

Niskanen Center

Grantee Spotlight: Niskanen Center

The [Giving Green Fund](#) is awarding a restricted grant to the [Niskanen Center](#) for its research and advocacy on high-voltage direct current (HVDC) technology and interregional electricity transmission. Niskanen is a U.S.-based think tank, headquartered in Washington, D.C., that develops and promotes market-oriented policy.

Niskanen's work falls within our philanthropic strategy of [unleashing clean energy in the U.S.](#) Please see Giving Green's strategy report for more information, including potential risks and co-benefits, recommended sub-strategies, theory of change, funding need, and key uncertainties.

Last updated: October 2026

What Is the Niskanen Center?

Founded in 2015, the Niskanen Center is a Washington, D.C. think tank that works across climate and energy, immigration, criminal justice, social policy, and state capacity, guided by the belief that dynamic and competitive markets and effective and efficient government depend on each other. It pursues policy change through direct engagement in the policymaking process. For example, it produces original research, turns technically and legally complex material into legislative and regulatory proposals, and supports congressional offices, federal agencies, and coalitions across the political spectrum.

Niskanen's energy work centers on high-voltage, interregional transmission, which is a binding constraint on decarbonizing the U.S. grid. Specifically, its work focuses on interregional planning and cost allocation, siting and permitting, utility governance, and HVDC technology integration. Niskanen leverages its technical knowledge and government affairs capacity to help decision-makers develop and implement supportive policies. For example, its HVDC Resource Hub explains technical questions about transmission technologies so that congressional staff can be better informed when developing policies.

What Are We Funding, and How Could It Help Address Climate Change?

As part of our strategy to remove barriers to clean energy deployment in the U.S., Giving Green is supporting the Niskanen Center's transmission program. The grant will specifically support three things:

- **Original research and analysis** on HVDC and interregional transmission
- **Development of legislative and regulatory proposals**, including model provisions and comments to federal regulators
- **Policymaker education and dissemination**, through briefings, conferences, and coalition work with other energy and climate organizations

Several windows exist for a federal permitting package to move in the current and next Congress, creating an opportunity for technical transmission expertise to help inform potential policies. This opportunity is critical because load growth, aging equipment, and outdated market rules are pushing utilities to keep existing fossil generation online and build new gas capacity while clean projects wait to interconnect. By making interregional transmission easier to permit, site, and finance, Niskanen's work will support faster deployment of clean capacity and ultimately reduce power sector emissions.

Why Do We Think the Niskanen Center Will Use This Funding Well?

This grant renews our support for Niskanen's transmission work. Through our previous grant, Niskanen educated policymakers on HVDC and advanced transmission policies that increase interregional capacity. In March 2026, Niskanen's Director for Climate and Energy testified before the Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources on the state of the bulk power system. Niskanen's analysis of Winter Storm Fern—which found that gas supply constraints and transmission congestion drove up costs to consumers—was cited in testimony before the House Energy and Commerce Committee, and ideas from its 2025 report on HVDC appeared in a Senate discussion draft bill text. Earlier analysis also informed the Streamlining Interstate Transmission of Electricity (SITE) Act and the Building Integrated Grids with Inter-Regional Energy Supply (BIG WIRES) Act.

Given Niskanen's experience supporting policy development through its technical transmission analysis, its existing work with congressional offices and federal regulators, and its team's technical expertise, we think Niskanen is well suited to inform and support the development of impactful transmission policies.

We publish grant spotlights to offer transparency to [Giving Green Fund](#) donors and resources for those interested in the impact strategies each grant supports. Giving Green

believes our [Top Climate Nonprofits](#) have the greatest impact potential for large, unrestricted gifts. [For several reasons](#), we also disburse and recommend grants to other organizations surfaced through [our research process](#) for work that we believe is at least as impactful as grants to our top recommendations.

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