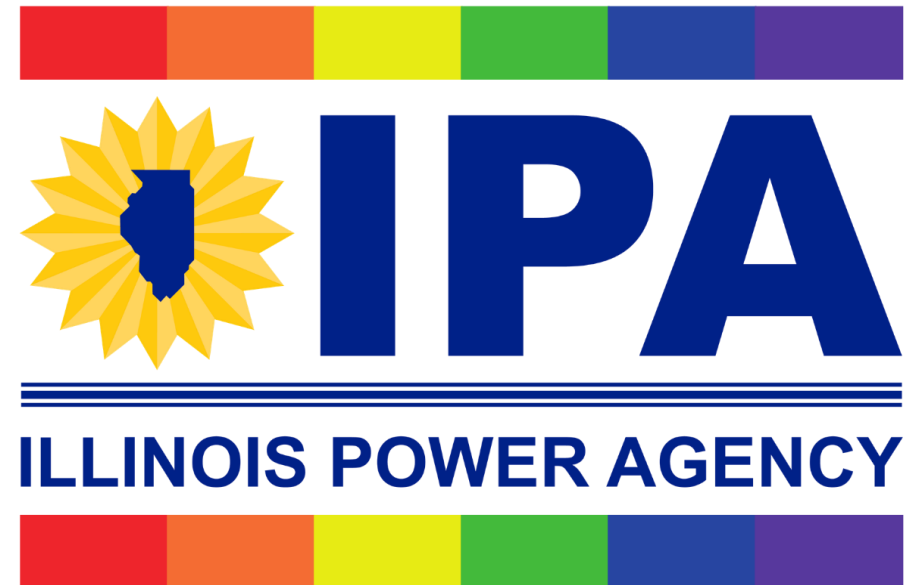


# Welcome In DEI Advisory Committee!

Please, take a moment to arrive.





# **September 2026 DEI Advisory Committee Meeting**

Illinois Power Agency | September 2, 2026 | 9:30 AM – 11:00  
PM

# Housekeeping



- Mind the mic
- Use the chat
- Ask for tech support if needed

## Working Agreements

|                                                                                                                                                           |                                                                                                                                                                                                         |                                                                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                   |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>Focus on Systems:</b><br/>Move out of the individual focus and zoom out to consider systemic cause for barriers or burdens felt by individuals.</p> | <p><b>Move up/Move up:</b> Be aware of one's own contributions. If you find yourself talking more, move up your listening. If you find yourself listening more, work to move up your contributions.</p> | <p><b>With and not for:</b> We are representatives in this space and we are tasked with advocating for perspectives and turning back to our spheres to bring them along with us in this space.</p> | <p><b>Confidentiality within this space:</b> Maintain confidentiality of what committee members share. Allow members to speak their minds.</p> | <p><b>Agree to Disagree:</b><br/>We may not always agree. There may be non-closure and we can expect and work to accept that.</p> |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

# Agenda

- 1. Welcome and Housekeeping**
- 2. Introductions**
- 3. Updates from the Bureau Chief**
- 4. Topic: Resources for the Ecosystem**
- 5. Future Meeting Topic(s)**
- 6. Closing**



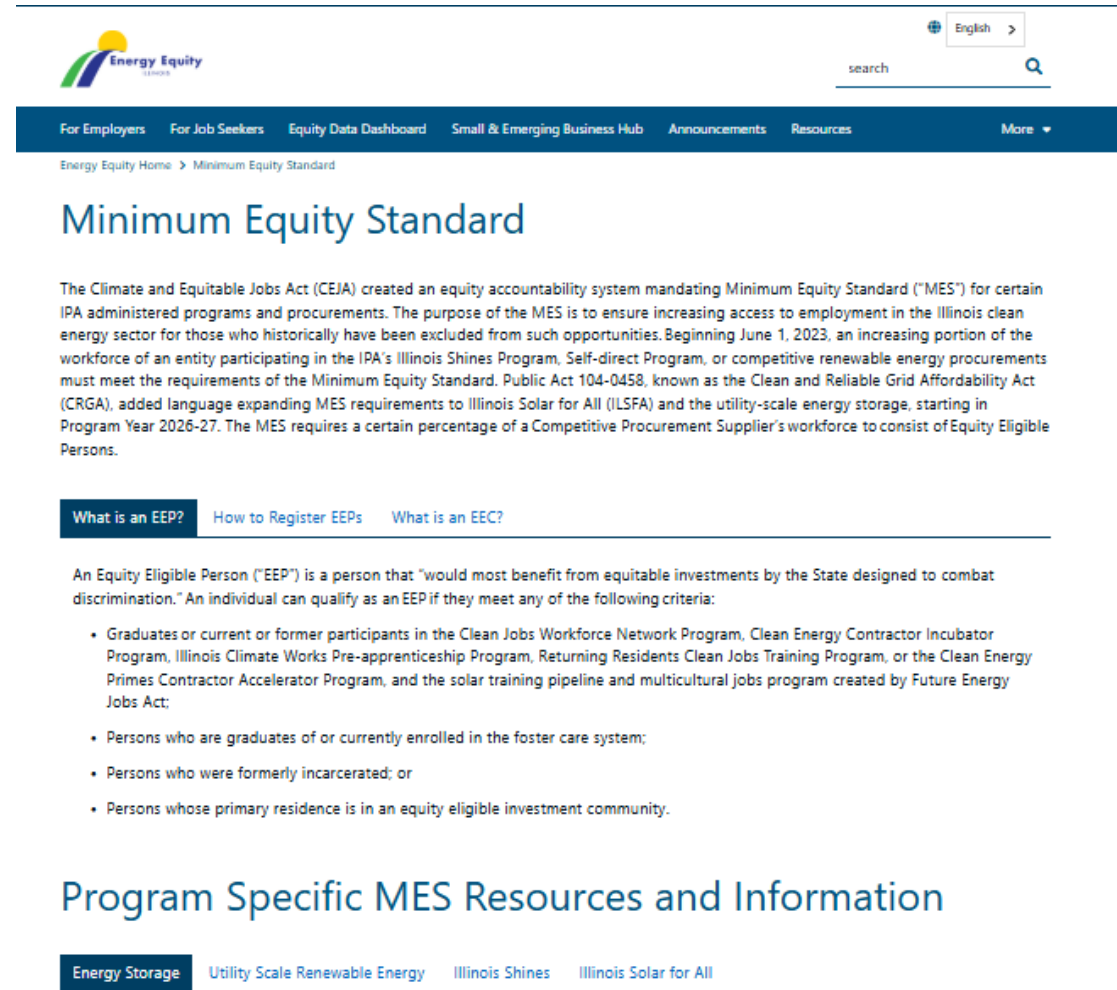
# Introductions

Reflection Prompt: *What has recently inspired you in your equity work?*



# Updates from the Bureau Chief

- Racial Disparity & Availability Study
- MES Combined Report Review
- New MES Resources on the Equity Portal
- Illinois Shines Mentorship Program
- Equity Learning Series (ELS)



The screenshot shows the Energy Equity Illinois website. The header includes the Energy Equity logo, a language selector set to English, and a search bar. The navigation menu contains links for Employers, Job Seekers, Data Dashboard, Business Hub, Announcements, Resources, and a dropdown menu. The main content area is titled "Minimum Equity Standard" and provides a detailed explanation of the MES requirement under the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA). It includes a list of criteria for who qualifies as an Equity Eligible Person (EEP). At the bottom, there is a section for "Program Specific MES Resources and Information" with links for Energy Storage, Utility Scale Renewable Energy, Illinois Shines, and Illinois Solar for All.

Energy Equity  
ILLINOIS

English >

search

For Employers For Job Seekers Equity Data Dashboard Small & Emerging Business Hub Announcements Resources More ▾

Energy Equity Home > Minimum Equity Standard

## Minimum Equity Standard

The Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA) created an equity accountability system mandating Minimum Equity Standard ("MES") for certain IPA administered programs and procurements. The purpose of the MES is to ensure increasing access to employment in the Illinois clean energy sector for those who historically have been excluded from such opportunities. Beginning June 1, 2023, an increasing portion of the workforce of an entity participating in the IPA's Illinois Shines Program, Self-direct Program, or competitive renewable energy procurements must meet the requirements of the Minimum Equity Standard. Public Act 104-0458, known as the Clean and Reliable Grid Affordability Act (CRGA), added language expanding MES requirements to Illinois Solar for All (ILSFA) and the utility-scale energy storage, starting in Program Year 2026-27. The MES requires a certain percentage of a Competitive Procurement Supplier's workforce to consist of Equity Eligible Persons.

[What is an EEP?](#) [How to Register EEPs](#) [What is an EEC?](#)

An Equity Eligible Person ("EEP") is a person that "would most benefit from equitable investments by the State designed to combat discrimination." An individual can qualify as an EEP if they meet any of the following criteria:

- Graduates or current or former participants in the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program, Clean Energy Contractor Incubator Program, Illinois Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program, Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program, or the Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program, and the solar training pipeline and multicultural jobs program created by Future Energy Jobs Act;
- Persons who are graduates of or currently enrolled in the foster care system;
- Persons who were formerly incarcerated; or
- Persons whose primary residence is in an equity eligible investment community.

## Program Specific MES Resources and Information

[Energy Storage](#) [Utility Scale Renewable Energy](#) [Illinois Shines](#) [Illinois Solar for All](#)

# Group Discussion

**How can IPA's resources close gaps in the ecosystem and address evolving needs?**

# Group Discussion: Financing



**What resources or enhancements to resources would help Equity Eligible Contractors (EECs), Small and Emerging Businesses (SEBs) understand financial resources available to them?**

- Advance of Capital for EEC AVs
  - 1:1 AOC Request Support
  - AOC Best Practices for AVs (Fall 2026)
- Financing Opportunities Webinar

## Agenda

- 1 Hispanic American Construction Industry Association (HACIA) Presentation
- 2 National Laboratory of the Rockies (NRL) Presentation
- 3 Ameren Illinois Market Development Initiative Presentation
- 4 Clean Energy Jobs and Justice Fund (CEJF) Presentation
- 5 Questions & Answers



# Group Discussion: Vendor Support



What enhancements to vendor resources in the Illinois Shines and Illinois Solar for All programs would increase inclusion and accessibility of diverse contractors and workforce?

- Illinois Shines
  - Program Guidebook
  - Mentorship Program
  - Equity Accountability System
    - Website Overview
    - Equity Learning Series
- Illinois Solar for All
  - AV Manual



JUNE 4, 2026

## Approved Vendor Manual 9.0

2026 – 2027 PROGRAM YEAR

© ILLINOIS POWER AGENCY 2026

Kim, Esther (Esther.Kim@illinois.gov)

## Program Guidebook

Illinois Shines (Adjustable Block Program)

Version Released June 3, 2025\*



\*Updated to correct a discrepancy to one REC Pricing sub-category

## Equity Accountability Learning Series:

Advancing Equity Through Inclusive Recruitment and Retention of EEPs

February 3, 2026

Presented by Illinois Power Agency and Energy Solutions



# Group Discussion: Collateral

## How can collateral for contractors and workforce be improved to better reach diverse audiences?



**Energy Equity**  
ILLINOIS

To register as an Equity Eligible Person, please scan the QR code:



Are you looking for new opportunities in the cutting-edge renewable energy sector?

If you are, you could qualify for a new initiative in Illinois. Illinois law requires companies participating in the Illinois Shines solar program and select utility-scale renewable project developers to hire a minimum percentage of Equity Eligible Persons (EEPs) to support the state goal of an equitable and inclusive clean energy economy.

You qualify as an EEP if you meet just ONE of these requirements:

- Live in an equity investment eligible community
- Have graduated from, or are a current or former participant of, the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program; the Clean Energy Contractor Incubator Program; the Illinois Climate Works Apprenticeship Program; the Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program; the Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program; Solar training pipeline and multicultural jobs program created by the Future Energy Jobs Act (FEJA)
- Were formerly incarcerated
- Are formerly or currently a member of the foster care system

To learn more, visit [energyequity.illinois.gov](https://energyequity.illinois.gov)

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**Energy Equity**  
ILLINOIS

### Become an Equity Eligible Contractor with Illinois Shines

As a result of the passage of the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act, the Illinois Power Agency established the Equity Eligible Contractor (EEC) project category within its statewide solar incentive program, Illinois Shines. The EEC category expands access to the clean energy economy. Benefits of becoming a certified EEC include:

- A separate, reserved block of project capacity available only to EEC Approved Vendors (AVs)
- Potential additional financial incentives for qualifying EEC projects
- The opportunity to apply for an advance of capital to support project development costs\*
- Tailored support from the Program Administrator team
- Eligibility for [CEJA Equitable Energy Future Grant](#) under the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO)



#### What is an Equity Eligible Contractor (EEC)?

An EEC is a business that is majority-owned by Equity Eligible Persons (EEPs), a nonprofit or cooperative that is majority-governed by EEPs, or an individual EEP offering personal services as an independent contractor. EEPs consist of individuals who meet one of four criteria:

-  Persons who graduated from or are current or former participants in qualifying job training programs;
-  Persons who are graduates of or currently enrolled in the foster care system;
-  Persons who were formerly incarcerated; or
-  Persons whose primary residence is in an [equity investment eligible community](#) ("EIEC").

See the [Illinois Shines website](#) for details on EEC qualification criteria.

\* EEC AVs may request an Advance of Capital which are capped at the lesser of \$750,000 or 50% of the REC Contract value. The total REC Contract value of the project cannot exceed \$1.5 million. More information can be found at [illinoisshines.com/eeep-and-ecp](#).



Illinois Shines Program Administrator | [admin@illinoisshines.com](mailto:admin@illinoisshines.com) | (877) 783-1820

vo80626

#### Steps to Become a Certified EEC:

- 1 Review the eligibility criteria and ways to participate in Illinois Shines as an EEC on the [Become an Equity Eligible Contractor \(EEC\) page](#) on the Illinois Shines website.
- 2 Apply for program participation.
  - Approved Vendors: Complete the AV application and EEC application
  - Designees: Complete Designee registration and the EEC application
  - Subcontractors: Complete the EEC application only
    - See the [program website](#) for details on these different pathways
- 3 Check your email and respond to Program Administrator follow up requests.
  - EEC application review typically takes 3-6 weeks; EEC Approved Vendor and Designee applications take additional review time.



Illinois Shines and the Illinois Power Agency are committed to the success of Equity Eligible Contractors.

Need support? A dedicated EEC Sector Strategist is ready to support prospective & current EECs. Contact the EEC Sector Strategist at [eec@illinoisshines.com](mailto:eec@illinoisshines.com) or the Program Administration team at [admin@illinoisshines.com](mailto:admin@illinoisshines.com).

# Group Discussion: EEP Supports

## What resources can increase connectivity between EEPs and workforce/training programs and employers?



search

For Employers For Job Seekers Equity Data Dashboard Small & Emerging Business Hub Announcements Resources More

Energy Equity Home > Job Seekers > FEJA and CEJA Workforce...



**FEJA and CEJA Workforce Training Programs**

Please note the CEJA and FEJA Workforce Training programs are administered by the [Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity \(DCEO\)](#). These trainings qualify you as an Equity Eligible Person (EEP). Any questions regarding these programs should be directed to [ceo.ceja@illinois.gov](mailto:ceo.ceja@illinois.gov).

### Connect with the FEJA Workforce Training Programs

Solar Training Pipeline Program

Link: <https://www.illinoisworknet.com/CEJA/Pages/SolarPipelineTrackingProgram.aspx>

Multi-Cultural Jobs Program

Link: <https://www.illinoisworknet.com/CEJA/Pages/MulticulturalJobProgram.aspx>

### Connect with the CEJA Workforce Training Programs

Clean Jobs Workforce Hubs Network Program

Link: <https://www.illinoisworknet.com/CEJA/Pages/CEJACleanJobsWorkforceHubs.aspx>

Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program

Link: <https://www.illinoisworknet.com/CEJA/Pages/CEJAReturningResidents.aspx>

Climate Work Pre-Apprenticeship Program

Link: <https://www.illinoisworknet.com/CEJA/Pages/ClimateWorksPreApprenticeship.aspx>

Energy Transition Navigators

Link: <https://www.illinoisworknet.com/CEJA/Pages/IllinoisEnergyTransitionNavigatorProgram.aspx>



Powered by [Illinois workNet](#)

## CLEAN JOBS WORKFORCE NETWORK PROGRAM (WORKFORCE HUBS)

### Preparing Illinois residents for clean energy careers

The Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program (also known as the CEJA Workforce Hubs) creates a statewide network of **14 training hub sites** that prepare individuals for entry-level clean energy careers.

Each hub uses the **Clean Jobs Curriculum Framework**, ensuring consistent, high-quality learning opportunities across Illinois.

For organizations interested in becoming CEJA program providers or applying for funding, visit DCEO's [CEJA Updates & Program Status](#) page.

User Guides

# Group Discussion: Other

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**What are other resources would assist contractors and workforce navigating the ecosystem?**

- Outreach
- Project Labor Agreement/Prevailing Wage Compliance for Community Solar 3MW or bigger

# Future Topic Generation

- What emerging equity topics or gaps should we discuss next?
- Any intersectional issues (e.g. workforce, policy, small business) we should elevate?
- Ideas for speakers, research, or data to inform upcoming agendas?

## Closing & Next Steps

- Gratitude for your continued insight and partnership.
- Meeting notes and materials will be posted on the website.
- Please complete the short feedback form after the meeting.
- Next meeting: Scheduling Link to be sent end of July/beginning of August