Engagement to inform Clean Jobs Curriculum development



**Illinois
Department of Commerce
& Economic Opportunity**

CEJA Stakeholder Feedback Summary Presentation

December 20, 2022

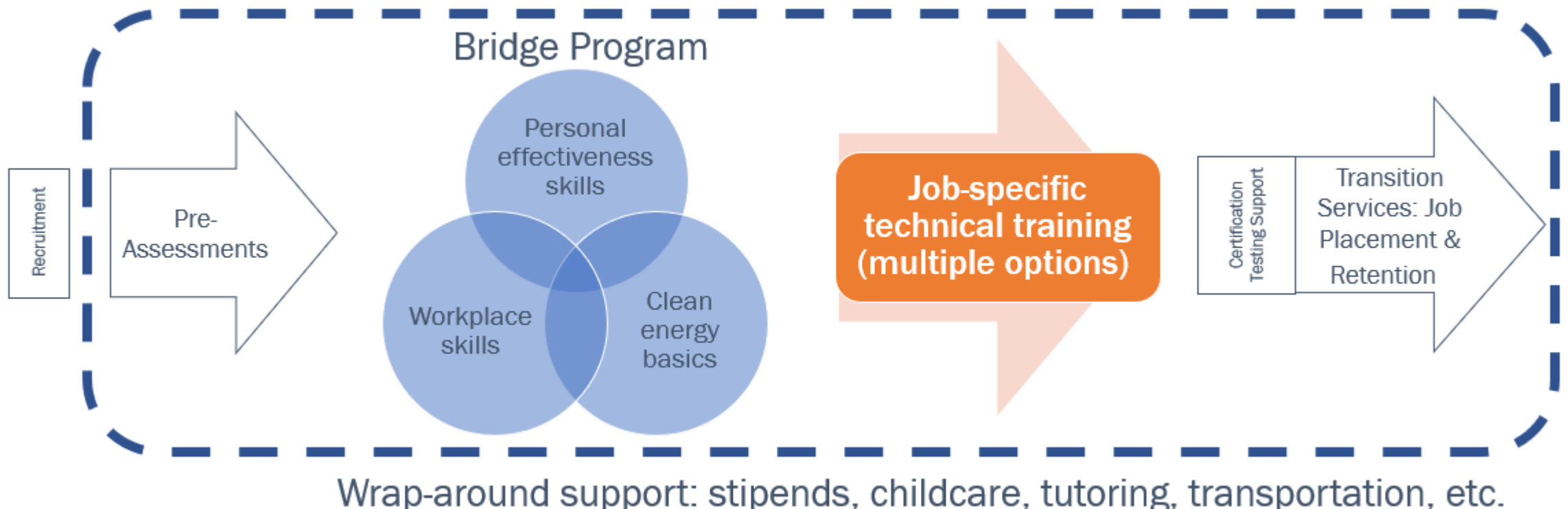


**Illinois
Department of Commerce
& Economic Opportunity**
JB Pritzker, Governor

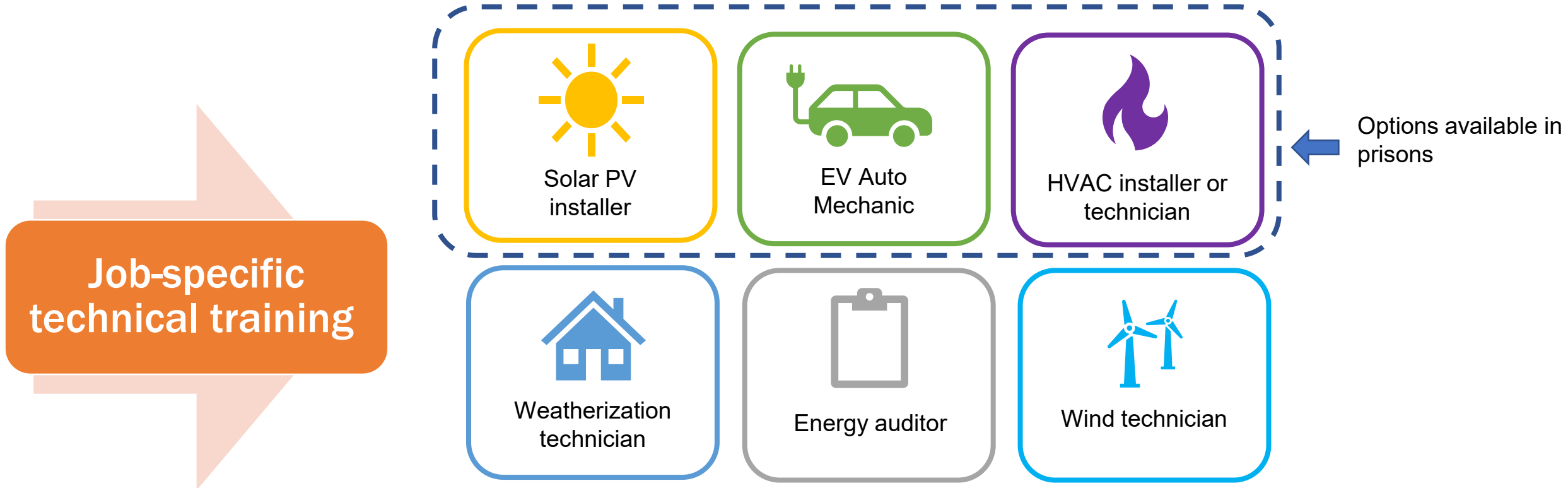
Posted on DCEO CEJA website:
<https://dceo.illinois.gov/climateandequitablejobs/ceja-workforce-programs.html>

Clean Jobs Curriculum Framework Status

Drafted, in review by ICCB and clean energy employers, training providers.
Anticipated completion: mid-March



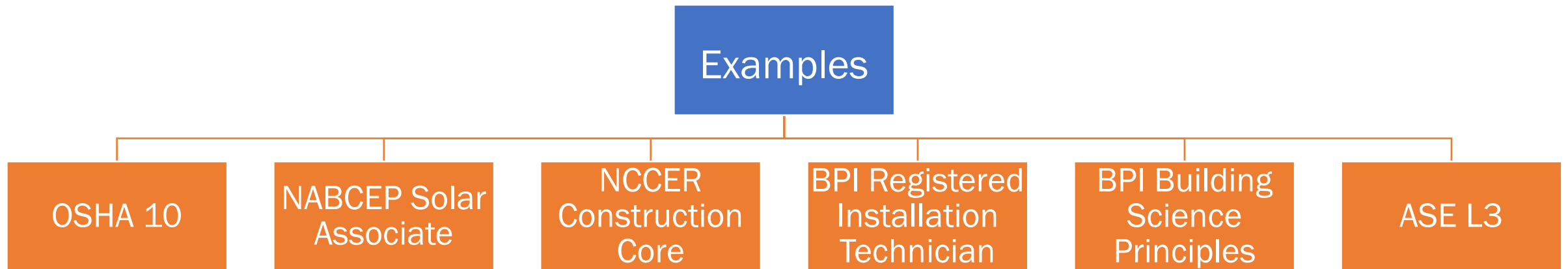
Job-specific training options



Hubs will decide on job-specific training options based on local job needs, training availability and employer partnerships.

Recommended: Solar PV installer + 1-2 other options

Training will lead to industry-recognized credentials or certifications



Stakeholder Feedback on Program Design

Requests for Information status

Program	RFI post date	Number of responses
Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship	Nov 3	12
Contractor Incubator Program	Nov 16	12
Clean Jobs Workforce Network, ET Navigators, ET Barrier Reduction	Dec 8	19
Returning Resident Clean Jobs Program	Jan 18	8
Primes Contractor Accelerator Program	Early March	



Returning Resident Program Design and Curriculum Feedback

- Meetings with Illinois Department of Corrections
- Two listening sessions held with CBOs, training providers, employers, workforce coordinators in December
- Two listening sessions for returning residents next week.
- Findings summarized, shared



Preliminary Timeline for NOFO Roll-out

March

April

May



Climate Works
Pre-apprenticeship



Clean Jobs
Workforce Network



Energy Transition
Navigators



Returning Resident
Clean Jobs



Contractor
Incubator



Energy Transition
Barrier Reduction



Contractor
Accelerator

Helping organizations prepare to apply

Two Planning Workshops held for potential applicants

- February 14th : 180 participants
- February 15th: 200 participants

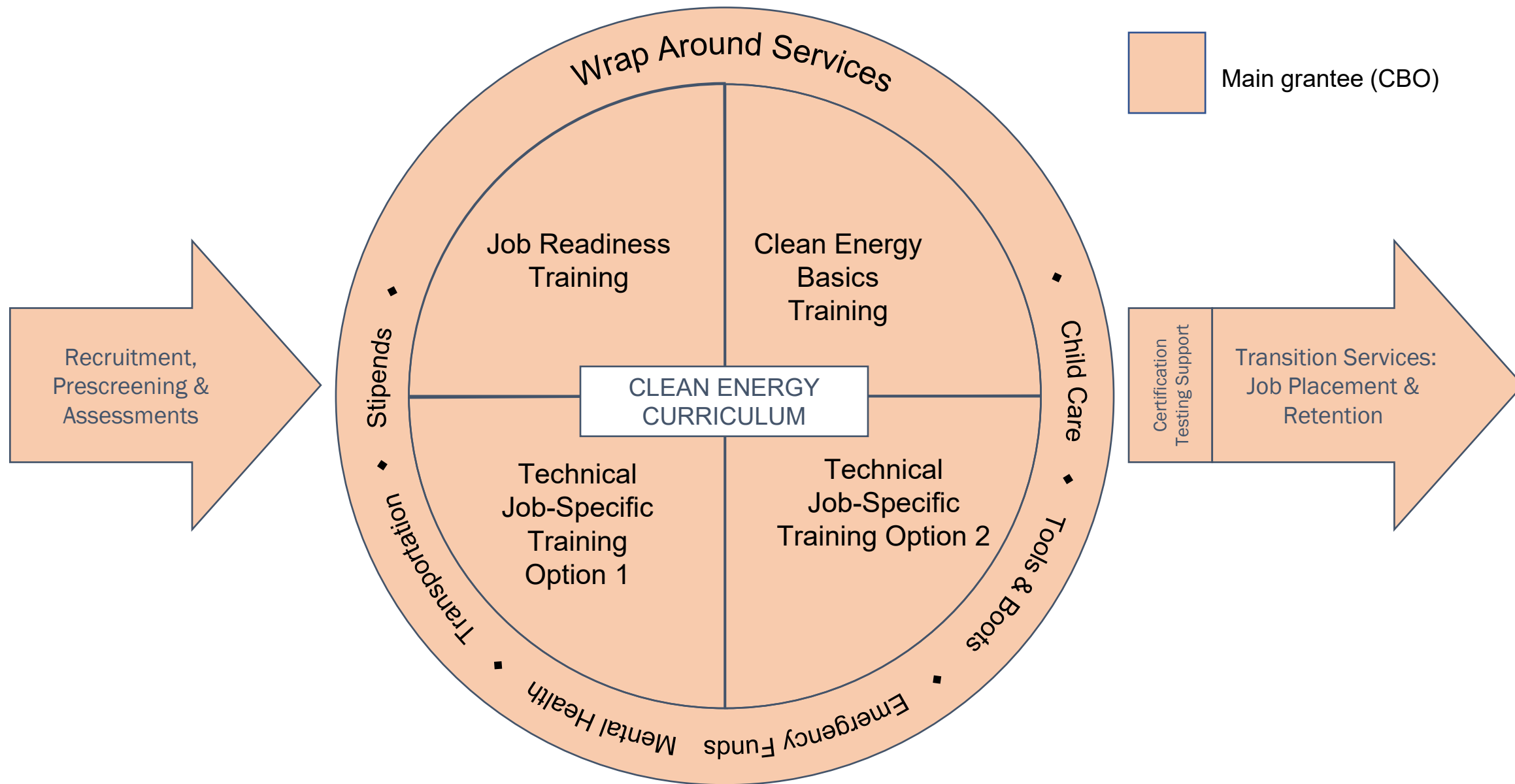
Workshops coming soon (as NOFOs are rolled out)

- Bidders webinars
- Proposal preparation workshops
- GATA training

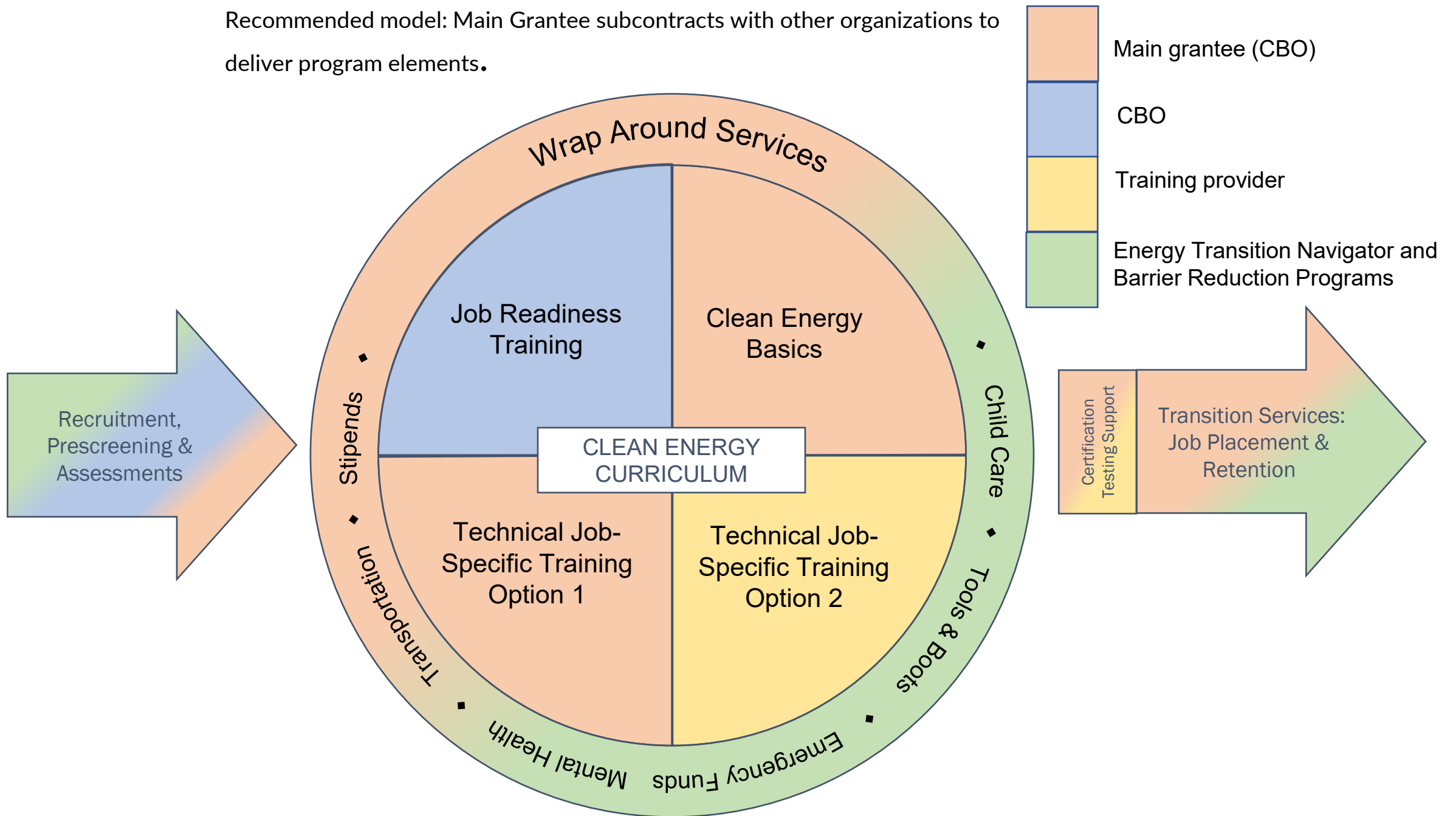
Technical support for first-time applicants



Possible option: Main Grantee provides all program elements



Recommended model: Main Grantee subcontracts with other organizations to deliver program elements.



Prepare to apply for funding

Build your team

- What community-based organization is best suited to lead the hub in your area?
- What other organizations might you partner with to provide program elements?

Explore local needs

- Research local needs and talk to employers to identify training areas.

Form employer partnerships

- Coordinate work-based learning components & job placement.



Start thinking about program design

Outreach and recruitment of target populations

Application and intake process

Staffing plan

Equity focused program culture

Training program delivery

Wrap around services

Work-based learning components

Transition, job placement, and retention services



Employer engagement events

Group	Hosted with	Date	Number of attendees
Energy Efficiency Employers	Ameren Illinois	Feb. 14	60
Solar Employers	ISEA	Feb 23	64
All-employer meeting		March 1	TBD



Employer engagement events topics

- **Are you hiring?**
Hire from the CEJA workforce programs.
- **Want to grow your business?**
Take advantage of the CEJA contractor programs.
- **Want to be involved in the CEJA workforce programs?**
Employers will play a crucial role in curriculum review and program delivery.
- **Breakout discussion**
Review curriculum and provide feedback on employer involvement in training



Overall timeline

Task	Mar	Mar	Apr	Apr	May	May
Curriculum development	Orange					
Employer engagement	Blue					
NOFOs released for Pre-apprenticeship and Contractor Incubator program	Green	Green				
NOFOs released for Network Hubs, ET Navigator, and ET Barrier Reduction Programs			Yellow	Yellow		
NOFOs released for Returning Resident and Primes Contractor Programs					Blue	Blue
NOFO applicant workshops and support	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange



Thank you!
Questions? Contact ceo.ceja@illinois.gov



Illinois
Department of Commerce
& Economic Opportunity
JB Pritzker, Governor



Q&A

Contact Us!



Delmar L. Gillus, Jr.
Chief Operating Officer, Elevate
Delmar.Gillus@elevatenp.org

Kristal Hansley
Founder and CEO, WeSolar
kristal@wesolar.energy

Sarah Duffy
Deputy Legal Counsel, Illinois Power
Agency
sarah.duffy@illinois.gov

Lisa Jones
Manager, Office of Employment &
Training, Illinois Department of
Commerce & Economic Opportunity
lisa.d.jones@illinois.gov