



2024 ANNUAL REPORT

President's Perspective

In 2024, the Clean Energy Business Network team traveled the nation—both physically and virtually—hearing from small businesses and community leaders about their local priorities for clean energy and climate tech.

In Louisiana, we heard about efforts to build upon the state's leadership in the energy sector to expand into opportunities in carbon capture, renewable energy, and technology exports. In Georgia, we heard about new investments spurring EV manufacturing and rural renewable energy development. In nationwide convenings of stakeholders from Hawaii to South Dakota to Kentucky, we heard about locally driven job training, economic development, and access to affordable energy.

What “clean energy” means—specific technologies, economic priorities, messaging—differs for each person and place. At the CEBN, we take an expansive view. We seek common ground on bipartisan policy solutions to decarbonize the U.S. economy, modernize energy and transportation systems, and enable emerging energy technologies to compete in the market. Our growing network now spans 8,200+ small business and community leaders, with technologies as varied as their geographies.

And we see a unifying, underlying theme across this diverse network: In communities across the U.S.—urban and rural, red and blue—clean energy is now hardwired into the American economy, bringing new jobs and economic growth.

Small businesses play a critical and often underappreciated role in every aspect of this growth by innovating, manufacturing, and deploying new technologies across the U.S. CEBN elevates the work of these small businesses and other community leaders and help them navigate and engage in policies and funding resources. Throughout our initiatives, we strive to expand access for new entrants to the clean energy economy: startups, minority- and women-led firms, disadvantaged and rural communities, and incumbent businesses and workers diversifying into new technologies.

Whatever your role in the clean energy economy, we invite you to work with us in 2025 to build a clean and prosperous future.

Lynn Abramson
President, Clean Energy Business Network



^ In New Orleans, Lynn and former staff Awa Darboe prepare to lead stakeholder roundtables.



^ In Chicago, CEBN team tries deep-dish pizza while in town for the Community Energy Innovation Summit.



^ In Dallas, Lynn moderates a panel on government support for innovation at the ARPA-E Summit.

Clean Energy Business Network AT A GLANCE

Founded in 2009 by The Pew Charitable Trusts, CEBN spun out in 2017 to become an independent small business initiative of the Business Council for Sustainable Energy.

OUR REACH

8,200+
Business and
community leaders

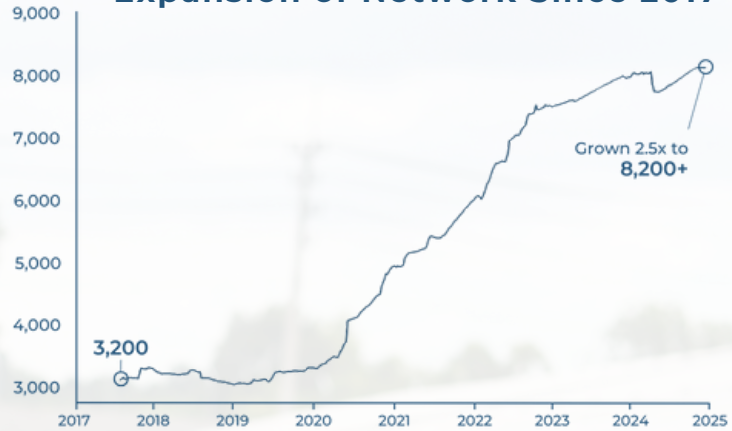
6,300+
Small business leaders

1,000+
Nonprofit/entrepreneur
support organizations

400+
State & local government

500+
Academia & researchers

Expansion of Network Since 2017



2024 HIGHLIGHTS

420+
Policy advocates

800+
Event attendees

7
New Mária Telkes
Fellows announced

210+
Applicants assisted from
underrepresented communities



CEBN Team (left to right): Nadia Gallimore, Lynn Abramson, Allie Judge, Andy Barnes, Eric Foster

Bringing Small Business Voices to Washington

In 2024, CEBN amplified the voices of small business leaders to advocate for robust funding for clean energy programs at the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) in the FY25 budget, ongoing support for clean energy tax credits and programs, rural cleantech investments in the Farm Bill, and restoration of the Sec. 174 research and development tax deduction. Small business leaders are powerful advocates with authentic voices that resonate across partisan lines, but all too often, they are not heard in Washington, D.C. CEBN serves to fill this void, showcasing the impacts of federal policy on the ground.

Sec. 174 R&D Tax Deduction

Since 2023, one of CEBN's top policy priorities has been restoring immediate expensing of R&D expenditures under the Sec. 174 tax deduction.

Thousands of innovative companies are at risk of bankruptcy due to a change in the tax code that went into effect in 2022, which forces firms to amortize R&D expenses over at least five years instead of an upfront deduction in year one.

- ▶ **322 business leaders** sent personalized messages to their congressional offices advocating for the restoration of 174.
- ▶ **15 congressional offices** were engaged by CEBN business leaders, who urged action on this issue.
- ▶ CEBN and partners coauthored an OpEd in [RealClearEnergy](#).

RealClear Energy



Sec. 174 Action Alert Campaign

In early 2024, a tax package restoring the Sec. 174 R&D tax deduction passed the House of Representatives with support from 357 Democrats and Republicans. CEBN organized an email campaign allowing business leaders and other stakeholders to write directly to their representatives in support of the bill. **322 advocates** wrote **900+ customizable messages** to their members, reaching **167 congressional offices**. Unfortunately, the bill stalled in the Senate due to conflict over separate tax provisions but remains a top priority in the next Congress.



Appropriations

CEBN mobilized small business voices to support robust funding for DOE programs, particularly offices supporting research, development, demonstration, and deployment.

While the FY25 appropriations process was significantly delayed due to ongoing policy negotiations, DOE has continued to roll out new programs from recently passed legislation.

- ▶ **32 innovators** met with 25 target congressional offices to share the impacts of DOE-funded projects.
- ▶ **127 business leaders** signed onto a letter supporting robust FY25 DOE funding.
- ▶ **37 business leaders** sent messages to their congressional offices on their priorities for federal R&D support.



Small Businesses Sign On!

In 2024, CEBN sent a business sign-on letter to Congress—collectively attracting 127 signatories—which advocated for robust FY25 funding for DOE. Thirty seven business leaders also sent personalized messages to 71 congressional offices advocating for strong appropriations levels for the technology areas most relevant to their work.

Dial-ins & Fly-ins: Bringing Small Business Voices to Washington

For the sixth consecutive year, CEBN convened a series of advocacy meetings, bringing 40 business leaders to meet with a combined 37 Republican and Democratic congressional offices. Business leaders advocated for continued robust funding for cleantech programs in the federal budget, rural energy investments in the Farm Bill, and restoration of the Sec. 174 R&D tax deduction.

Participants also provided examples of how their companies have leveraged federal grant programs and tax incentives to develop and commercialize new cleantech innovations, create jobs, and modernize infrastructure in communities across the U.S.

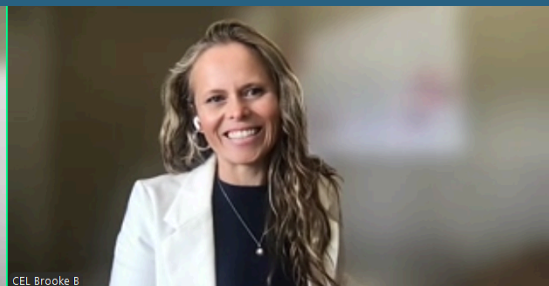
▼ Virtual meeting with Senator Merkley (OR) and small business constituents, Brooke Brumfield, Director of Partnerships at Community Energy Labs, and David Burchfield, CEO of BuildingLens



Andy Barnes (CEBN)



Allie Judge (CEBN)



CEL Brooke B



David Burchfield CEO/President



Ben Schreiber



Jeff Merkley

Building Bipartisan Support for Clean Energy

CEBN works to build champions in our network to demonstrate the impact and importance of federal policy on the ground in communities.

Preserving federal tax incentives and other clean energy investments will help ensure long-term economic certainty for small businesses, modernize our energy systems, and reduce costs for consumers.

- ▶ **23 advocates** emailed their congressional offices to support the light-duty vehicles emissions standard.
- ▶ **9 congressional offices** were engaged by CEBN staff and member businesses in advocacy meetings on the Farm Bill.
- ▶ CEBN joined **17 partner coalition letters** advocating for strong clean energy policies.

CEBN Takes Action on Farm Bill



In 2024, CEBN advocated for reauthorizing and expanding clean energy and climate provisions in the Farm Bill, which must be reauthorized roughly every five years. This legislation has a tremendous impact on the agricultural sector, nutritional programs, and rural economies.

Alongside the Business Council for Sustainable Energy (BCSE), CEBN participated in meetings with **9 congressional offices** advocating for continuing and expanding clean energy programs in the Farm Bill, such as the Rural Energy for America and Rural Energy Savings Programs. BCSE and CEBN also **submitted recommendations to the House and Senate Committees on Agriculture** regarding their Farm Bill negotiations, which were still ongoing at the end of the year.



I really appreciate CEBN distilling policy initiatives into letters to legislators and being able to join with colleagues on energy policy sign-on letters to allow my personal views to be represented in Congress.

- ▶ **Elizabeth Halliday**, Owner, Elizabeth International, LLC and COO, Clean Capitalist Leadership Council

Policy Action Alerts



Demystifying Government Programs

Given the massive outpouring of new government and private-sector support for clean energy, one of CEBN's top priorities is to make these resources more accessible by serving as a "first stop" point of entry for small cleantech businesses and other stakeholders. We demystify federal grant programs and curate sources of support and technical assistance from across the cleantech ecosystem.

Newsletters

The [CEBN Weekly](#) is our most essential tool for reaching our network of small clean energy businesses, nonprofits, and other clean energy advocates. This newsletter offers the latest updates from Washington and across the U.S.

In 2024, CEBN's newsletter:

- ▶ Reached a weekly audience averaging **5,938 contacts**.
- ▶ Achieved an average open rate of **31.86%**.
- ▶ Was sent **47 out of 52 weeks** of the year.
- ▶ Hit a collective total of **368 newsletters** sent since 2017.



We also offer **two bi-monthly email series** providing more intentional focus on justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion (JEDI) and innovation/R&D in cleantech.

- ▶ Inclusive Energy Economy Update
- ▶ Energy Innovation Update

Partnership with the U.S. Department of Energy

As a **Power Connector** for the DOE's **American-Made program** since 2020, CEBN has completed **23 projects supporting prizes and grants** by conducting outreach to new applicants, providing feedback and application assistance, and developing workshops and resources to coach awardees as they advance through prize phases.

In 2024, CEBN:

- ▶ Engaged more than **5,400 potential applicants**.
- ▶ Provided **258 applicants** with 1:1 support.
- ▶ Held **15 events**, attracting **747+ attendees**.
- ▶ Intentionally engaged business and community leaders from underrepresented demographics.



We are an early stage company, so we appreciate all of the opportunities to be made aware of DOE prizes and funding opportunities. CEBN does a great job of providing regular updates on upcoming opportunities and the deadlines.

- ▶ **James Lancelot**, Co-Founder and CEO, *GridBoost.io*

Community Energy Innovation Summits

In our role as a Power Connector for the American-Made program, CEBN worked alongside the U.S. Department of Energy and National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) to convene two summits in 2024 showcasing winning teams of the **Community Energy Innovation Prize** and engaging other stakeholders working to create an accessible clean energy economy.

Collegiate Track Summit - Washington, DC

- ▶ Took place in June at the MLK Jr. Memorial Library in Washington, DC.
- ▶ Featured pitch presentations by three winning teams of the prize's Collegiate Track, who each took home \$25,000 to \$45,000 in GRAND PRIZE awards.
- ▶ Included a federal funding panel and roundtable discussions on resources and strategies to support community-based clean energy initiatives.



^ Collegiate Track Summit - Summit attendees participate in roundtable discussions (left). Collegiate team pitches their project before the DOE and a public audience at the MLK Jr. Memorial Library (right).

Clean Energy and Manufacturing Ecosystem Tracks Summit - Chicago, IL

- ▶ Took place in December at the University of Illinois Chicago—a federally-designated Hispanic- and Minority-Serving Institution.
- ▶ Featured pitch presentations by 19 winning teams of the prize's Ecosystem Tracks, each of whom took home between \$10,000 and \$310,000 in final IMPACT Phase and GRAND PRIZE awards.
- ▶ Offered attendees the opportunity to visit one of three clean energy project or cleantech manufacturing site tours.
- ▶ Included federal funding presentations and networking for teams and stakeholders working to build an accessible clean energy economy.



^ The winning Ecosystem Track teams celebrate at the end of the CEI Summit in Chicago, IL.

U.S. Cleantech Funding Database

CEBN's [Cleantech Funding Database](#) streamlines the process for small businesses and community organizations to find funding. Since 2018, it has aggregated information on federal and state grants, prizes, incubators and accelerators, fellowships, technical assistance opportunities, and other resources into one easy-to-navigate repository. The database also includes funding for nonprofits, local governments, HBCUs and MSIs, students, and more.

In 2024, CEBN:

- ▶ Added **\$16.9 billion** in funding across **347 opportunities**.
- ▶ Grew database reach to **8,700 all-time users**.
- ▶ Attracted **263 email subscribers** to the database.



Funding Direct to Your Inbox!

In February 2024, CEBN launched a subscription function for our U.S. Cleantech Funding Database, allowing users to subscribe to weekly or monthly email updates containing new opportunities. These emails are customizable by technology interest.

Cleantech Ecosystem Resources List

In 2024, CEBN launched the [Cleantech Ecosystem Resources List](#), a quick-access and searchable list of organizations and programs that provide support services and expertise commonly requested by cleantech businesses and community organizations. Users can filter and search for organizations by location, technology, and focus areas such as:

- ▶ Startup incubation/acceleration
- ▶ Business development
- ▶ Grantwriting and applicant support
- ▶ Justice, equity, diversity, and inclusion
- ▶ Policy

The list currently features **62 organizations**. Organizations providing these types of services can also submit a form to be considered for inclusion in the ecosystem resources list.



Blogs

CEBN produces blog series demystifying federal policies and programs in accessible language. We continued to add new posts throughout 2024 unpacking the rollout of new grant programs, federal guidance on tax incentives, and other developments.

- ▶ [Insight into the Inflation Reduction Act \(IRA\)](#)
- ▶ [Breaking Down Bipartisan Infrastructure Law \(BIL\)](#)
- ▶ [Insight into Federal Programs](#)

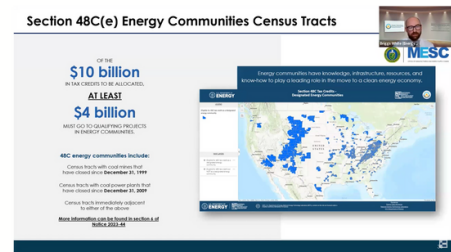


Educational Events

CEBN convened **20 events** in 2024 providing platforms to help small businesses and community organizations engage, connect, and learn. **More than 800 stakeholders** participated. Several key virtual events are summarized below:

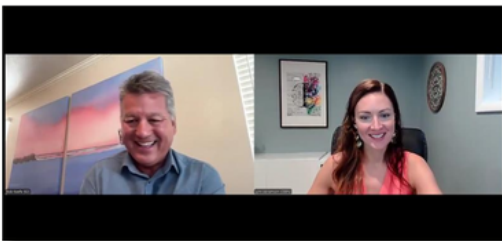
Navigating DOE Clean Energy Manufacturing Initiatives

- ▶ Featured federal manufacturing programs, with speakers from the **DOE's Office of Manufacturing and Energy Supply Chains** and **Energy Communities IWG**.



Financing the Future

- ▶ Provided actionable information on securing capital for clean energy projects, with speakers from **Climate Finance Solutions**, **Coalition for Green Capital**, **Dream.org**, and **Women+ in Climate Tech**.



Stories from the Front Lines of an American Business Revolution

- ▶ Presentation and conversation with **Bob Keefe**, **Executive Director of E2**, on the ongoing economic transformation of the energy industry.



Coalition Building for a Clean Energy Workforce

- ▶ Highlighted effective strategies for collaboration to advance workforce development, with speakers from **Business Leaders United** and **BlueGreen Alliance**.

Clean Energy Business Network Hits the Road!

Working with state and local partner organizations, CEBN launched a series of in-person and virtual stakeholder roundtable discussions around the U.S. We provided presentations on opportunities in clean energy and federal funding available to small businesses and communities and worked with our partners to tailor this information to the particular interests of the communities we visited.

New Orleans Stakeholder Roundtable

July 2024

- ▶ Convened three stakeholder workshops with **Greater New Orleans**.
- ▶ Each workshop focused on small businesses, state/local government, or academia.
- ▶ Engaged in roundtable discussions further unpacking opportunities and challenges to access.

✓ *CEBN visits New Orleans for three stakeholder workshops, organized with Greater New Orleans.*



✓ *CEBN visits Atlanta for a half-day stakeholder workshop.*



Other Panels and Presentations

- ▶ Brought these resources to additional communities via virtual presentations for business leaders in Maine (with E2Tech) and Arizona (with Local First Arizona).
- ▶ Led in-person panels at the [ARPA-E Summit](#) in **Dallas**, [Prosperity Summit](#) in **Washington, DC**, and Sen. Cassidy's (R-LA) [Energy Security Summit](#) in **Baton Rouge**.

Atlanta Stakeholder Roundtable

September 2024

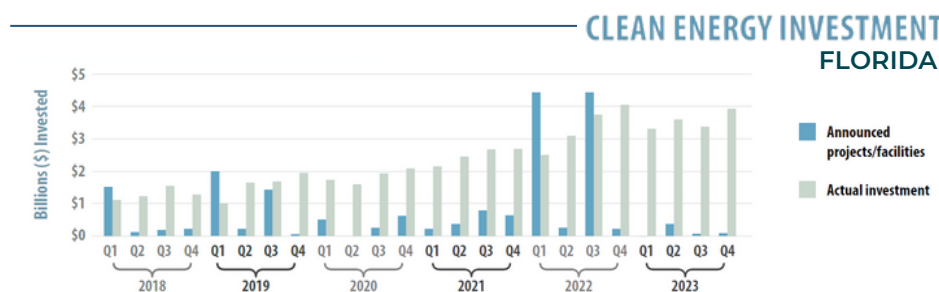
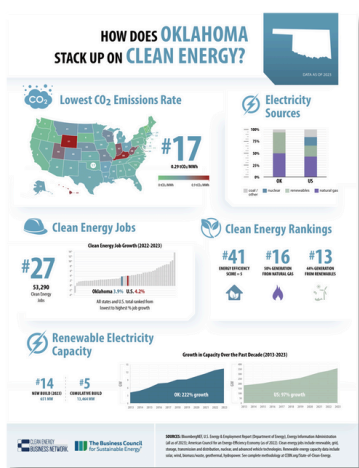
- ▶ Held half-day event providing an overview of a broad range of federal resources.
- ▶ Collaborated with **Urban League of Greater Atlanta**, **Engaged Futures Group**, **Ismaeli Council for the Southeastern U.S.**, and the **Partnership for Southern Equity**.
- ▶ Included breakout discussions on opportunities and challenges to accessing federal programs.

Showcasing the Clean Energy Economy

State of Clean Energy

In 2020, CEBN launched **The State of Clean Energy**, an interactive series of infographics providing data and rankings on clean energy jobs, deployment, power sector emissions, and federal R&D investments. CEBN shares these resources with industry stakeholders and uses them to communicate with lawmakers about the unique clean energy trends and opportunities in their states. The 2024 infographics include data such as:

- ▶ Clean energy job totals and growth rates from 2022 to 2023.
- ▶ Cumulative renewable energy capacity growth since 2013.
- ▶ Investment data from the DOE and private sector.
- ▶ Spotlights for clean energy companies in each state.










Mária Telkes Fellowship for Underrepresented Leaders

The **Mária Telkes Fellowship** champions rising cleantech stars from underrepresented demographics on a path to executive leadership. Founded in 2021 by CEBN and **Cleantech Leaders Roundtable (CTLR)**, the fellowship was named in honor of solar energy pioneer Mária Telkes. The program welcomed its third cohort of fellows in 2024, for a total of 24 fellows to date.

Fellows are matched with mentors for guidance on professional growth, receive two years of complimentary membership in CEBN and CTLR, and benefit from positive exposure through communications and networking events.

2024-2026 Telkes Fellows >

-  **Tricia Compas-Markman**
Director, National Venture Programs, *VentureWell*
-  **Catherine Ember**
CEO & Founder, *Last Loop Metals*
-  **Bao Truong**
Vice President of Engineering, *Electrified Thermal Solutions*
-  **Nneka Kibuule**
Principal, *Aligned Climate Capital*
-  **Sarah Hill-Nelson**
President & CEO, *The Bowersock Mills and Power Company*
-  **Palak Jain**
CEO & Co-Founder, *Vellx Computing*
-  **Genevieve Liang**
Director, Project Development, *Catalyze*

Powering Forward into 2025

As the dust settles from a historic election and political dynamics shift heading into 2025, the state of clean energy remains strong. CEBN is committed to building on the past year's successes by:

- ▶ Amplifying the voices of small business and community leaders across the nation who otherwise lack representation in Washington, DC.
- ▶ Working in a bipartisan manner to find common ground on building a clean energy future.
- ▶ Demystifying federal programs and resources with the support of cleantech ecosystem partners.
- ▶ Strengthening access to federal resources for small businesses, community-based organizations, and underrepresented founders.

Visit www.cebn.org to join our community of business leaders, partners, and changemakers across the country.

Together, we can build a more affordable, reliable, and accessible clean energy economy.





Report prepared by:

Allie Judge, Lynn Abramson,
Andy Barnes, and Nadia Gallimore

Report designed by:

Allie Judge



Front: Attendees at the U.S. Department of Energy's
Community Energy Innovation Summit in Chicago, IL.
Photo by Bear & Camera Visuals.



805 15th St NW, Suite 710, Washington, D.C. 20005

www.cebn.org | (202) 785-0507

