

# RWFI E-NOTE MONTHLY

REGIONAL WORKFORCE INITIATIVE • AUGUST 2024

## Welcome Message

Greetings NETL RWFI stakeholders,

In this month's funding opportunity in focus is the U.S. Department of Commerce's *Good Jobs Challenge*. Through this funding, the Economic Development Agency (EDA) aims to support regional workforce training systems in designing and implementing activities for established sectoral partnerships in key technology focus areas.

Also, in this month's E-Note's Reports and Resources section is a new report from the *Georgetown Center for Workforce on Job Projections through 2031*.

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– Sincerely, The NETL RWFI Team

## Workforce Funding Announcements

FUNDING SPOTLIGHT



### *Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Good Jobs Challenge*

#### **U.S. Department of Commerce, Deadline, Sept. 27, 2024**

The Economic Development Agency's (EDA) mission is to lead the Federal economic development agenda by promoting innovation and competitiveness by preparing American regions, States, and Tribes for growth and success in the worldwide economy. Through this FY24 Good Jobs Challenge Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), EDA will support regional workforce training systems in designing and implementing activities for established sectoral partnerships that place program participants in good jobs and advance industries in the federal key technology focus areas. \$25M will be awarded through this FY24 Good Jobs Challenge NOFO. EDA anticipates awarding approximately 5–8 grantees with awards ranging from \$1M–\$8M. This NOFO aims to fortify the economic and national security of the United States and advance the competitiveness of the applicant's region.

### *Accelerating Research through International Network-to-Network Collaborations*

#### **National Science Foundation, Deadline, Sept. 15, 2024**

The contemporary research landscape is a collaborative and international enterprise requiring high level coordination among multi-disciplinary, cross-cultural teams. As such, the Accelerating Research through International Network-to-Network Collaborations program values cooperation over competition. Program goals are to leverage prior National Science Foundation (NSF) support for building research capacity towards activities that launch international research network of networks that will lead to an accelerated advancement of an area of science after the award period and recruit and foster a diverse and internationally competent U.S.-based workforce trained in conducting and leading multi-team international collaboration.

### *Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) Smart Manufacturing and Recycling Tactics for States (SMART)*

#### **U.S. Department of Energy, Deadline, Sept. 16, 2024**

The BIL SMART funding opportunity announcement (FOA) will provide funding to support access to smart manufacturing technologies and high-performance computing resources for small- and medium-sized manufacturers by states and the recycling of batteries and battery-containing devices by states and units of local government.

### *Strengthening Community Colleges (SCC) Training Grants (Round 5)*

#### **U.S. Department of Labor, Deadline, Sept. 24, 2024**

The purpose of this grant program is to build community colleges' capacity to meet the skill development needs of employers and equitably support students in obtaining good jobs in in-demand industries. Grantees will enhance sector-based career pathways programs using strategies rooted in evidence and designed to build further evidence on the effectiveness of sector-based career pathways programs in leading to positive employment outcomes. Successful applicants will use the diverse strengths of their SCC Partnership members to accomplish and sustain systems change.

### *Expanding Artificial Intelligence (AI) Innovation through Capacity Building and Partnerships (ExpandAI)*

#### **National Science Foundation, Deadline, Oct. 18, 2024**

The NSF and its partners support the continued growth of a broad and diverse interdisciplinary research community for the advancement of AI and AI-powered innovation, providing a unique opportunity to broadly promote the NSF vision and core values, especially inclusion and collaboration. The ExpandAI program aims to significantly broaden participation in AI research, education, and workforce development through capacity development projects and through partnerships

within the National AI Research Institutes ecosystem.

*Water Power Innovation Network*

**U.S. Department of Energy, Deadline, Oct. 23, 2024**

The DOE’s Water Power Technologies Office (WPTO) is issuing this \$4.8M FOA “Water Power Innovation Network” to support business creation, entrepreneurship, and regional innovation for water power systems and solutions. WPTO enables research, development, and testing of emerging technologies to advance marine energy as well as next-generation hydropower and pumped storage systems for a flexible, reliable grid.

**NETL News**

*First-of-Its-Kind Software Integration with Wafer-Scale Engine (WSE) Achieved*

NETL researchers recently took a significant step forward in harnessing the power of the world’s largest computer chip—the WSE—by using an application programming interface designed in-house to connect commercial computational fluid dynamics software through data-file sharing with the next-generation computing technology.



*NETL and Cerebras Look to Wafer Scale Engine to Increase Onsite Energy Efficiency*

NETL and project partner Cerebras are advancing high-performance computing and AI-physics model coupling that can greatly reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions associated with energy research projects by as much as 30%.



*Splendor of the Pacific Northwest Drives NETL Researcher to Help Save the Planet*

Working for NETL at its research site in Albany, OR has provided Billy Epting with an abundance of opportunities to explore his true passions—developing solid oxide fuel cell and solid oxide electrolysis cell technology to address climate change and enjoying the beauty of

the Pacific Northwest with his family.



*Two Additional Projects Selected to Advance Rare Earth Element (REE) and Critical Mineral (CM) and Material Processing Technologies Using Coal and Coal Byproducts as Feedstocks*

As part of President Biden’s Investing in America agenda, the DOE today announced nearly \$10M for two projects that will help lower the costs and reduce the environmental impact of producing REEs and other CMs and materials from coal, coal wastes, and coal by-products. Funded by the BIL, the selected projects will help meet the growing demand for critical minerals and materials in the United States, while reducing our reliance on foreign supply chains. REEs and other CMs and materials are incorporated into many products, including U.S.-manufactured clean energy technologies—such as solar panels, wind turbines, electric vehicles, and hydrogen fuel cells that are advancing President Biden’s historic climate agenda.



*NETL, Partners Report Breakthrough Research Results to Advance Geothermal Technology*

he successful completion of field operations supported by NETL in southwest Utah represents a significant step forward to advance geothermal energy as a resource that will produce renewable clean electricity for the nation’s power grid.



*DOE Issues Notice of Intent to Fund Undocumented Orphan Well (UOW) Characterization and Remediation Technology Development and Deployment*

The DOE's Office of Fossil Energy and Carbon Management today announced its intent to issue funding to support research and development projects focused on advancing cost-effective technology options toward commercialization that can more efficiently characterize the condition of UOWs and provide a range of remediation options.

**Reports and Resources**

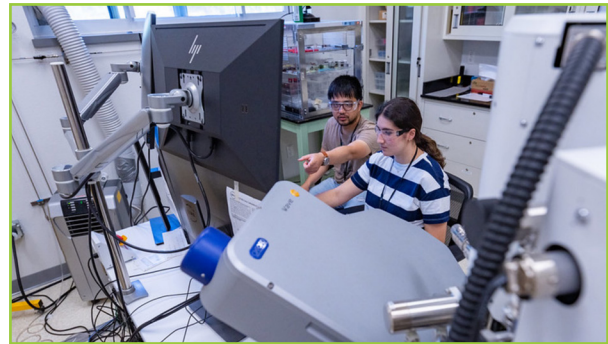


*The Future of Good Jobs—Projections through 2031*

**Georgetown University, Center on Education and the Workforce**

Even against a backdrop of economic uncertainty—driven by high inflation and interest rates, generative AI, international conflicts, changing demographics, and a shifting policy environment—the future of good jobs in the United States looks promising. Economic opportunity will increasingly favor workers with higher levels of education and training. The Future of Good Jobs: Projections through 2031 forecasts the number of good jobs in 2031 for workers ages 25–64 by 22 occupational groups and three educational pathways (bachelor's degree, middle skills, and high school). The report finds that while there will be good jobs on every educational pathway in 2031, only 15 percent will be available to workers on the high school pathway, compared to 66 percent on the bachelor's degree pathway and 19 percent on the middle-skills pathway.

**DOE STEM Rising**



*Early-Career Professionals Session to Return to National Cleanup Workshop*

DOE's Office of Environmental Management will hold the 2<sup>nd</sup> Early-Career Professionals Session during the annual National Cleanup Workshop (NCW) with a goal of training and retaining its newest workforce members. The workshop is being held Sept. 16–18, 2024, at the Crystal Gateway Marriott in Arlington, VA. The NCW brings together senior DOE executives, officials from DOE sites, industry executives, and other key stakeholders to discuss EM's progress in the cleanup of the environmental legacy of the nation's Manhattan Project and Cold War era nuclear weapons program.

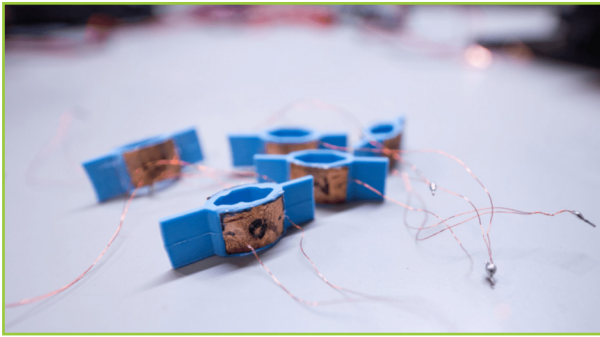
*Responses Will Help Inform the Balance Between Centralized and Distributed Program Management of the Fellowship Program*

The DOE's Advanced Materials and Manufacturing Technologies Office (AMMTO) released a request for information (RFI) to gather input from stakeholders across the clean energy innovation and entrepreneurship ecosystem regarding optimal strategies and opportunities to expand the quality, reach, impact, and equity of the Lab-Embedded Entrepreneurship Program. The RFI will assist AMMTO as it considers approaches to coordination and/or centralization of some of the program's core operations.

*Biden-Harris Administration Announces \$24M to Further Expand America's Clean Energy Workforce and Enhance Manufacturing Efficiency*

In support of the Biden-Harris Administration's Investing in America agenda, the DOE announced 21 new projects selected to receive \$24M from the BIL to bolster the development of clean energy workforce training programs—with a focus on jobs that do not require a four-year degree—within union training programs, community colleges, and trade schools across the country.





***Marine Energy Technology Innovators Receive \$1.2M in Second Phase of Prize Focused on Novel Wave Energy Technologies***

The DOE's Water Power Technologies Office today announced the 15 winning teams in Phase II of the American-Made Innovating Distributed Embedded Energy Prize. Each team was awarded \$80K, for a combined \$1.2M in cash prizes, for showcasing the performance capabilities and characteristics of their distributed embedded energy converter technology concepts to harness and convert the power of ocean waves into usable types of energy.

## ABOUT NETL



NETL, owned and operated by DOE, is one of the Department's 17 National Laboratories. NETL supports DOE's mission to advance the national, economic, and energy security of the United States.

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