

**State of Illinois Uniform Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)  
Summary Information**

Awarding Agency Name	Commerce And Econ Opp
Agency Contact	John Barr (john.w.barr@illinois.gov)
Announcement Type	Initial
Type of Assistance Instrument	Grant
Funding Opportunity Number	FY25-2
Funding Opportunity Title	Illinois Energy Transition Navigators Program (CEJA)
CSFA Number	420-30-3174
CSFA Popular Name	Illinois Energy Transition Navigators Program (CEJA)
Anticipated Number of Awards	3
Estimated Total Program Funding	\$750,000
Award Range	\$200000 - \$500000
Source of Funding	State
Cost Sharing or Matching Requirements	No
Indirect Costs Allowed	Yes
Restrictions on Indirect Costs	No
Posted Date	05/21/2025
Application Date Range	05/21/2025 - 07/14/2025 : 11:59PM
Grant Application Link	Please select the entire address below and paste it into the browser... <a href="https://dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/grantopportunities/3174-3022.html">https://dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/grantopportunities/3174-3022.html</a>
Technical Assistance Session	Offered : Yes Mandatory : No Date : 06/02/2025 : 1:00PM Registration link : <a href="https://illinois.webex.com/webappng/sites/illinois/recording/912a722122bc103ebffb82d1fa31c033/playback">https://illinois.webex.com/webappng/sites/illinois/recording/912a722122bc103ebffb82d1fa31c033/playback</a>

# Agency-specific Content for the Notice of Funding Opportunity Illinois Energy Transition Navigators Program 2025 NOFO ID: 3174-3022

For information about grants please visit <https://dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/grantopportunities/granteeresources.html>.

## A. Program Description

### Notice of Funding Opportunity Intent

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (the “Department” or “DCEO”) is issuing this Notice of Funding Opportunity (“NOFO”) to support the Illinois Energy Transition Navigators Program. The goal is to establish a network of community-based providers across the State of Illinois. These providers will offer community education, outreach, and recruitment services to encourage eligible individuals to participate in clean energy workforce and contractor development programs.

### Program Description

This Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) sets forth the requirements for funding for the Energy Transition Navigators Program 20 ILCS 730/5-35, as specified by the Energy Transition Act as part of the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act, PA 102-0662 (“Climate and Equitable Jobs Act” or CEJA”).

Investments in clean energy technology and infrastructure, funded through CEJA and other state and federal programs, will offer numerous employment and business development opportunities for the residents of Illinois. Historically, these types of opportunities have not always been available to some populations and communities. CEJA establishes various new programs and expands existing programs aimed at accelerating the adoption of clean energy sources, electric vehicles, and energy efficiency efforts.

Recognizing that the manufacturing, construction, and maintenance activities required to meet these regulations, incentives, and goals will require significant expansion of businesses and well-trained workers, the CEJA legislation includes several new workforce and contractor development programs. These programs are intended to equitably grow the clean energy workforce by serving equity investment eligible communities and equity investment eligible people (defined below).

The Energy Transition Navigators Program will provide outreach and recruitment for the CEJA workforce and contractor programs. The Department seeks to contract with the community-based provider(s) (“Navigator Teams”) to connect people to the CEJA workforce and contractor programs. Navigator Teams will provide outreach and recruitment services to eligible populations to ensure they are aware of and engaged in the statewide and local workforce and contractor development programs. Navigator Teams will prioritize individuals eligible for the following programs:

- **Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program** (20 ILCS 730/5-20). Provides clean jobs training and a career pipeline for eligible participants.
- **Illinois Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program** (20 ILCS 730/5-40). Trains equity investment eligible individuals for careers in clean energy sector construction and building trades.

To ensure that people are fully able to participate in these two workforce programs, Navigator Teams will assist eligible individuals in accessing **Energy Transition Barrier Reduction Program** services (20 ILCS 730/5-30), including tools, mentoring, travel stipends, work clothes, certifications, childcare, and other support services. These services will be offered through the Climate Jobs Workforce Network and the Illinois Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Programs.

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Additionally, Navigator Teams will engage eligible individuals to participate in the following programs:

- **Clean Energy Contractor Incubator Program** (20 ILCS 730/5-45). Provides training, mentorship, low-cost capital, business planning, low-interest loans, and recruitment opportunities for small clean energy businesses and contractors.
- **Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program** (20 ILCS 730/5-55). A program for contractors seeking to expand their capacity and fill the role of the prime contractor on clean energy projects through a structured five-year program with mentorship, operation support grants, business coaching, assistance applying for certifications, procurement programs, and preparing bids.

**Through this NOFO, the Department will award one navigator grant each to serve the Champaign, Decatur and Kankakee workforce regions.** This grantee will join the other CEJA Energy Transition Navigator grantees in serving a network of 14 regional workforce hub region. CEJA Energy Transition Navigators will provide outreach and recruitment services (including activities and events) to eligible populations in the 14 regional workforce hubs and surrounding areas. Outreach and recruitment will be prioritized for those eligible to participate in the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program and the Illinois Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program. Note that the Department may award multiple grants to Navigator Teams in a workforce hub region.

Navigator Teams will partner with organizations that manage the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program and the Illinois Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program in their region to coordinate outreach and recruitment activities. They must clearly understand the eligibility requirements and each program's training and service offerings.

Outreach and recruitment efforts will include providing information and consultation to eligible individuals on various training opportunities and supportive services available through CEJA and other statewide and local workforce development programs. Navigator Teams will support those applying for these programs and help them access Energy Transition Barrier Reduction services. They will provide guidance to these individuals on training and career opportunities in the emerging clean energy economy.

The Navigator Teams will also direct individuals interested in starting or growing their business to the Clean Energy Contractor Incubator and the Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Programs in their region. These programs provide services including, but not limited to, business consulting, business planning, regulatory compliance, marketing, training, accessing capital, government bid and certification assistance. Navigator Teams will also help to connect people with local Small Business Development Centers and APEX Accelerators (formerly known as "Procurement Technical Assistance Centers").

In coordination with the organizations that administer the Clean Jobs Workforce Network and the Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Programs in their region, Navigator Teams will refer individuals to local workforce innovation boards and other relevant organizations, if those individuals are not interested in the CEJA workforce and contractor programs.

Together with the teams that manage the Clean Jobs Workforce Network and Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Programs in their region, Navigator Teams will engage with local employers, industry leaders, and unions to identify the skill and hiring needs of the local clean energy industry. This information will be used to prioritize training program offerings, curricular modifications, career pathway support, and job placement for equity investment eligible persons.

Navigator Teams should also be well connected to other workforce and business development centers, including but not limited to:

- Illinois Small Business Development Centers: (<https://dceo.illinois.gov/smallbizassistance/beginhere/sbdc.html>) provide information, confidential business guidance, training, and other resources for start-ups and existing small businesses.

- APEX Accelerators (formerly known as "Procurement Technical Assistance Centers"): (<https://dceo.illinois.gov/smallbizassistance/beginhere/ptac.html>) are a portal for small businesses looking to enter the world of government contracting. They provide one-on-one counseling, technical information, marketing assistance and training to existing businesses interested in selling their goods and services to local, state, and/or federal government agencies.
- American Jobs Centers: (<https://www.illinoisworknet.com/Connect/Pages/LocationSearch.aspx>) help people search for jobs, find training, and answer other employment related questions.
- Regional or local economic development organizations.
- Regional or local workforce innovation boards.

### **Program Coordination**

The Energy Transition Navigators Program is part of a highly interconnected set of Illinois statewide clean energy workforce and contractor development programming. Navigator Teams will be required to collaborate and coordinate with the CEJA workforce and contractor programs listed above. Successful applicants will demonstrate an understanding of these clean energy programs and recognition of the need for collaboration and coordination. In particular, the Energy Transition Navigators Program is closely coupled with the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program and Illinois Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program, as described above. Navigator Teams will be required to operate with an exceptionally high level of coordination and collaboration with two programs to ensure a seamless experience of engagement, recruitment, and enrollment for the participants. information about each program is available here:

- Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program: <https://dceo.illinois.gov/climateandequitablejobs/clean-jobs-workforce-network-program.html>
- Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program: <https://dceo.illinois.gov/climateandequitablejobs/climate-works-pre-apprenticeship-program.html>
- Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program: <https://dceo.illinois.gov/climateandequitablejobs/returning-resident-clean-jobs-program.html>
- Clean Energy Contractor Incubator Program: <https://dceo.illinois.gov/climateandequitablejobs/clean-energy-contractor-incubator-program.html>
- Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program: <https://dceo.illinois.gov/climateandequitablejobs/clean-energy-primers-contractor-accelerator-program.html>
- Future Energy Job Act Programs: <https://dceo.illinois.gov/ceja/workforce-training-programs.html#solar-training>
- See also the Frequently Asked Questions (<https://dceo.illinois.gov/ceja/reports-and-resources.html>) to learn more about the programs.

### **Program Definitions**

This NOFO uses the definitions established in the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act, including the Energy Transition Navigators Program Statute, for "Community-based provider," "Equity investment eligible person," "Equity investment eligible community," and "Equity focused population".

Community-based provider is a not-for-profit organization that has a history of serving low-wage or low-skilled workers or individuals from economically disadvantaged communities.

Not-for-profit organization means a corporation organized under the General Not For Profit Corporation Act of 1986 in good standing to operate in the State of Illinois, that is representative of a community or a significant segment of a community and provides services directly to low-income individuals or low-skilled workers.

Economically disadvantaged community means areas of one or more census tracts where the average household income does not exceed 80% of the area median income.

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Equity investment eligible person is a person who would most benefit from equitable investments by the State designed to combat discrimination and foster sustainable economic growth. Specifically, equity investment eligible persons mean:

- persons whose primary residence is in an equity investment-eligible community; or
- persons who are graduates of or currently enrolled in the foster care system; or
- persons who were formerly incarcerated.

Displaced energy worker means an energy worker who has lost employment, or is anticipated by the Department to lose employment within the next 5 years, due to the reduced operation or closure of a fossil fuel power plant, nuclear power plant, or coal mine.

Energy worker means a person who has been employed full-time for a period of one year or longer, and within the previous 5 years, at a fossil fuel power plant, a nuclear power plant, or a coal mine located within the State of Illinois, whether or not they are employed by the owner of the power plant or mine. Energy workers are considered to be full-time if they work at least 35 hours per week for 45 weeks a year or the 1,820 work-hour equivalent with vacations, paid holidays, and sick time, but not overtime, included in this computation. Classification of an individual as an energy worker continues for 5 years from the latest date of employment or the effective date of [the Energy Community Reinvestment Act, September 15, 2021], whichever is later.

Navigator Teams will recruit individuals to participate in the CEJA workforce programs. Note that specific eligibility requirements vary by program.

Equity investment eligible communities are the geographic areas throughout Illinois that would most benefit from equitable investments by the State, which are designed to combat discrimination and foster sustainable economic growth. Specifically, equity investment eligible communities include the following areas:

- R3 Areas as established pursuant to Section 10-40 of the Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act (410 ILCS 705), where residents have historically been excluded from economic opportunities, including opportunities in the energy sector. Eligible R3 Areas are defined in the R3 service map (<https://r3.illinois.gov/eligibility>). Criteria for defining R3 Areas include rates of gun injury, unemployment, child poverty, incarceration with Illinois Department of Corrections, and historic disinvestment; and
- Environmental justice communities, as defined by the Illinois Power Agency pursuant to the Illinois Power Agency Act, but excluding racial and ethnic indicators, where residents have historically been subject to disproportionate pollution burdens, including pollution from the energy sector. For more information on the criteria and a map that defines these areas in Illinois, refer to the Illinois Solar For All (<https://www.illinoisfa.com/environmental-justice-communities/>) webpage on Environmental Justice Communities.
- The Equity Investment Eligible Community Map (<https://dceo.illinois.gov/ceja/map.html>) defines the areas that satisfy the criteria above for R3 Areas and/or Environmental Justice communities.

Eligible (Equity focused) populations include but aren't limited to:

- low-income persons;
- persons residing in equity investment eligible communities;
- persons who identify as black, indigenous, and people of color;
- formerly convicted persons;
- persons who are or were in the child welfare system;
- energy workers;
- dependents of displaced energy workers;
- women;
- LGBTQ+, transgender, or gender nonconforming persons;

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- persons with disabilities; and
- members of any of these groups who are also youth.

Navigator Teams' outreach efforts will be directed to eligible populations.

### Program History

The Department has identified Energy Transition Navigator grantees for several of the CEJA workforce regions under the previous NOFOs. **This NOFO will only award Energy Transition Navigator sites in the Champaign Decatur and Kankakee CEJA Workforce regions.** The CEJA workforce regions include:

- Chicago (South Side)
- Chicago (Southwest and West Sides)
- Waukegan
- Rockford
- Aurora
- Joliet
- Peoria
- Champaign
- Danville
- Decatur
- Carbondale
- East St. Louis
- Alton
- Kankakee

### Performance Goals and Measures

There are a number of program activities, performance goals, and outcomes metrics that applicants must describe in the application technical proposal and Attachments, including but not limited to:

- A description of the Navigator Team's outreach, education, and recruitment efforts
- The number of individuals who participate in outreach events and activities
- The number of individuals who apply to each of the CEJA Workforce and Contractor Programs, with support from the Navigator Team, and what specific support services were provided.
- Through coordination with the workforce programs, the number of individuals who complete the training and who are placed in jobs.
- Program success stories of individuals who have been placed in the CEJA Workforce and Contractor Programs.

### Program Requirements

The focus of the Energy Transition Navigator Program is: 1) to provide outreach and community education to eligible populations to raise awareness of opportunities to participate in CEJA programs, with priority to individuals eligible for the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program and the Illinois Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program; 2) to provide services to assist those individuals with enrollment and participation in those programs; and 3) to engage with diverse community, employer, and workforce stakeholders to effectively reflect both the opportunities and the needs of the emerging regional clean energy economy.

Projects funded under this program must include the following program elements:

- I. **OUTREACH & RECRUITMENT:** Applicants must outline comprehensive recruitment and outreach strategies to engage eligible populations, prioritizing individuals eligible for the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program and the Illinois Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program.
  - a) Outreach strategies should ensure that eligible populations are aware of and engaged in the statewide and local workforce development systems.

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- b) Navigator Teams will coordinate with the Illinois Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program to recruit eligible participants and assess participant eligibility. Eligible participants include:
    - persons whose primary residence is in an equity investment-eligible community (defined above);
    - persons who are graduates of or currently enrolled in the foster care system; or
    - persons who were formerly incarcerated.
  - c) Navigator Teams will coordinate with the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program to recruit eligible participants and determine participant eligibility. Eligible participants for the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program include Illinois residents who are at least 18 years of age and:
    - 1. Reside in an area that is:
      - both an R3 Area as established pursuant to Section 10-40 of the Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act [410 ILCS 705] and an environmental justice community; or
      - either an R3 Area as established pursuant to Section 10-40 of the Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act [410 ILCS 705] or an environmental justice community;
    - 2. Qualify as eligible to participate as follows:
      - meets the definition of a displaced energy worker; or
      - is a person who faces barriers to employment, including, but not limited to, low educational attainment, prior involvement with the criminal legal system, language barriers, or is a person who is a graduate or current member of the foster care system.
    - 3. Participant placement will be prioritized as follows where the applicant pool allows:
      - One-third of program placements are for people residing in an area that is BOTH an R3 area and an environmental justice community.
      - One-third of program placements are for people who reside in EITHER an R3 area OR an environmental justice community. Preference will be given to applicants who face barriers to employment, such as low educational attainment, prior involvement with the criminal legal system, language barriers, and applicants who are graduates of or current members of the foster care system.
      - Priority for the remaining placements must be given to displaced energy workers or persons who face barriers to employment (as defined above).
  - d) Navigator Teams may conduct outreach and recruitment strategies that include but are not limited to activities and community-hosted events.
  - e) Navigator Teams should work with regional educational institutions, organizations working with eligible populations, local employers, and labor unions to identify individuals who are unable to advance their careers due to inadequate skills or other barriers and help connect them to workforce and contractor programs
  - f) Navigator Teams will raise awareness of the CEJA workforce and contractor development programs in the region by providing information about these programs to organizations working with eligible populations, local workforce innovation boards, and other relevant stakeholders.
  - g) Each Navigator Team's outreach and recruitment policy and procedures will be required to describe the priority of service considerations outlined above.
- II. APPLICATION, INTAKE, AND COORDINATION: Navigator Teams will coordinate with the organizations that deliver the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program and the Illinois Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program in the proposed region to assist potential participants who wish to enroll in the programs. This may include coordinated support with participants' program applications, participant pre-screening to make sure they meet eligibility requirements, and participant pre-assessment to recommend job placement, training focus areas, curriculum

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modifications, or career pathway support as needed. Navigator Teams will help connect eligible participants to Energy Transition Barrier Reduction services provided by the workforce programs. Navigator Teams will also connect interested individuals to other workforce and business development center offerings, including the CEJA contractor programs described above. Navigator Teams will be required to use materials and methods for application and intake, which will be provided. These required materials and methods may include, but are not limited to, pre-screening assessments and interview questions; program applications; wrap-around service assessments; and commitment agreements. The Navigator Team's application / intake policy and procedures will be required to describe the priority of service considerations outlined in this NOFO.

- III. **WORKFORCE STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND COORDINATION:** In partnership with the organizations that manage the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program and Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program, Navigator Teams will maintain ongoing engagement and coordination with local employers, educational institutions, local economic development institutions, environmental justice organizations, trade groups, labor unions, and entities that provide jobs to identify the skill and hiring needs of the local clean energy industry. Applications should describe how the Navigator Team will establish the relationships with these organizations, how these relationships will be maintained over the duration of the funding period, and how information derived from these relationships will inform recruitment, training program design, and job placement efforts.
- IV. **GEOGRAPHIC COVERAGE:** Navigator Teams may propose to provide services in and around one or more of the 14 regional workforce hubs of the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program. Applicants should explain how they intend to reach equity investment eligible communities in the hub locations, as well as nearby regions. For instance, a team serving the Decatur hub could also propose to serve Springfield.
- V. **STAFFING:** Applicants must outline how the key program areas will be staffed to ensure the quality delivery of programs and services. These key program areas include, engagement with administrators of the CEJA workforce and contractor programs; engagement with regional business service centers, employers, workforce development centers, educational institutions, unions, etc. to maintain functional knowledge of the workforce needs and skills development capabilities of these entities; marketing, outreach and recruitment of individuals within eligible populations; provision of career guidance to members of eligible populations; data entry; and program administration. Applicants will provide this information by completing *Attachment 3: Staffing Plan* and providing resumes or job descriptions of key staff assigned to the project.
- VI. **PARTNERSHIPS:** The Navigator Team may enter into agreements with other community-based providers to provide different program elements, such as outreach and recruitment or employer engagement. Evidence of partnerships should be demonstrated in memorandums of understanding (MOUs) and through line items in applicants' proposed budgets.
- VII. **EQUITY-FOCUSED PROGRAM CULTURE:** Navigator Teams must provide information about how they will work to increase the participation of equity investment eligible individuals and communities in the CEJA workforce programs and connect them to the barrier reduction services offered by these programs. Navigator Teams must outline specific strategies for how to foster a welcoming, inclusive environment. The focus on equity should go beyond numeric participant targets and focus on all aspects of program design and partnerships.
- VIII. **DATA TRACKING AND PROGRAM OUTCOMES ASSESSMENT:** Navigator Teams must describe the approach they will use to track demographic information for program participants, including outreach and engagement numbers, broken down by race, gender, age, and other criteria as directed by the Department; the number of individuals who apply to, participate in, and

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complete programs offered through the various CEJA workforce and contractor programs. Grantees will perform data tracking and use reporting systems as directed by DCEO.

Navigator Teams must also describe an approach to assess the effectiveness of the outreach and recruitment efforts and how this information will be used to improve outreach and engagement efforts in a continuous manner. Grant recipients will also be required to cooperate with external evaluation efforts, as directed by DCEO.

### B. Funding Information

This grant program is utilizing state funds appropriated by the Illinois General Assembly under Public Act 103-0589. Total amount of funding expected to be awarded through this NOFO is \$750,000. Awards will range from \$200,000 to \$500,000. The Department expects to make 3 awards through this NOFO.

Anticipated start date for awards is September 1, 2025. The period of performance is expected to be September 1, 2025 through August 31, 2026.

The period of performance is expected to be up to 36 months through grant awards that come with a one-year initial term, with the Department renewing each year for up to 2 additional years unless the grantee either declines to continue or fails to meet reasonable performance measures that consider program timeframes.

Applicants must submit a project narrative that describes in detail how the award will be executed. The project narrative should include enough information for DCEO to understand the scope of the project, the budget, including a detailed breakdown of the costs associated with each budget line and any additional necessary detail to enable DCEO to manage the grant agreement activity against planned project performance. The Project Narrative must include evidence of capacity, quality and need as defined in Section E.1.

**The release of this NOFO does not obligate the Department to make an award.**

### C. Eligibility Information

An entity must be registered in the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) Grantee Portal, <https://grants.illinois.gov/portal/>, at the time of grant application. The portal will verify that the entity:

- Has a valid FEIN number (<https://www.irs.gov/individuals/international-taxpayers/taxpayer-identification-numbers-tin#:~:text=You%20can%20use%20the%20IRS%27s,for%20Individual%20Taxpayer%20Identification%20Number>);
- Has a current SAM.gov registration (<https://sam.gov>), SAM.gov registrations must be marked as “public” to allow the GATA Grantee Portal to expedite the review of the federal information;
- Has a valid UEI number (<https://sam.gov>);
- Is not on the Federal Excluded Parties List (verified at <https://sam.gov>);
- Is in Good Standing with the Illinois Secretary of State, as applicable ([https://www.ilsos.gov/departments/business\\_services/corp.html](https://www.ilsos.gov/departments/business_services/corp.html));
- Is not on the Illinois Stop Payment list (verified once entity is registered in GATA Grantee Portal); and
- Is not on the Department of Healthcare and Family Services Provider Sanctions list (<https://www.illinois.gov/hfs/oig/Pages/SanctionsList.aspx>).

Entities on the Illinois Stop Payment List and/or the Federal Excluded Parties List at time of application submission will not be considered for an award.

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An automated email notification to the entity alerts them of “qualified” status or informs how to remediate a negative verification (e.g., not in good standing with the Secretary of State). A federal Debarred and Suspended status cannot be remediated.

Pursuant to the policy of the Illinois Office of the Comptroller, to receive grant funds from the State of Illinois, a grantee must be considered a regarded entity by the IRS for federal income tax purposes. Disregarded entities will not be eligible to receive grant funds.

### 1. Eligible Applicants include:

Eligible applicants are community-based providers (see Program Definitions). One organization may propose to deliver all services or may subcontract with or partner with other entities to provide program elements or conduct outreach to specific populations or communities.

Navigator Teams must demonstrate:

- A. A history of providing education, outreach, and recruitment activities to low-wage or low-skilled workers or individuals from economically disadvantaged communities.
- B. An ability to reach and recruit from eligible populations.
- C. Relationships with relevant stakeholders, including Small Business Development Centers, economic development organizations, local employers, labor unions, trade groups, educational institutions or organizations working with eligible populations, environmental justice organizations, and any other entities that provide jobs, including businesses and other nonprofit organizations.
- D. The ability to effectively serve eligible populations and economically disadvantaged communities.
- E. The ability to engage with CEJA workforce and contractor program managers once they are selected, including:
  - The Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program,
  - The Illinois Climate Works Preapprenticeship Program,
  - The Clean Energy Contractors Incubator, and
  - The Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator.

**Experienced and New Providers:** This NOFO will consider lead applicants that have a history of delivering career navigator, career navigation, career assessment and counseling, or career pathways services to the target populations and a knowledge of clean-energy jobs, careers, and training. Applicants with little experience in these areas are encouraged to partner with entities that have experience delivering one or more of the program elements described in the NOFO. Organizations that have experience serving eligible populations in economically disadvantaged communities and equity investment eligible communities are encouraged to apply.

The Department complies with all applicable provisions of state and federal laws and regulations pertaining to nondiscrimination, sexual harassment and equal employment opportunity including, but not limited to: The Illinois Human Rights Act (775 ILCS 5/1-101 et seq.), The Public Works Employment Discrimination Act (775 ILCS 10/1 et seq.), The United States Civil Rights Act of 1964 (as amended) (42 USC 2000a-and 2000H-6), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 USC 794), The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 USC 12101 et seq.), and The Age Discrimination Act (42 USC 6101 et seq.).

### 2. Cost Sharing or Matching.

Cost sharing or matching is not required for this opportunity.

**3. Indirect Cost Rate.**

In order to charge indirect costs to a grant, the applicant organization must have an annually negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA). There are three types of NICRAs:

a) Federally Negotiated Rate. Organizations that receive direct federal funding, may have an indirect cost rate that was negotiated with the Federal Cognizant Agency. Illinois will accept the federally negotiated rate. The organization must provide a copy of the federally NICRA.

b) State Negotiated Rate. The organization may negotiate an indirect cost rate with the State of Illinois if they do not have a Federally Negotiated Rate. If an organization has not previously established an indirect cost rate, an indirect cost rate proposal must be submitted through State of Illinois' centralized indirect cost rate system no later than three months after receipt of a Notice of State Award (NOSA). If an organization previously established an indirect cost rate, the organization must annually submit a new indirect cost proposal through CARS within six to nine months after the close of the grantee's fiscal year, depending on the grantee's audit type requirements.

c) De Minimis Rate. An organization may elect a de minimis rate of 15% of modified total direct cost (MTDC). Once established, the De Minimis Rate may be used indefinitely. The State of Illinois must verify the calculation of the MTDC annually in order to accept the De Minimis Rate.

All grantees must complete an indirect cost rate negotiation or elect the De Minimis Rate to claim indirect costs. Indirect costs claimed without a negotiated rate or a De Minimis Rate election on record in the State of Illinois' centralized indirect cost rate system may be subject to disallowance.

Grantees have discretion and can elect to waive payment for indirect costs. Grantees that elect to waive payments for indirect costs cannot be reimbursed for indirect costs. The organization must record an election to "Waive Indirect Costs" into the State of Illinois' centralized indirect cost rate system.

The following State University Facilities & Administration Rate and Base will apply to all State issued awards that contain either Federal pass-through funding or State funding.

**RATE:**

- 20% Rate for awards or programs administered On-Campus\*
- 10% Rate for awards or programs administered Off-Campus\*

**BASE:**

Base approved in the State Universities' current Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA)

\*Criteria for utilization of the On/Off campus rate is located within the general terms and conditions of Federal NICRA for each State University. If not clearly defined, State awarding agencies and officers will make final determination based upon the purposes of the grant scope.

**4. Freedom of Information Act/Confidential Information.**

Applications and accompanying materials are subject to disclosure in response to requests received under provisions of the Freedom of Information Act (5 ILCS 140/1 et seq.). Information that could be proprietary, privileged, or confidential commercial or financial information should be clearly identified as such in the application materials. The Department will maintain the confidentiality of that information only to the extent permitted by law.

**5. Other, if applicable.**

Once an entity is registered, the applicant must complete a programmatic, fiscal, and administrative risk assessment prior to award. Applicants will complete the Internal Controls Questionnaire (ICQ) through the GATA Grantee Portal. The ICQ assesses the applicant organization's fiscal and administrative risk. Applicants must complete the ICQ annually as part of the pre-award process, and program staff will then determine whether any or all risk-based conditions shall be incorporated into the Grant Agreement.

Applicants will also be assessed for programmatic risk to determine grant-specific risk. This assessment will be conducted during the application process by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity. Program staff will then determine whether any or all risk-based conditions shall be incorporated into the Grant Agreement.

Applicants may submit one application per open region for this opportunity.

**D. Application and Submission Information**

**1. Address to Request Application Package.**

Grant application forms are available at the web link provided in the "Grant Application Link" field of this announcement or by contacting the Program Manager:

Diana Fuller  
Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity  
Springfield, IL  
Tele: 217-685-1608  
Email: [Diana.Fuller@illinois.gov](mailto:Diana.Fuller@illinois.gov)

**2. Content and Form of Application Submission.**

A standard application package must be submitted to and reviewed by DCEO. Each package must contain the following items:

- Uniform Grant Application in fillable PDF format. Signature page must be printed, signed, scanned and submitted with application.
- Uniform Budget utilizing the template provided by DCEO for this project. The entire budget with all worksheets included even if the worksheets are not relevant to the grant opportunity must be submitted with the application materials. Signature page must be printed, signed, scanned and submitted with application.
- Conflict of Interest Disclosure
- Mandatory Disclosures

This Notice of Funding Opportunity also requires the **submission of the following other programmatic specific items as part of the program application:**

- TECHNICAL PROPOSAL** (not to exceed 15 pages): Provide a narrative proposal to describe the program activities and outcomes that will be supported by this grant. Note that each section of the technical proposal corresponds with the application review criteria in Part E of this NOFO.

***Documentation of Need (approx.2 pages)***

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- Describe the workforce hub area or multiple hub areas where Energy Transition Navigator Services will be provided, the specific equity investment eligible communities the Navigator Team will focus on, and the needs of those communities.
- Describe how the social and economic conditions of the region may affect potential participants' access to well-paying jobs and clean energy training programs.
- Describe local employment needs in the clean energy industry and how this program can establish relationships with local employers and facilitate job growth.
- Describe how the work of this project will result in increased participation among equity investment eligible communities and individuals in the CEJA workforce and contractor programs.
- Provide any additional contextual details that will strengthen the reviewers' understanding of the identified issues/problems, needs and expansion opportunities.

### ***Applicant Organization Qualifications and Capacity (approx.3 pages)***

- Provide high-level information about the lead applicant organization's size, structure, and length of time in business. Specify whether the program is a start-up or an established organization. Describe any other organizations that will be partners or subcontractors for the project.
- Include a list of the key staff, including sub-contractor personnel, to be assigned to the project.
  - Describe the role each staff person will fulfill and the percentage time they will allot to the project.
  - Provide short bios of key staff that indicate, at a minimum, their positions and total years in the organization, education, and relevant work experience. This needs to align with Attachment 3 Staffing Plan.
  - Applicants are also required to provide the resumes or job descriptions for all key positions funded by this grant.
- Provide information demonstrating the applicant team's experience with and ability to:
  - Provide education, outreach, and recruitment activities to eligible populations for similar workforce or contractor programs.
  - Provide career navigation services and career pathway support to eligible populations.
  - Raise awareness of clean energy jobs, training opportunities and career paths.
  - Engage with a variety of stakeholder groups and organizations to share information, coordinate activities, and identify workforce needs.
  - Coordinate with local workforce innovation boards, employers, trade groups, and other entities providing jobs to identify local job and skill needs and assist with job placement.
- Provide information demonstrating the applicant team's experience with and ability to use an equity lens for program operations. An equity lens is a process that analyzes the impact of policies and practices on marginalized communities to inform and ensure equitable outcomes.
  - Describe the applicant team's experience with and capacity to intentionally and deliberately analyze the delivery and/or impact of the program on participants, including underserved and marginalized groups, such as persons with barriers due to their lack of education, job training, reliable housing and transportation, criminal history, communities of color (Black, Latino, and Indigenous and Native American persons, Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders and other persons of color), members of religious minorities; lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer (LGBTQ+) persons; persons

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- with disabilities; persons who live in rural areas; and persons otherwise adversely affected by persistent poverty or inequality.
- Describe the applicant team's experience working to assist organizations that provide program services to address barriers to employment, including low educational attainment, prior involvement with the criminal legal system, prior participation in the foster care system, and language barriers.
- Provide detailed information about members of the applicant team's leadership and/or staff that have lived in the community to be served or their work experience within the community and/or provide real-life situations or success stories showing how their roots within the community have helped guide the organization's work.
- Describe the applicant team's connections to and relationships with:
  - Statewide and local workforce development systems including local workforce innovation boards and other relevant stakeholders.
  - Small Business Development Centers, APEX Accelerators, or economic development organizations who provide services including business planning and consulting services.
  - Educational institutions providing clean energy jobs training.
  - Organizations working with eligible populations.
  - Local clean energy employers, trades groups, labor unions, industry leaders, and entities providing jobs.

### ***Project Quality and Integration - Energy Transition Navigators Program Plan*** (approx. 8 pages)

- Summarize the program design and implementation. The summary description should include the following: The applicant team's overall approach to outreach, education, recruitment services, and stakeholder engagement required by the Energy Transition Navigators program.
  - A short summary of the program design and implementation, including key tasks, deliverables and milestones.
  - The proposed program's anticipated goals and outcomes (including number of individuals engaged, number of outreach activities and events, number of enrollments, etc.). Navigator Teams will work with the regional Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program and the Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program to enroll participants. When developing outcomes, please use the following estimate ranges: Each Navigator Team will help to recruit 100-200 participants a year for the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program; each Navigator Team will help to recruit 50-100 participants a year for the Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program.
    - Note that these are rough ranges of the number of participants each program will enroll. Because hub regions vary in size and population, some hubs are expected to serve more participants than others. If proposing to serve more than one workforce region, estimates should be adjusted accordingly. Once grantees for these programs have been selected, outcome metrics and workplans will be revised.
- Provide a one-year program plan that includes tasks, deliverables and a milestones timeline for the Energy Transition Navigators Program. Details in this section should align with Attachment 4 – Implementation Timeline. The program plan should address, at a minimum:
  - How the applicant team will engage in outreach to provide information and recruit eligible participants into the CEJA workforce and contractor programs.

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- How the applicant team will support potential participants through the enrollment process, including assisting with pre-assessments and connections to barrier reduction services.
- How the applicant team will provide career navigation support and in-depth information about clean energy careers and pathways.
- How the applicant team will connect with other workforce, employment agencies, small business development centers, and community-based organizations to recruit individuals, provide information about the CEJA programs, and refer participants to other community services to meet their needs.
- How the applicant team will engage with employers, industry leaders, trade groups, unions, and other entities providing jobs to identify local job and skill needs, facilitate job placement, and work with the workforce and contractor programs to address these needs.
- How the applicant team will coordinate activities with state, regional, and local partners including but not limited to:
  - Construction and clean energy employers, industry leaders, unions, and apprenticeship programs.
  - Regional workforce, educational and economic development entities;
  - Illinois Small Business Development Centers;
  - Construction and clean energy employers, industry leaders, unions, and apprenticeship programs.
- Regional workforce, educational and economic development entities; describe how the applicant team will conduct reporting activities. Include:
  - How information will be stored and shared.
  - What information will be included in reports to DCEO.
- Describe how the applicant team will assess the effectiveness of the outreach and recruitment efforts to eligible populations. Indicate how the results of the assessment will be used to improve engagement activities in a continuous manner.

### ***Cost Effectiveness / Return on Investment / Budget Narrative (approx. 2 pages)***

- Provide a high-level budget narrative for the Energy Transition Navigators Program, including justification of the main budget expense items and an analysis of the cost efficiency in relationship to planned outcomes.
- Describe any programs, services and partnerships that will be leveraged to improve the program's cost effectiveness, return on investment, and long-term sustainability. Describe any leveraged/matching funds from workforce or other program partners, participating businesses, and others.

**REQUIRED WORKBOOK CONTAINING ATTACHMENTS:** Applicants are required to complete the four tabs that are included as the *NOFO Workbook Attachments (Excel Workbook)* that is available on the NOFO website. Note that each "tab" of the excel workbook includes a required attachment that should be submitted as one electronic excel file.

- **Attachment 1: Project Summary:** Applicants will complete a project summary by adding information in the bracketed text areas highlighted in red. The project summary will provide an overview of the project partners, program activities and projected outcomes. Please do not edit the non-bracketed text.

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- **Attachment 2: Activities and Outcomes:** Applicants must set quarterly and annual goals for program services and outcomes, including numbers of applicants, enrollees, graduates, and job placements.
- **Attachment 3: Staffing Plan:** Applicants must outline who will coordinate the administration of the program and provide the program services. NOTE: Resumes, credentials, partnership agreements or Memorandums of Understanding should be compiled and submitted as one PDF attachment.
  - **Resumes and Credentials of Program Staff.** Include the resumes of key program staff and instructors that demonstrate capacity to complete the work outlined in the application. If the position are not currently filled, provide job descriptions that outline the position qualification and other requirements.
  - **Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs)/Partnership Agreements** from any applicant team partners. Include MOUs with all key partners on the Applicant team detailing the entity's information, key staff information, roles and responsibilities associated with this project, and dollar amounts for specific services to be rendered.
  - **Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) / Partnership Agreements** from employers who agree to consider hiring program graduates and/or offer on-the-job training opportunities or work-based learning opportunities.
- **Attachment 4: Timeline:** Applicants must provide an implementation timeline that outlines the major program activities, staff responsible, dates and deliverables.

**Application Format Requirements:** All applicants must meet the following submission requirements: Applications must be formatted to an 8 1/2 x 11-inch page size, using 11-point type and at 100% magnification. Tables may be used to present information with a 10-point type. The program narrative must be typed single-spaced, with 1-inch margins on all sides. The entire application, including appendices, must be sequentially page numbered (hand-written page numbers are acceptable). Items included in the attachments are NOT included in the page limitations.

Please note there is a maximum upload of 10 documents in the web form that you submit the application, so combining files may be necessary.

### 3. Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) and System for Award Management (SAM).

Each applicant (unless the applicant is an individual or Federal or State awarding agency that is exempt from those requirements under 2 CFR 25.110(b) or (c), or has an exception approved by the Federal or State awarding agency under 2 CFR 25.110(d)) is required to:

- (i) Be registered in SAM. To establish a SAM registration, go to [www.SAM.gov](http://www.SAM.gov) and/or utilize this instructional link: [How to Register in SAM from the www.grants.illinois.gov](http://www.grants.illinois.gov) Resource Links tab. SAM.gov registrations must be "public."
- (ii) Provide a valid UEI number in the GATA Grantee Portal registration.
- (iii) Continue to maintain an active SAM registration with current information at all times during which it has an active Federal, Federal pass-through or State award or an application or plan under consideration by a Federal or State awarding agency. The Department will not make a Federal pass-through or State award to an applicant until the applicant has complied with all applicable UEI and SAM requirements and, if an applicant has not fully complied with the requirements by the time the Department is ready to make a Federal pass-through or State award, the Department may determine that the applicant is not qualified to receive a Federal pass-through or State award and use that determination as a basis for making a Federal pass-through or State award to another applicant.

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## 4. Submission Dates and Times.

Applications for this opportunity must be submitted by no later than 11:59 p.m. CDT on July 14, 2025 to be included in the initial merit review round under this NOFO. If grantees per area are not awarded, this funding opportunity will be open on a rolling basis for the areas not awarded until December 31, 2025. Applications that do not meet the administrative requirements will have the opportunity to resubmit the application package before the December 31, 2025 deadline.

Application materials must be submitted to the Department via electronic form at <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/c59b016923164b7d91a99b4b041ac0bb>

The Department is under no obligation to review applications that do not comply with the above requirements. Failure to meet the application deadline may result in the Department returning application without review or may preclude the Department from making the award.

## 5. Intergovernmental Review, if applicable.

N/A

## 6. Funding Restrictions.

This opportunity may allow reimbursement of pre-award costs. Other restrictions can be found in Sections A., B., and C.

## 7. Other Submission Requirements.

Documents stored in Google Docs or other cloud-based servers are not allowed.

Applicants may confirm receipt of the application and documents by contacting the program contact listed in this NOFO.

# E. Application Review Information

## 1. Criteria.

Grant proposals will be reviewed on a competitive basis. Each proposal will be scored on a 100-percentage scale. Applicants must demonstrate that they meet the requirements under this NOFO as described throughout. The following criteria will be used as part of the merit review of applications:

<b>Documentation of Need- Identification of stakeholders, facts, and evidence that demonstrate the proposal supports the grant program purpose (10%)</b>	
The project's focus on specific equity investment eligible communities or populations; identification of barriers that these target communities or populations may face; and workforce needs in target communities.	4%
The project's focus on local and regional employment needs and how the program can establish relationships with local employers and facilitate job growth.	3%
Expected impact of project on the identified target communities populations and growth in clean energy.	3%
<b>Applicant Qualifications and Capacity- The ability of the applicant to execute the project according to requirements of the grant program (35%)</b>	
Overall staff capacity and qualifications for successful and timely completion of all program tasks.	10%

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Related experience and administrative performance on similar grants and projects.	8%
Quality of applicant team’s demonstrated experience with and ability to use an equity lens for program operations.	10%
Quality of applicant team’s connections to and relationships with statewide and local workforce development systems, economic development organizations, educational institutions, community-based organizations, and local employers and industry leaders.	7%
<b>Project Quality and Integration - The totality of features and characteristics of the project that indicate its ability to satisfy the requirements of the grant program (40%)</b>	
Quality and feasibility of program goals and outcomes (including number of people served, number of enrollments, number of outreach activities, and more)	5%
Quality of plans to conduct outreach, engagement, and education to recruit eligible participants for the CEJA workforce and contractor programs.	6%
Quality of workplan tasks, deliverables, and milestones and ability to reach milestones in a timely manner.	6%
Quality of plans to assist participants in enrolling in the CEJA workforce and contractor programs, providing career navigation support, and connecting them to barrier reduction services.	6%
Quality of plans to engage with a variety of local stakeholders (workforce and employment agencies, small business development centers, community-based organizations, etc.) to share information about the CEJA programs, recruit participants, coordinate activities, and refer participants to other services.	6%
Quality of plans to engage clean energy employers, industry leaders, unions, and apprenticeship programs to identify local job and skill needs, facilitate job placement, and work with the CEJA programs to address these needs.	6%
Quality of plan to conduct reporting activities, assess program activities, and improve the program in a continuous manner.	5%
<b>Cost Effectiveness / Return on Investment (15%)</b>	
Reasonableness of project cost in relation to planned outcomes and activities (cost per participant).	10%
Ability to leverage existing programs, services, and partnerships to improve cost effectiveness, return on investment, and long-term sustainability of program.	5%

**2. Review and Selection Process.**

Applications will be graded using the Merit Review Process and scored on the criteria specified in Section E.1. The Department will designate an Evaluation Committee to grade each application received for this funding opportunity. The final score of each Committee member will be calculated and an average of all scores will be the final applicant score. Grants will be awarded as follows: The highest scoring applications in each open region that meets the NOFO requirements will be recommended for funding. The final grants will be negotiated by the Department based on the applications’ alignment with the requirements of this NOFO. The purpose of negotiations will be to arrive at acceptable grant terms, including budgetary and scope of work provisions, at which time the final decision to make a grant award will be made. If grantees per area are not awarded, this funding opportunity will be open on a rolling basis for the areas not awarded until December 31, 2025..

The Merit Based Review process is subject to appeal. However, competitive grant appeals are limited to the evaluation process. Evaluation scores may not be protested. Only the evaluation process is subject to appeal. The appeal must be submitted in writing to the Department within 14 calendar days after the date that the grant award notice has been published. The written appeal shall include the name and address of the appealing party, the identification of the grant and a statement of reasons for the appeal. To file an appeal, applicants must submit the appeal in writing and in accordance with the Merit-Based Application Review Appeals Process listed on the

Grant Opportunities page of the DCEO website:  
<https://dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/grantopportunities/meritapprove.html>.

**3. Anticipated Announcement and State Award Dates, if applicable.**

After the application period is closed, the Department will conduct a merit based review of eligible applications. Successful applicants will receive a Notice of State Award (NOSA) to initiate the grant agreement phase. During this phase, you will be contacted by a grant manager to develop a grant agreement, which can be a months long process depending on complexity, cooperation, and conformity with all applicable federal and state laws.

The Department reserves the right to issue a reduced award, or not to issue any award.

**F. Award Administration Information**

**1. State Award Notices.**

The Notice of State Award (NOSA) will specify the funding terms and specific conditions resulting from the pre-award risk assessments and the merit-based review process. The NOSA must be accepted in the GATA Portal by an authorized representative of the grantee organization. The NOSA is not an authorization to begin performance or incur costs.

**2. Administrative and National Policy Requirements.**

**Subrecipients and Subcontractors:** Agreement(s) and budget(s) with subrecipients and subcontractors must be pre-approved by and on file with DCEO. Agreements can be submitted to DCEO when available. Subcontractors and subrecipients are subject to all applicable provisions of the Agreement(s) executed between DCEO and the grantee. The successful applicant shall retain sole responsibility for the performance of its subrecipient(s) and/or subcontractor(s).

**Grant Uniform Requirements:** The Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (30 ILCS 708/1 *et seq.*) (and its related administrative rules, 44 Ill. Admin. Code Part 7000), was enacted to increase the accountability and transparency in the use of grant funds from whatever source and to reduce administrative burdens on both State agencies and grantees by adopting federal guidance and regulations applicable to those grant funds; specifically, the Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards (2 CFR 200).

**Procurement:** Grantees will be required to adhere to methods of procurement per the Procurement Standards (2 CFR 200.317 – 2 CFR 200.327).

**3. Reporting.**

**Periodic Performance Report (PPR) and Periodic Financial Report (PFR)**

Grantees funded through this NOFO are required to submit in the format required by the Grantor, at least on a quarterly basis, the PPR and PFR electronically to their assigned grant manager. The first of such reports shall cover the first three months after the award begins. Pursuant to 2 CFR 200.328, Periodic Financial Reports shall be submitted no later than 30 calendar days following the period covered by the report. Pursuant to 2 CFR 200.329, Periodic Performance Reports shall be submitted no later than 30 calendar days following the period covered by the report. Any additional reporting requirements will be disclosed in the NOSA. Grantees are required within 45 calendar days following the end of the period of performance to submit a final closeout report in the format required by the Grantor (See 2 CFR 200.344).

**Monitoring**

Grantees funded through this NOFO are subject to fiscal and programmatic monitoring visits by the Department in accordance with 2 CFR 200.337. They must have an open-door policy allowing periodic visits by Department monitors to evaluate the progress of the project and provide documentation upon request of the monitor. Program staff will also maintain contact with participants and monitor progress and performance of the contracts. The Department may modify grants based on performance.

**Audit**

Grantees shall be subject to Illinois' statewide Audit Report Review requirements. Terms of the Single Audit Act Amendments of 1996 (31 USC 7501-7507), Subpart F of 2 CFR Part 200, and the audit rules set forth under the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act Admin Rules shall apply (See 44 IL Admin Code 7000.90).

**Energy Transition Navigator Specific Reporting**

Grantees shall provide an annual report to the Department by April 1 of each calendar year. The annual report shall include the following information:

- A description of the grantee's recruitment, screening, and training efforts;
- The number of outreach activities and events, dates, and number of participants who attended events or participated in activities;
- The number of individuals who enroll in and complete each of the CEJA workforce and contractor programs who were recruited by the Energy Transition Navigator team, broken down by location (nearest workforce hub or pre-apprenticeship center, environmental justice community and/or R3 community), race, gender, and age;
- A description of engagement activities with local stakeholders (workforce and employment agencies, small business development centers, community-based organizations, etc.) and any outcomes from these engagement activities;
- And a description of engagement activities with employers, industry leaders, unions and apprenticeship programs and any outcomes from these engagement activities.

Grantees will be required to submit regular reports to document the progress of the project as part of the grant requirements.

**G. State Awarding Agency Contact(s)**

Grant Help Desk  
Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity  
Email: [CEO.GrantHelp@illinois.gov](mailto:CEO.GrantHelp@illinois.gov)

**H. Other Information, if applicable**

The Department reserves the right to request additional information from applicants to evaluate applications.

Submission of an application confers no right to an award or to a subsequent grant agreement. The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity is not obligated to award any grants under this program, to pay any costs incurred by the applicant in the preparation and submission of an application or pay any grant-related costs incurred prior to the grant's beginning date

**Questions and Answers:** Applicants may submit questions about this NOFO to [CEO.CEJA@illinois.gov](mailto:CEO.CEJA@illinois.gov). Answers to questions will be posted on the NOFO webpage at: <https://uofi.app.box.com/s/vzbo4oytrq5a83uvian4f7j5owbytuxl>

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**Renewals and Grant Modifications:** The Department may authorize the renewal, for up to two additional years, of projects awarded under this NOFO and additional funding based on the activities, outcomes and performance of the grantee as well as the availability of funds under the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act. The renewal, if granted, would occur after one year of programmatic performance and an evaluation of services and outcomes.

**Technical Assistance and Professional Development:** Grantees must plan on attending group or individual technical assistance and/or training sessions as directed by the Department. Depending on grantee needs and capacity, the Department may require grantees to meet with a program coach.

### APPLICATION CHECKLIST

This checklist outlines the required documents that must be uploaded to the DCEO application smartsheet at: <https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/c59b016923164b7d91a99b4b041ac0bb>. Applications that are submitted July 14, 2025 will have the administrative review completed by July 31, 2025 to verify that the application meet the minimum administrative requirements. Applications that do not meet the administrative requirements will have the opportunity to resubmit the application package before the December 31, 2025 deadline.

- Uniform Grant Application in fillable PDF format. Signature page must be printed, signed, scanned and submitted with application. **[PDF FORM]**
- Uniform Budget utilizing the template provided by DCEO for this project. **[EXCEL FILE and PDF FORM]**
  - The entire budget with all worksheets included even if the worksheets are not relevant to the grant opportunity must be submitted with the application materials. Signature page must be printed, signed, scanned and submitted with application.*
- Conflict of Interest Disclosure **[PDF FORM]**
- Mandatory Disclosures **[PDF FORM]**
- Technical Proposal **[PDF NARRATIVE]**
- Required Attachment Workbook **[EXCEL FILE]**
  - Attachment 1 – Project Summary
  - Attachment 2 – Activities and Outcomes
  - Attachment 3 – Staffing Plan
  - Attachment 4 - Timeline
- Resumes and Job Descriptions **[PDF FORM]**
- Memorandum of Understanding / Partnership Agreements **[PDF FORM]**