



CEJA Notice of Funding Opportunity Announcement August 28, 2024

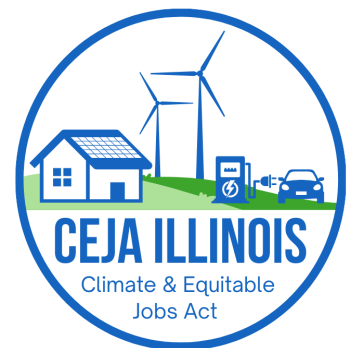


Illinois
Department of Commerce
& Economic Opportunity
JB Pritzker, Governor

Agenda

Purpose of presentation:

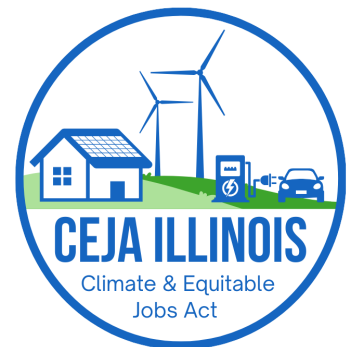
- Announce the release of Round 3 notices of funding opportunity (NOFO)
 - Still need more grant applications for CEJA Programs in several regions of Illinois
- Provide information and resources to help applicants prepare strong applications
- Introduction, brief program overviews and clarifications
 - Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program
 - Energy Transition Navigator Program
- Characteristics of successful applications
- Peer presentation by current CEJA grantees: Application experience
- Summary of application resources
- Mini grant writing workshop exercise
- Meet a CEJA grant manager



What is the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act?

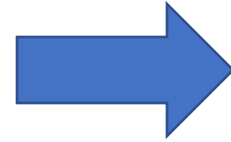


Comprehensive energy legislation to equitably accelerate the adoption of renewable energy generation, electrification, electric vehicles, and energy efficiency.



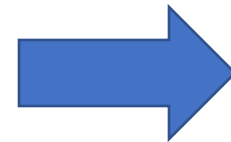
Workforce programs are an essential aspect of the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act

Illinois is investing in clean energy sources, electric vehicles, and energy efficiency.

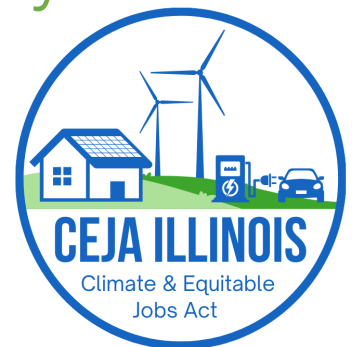


We need to expand the clean energy workforce to do the work.

Some groups of people and communities benefit more from clean energy investments. Some suffer more from environmental impacts and community disinvestment.



The benefits of clean energy investments and good-paying clean energy jobs should be distributed equitably.



CEJA Workforce Ecosystem

Workforce training programs focused on training equity investment eligible individuals



Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program



Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program

Energy Transition Barrier Reduction Program



Returning Resident Clean Jobs Training Program



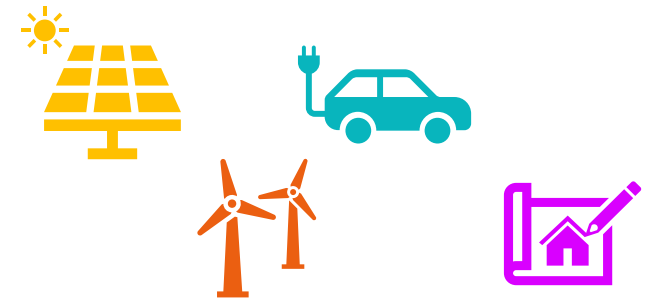
Energy Transition Navigator Program

Job or apprenticeship placement

Clean energy employers select or hire apprentices or entry-level workers

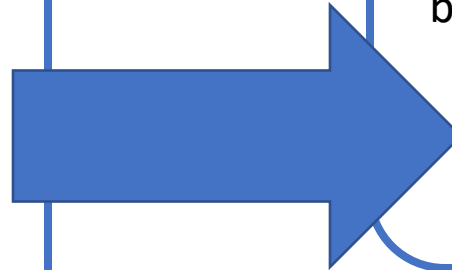


They work on clean energy projects funded by CEJA and more



CEJA Workforce Ecosystem

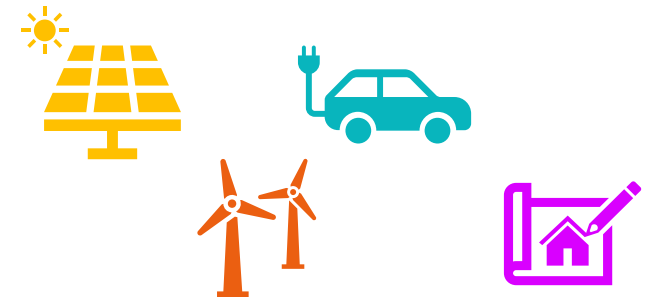
Equity-focused economic development programs



Clean energy contractors receive resources and support to grow their businesses.



They have increased capacity to bid on clean energy projects funded by CEJA and more



Today's Focus: Two CEJA Workforce Programs



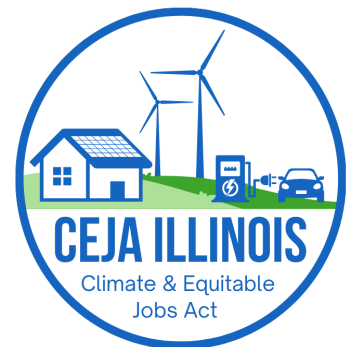
Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program (“Workforce Hubs”)

- **Goal:**
Provide training to prepare people for entry-level clean energy jobs
- **Areas accepting applications:**
Carbondale, Danville, **Kankakee***, and Peoria
- **Deadline: 11/ 1/ 2024 before 5:00 pm Central**



Energy Transition Navigators Program

- **Goal:** Conduct outreach and education to raise awareness of CEJA programs, recruit participants, and build connections
- **Areas accepting applications:**
Champaign and **Kankakee***
- **Deadline: 11/ 1/ 2024 before 5:00 pm Central**



***Kankakee NOFO release is TBA due to 7/1/2025 grant effective date, likely late fall 2024 or early 2025**

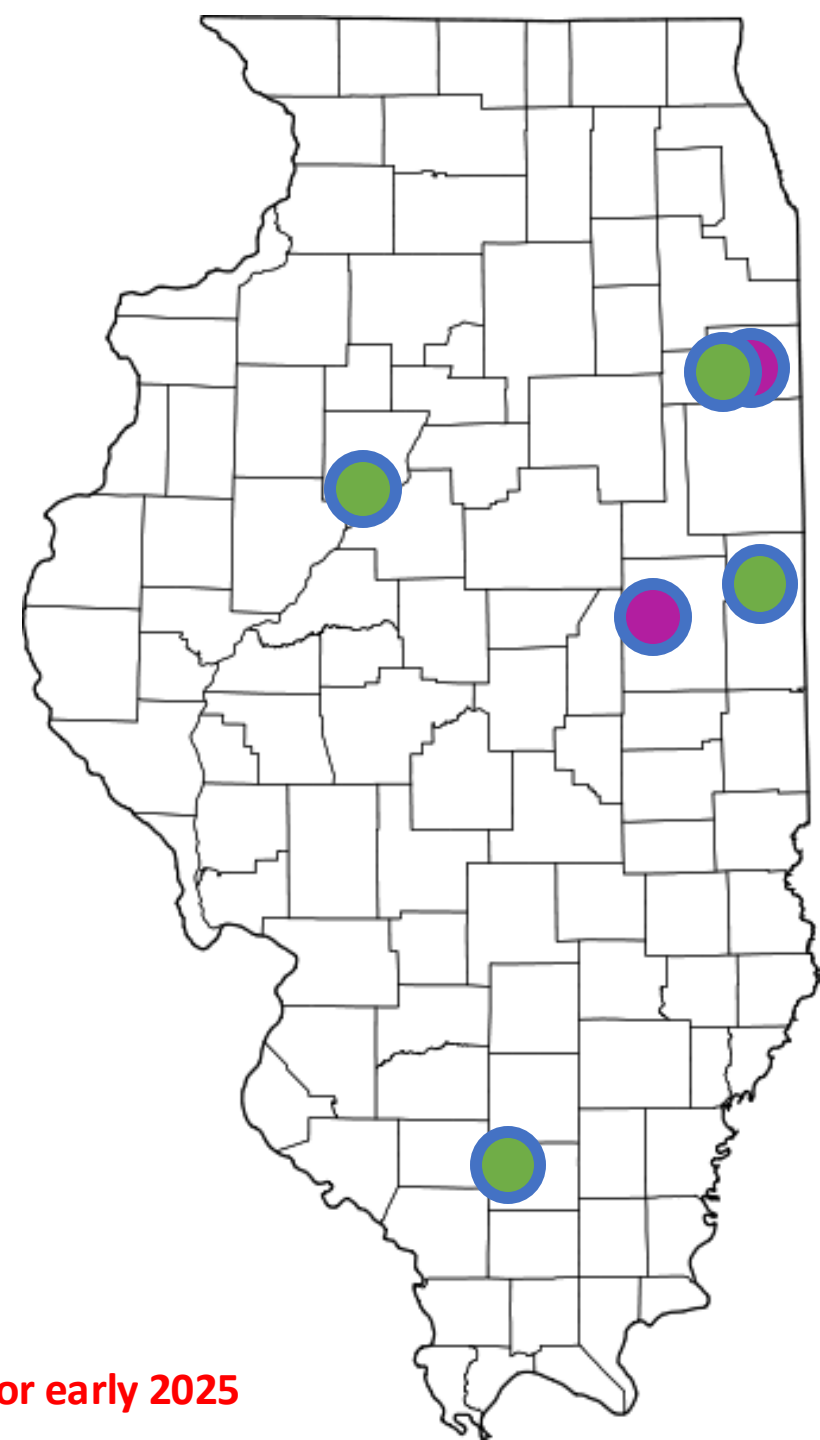
Regions Accepting Round 3 Applications

Workforce Hubs

- Carbondale
- Danville
- Kankakee*
- Peoria

ET Navigator

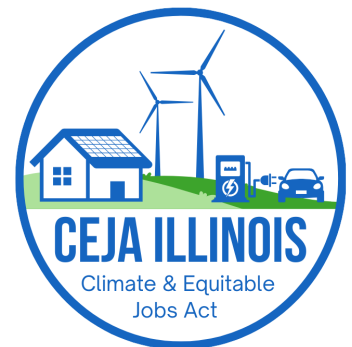
- Champaign
- Kankakee*



*Kankakee NOFO release is TBA due to 7/1/2025 grant effective date, likely late fall 2024 or early 2025

Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program - "Workforce Hubs"

- **Goal:** Prepare people for good-paying, entry-level clean energy jobs.
- **What:** Clean jobs training, utilizing a standard clean energy curriculum framework
- **Where:** At least one in each of the 14 regions. Soon accepting applications for Carbondale, Danville, and Peoria with **Kankakee*** to follow
- **Funding:** \$37.9 million per year
- **Delivered by:** Community-based organizations and partners
- **Amount per award:** \$1 million to \$5 million per year



*Kankakee NOFO release is TBA due to 7/1/2025 grant effective date, likely late fall 2024 or early 2025

Successful Workforce Hub applications must submit plans to:

1. Recruit participants

2. Enroll participants

3. Deliver bridge program training*

4. Deliver job-specific training*

5. Provide barrier-reduction services

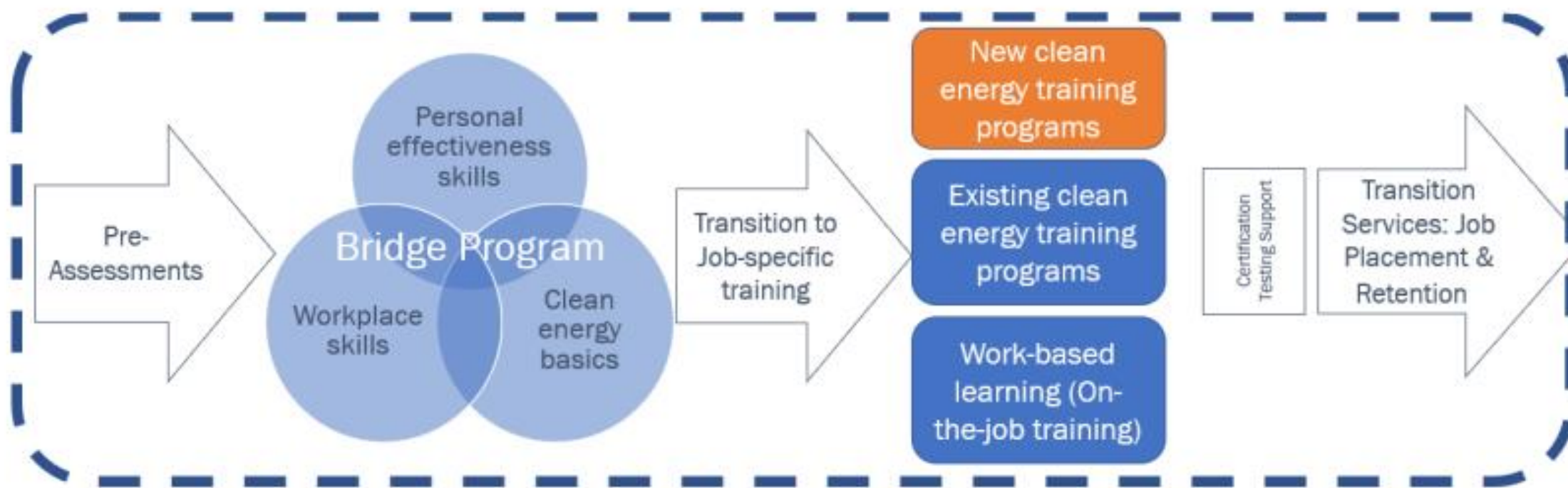
6. Help participants transition to jobs

7. Track participants and provide follow-up support

* Refer to Clean Jobs Curriculum Framework



Training must align with the Clean Jobs Curriculum Framework



Wrap-around support: stipends, childcare, tutoring, transportation, etc.

Figure 1: Overview of Clean Jobs Curriculum Framework

Energy Transition Navigator Program

- **Goal:** Increase awareness of and participation in CEJA programs
- **What:** Provide recruitment, enrollment and engagement for CEJA workforce programs
- **Where:** 14 hubs and surrounding areas throughout the state.
Soon accepting applications for Champaign with **Kankakee*** to follow
- **Funding:** \$6 million per year
- **Delivered by:** Community-based providers
- **Amount per award:** \$250,000 to \$600,000 per year



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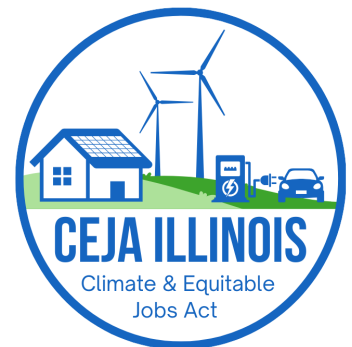
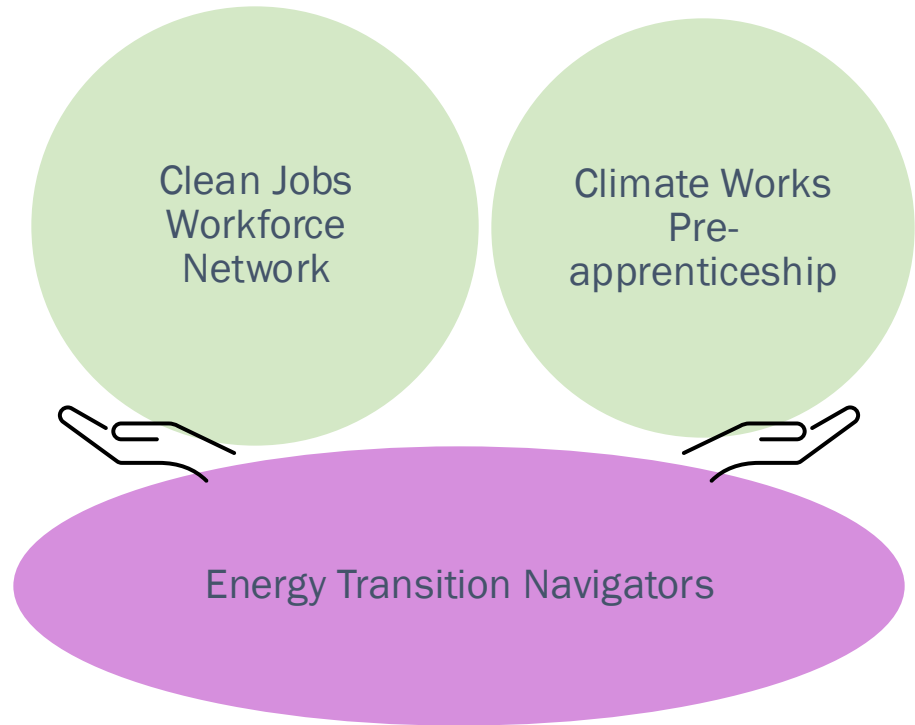
Energy Transition Navigators support the CEJA Workforce programs

Help recruit participants for the programs in the CEJA workforce ecosystem

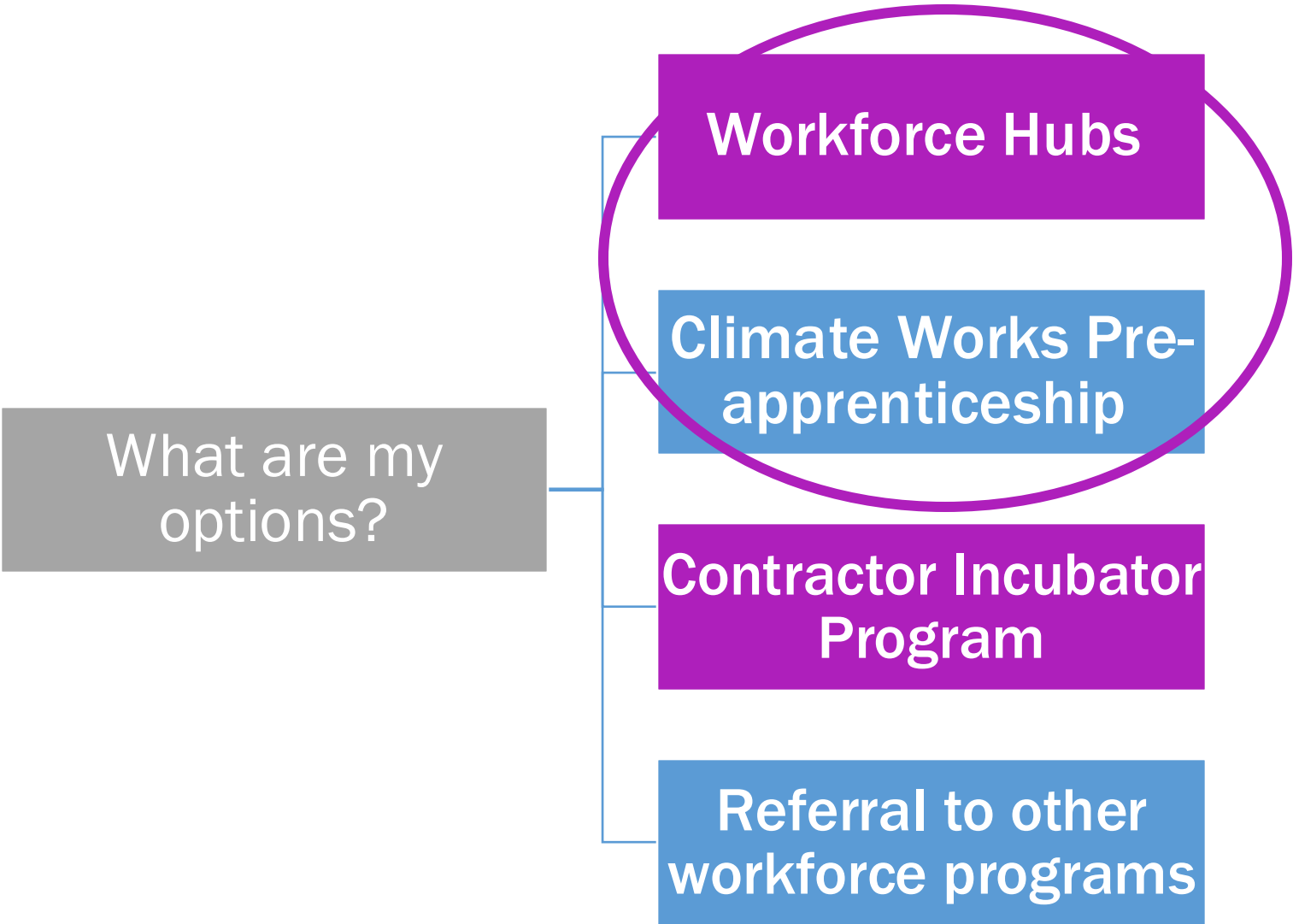
Conduct education and outreach

Build connections in communities

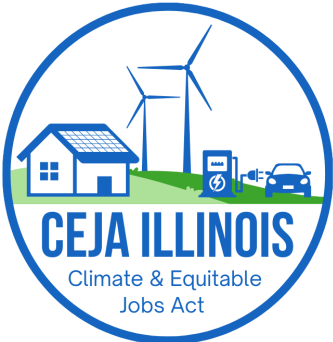
Engage clean energy employers to facilitate job placement & work-based learning



Navigators coordinate with CEJA programs to guide people to the programs that meet their interests and needs



Navigators must coordinate closely with these programs as part of their larger outreach teams.



Successful ET Navigator applications must submit plans to:

Coordinate closely with the other CEJA workforce programs (especially Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship and Workforce Hubs)

Provide outreach and community education to raise awareness of and recruit people to participate in CEJA programs (especially Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship and Workforce Hubs).

Provide services to help people enroll and participate in the programs.

Engage with diverse community, employer, and workforce stakeholders to advance workforce program goals.



CEJA Participant Eligibility Criteria

Program	Geographic eligibility	Other eligibility	Age	Other requirements
Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship	Anyone living in an EJ and/or R3 community	Primary residence is in an equity investment eligible community, Formerly incarcerated people; Current or former foster care members	16 or above (or will be 16 by the time they complete the program)	Must either have a diploma or equivalent or be enrolled in a program where they are working towards one.
CEJA Workforce Hubs	Prioritize placement as follows, where applicant pool allows : 1/3 people living in BOTH EJ and R3 community; 2/3 people living in EITHER EJ or R3 community	Preference and priority for people with barriers to employment*, current or former members of the foster care system, displaced energy workers	18 or above (or will be 18 by the time they complete the program)	N/A
CEJA Contractor Incubator Program	Prioritize placement as follows, where applicant pool allows: 1/3 business owners living in BOTH EJ and R3 community; 2/3 business owners living in EITHER EJ or R3 community	Preference for business owners who have barriers to employment*, current or former members of the foster care system, displaced energy workers	18 or above (or will be 18 by the time they complete the program)	N/A



Preparing a Strong Application



Preparing a Strong Proposal – Overall Tips

Read the NOFO Carefully (multiple times!)

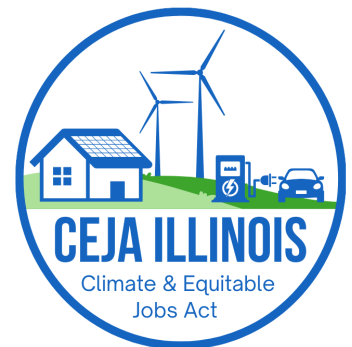
- The notice of funding opportunity contains important information about the expected activities, eligibility criteria, and documents and organizational data needed from prospective partners.
- Be sure that you understand all the requirements.

Submit the NOFO well in advance of the deadline

- Give yourself time for technical assistance and technical issues.

Close reading strategies

- Highlight
- Dissect
- Outline key points
- Ask questions
- Discuss with team



Make sure your organization (or team of organizations) is a good fit

- Does the opportunity align well with your organization's mission and capabilities?
- Are there other organizations that you can partner with to strengthen the application?
- Are you considering staffing, budget, and partnerships?



Preparing a Strong Proposal – Writing Tips

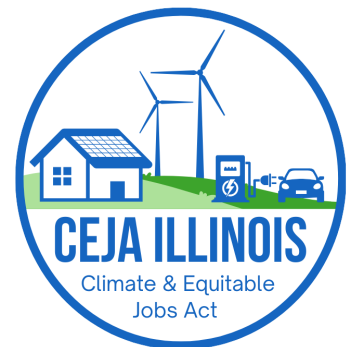
Respond to the requirements of the NOFO

- Your proposed program design should strongly align with the program description and structure
- The review criteria should guide your proposal development
- This is not a creative writing exercise – respond according to the application format required by the NOFO

Tip: Don't make up your own definitions, terms for the people you will serve, or the type of training you will deliver. Refer to the definitions in the NOFO.

Tell your story

- Highlight the strengths of your team
- Make a case for your project and its potential impact



Uniform Grant Application in fillable PDF format

Uniform Budget utilizing template provided by DCEO

Conflict of Interest Disclosure

Mandatory Disclosure

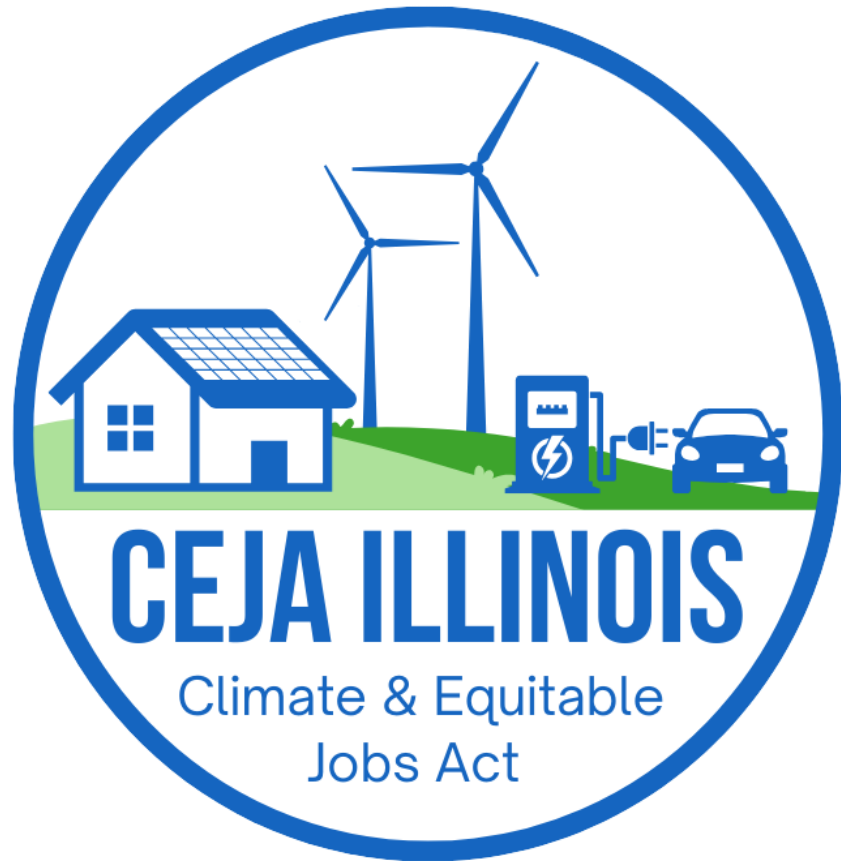
Technical Proposal

Supplemental project documents (attachments)

What does a complete application package look like?

Find all materials on the NOFO webpages.

Refer to the application check list in Section D.2. "Content and Form of Application Submission"



The Application Review Process

- **Step 1: Administrative Review**
- **Step 2: Merit Review**



Step 1: Initial administrative review

- Do you have all required elements of the application package?
- Are you GATA pre-qualified?
- Are you an eligible applicant?
- Did you turn in your application on time?

If you fail this step, your application will not advance to the merit review stage.

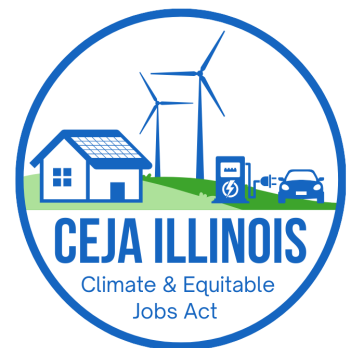
Out of fairness to all applicants, DCEO does not accept applications beyond the due date.



Step 1: Initial administrative review

Common problems

- Applications were rejected due to lack of GATA pre-qualification, not following directions, missing materials or uploading blank templates.
 - Check and double check the submission requirements. See the checklist in NOFO Section D.2. "Content and Form of Application Submission"
- Applications were rejected because they were submitted late.
 - The submission process takes time, and tech issues happen. Don't wait for the last hour (or the last minute) to submit.




Step 2: Merit review of complete applications

Team of merit reviewers appointed and trained.



Each reviewer reviews applications separately, filling out scoring sheet, comments.



Team meets to discuss discrepancies, adjust scores as needed.



Final reviewer scores for each application are combined into composite score.



Highest scoring application for each region that meets minimum score threshold is selected.



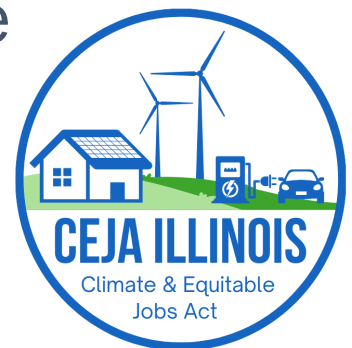
Characteristics of Successful Applications and Common Weaknesses



Qualifications and Capacity

(Common weaknesses underlined)

- Staffing plan is clear and complete, reflecting all personnel roles required for program services and administration. Resumes of all key personnel are provided.
- Application narrative specifically describes experience administering similar types of projects.
- Application narrative describes significant experience and capability using an equity lens for program operations.
- Demonstrates ability to form effective partnerships within the region



Documentation of Need

(Common weaknesses underlined)

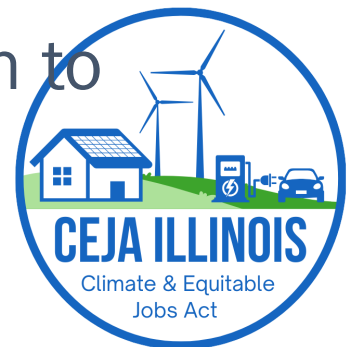
- Application describes where this project will operate, who the project will serve, as well as their barriers and needs.
- Application describes how local and regional labor market info is used to identify need for clean energy job expansion in the region. Identifies multiple relevant strategies to create connections with local and regional employers.
- Application describes the impact of the project on identified target communities, populations, and growth in clean energy jobs



Project Plan

(Common weaknesses underlined)

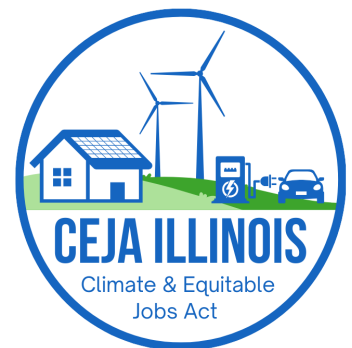
- Workplan is detailed and complete. Goals and outcomes align with NOFO requirements.
 - Clean Energy Workforce Hubs: Alignment with Clean Energy Curriculum Framework requirements. Clean Energy Basics is not optional!
- Plan to help participants transition to employment is detailed and complete.
- Plan to address equity in program design and operation is detailed and complete.
- Plan to track outcomes is detailed and complete. The approach to assessing outcomes to improve program delivery is clearly defined.



Budget and Cost Effectiveness

(Common weaknesses underlined)

- Thoroughly detailed, itemized budget with justification narrative.
- Thorough analysis of the cost efficiency in relationship to planned program outcomes.
- Application describes multiple leveraged programs, services and partnerships and how they will benefit the program.



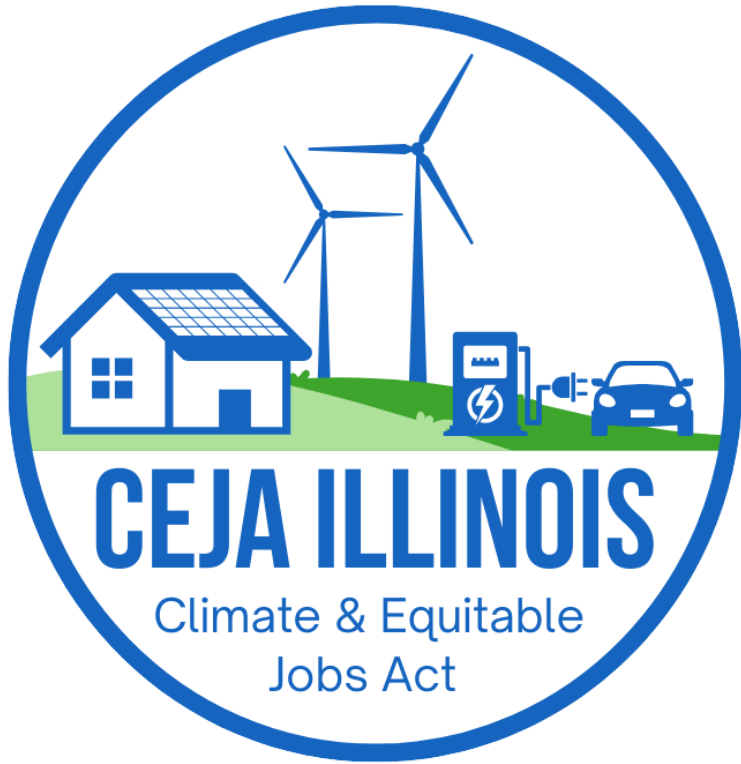


Grantee Case Studies Guest Presenters:

- **Rockford Hub Region**
The Workforce Connection, Inc. (Clean Jobs Workforce Hub)
Goodwill Industries of Northern IL (ET Navigator)
- **Alton Hub Region**
Senior Services Plus (ET Navigator)



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Grantee Case Studies

Review of experiences developing CEJA program applications

- What program(s) did you apply for?
- How did you build your team?
- What was your approach to designing the program and completing the application?
- Did your team use DCEO technical assistance resources to help with application development? If so, please discuss.





NOFO Resources



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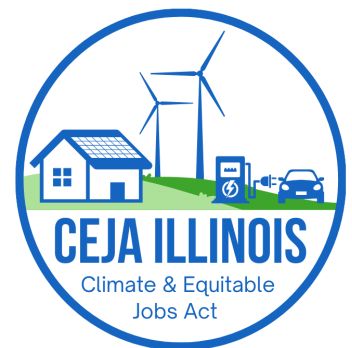
Resources for Program Details and Requirements

- Bidders conference presentation, January 2024
 - [Recorded presentation](#), posted on youtube.com



Existing Resources – Technical Assistance Webinars

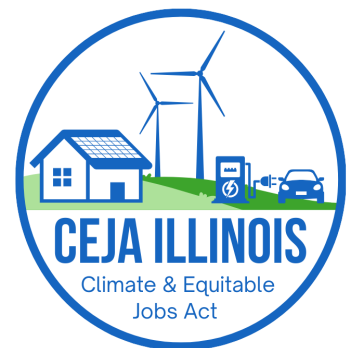
- GATA - [Video Training & Resources \(illinois.gov\)](#)
- [Workforce Grants 101](#): An Overview of the Grant Submission requirements under the Illinois Grant Accountability and Transparency Act
- [Applicant Team Qualifications and Budget – Avoiding Pitfalls](#)
- [Rolling Back the Curtain: What CEJA Grant Reviewers are Looking for](#)



Existing Resources – CEJA Q+A Document

CEJA Q+A

- <https://uofi.box.com/s/vzbo4oytrq5a83uvian4f7j5owbytuxl>



Other support for returning and new applicants

Request summary of feedback from merit reviewers. Contact Char Flickinger, charlotte.flickinger@illinois.gov

Request one-on-one technical assistance (up to 3 sessions)

Attend more technical assistance webinars

Collaborate with community leaders

Get Technical Assistance from a CEJA NOFO Coach

CEJA NOFO Coaches provide technical assistance on developing an effective grant application. Applicants may sign up for multiple TA sessions.

Use the QR code or link to sign up:

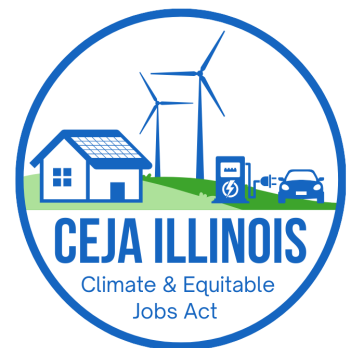
https://forms.office.com/r/4qUkTd_gCFY

CEJA NOFO Applicant Technical
Assistance Sign Up



TA webinars and one-on-one sessions will provide guidance for improving your application

- Does what you propose conform to the application requirements outlined in the NOFO?
- Is your application package complete?
- Does your team have the capacity and experience to deliver the program? Are roles and responsibilities among partners clearly defined?
- Do you have detailed plans to deliver key elements? The NOFO explains WHAT you'll be delivering. Your proposal explains HOW you'll deliver it, by describing tasks, methods, timeframes, and overall plan.
- Do you have a detailed budget description/narrative?
- Do you demonstrate an understanding of local economy and clean energy job needs?





CEJA Family Feud!

When considering applying for a CEJA Grant, what are the top 5 important questions to ask as it relates to “Who?”



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- Who will your program serve?
- Who is your training provider?
- Who are your grant partners?
- Who are your employer partners?
- Who are the important stakeholders who should be brought on to evaluate your program, spread the word?



CEJA Family Feud!

When considering applying for a CEJA Grant, what are the top 5 important questions to ask as it relates to “What?”



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- What training will be offered?
- What credentials will participants be working toward?
- What occupations will the training lead to?
- What will the work-based learning be?
- What will be the impact of this work in the community where it is done?



CEJA Family Feud!

When considering applying for a CEJA Grant, what are the top 6 important questions to ask as it relates to “How Much/How Many?”



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- How much barrier reduction funding will your participants need?
- How many people will you serve?
- How much is the cost per participant?
- How much funding will your grant request?
- How many jobs will be earned by your participants?
- By how much will their wages increase?

Conclusion

- We're looking for CEJA applicants!
 - Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program
 - Energy Transition Navigator Program
- Refer to the NOFO homepages for application information and resources
- Application technical assistance is available!
- Application deadline: November 1, 2024 before 5:00 pm Central
- How can we help you? Contact us at CEO.CEJA@illinois.gov

