# GREEN NEWS

*The Newsletter for The CEJA Illinois Clean Energy Contractor Incubator Program*

## Coming Up

### Chain Reaction Innovations | Argonne National Laboratory Fellowship: Informational Webinar is Today!

Chain Reaction Innovations (CRI), the energy and science incubator at Argonne National Laboratory, is accepting applications for its 2027 cohort starting September 15 through October 30. The two-year fellowship provides early-stage technical founders with a $115,000 annual stipend, healthcare benefits, non-dilutive funding, and access to Argonne's world-class facilities, scientific expertise, and investor network. Applicants must be U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents.

An informational webinar is also available **today** for those looking to learn more before applying.

**To Learn More and Register**

### ID Workshop | Grow & Scale Your Business with AI: This Wednesday!

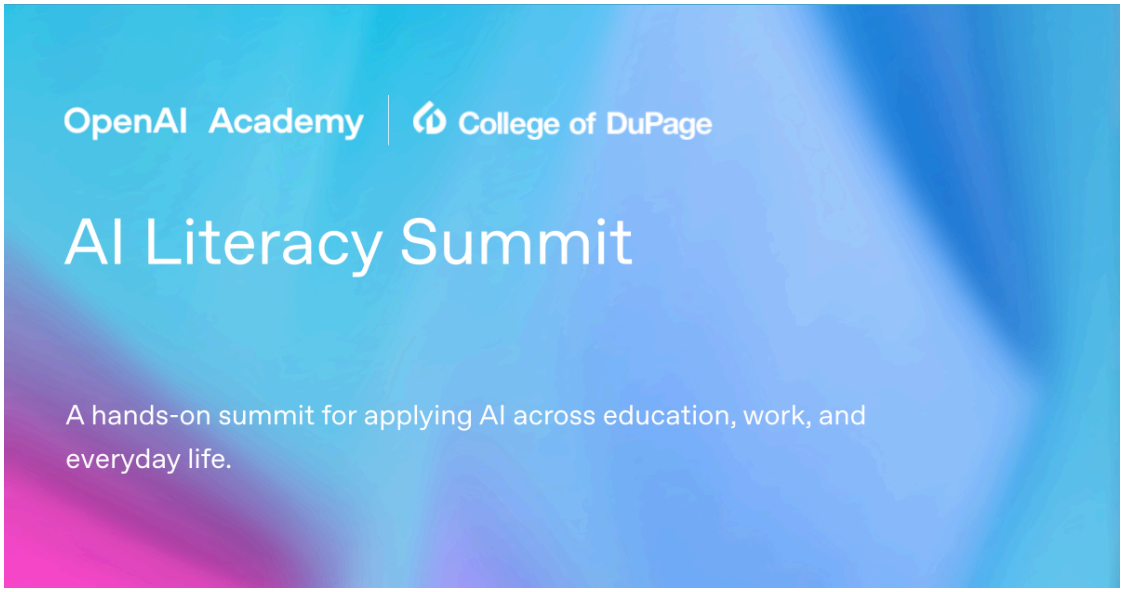



Wondering where AI can help you move the needle in your business? ID member Noor Aftab, former Amazon Global Lead and founder of Skilium AI, is facilitating this interactive workshop designed to help business owners cut through the noise and identify their highest-value AI opportunities. Participants will leave with three AI opportunities specific to their business, a workflow mapped for automation, and a 30-day action plan to put it all in motion.

**To Register**

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## OpenAI Academy and College of DuPage | AI Literacy Summit: Oct 7




College of DuPage and OpenAI Academy are hosting a hands-on AI Literacy Summit right here in Glen Ellyn! The full-day event is designed to help you use AI confidently and responsibly in your work and everyday life. Sessions include

AI foundations, breakouts for ChatGPT for Work, ChatGPT for Parents, and Building with ChatGPT, and no prior experience is needed to attend.

**To Learn More and Register**

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## College of DuPage Business Development Center | Certification Process Workshop Series

Our partners at the College of DuPage Business Development Center are hosting a four-part workshop series through the Illinois APEX Accelerator. Learn how the certification process works and what it takes to get started, with guidance from experienced APEX advisors.

Dates: Tuesdays, October 13, 20, 27, and November 3, 2026
Time: 1:00 to 2:30 p.m.
Location: Glen Ellyn Civic Center, Room 301
Instructors: Colleen Sall, with Andres Blandon and Ileen Kelly

Reach out to **Rob Glaser**, ID Program Manager to get signed up.

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## CECI Workshop | K.C. Doyle on the Illinois Shines Program: October 20




Join us at Innovation DuPage for a comprehensive overview of the Illinois Shines Program, the state's solar energy incentive program. K.C. Doyle will walk through the main project categories, steps to become an Approved Vendor or Designee, and a focused look at the Equity Eligible Contractor pathway, including eligibility, benefits, and how to register. A great session for solar developers, installers, and contractors exploring clean energy opportunities in Illinois.

Register through the member portal today!

# Ongoing Funding

## Illinois DCEO | Federal Grant Support Program: Up to $2M in Grant-Matching Assistance

To Learn More

## Clean Energy Jobs and Justice Fund: Financing Resources for Illinois Contractors

CEJJF Contractor Onboarding Portal (FairPath)

Clean Energy Project Form (Survey)

## Illinois DCEO: Energy Equity Futures Grant: Funding Opportunity Coming Q3 2026

To Sign Up for Updates

## National Energy Improvement Fund: Financing for Energy Efficiency & Renewable Projects

To Learn More

## Illinois Climate Bank: Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund

To Learn More and Apply

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

To Learn More and Apply

# Opportunities

## TrustBank Office Hours at Innovation DuPage

Have a banking question? Join the TrustBank team every other Wednesday from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m., immediately following our Member Meetup, for open Office Hours at ID.

Whether you're looking for guidance on business banking, lending, cash flow, credit, financial planning, or other financial topics, a TrustBank representatives will be available to answer questions and share practical insights and best practices.

No appointment is necessary. Just bring your questions and connect with the TrustBank team after the Member Meetup.

TrustBank™ WHEATON

## The Office of Economic Equity & Empowerment (OE3) | Monthly Webinars: June 3 - December 2

The Illinois Office of Economic Equity and Empowerment (OE3) hosts regular online sessions connecting business owners with the latest financial resources from state, federal, and local programs, as well as funding opportunities from private and community organizations.

Business Development Managers are available to answer questions in English and Spanish, and attendees receive a follow-up email recap of all resources shared. Sessions are not recorded.

Choose one or more dates to attend.

To Learn More and Register

# Policy

## Illinois Worker Preference Requirement Now in Effect

To Learn More

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### Clean and Reliable Grid Affordability (CRGA) Act Now in Effect

CRGA Factsheet

CRGA Overview

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### Latest Illinois Green Policy Update: June 2026

Read More Here

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# Partner Resources

The **Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO)** website includes a page dedicated to current state and federal grant opportunities as well as Grantee resources.

To Access Grant Opportunities and More

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Just upstairs from Innovation DuPage is the **Illinois Small Business Development Center (SBDC)**, part of College of DuPage's Business Development Center. SBDC advisors provide confidential guidance, training, and resources to start-up and existing small businesses, helping with everything from securing business capital and marketing to commercializing new ideas and developing innovative products and services. Client projects range from early-stage, pre-revenue concepts to established business operations.

To Learn More

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**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 an improve energy equity in Illinois.

**Office of Energy: Listserv Sign-up**

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**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**

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# ID Resources

**ID Mentoring Program:**
A flexible, high-impact program that connects CECI members with vetted industry experts for 1:1 mentorship tailored to their needs. Whether you're seeking a one-time conversation or an ongoing relationship, mentors provide guidance, insight, connections, and encouragement while helping you stay accountable to your goals.

Support areas include business development, funding and loans, legal guidance, business planning, marketing, government contracting, and more. The program is designed to be adaptable and collaborative, allowing you and your mentor to co-create a structure that best fits your journey and level of support needed.

**To Get Connected to a Mentor**

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**Grant Writing Support:**
Jess Wain — Hobbs & Wain Advancement Partners
Jess 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**

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**Get Your Company Listed on Pitchbook**:
Pitchbook is a leading private market database used by investors, VCs, and strategic partners to discover and research early-stage companies. Innovation

DuPage is now offering all members the opportunity to be listed under ID's profile — giving your company added visibility and third-party validation as a program participant. This is an opt-in benefit available to all active members.

Interested? Reach out to **Elina Conley** to get started.

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**Newsletter Access:**
Want to add a team member or partner to the Green News mailing list? Contact **Hiba Anjum** to get them subscribed.

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**Legal Support:**
CECI 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

Reach out to **Ricardo Magallon** or the **CECI Team** to get started.

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**ID Team Support:**

- **Mike Varon** - Strategic Business Advisor
- **Heather Sattler** - Mentor Advisor
- **Heidi Kuharich** - Program Instructional Designer
- **Ricardo Magallon** - Program Director
- **Hiba Anjum** - Program Associate
- **Dan Facchini** - Managing Director

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**Member Portal Login Page**

**Member Meetup Signup Sheet**

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CEJA ILLINOIS
Climate & Equitable Jobs Act

Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity

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