



GREEN NEWS

The Newsletter for ID's Clean Energy Incubator Program

Coming Up



Join biweekly Member Meetups at Innovation DuPage! Network, enjoy bagels & coffee, and learn from spotlight members & resource experts.

The next Member Meetup will be on April 15 from 9:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.

Member Spotlight: Jake Mickley of Aila Technologies

Member Resource: Jessica Wain of Hobbs & Wain Advancement Partners and Innovation DuPage Grant Writer

Following the Member Meetup, there will be a Consumer Goods and Services Cluster meeting.

If you can't make it in person, attend virtually through our [Zoom Link](#)

[Sign up](#) to present at a future Member Meetup

AI Symposium at DePaul University: April 15

The AI Applied Consortium is hosting "The Spark: Where Industrial AI Gets Real" on April 15 from 1:00-5:00 p.m. at the Spark Center at DePaul University. The afternoon features three panels with operators, researchers, and industry leaders covering where AI is delivering real value today, how to design agentic systems that work in practice, and what the next operating model looks like as AI becomes part of everyday work.

[Register Here](#)

Illinois INVENT Workshop Hosted by DCEO April 21

Please join us for a virtual workshop hosted by the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) on April 21 from 1:00 - 2:00 p.m.

Illinois INVENT (Illinois Innovation Venture Fund) is a \$114 million direct equity capital program funded through the U.S. Department of the Treasury's State Small Business Credit Initiative (SSBCI) and administered by Illinois DCEO.

For more information on INVENT, please visit:
<https://dceo.illinois.gov/illinoisinvent.html>.

We recommend downloading the Webex app to utilize all functionalities

[TO JOIN THE WORKSHOP](#)

CxEnergy 2026 Conference

CxEnergy 2026 takes place April 21-24 in Chicago at the Sheraton Grand. The conference covers building commissioning, energy management strategies, and case studies across various sectors. Attendees earn continuing education credits.

[Register Here](#)

Green Drives Conference & Expo: May 14

The Illinois Alliance for Clean Transportation presents its annual Green Drives Conference & Expo on May 14 from 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. at Danada House in Wheaton. This Midwest clean-transportation conference features the latest in electric vehicles, alternative fuels, and zero-emissions technologies, with dozens of exhibitors and vehicles on display. Learn from fleet managers, policy makers, and industry experts about trends and best practices for clean transportation.

[Register Here](#)

Opportunities

Funded Summer Internship Program through UChicago

The University of Chicago's Metcalf Internship Program offers Clean Energy Incubator Program participants access to undergraduate interns with a \$4,000

stipend provided by the university.

To participate, you'll need to submit a job description with details about your organization, the internship role and responsibilities, required qualifications, location and time commitment, and your hiring timeline. The application process moves quickly, so reach out to [Arlinda Bajrami](#) or [Ricardo Magallon](#) soon if you're interested.

[To Learn More](#)

Illinois Clean Ports Program RFP: Shawneetown Port

As part of the Illinois Clean Ports Program, the Shawneetown Port District has released a Request for Proposals (RFP) to procure a (BABA)-compliant Electric Material Handler.

[To Learn More](#)

Apply Now: DOE Boost Entrepreneur Program

Launch an EnergyTech venture with the DOE Boost Program. This virtual program gives entrepreneurs exclusive access to cutting-edge DOE lab technologies, expert mentorship, and the opportunity to license technology and launch your own spinout company. Top-performing teams are eligible for a share of \$100,000 in awards.

The program is open to entrepreneurs from all backgrounds, with special encouragement for applicants in Illinois and seven other states.

The application deadline is June 26, 2026, with the program running from late July through an in-person Industry Showcase in early December.

[To Learn More and Apply](#)

Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund

The Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund is designed to help developers, contractors, and building owners finance clean energy and energy efficiency projects across Illinois. This program provides short-term bridge loans to cover upfront project costs while awaiting incentives, rebates, or tax credits, helping projects move forward without delays. Eligible upgrades may include solar, battery storage, geothermal systems, and energy efficiency improvements in commercial or multifamily buildings.

This program is a \$14 million revolving loan fund that will offer loans of up to \$1 million each for a short term (12-18 month) and, in some instances, more lengthy participation loans.

[To Learn More and Apply](#)

State Small Business Credit Initiative: Low-Interest Loans for Clean Energy Businesses

Illinois small businesses working in clean energy can access low-interest loans through the Illinois Climate Bank's SSBCI program. Loans range from \$25,000 to \$2 million at a flat rate of 1–2% annually, with terms up to 7 years. Eligible projects include solar, wind, EV charging, energy conservation, and more. Businesses must have fewer than 750 employees and operate in Illinois.

[To Learn More and Apply](#)

Illinois Innovation Voucher Program: Now Accepting Applications

Illinois small and mid-sized businesses can apply for vouchers covering up to 75% of costs (up to \$75,000) to partner with Illinois universities and research institutions on R&D projects. Eligible uses include product development, prototyping, testing, and access to labs and equipment. Applicants must be Illinois-based for-profit businesses.

[To Learn More and Apply](#)

Policy

Illinois Green Policy Update: March 2026

Illinois Green Alliance's latest policy update covers legislation currently being considered by the Illinois General Assembly, including the POWER (Protecting Our Water, Energy, and Ratepayers) Act, Plug-In Solar, and Utility Data Access for Gas Utilities.

[Read More Here](#)

What the CRGA Act Means for Your Business

Illinois just passed the Clean and Reliable Grid Affordability (CRGA) Act, which builds on previous clean energy legislation and creates significant new opportunities for clean energy contractors. The Act mandates 3 gigawatts of battery storage deployment, expands energy efficiency programs, and creates a Virtual Power Plant program that will allow customers with batteries and

solar to provide grid services and get paid. It also funds geothermal energy network pilot programs and strengthens protections against solar fraud, helping legitimate installers compete fairly. Funding and program rollouts will occur gradually depending on regulatory approvals and program development.

[Read More Here](#)

Partner Resources

Dorian Dickinson, CEO of FundingHope, has shared his presentation from last week's workshop on raising capital through investment crowdfunding. The slides cover how Regulation Crowdfunding works, what investors look for, and how to evaluate if your business is ready.

[Access the Presentation Here](#)

Allies for Community Business provides capital, coaching, and connections to help entrepreneurs grow businesses that create jobs and wealth in their communities. Allies for Community Business offers loans up to \$500,000 to support community businesses.

[Schedule a Session: Allies for Community Business](#)

The Illinois EPA Office of Energy supports energy efficiency, resiliency, and clean energy through public partnerships and inter-agency collaborations to reduce energy burden and improve energy equity in Illinois.

[Office of Energy: Listserv Sign-up](#)

The Building Energy Hub is designed for building developers, owners, operators, managers, and contractors. It provides education, highlights relevant tools, and connects you to key resources to support your clean energy projects. Explore playbooks, financing opportunities, case studies, and more.

[Building Energy Hub Website](#)

ID Resources

Businesses who haven't completed onboarding do so as soon as possible.

The below steps should be completed by all Clean Energy Incubator Program members:

1. Schedule a meeting with **Beth Ann Wymyslawski** Innovation DuPage member onboarding
 2. Schedule a meeting with **Anushka Verma** for tech stack onboarding
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To access any of the resources below, Please reach out to **Ricardo Magallon** or **Arlinda Bajrami**. They will help you get connected, determine eligibility, and guide you through next steps.

Newsletter Access:

Want to add a team member or partner to the Green News mailing list? Contact **Arlinda** to get them subscribed.

Grant Writing:

Jessica Wain — Hobbs & Wain Advancement Partners

Jessica provides grant writing and proposal development support, helping you identify, pursue, and secure funding opportunities that can accelerate your company's growth and scalability.

[Jessica's Booking Link](#)

Legal Support:

CEI Program Participants can receive legal support and potential expense reimbursement for assistance with:

- Structuring or restructuring your business
 - Intellectual property protection
 - Contracts, compliance, or general advisement
-

Interns:

We are partnering with the CEJA Aurora Workforce Hub to offer CEI companies access to paid interns in the following clean-energy career pathways:

- Commercial Energy Auditor
- Solar Installer and Sales
- HVAC-R Entry-Level Technician

This initiative is currently being developed, but we anticipate making these short-term internship opportunities available forthcoming.

ID Team Support:

- **Mike Varon** - Strategic Business Advisor
- **Ozge Guney** - Strategic Business Advisor
- **Heidi Kuharich** - Program Instructional Designer
- **Arlinda Bajrami** - Interim Program Manager
- **Ricardo Magallon** - Interim Program Director

- **Dan Facchini** - Managing Director

[Member Portal Login Page](#)

[Member Meetup Signup Sheet](#)

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