



Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program

2024-25 Program Manual

Chapter 3: Partnerships

Chapter Overview

By the end of this chapter, you will be able to:

- Ensure partners comply with program requirements (i.e., grantees/recipients, subgrantees/subrecipients, and contractors/vendors).
- Explore the partnerships you may wish to develop with other CEJA program grantees.
- Develop strategic partnerships to support program success.
- Track partnerships in the CEJA Reporting System.
- Establish partnerships experienced with meeting the needs of equity investment-eligible communities and other targeted populations.
- Leverage recommended resources.

Partner Roles

While partners may have expertise in one or more required program areas, it may be necessary for them to leverage the support of strategic partners. Strategic partnerships can be essential to comprehensive program implementation and long-term success. Below are typical partner roles.

- **Grantees/Recipients:** A non-state entity receiving an award directly from DCEO to carry out the activities outlined in the award agreement.
- **Subgrantees/Subrecipients:** A non-state entity that receives a sub-award to carry out part or a portion of a state award. The sub-award creates an assistance relationship between the Grantee/Recipients and the Subgrantee/Subrecipient.
- **Contractors/Vendors:** A non-state entity that receives a contract to provide goods and/or services for the awarding non-state entity. The contract creates a procurement relationship between the contractor and the Grantee/Recipient and/or the Subgrantee/Subrecipient. This relationship may include an employer contracting with grantees for a work-based learning job site practicum.

Note: A vendor may provide products or services but does not necessarily require a contract. However, it will create a procurement relationship. Refer to Chapter 11: Finances, Records, and Reports for procurement policy information.

Each partner may have a different relationship with the grantee depending on the nature of the agreement, the services provided, and the payment/compensation structure. The terms of the partnership must be clearly delineated in a **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)**, which establishes the expectations for each party in the agreement.

Note: For information about relationships that require MOUs see Table 1: Partnership and Provider Relationship Requirements below.

Components of a **Memorandum of Understanding** may include, but not be limited to:

- Parties involved
- Name of project/program/grant
- Purpose of agreement
- Scope of work
- Responsibilities per party/entity
- Mutual understandings
- Communication/Reporting expectations
- Recordkeeping, maintenance, and retention
- Duration of agreement (start and end date)

Partners may fill a particular role and have specific grantee reporting requirements. Broadly speaking, partners relate to the grant in the following ways:

Grantees/Recipients

- Are officially on record for the grant and can receive the actual funds for the grant through a grant agreement with DCEO.
- Require an MOU with subgrantees.
- Must report program participation and outcomes through the periodic performance report, periodic financial report, and other required reporting through the CEJA Reporting System.
- Must maintain program documentation for five years.

Subgrantees/Subrecipients

- Are officially on record for the grant (note: if this is a program requirement).
- Require an MOU with Grantees/Recipients.
- Must report program participation and outcomes to the Grantees/Recipients.
- Must maintain program documentation for 3-5 years (note: this must be in line with the funding source and outlined in the grant agreement).
- Provide services and outcomes that are reported and managed by the Grantees/Recipients.
- Are supervised and monitored by the Grantees/Recipients.

Contractors/Vendors

- Are not officially on record for the grant agreement.
- Are compensated by the Grantees/Recipients or Subgrantees/Subrecipients.
- May not require a MOU but is still recommended.
- Must report activities and services per the requirements of the Grantees/Recipients or Subgrantees/Subrecipients.
- Are supervised and monitored by the Grantees/Recipients or Subgrantees/Subrecipients.

It is important to note that contractors/vendors do not have to be a part of the grant contract, but utilizing a contractor/vendor will create a procurement relationship.

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Note: For more information about procurement policies see [Section 11: Finances, Records, and Reports](#).

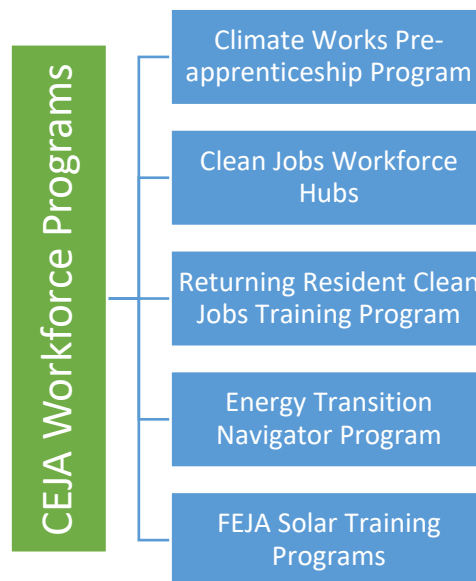
Table 1: Partnership and Provider Relationship Requirements

Requirements	Grantees/ Recipients	Subgrantees/ Subrecipients	Contractors/ Vendors
On Record for the Grant	Yes	Yes	
Receives Funds Directly from DCEO	Yes		
Receives Funds from Grantee through Subgrant/Contract		Yes	Yes
Requires an MOU	Yes	Yes	Recommended
Must Report Program Participation and Outcomes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Must Maintain 3-5 yrs. of Program Documentation	Yes	Yes	

Remember that the main Grantee/Recipient will be held accountable by DCEO for all grant outcomes and for following all of the required program guidance. If a Subgrantee/Subrecipient or a Contractor/Vendor is not performing as agreed, they can be removed and/or replaced. However, a **Grantee/Recipient is legally responsible for executing the project as agreed with DCEO.**

CEJA Workforce Partners

The Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program is part of the larger **CEJA Workforce Program ecosystem**, shown below. Climate Works grantees will, therefore, need to coordinate closely with the grantees of these programs to build the clean energy workforce in Illinois. Consider how partnerships with each of these might support the program's success. The terms of the partnership must be clearly delineated in a **Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)**, which establishes the expectations for each party in the agreement.



Energy Transition Navigators

The central CEJA partnership will be with the Energy Transition Navigators. Energy Transition Navigators will provide outreach, education, and recruitment to equity investment-eligible communities and individuals to increase participation in the CEJA workforce programs, including the Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program. Energy Transition Navigators will provide support and career guidance for participants enrolling in the Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program. You must work with them to coordinate your outreach and recruitment efforts.

Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program (Workforce Hubs)

Clean jobs training will be provided by thirteen (13) different workforce hubs throughout the state of Illinois. Grantees should partner with the nearest workforce hub to coordinate learning opportunities, provide job fairs, or share outreach referrals.

Returning Resident Clean Jobs Training Program

Grantees may receive referrals for individuals who receive clean jobs training in correctional facilities for additional training or barrier reduction services. Coordinate with the grantees of this program to support returning residents.

CEJA Regional Administrators

Another key partner is the **CEJA Regional Administrator**. These DCEO employees oversee and support the CEJA workforce programs and will be an essential resource for program implementation. Get to know the regional administrator in your region.

- Northern Illinois Regional Administrator: Larry Dawson, Larry.Dawson@Illinois.gov
- Central Illinois Regional Administrator: Nate Keener, nate.keener@illinois.gov
- Southern Illinois Regional Administrator: Michelle Cerutti, Michelle.Cerutti@Illinois.gov

Equity Values

It is important that ALL partners understand that **equity** is the foundation of the Climate Works program. **Trust** should be established in a way that allows for honest dialogue with participants. Trust is essential for building a diverse pipeline for the Clean Energy Sector in the state of Illinois.

ALL partners should be educated on:

- CEJA equity values
- Diversity among equity eligible individuals
- Equity eligible community dynamics

Each of these are critical for removing barriers and providing participants with the support they need to be successful.

Note: For more information regarding educational opportunities, see Chapter 9: Professional Development.

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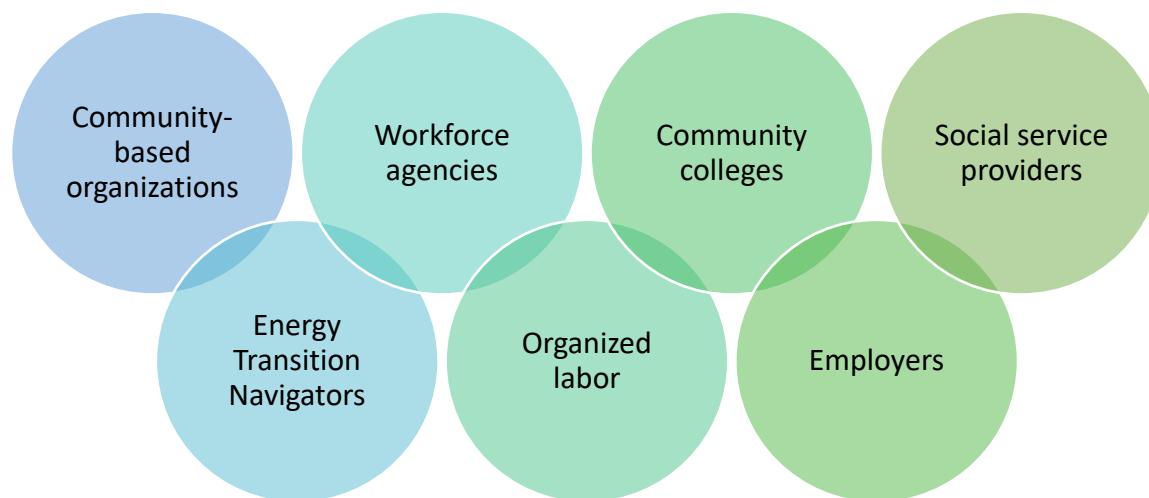
Trauma-informed practice is the ability to recognize the link between trauma, social, and academic challenges. It helps ensure that people feel safe and are not re-traumatized by their engagement with the CEJA ecosystem. Trauma informed practices should be a component of the professional development provided for partners with the goal of enabling them to best support program participants, including how to assess and determine when there is a need for mental health counseling.

Trauma-informed practices can help cultivate trust. **Trust** should be established in a way that allows for honest dialogue between partners and Climate Works Pre-apprentice Participants.

Note: For more information about the Climate Works program culture, core values, equity goals, and overall equity focus, see Chapter 2 Program Culture.

Developing Partnerships

The success of the Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program depends on grantees' ability to **develop partnerships** with external organizations, such as organized labor, employers, community-based organizations, and workforce agencies for apprenticeship placement, support service referrals, best practice sharing, and more.



Many of these partnerships may already exist. Continue cultivating these relationships. Consider which type of partnerships will support the different program elements.

Outreach and recruitment: What organizations might help with outreach and recruitment? To recruit participants, consider developing relationships with high school counselors, community-based organizations, or reentry organizations. Reach out to the local [Illinois workNet/American Jobs Center](#) or the [Regional Economic Development \(RED\) Team](#) for ideas on recruiting participants. The [CEJA Grantee Map](#) includes the location of Illinois workNet Centers (be sure to enable the appropriate layer in the map to see the centers).

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Reach out to these organizations and consider ways to:

- Co-host outreach events
- Spread the word about the program through fliers, posters, and word-of-mouth
- Attend meetings with their clients to share information about the program

Support service delivery: The Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program offers a wide variety of support services. Still, it is unlikely that one program will be able to provide all the barrier reduction services in-house. Leveraging formal and informal partnerships and relationships for referrals can help meet the needs of program participants. Referrals to other organizations will be much more effective if relationships are developed beforehand. Reach out to organizations that provide food, housing, transportation assistance, legal assistance, mental health services, substance use treatment, childcare, and more. Learn how to work together to support participants. Discuss how services will be paid for and how Climate Works can support service delivery.

Training program delivery: Work-based learning is a crucial—and required—element of the Climate Works training. If partnerships do not currently exist with employers or other organizations for work-based learning elements, developing these relationships must be a priority. Explore how employers or apprenticeship programs might:

- Provide job site practicums so your participants can have hands-on experience at a real job site.
- Provide job shadowing or field trips so that participants can see workers in action.
- Provide class visits so that participants can ask questions about employment.

Additionally, consider developing relationships with external education providers for tutoring or other barrier-reduction services for participants with special needs.

Apprenticeship placement: The program aims to help participants enter and succeed in registered apprenticeships. Grantees must develop relationships with registered apprenticeships to facilitate apprenticeship placement. This relationship may involve learning how many openings they have per year, exploring the application process, and structuring the training schedule so that participants can enter an apprenticeship program right after they complete the training. It may involve learning about the skills that apprenticeship programs expect new apprentices to have and helping participants develop these skills.

For apprenticeship programs in your area, access the hyperlink here to the [CEJA Grantee Map](#) and enable the Registered Apprenticeship Program layer. Contact information for each apprenticeship program is available by clicking on the icons. You can also find registered apprenticeship programs [here](#).

Job placement: Because not all participants will enter apprenticeship programs (many may be waitlisted, and others may decide that they want to get a job instead), it will be essential to develop relationships with employers in the construction and building trades, especially those that work on clean energy projects; and discuss how Climate Works' pipeline of graduates can support their hiring needs.

The Illinois Power Agency's [Energy Equity Portal](#) maintains a list of job openings in the clean energy industry. Ameren Illinois (in partnership with Springfield Urban League) maintains a vetted [list of Illinois](#)

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[job openings in energy efficiency](#). Consider contacting these employers to discuss ways you can help them fill these job openings.

Clean energy employers include, but may not be limited to:

- [Illinois Shines Approved Vendors](#) (solar developers/installers)
- [Illinois Solar for All Approved Vendors](#) (solar developers/installers)
- [Ameren Illinois Business Program Ally Contractors](#) (network of contractors who offer energy efficiency solutions for businesses and public sector facilities in Ameren Illinois territory)
- [Ameren Illinois Residential Program Allies](#) (network of contractors who offer energy efficiency solutions for residential properties in Ameren Illinois territory)
- [ComEd Energy Efficiency Service Providers--Businesses](#) (network of contractors who offer energy efficiency services in ComEd territory for businesses and public sector organizations)
- The local [Community Action Agency](#) to find out if they are hiring people for the Illinois Home Weatherization Assistance Program.
- The [IllinoisJobLink.com](#)
- The [Network & Connect Illinois workNet Service Finder](#) is a free service for Illinois residents and employers that offers many great service providers and programs that are available throughout Illinois to help you get through tough times. These services and programs provide support to help you reach your training and employment goals.
- State of Illinois Commission on Equity and Inclusion [CEI BEP Diversity Management System](#)
- PDF of [Equity Eligible Contractor AVs as of 3-15-2024](#) (AVs who are currently suspended or who discontinued operations highlighted in ORANGE AVs who have withdrawn in good standing or have become inactive in the Program highlighted in BLUE.
- Illinois Commerce Commission maintains a Utility Company Database of companies required to receive a certificate from the Illinois Commerce Commission. These include energy efficiency providers, electric vehicle charging station installers (or maintainers), and distributed generation. Search for companies [here](#).

The [Regional Economic Development \(RED\) Team](#) can assist with connecting to business partners. The economic regional boundaries are available in the [CEJA Grantee Map](#) (enable the Economic Development Region layer).

When communicating with employers and apprenticeship programs, identify the value proposition: what's in it for them?

By partnering with your program, employers and apprenticeship programs can:

- Access qualified candidates with basic construction skills, fundamental clean energy knowledge, and essential employability skills.
- Meet minimum equity or supplier diversity requirements for participation in state solar, wind, and energy efficiency programs.
- Make commitments to diversify their workforce.
- Grow their businesses to take advantage of clean energy project funding.

Managing Relationships with Partners

Establish a **Memorandum of Understanding** with partners to clarify the expectations of the relationship. Especially with employers and apprenticeship programs, it is essential to explain what is expected of them in terms of:

- Hiring program graduates.
- Offering work-based learning opportunities.
- Supporting participants after hire.
- Tracking outcomes.
- Communicating with staff about participant needs.

How will you share information about participants? How will you continue to support participants who are hired by employers? What information will you need from them to report program outcomes? These issues will be addressed in subsequent chapters.

A sample Memorandum of Understanding can be found in the Climate Works Partner Guide.

Tracking Partner Engagements

The **CEJA Reporting System** allows grantees to track partner engagements. Through the Partner Engagement tab, grantees will track partner relationships and engagement, including the type of partner (i.e., business association, community college, union, social service agency, and employer, among others), and the services the partner offers (i.e., supportive services, job site training, other instruction, and daycare, among others). This type of tracking is critical for programs to develop a robust and ever-growing network of partners.

DCEO will look at partner recruitment and engagement data as one of the key metrics denoting grantee success. For technical instructions on how to track partner recruitment and engagement, visit the resource page of the Climate Works Partner Guide. Tracking partner relationships will also enable you to share contacts with other CEJA grantees, such as the Energy Transition Navigators, to coordinate engagement efforts and avoid duplication of efforts.

Leveraged Resources

Climate Works encourages its grantees to maximize the use of their resources and minimize duplication of efforts through system alignment, leveraging alternate funding, network building, and information sharing. Leveraged resources can include the following:

- **Co-enrollment:** In addition to enrolling in the Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program, participants may also qualify for other programs, such as the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), that can offer critical services for participants. Climate Works allows co-enrollment with specific programs; however, it is essential to note eligibility or ineligibility for other services does not and should not impact a grantee's decision to accept the participant into the pre-apprenticeship program. Note that participants cannot be co-enrolled in another CEJA program (such as the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program).

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- **Alternate Funding:** Climate Works does not require grantees to seek out additional programming funding. However, if grantees are interested in securing alternate funding or in-kind resources for service support or to help improve the cost-effectiveness of their programming, this is allowable and encouraged. Various other state, federal, and private programs exist and may provide an opportunity to expand the capacity of CEJA programming.
- **Service Networks:** Many grantees have informal or formal relationships with other community-based organizations. These networks can be invaluable in helping to enhance existing programs and services. Informal relationships may consist of referral networks, while formal relationships may be solidified in a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU). Grantees that leverage their networks may provide participants with a more robust menu of support services.
- **Resource and Best Practice Sharing:** Climate Works will offer grantees a suite of tools and resources based on industry best practices available throughout their grant year. Grantees are encouraged to utilize the tools available in this manual and in the Climate Works Partner Guide. Climate Works also encourages grantees to contact their fellow Climate Works grantees to pull from the network's collective knowledge and experience. DCEO will also host technical assistance webinars and other events to share best practices and provide a space to network among grantees.