

PANEL 4: Workforce Development Panel Description

This panel will focus on identifying the required knowledge, skills and abilities for jobs implementing and supporting current industry decarbonization goals. There is a strong need to substantially build the energy workforce, at all levels, to meet the growing need for qualified, technology-savvy talent to enable the manufacturing industry to quickly realize its ambitious decarbonization goals. Companies are also assessing how to upskill current workers to achieve new process efficiencies and track carbon footprints. Current workforce challenges include (1) identifying the unique knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) to elevate and execute sustainability projects and efforts, (2) finding qualified candidates due to lack of technical skills, industry-specific knowledge, and increased complexity and interconnectivity of energy and manufacturing technologies, and (3) lack of awareness of energy manufacturing careers and limited available career pathways.

The panel will address ideas and topics such as:

- Avenues to upskill the current workforce, including types of workers that need upskilling, what types of training are in need of development, in what formats, and who develops and implements these training programs.
- How to increase the quantity and quality of workers with the skills to adequately design, install, maintain, and operate high-performance industrial buildings and/or manufacturing processes, including:
 - How to increase awareness and interest in these careers, base of applicants, and how to attract students to the field;
 - How to improve pathways to these careers, including encouraging participation of underrepresented groups in the manufacturing workforce, increasing awareness and interest in energy careers, and improving access to and participation in training program;
 - How to improve skills of existing manufacturer employees in decarbonization efforts as well as re-train current/displaced employees to fill open positions;
 - How to better connect those expressing interest in these careers with the opportunities available.
- How collaboration between state programs, federal programs, and the private sector can be more effectively supported, including the sharing, organization, and increased awareness of available workforce development resources, in order to enable effective use of personnel and financial resources.
- Innovative approaches in workforce development addressing gaps in current training and/or case studies of new approaches to energy-related workforce development