

RI 2025 Climate Action Strategy and CCAP

Workforce Focus Area Meeting

April 8, 2025

[bw] RESEARCH
PARTNERSHIP



Lighthouse Consulting
Group, Inc.

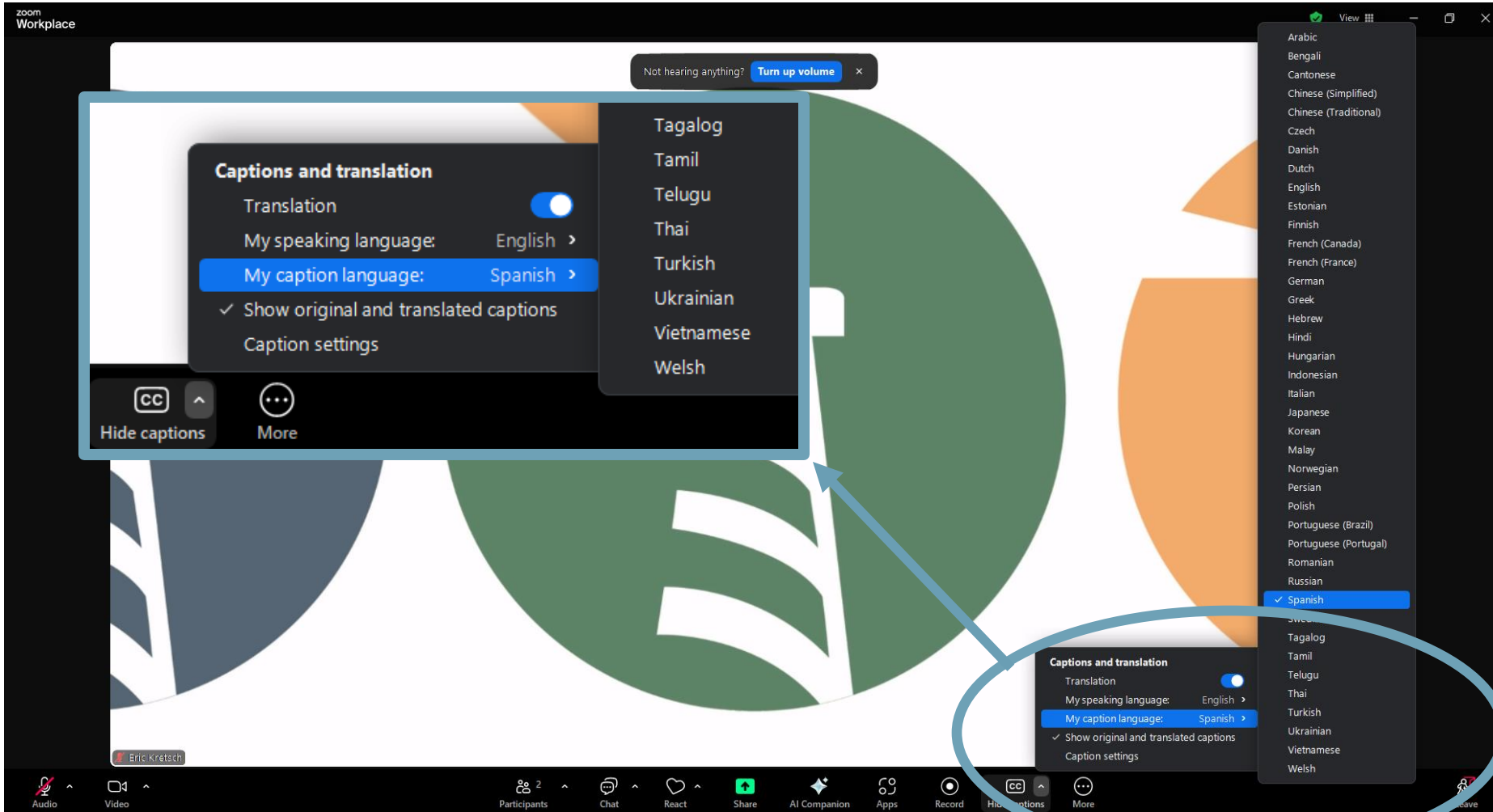


Energy+Environmental Economics

Cai Steger, BW Research
Sophia Nelson, BW Research
Andrea Gustafson, BW Research
Chelsea Petrenko, E3
Molly Bertolacini, E3
Eric Kretsch, Lighthouse

Translated Closed Caption (CC) Available

Acceso a subtítulos *traducidos*



- + Click on Closed Caption “CC” icon
- + Set “Speaking Language”
- + Set “Caption Language”

Para Español:

- + Haz clic en el icóno “CC” para los subtítulos
- + Haz clic en “My speaking language” y selecciona “Spanish”
- + Haz clic en “My caption language” y selecciona “Spanish”

Ground rules and guidelines to participation



+ This workshop is being recorded so we can accurately capture your comments. We do not intend to post this recording publicly.



+ Power off other electronics and mute yourself to limit distractions.



+ Make space and take space. Be mindful of how much airtime you take, but we encourage you to voice your support and concern.



+ There are multiple ways to participate:

- Raise your hand to be called on
- Use the chat feature
- Utilize the Survey Monkey Form, so that we capture all you have to say.



+ Thank you in advance for your participation.

How will your Feedback be Included?

- + This meeting will explore the **workforce impacts and opportunities** from actions in support of the Rhode Island Climate Action Strategy (RICAS)
- + Specifically, we will discuss...
 - **Opportunities and gaps in preparing RI's workforce** for expanded decarbonization
 - *Decarbonization means to eliminate or reduce carbon dioxide emissions from activities like driving, heating our apartments/homes, and using electricity*
 - **Coordination and collaboration across the state** in developing a workforce strategy
 - Best practices for **including worker voices and workforce needs in climate and energy planning processes**
 - Meeting the needs of **workers who may need to transition into new fields** or occupations
- + Your feedback will help our team determine priority policy and programs for the RICAS and help develop the section on workforce impacts.

All Topic Areas for Engagement – EMPHASIZE WORKFORCE

How will climate action affect jobs, workforce and businesses? How can RI ensure a just transition as we remove carbon from the economy?

Workforce*



How can RI ensure the communities most affected by climate change benefit from GHG reduction measures?

EJ, equitable transition*



How does climate action in RI affect the electricity supply? What role do electric and gas utilities play in climate action?

Energy



Which subsectors are the biggest contributors to RI's emissions? What strategies should be prioritized to reduce transportation emissions?

Transportation



What is the role of cities and municipalities in reducing emissions in RI?

Municipalities



What pathways for reducing building related emissions should be prioritized?

Buildings



All Topic Areas for Engagement

How will climate action affect jobs, workforce and businesses? How can RI ensure a just transition as we remove carbon from the economy?

Workforce*



How can RI ensure the communities most affected by climate change benefit from GHG reduction measures?

EJ, equitable transition*



How does climate action in RI affect the electricity supply? What role do electric and gas utilities play in climate action?

Energy



Which subsectors are the biggest contributors to RI's emissions? What strategies should be prioritized to reduce transportation emissions?

Transportation



What is the role of cities and municipalities in reducing emissions in RI?

Municipalities



What pathways for reducing building related emissions should be prioritized?

Buildings



Agenda

- + Welcome and introductions**
- + Policy background and summary**
- + Workforce research methodology and approach**
 - Project goals and status
 - What we've heard thus far
- + Overview of Rhode Island workforce learnings to date**
- + Breakout sessions**
 - #1 – Gaps to Address in Workforce Development for Decarbonization
 - #2 – Statewide Coordination of Climate Workforce Strategy
 - #3 – Workforce Transitions and Transfers
- + Next steps and wrap up**

Introductions to Consultant Team



Energy and Environmental Economics (E3)



Tory Clark
Project Partner



Chelsea Petrenko
Project Lead



Molly Bertolacini
Project Manager



Nathaniel Kinsman
University of RI Energy Fellow



Lighthouse Consulting Group



Eric Kretsch
Sr. Associate Facilitator



Kyle McElroy
Facilitator



BW Research Partnership



Cai Steger
Project Director



Sophia Nelson
Project Manager



Andrea Gustafson
Project Manager

Policy Background and Summary



Climate Policy and Planning in Rhode Island

+ On April 14, 2021, RI Governor Dan McKee signed into law the 2021 Act on Climate, setting mandatory climate GHG reduction targets:

- 45% below 1990 emissions levels by 2030
- 80% below 1990 emissions levels by 2040
- “Net zero” by 2050

+ As required by the Act on Climate, the Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council (EC4) submitted an update to the 2016 Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction Plan in 2022

- The next step in the implementation of RI’s Act on Climate is the 2025 Climate Action Strategy, due at the end of 2025

+ At the same time, RI Department of Environmental Management (RIDEM) has been awarded a planning grant through the EPA Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) program

- The first step was completing a **Priority Climate Action Plan** which focused on a list of near-term and high-priority GHG reduction measures
- The next step in CPRG is the development of a **Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP)**

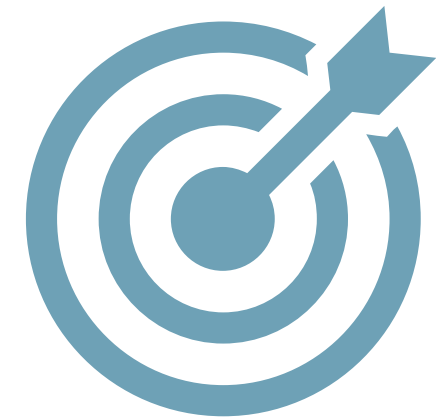


Project Goals

The overarching goal of this project is to create the RI Comprehensive Climate Action Plan (CCAP) for the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) program and the RI 2025 Climate Action Strategy as part of RI's Act on Climate

+ Key elements of each plan will include:

- Energy efficiency in buildings and transportation
- Transition away from fossil fuel
- Transition to renewable electric power
- The removal of carbon from the air through land use and forest conservation
- A just transition for workers
- Considerations for energy affordability and utility bills
- Benefits to environmental justice and low-income and disadvantaged communities (LIDAC)



The Role of an Equitable Transition in the RI Climate Action Strategy

The Act on Climate dictates that the RI Climate Action Strategy (RI CAS) “shall include an equitable transition to climate compliance for environmental justice populations, redress past environmental and public health inequities, and include a process where the interests of and people from populations most vulnerable to the effects of climate change and at risk of pollution, displacement, energy burden, and cost influence such plan.”



Prioritize GHG Reduction Measures that Advance Equity and Environmental Justice



Collaborate with Communities Most Impacted by Climate Change and Policies



Consider Decarbonization Co-benefits (e.g., Workforce Development and Climate Resilience)

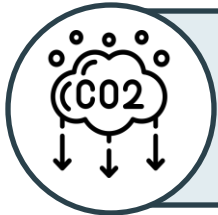
Key Components of the RI Climate Action Strategy Modeling



Creating a list of potential strategies and policies to reduce emissions in Rhode Island, such as rebates to increase electric vehicle purchases or building energy efficiency programs to reduce energy use in households.



Projecting future emissions levels in RI in both the short term (e.g., by 2030) and the long term (e.g., by 2050). These projections will be based on current policies in RI and the proposed policies included in the RI Climate Action Strategy.



Calculating how much each proposed policy will reduce carbon emissions. For example, calculating the emissions reductions expected from a program that increases electric vehicle ridership and decreases driving in gasoline-powered vehicles.



Estimating the benefits of climate action in Rhode Island. For example, calculating the estimated number of jobs created because of the proposed policies, or calculating the air quality improvements.

Workforce Research Process



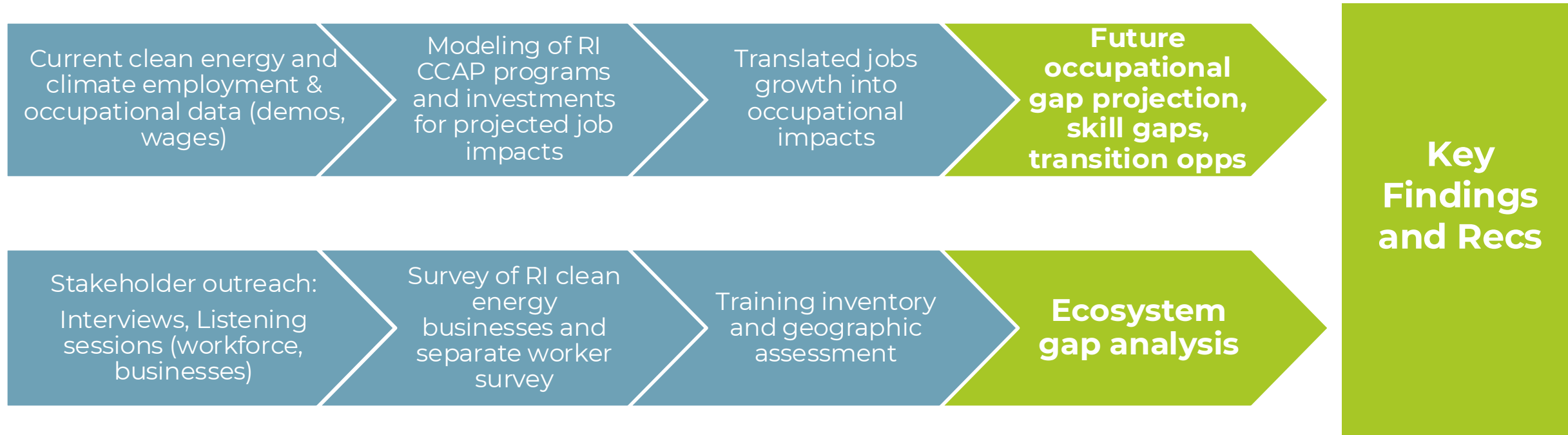
Energy+Environmental Economics



Lighthouse Consulting
Group, Inc.

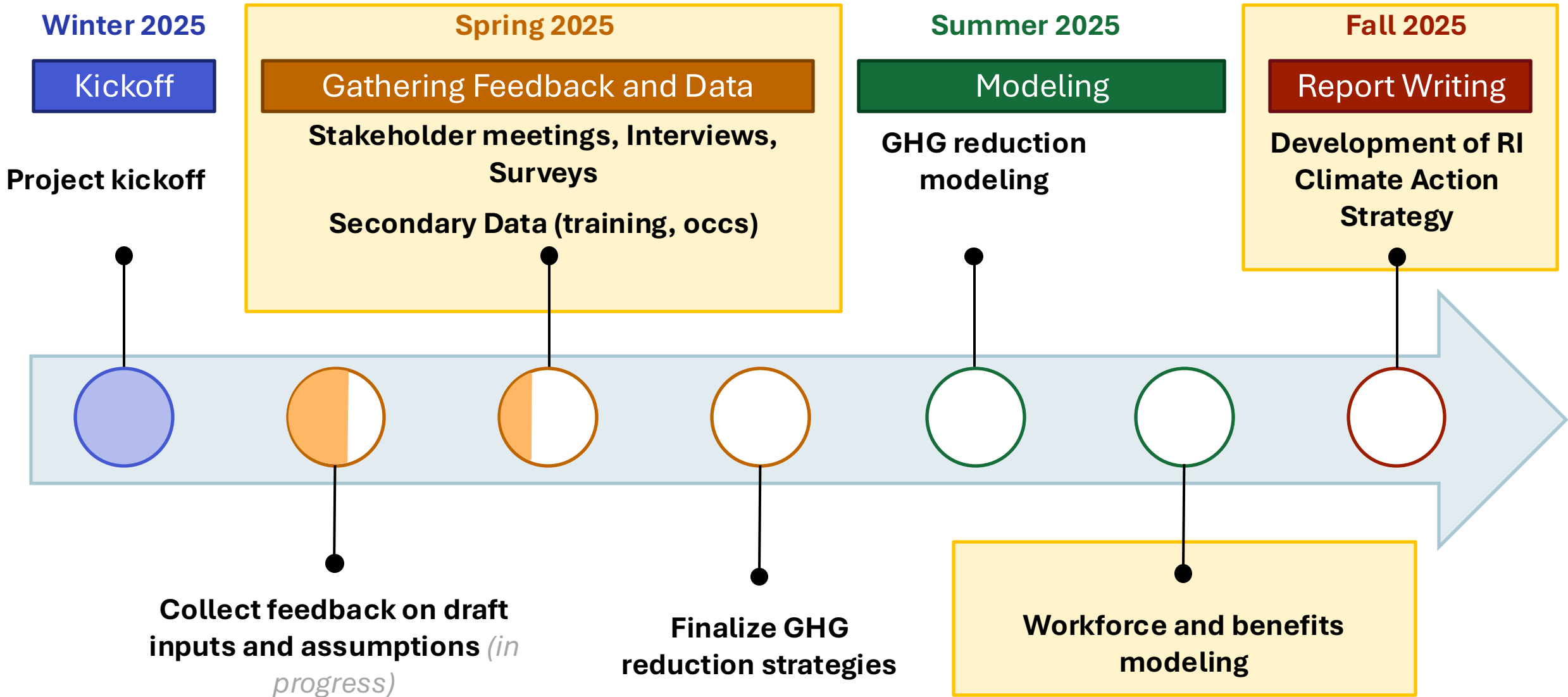
[bw] RESEARCH
PARTNERSHIP

Workforce Research Methodology



Project Status and Timeline

 = Workforce Focus



Incorporating Workforce Feedback So Far

What we heard so far...

- + Make sure that **workers voices** are heard via direct engagement (both union/non-union)
- + Importance of **realistic perspective** on training and workforce development opportunities for existing workers
- + Value of **integrating the role of education** into any workforce development strategy
- + Emphasize **business community outreach** to comprehensively explore workforce impacts and strategy from RICAS
- + Limited mention so far of a "**just transition**" for workers who will be impacted

Key changes incorporated into process...

- + **Integrating employee survey** into research process
- + Established **workforce-specific listening session**
- + **Outreach to existing entities/coalitions** such as Climate Jobs RI, and GEWAC
- + Developing stakeholder outreach to connect with **full workforce ecosystem** – including educators, employers, unions
- + Focusing on **skills assessments, transfers and occupational adjacencies** in assessment

Previewing Breakout Questions for Today

- + As we think about preparing RI's workforce for expanded decarbonization, where are the **key gaps**? If you could **prioritize workforce funding to address one gap** or barrier, what would it be?
- + What would a **coordinated workforce strategy across the state** look like? Who would be **leading/participating**? What would the outcome(s) be?
- + Where are the biggest pain points in how RI will **support workers who may need to transition into new fields** or occupations?

Questions?



Energy+Environmental Economics



Lighthouse Consulting
Group, Inc.

[bw] RESEARCH
PARTNERSHIP

Rhode Island Clean Energy Workforce – Previous Insights and Research



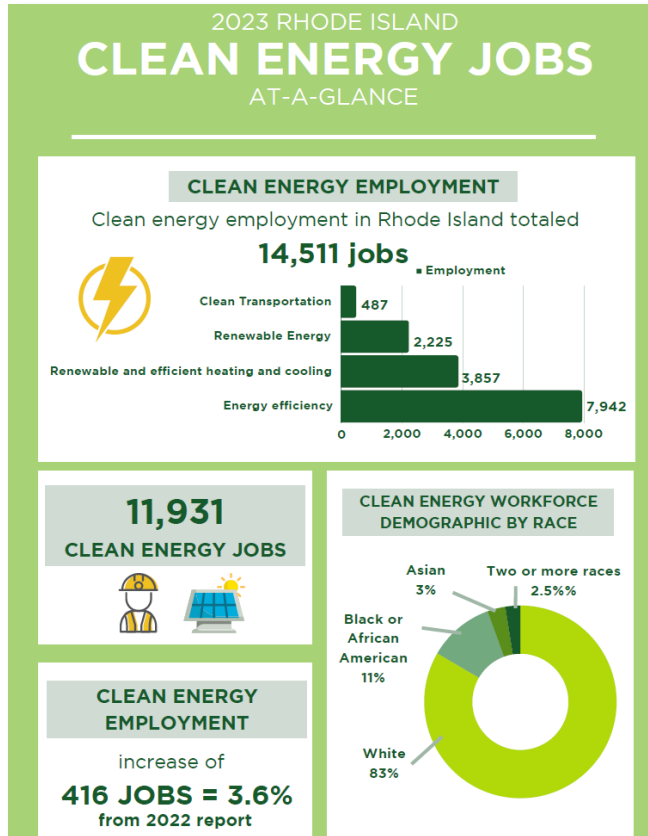
Energy+Environmental Economics



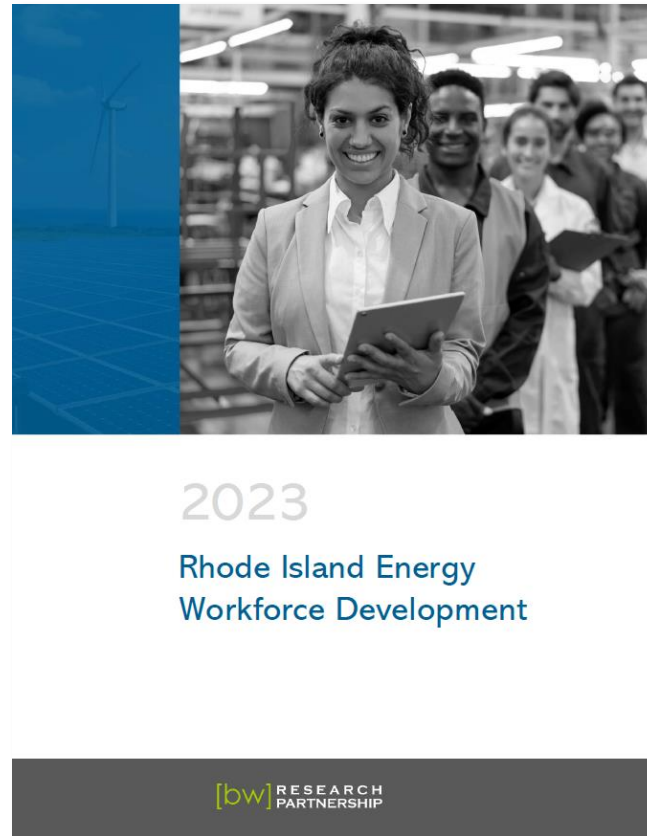
Lighthouse Consulting
Group, Inc.

[bw] RESEARCH
PARTNERSHIP

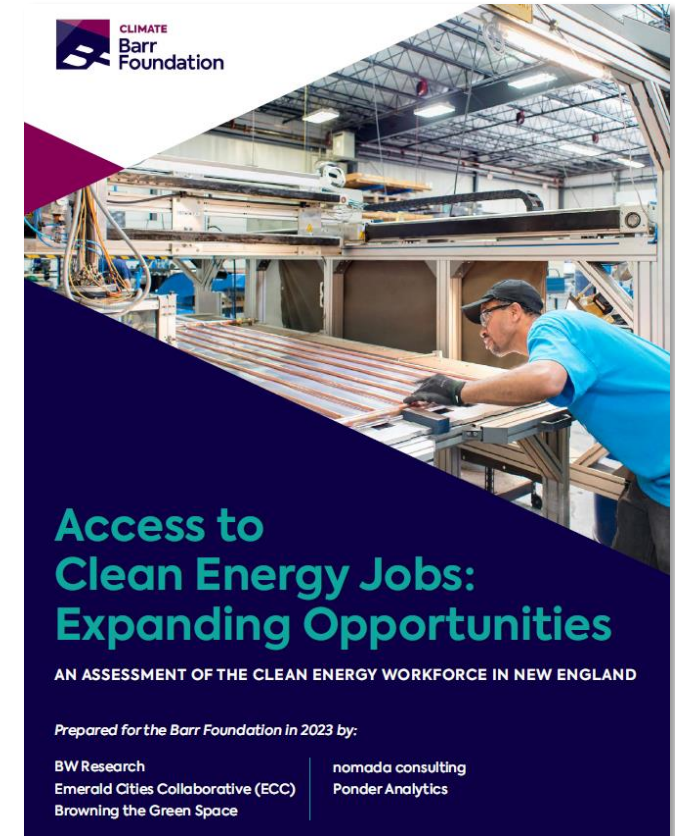
BW Work in this Area



[LINK](#)



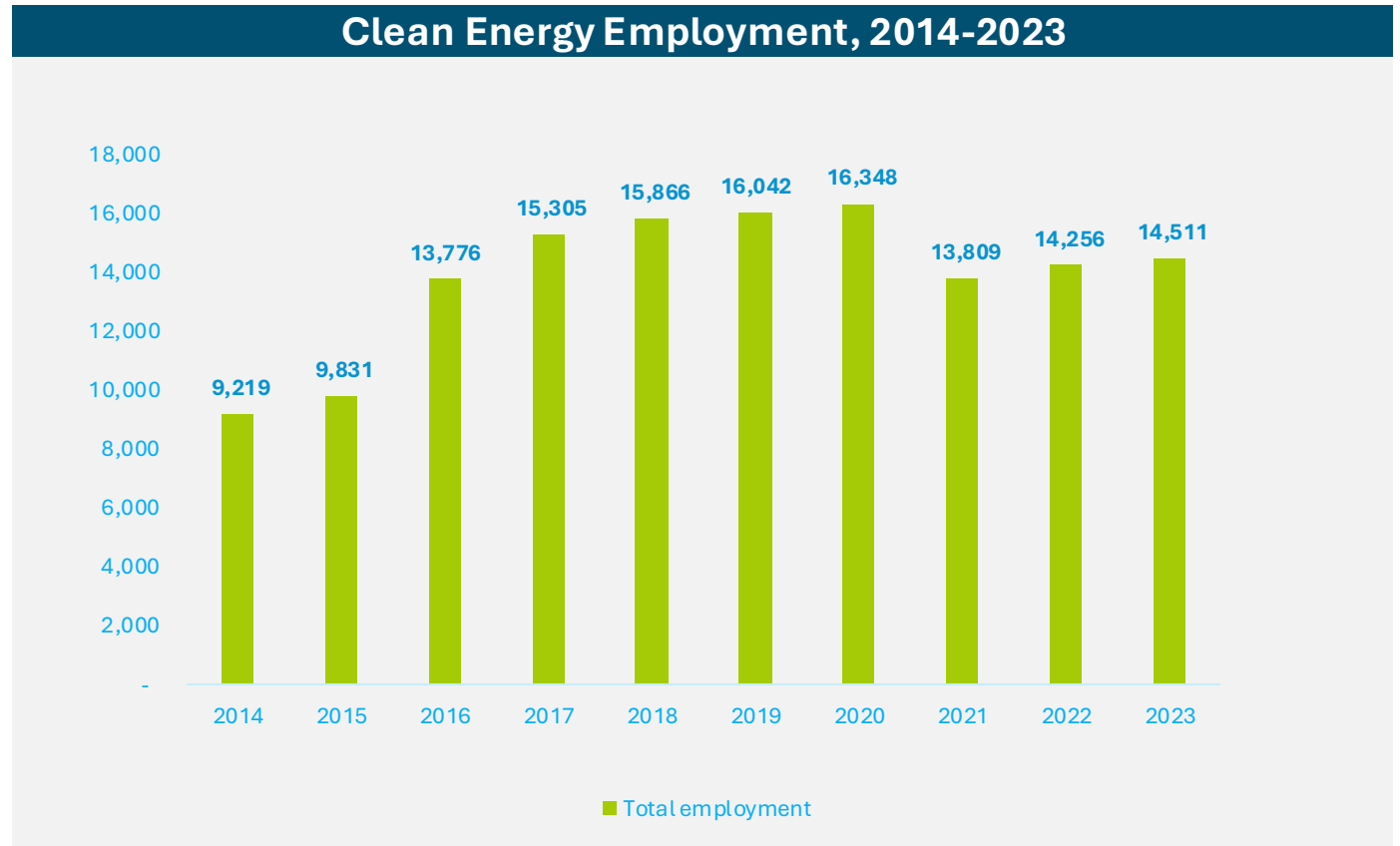
[LINK](#)



[LINK](#)

Number of Rhode Island Clean Energy Workers (RI CEIR)

- + More than 14,500 workers in the state work in clean energy.
- + Over half (54.7 percent) of clean energy jobs are in energy efficiency.
- + Clean energy employment increased annually by approximately 1.8 percent (255 jobs).
- + 2024 Rhode Island Clean Energy Industry Report publishing soon.



Types of occupations in current RI clean energy economy

+ The installation, maintenance, repair, and operations value chain contains over 8,000 clean energy jobs, which accounts for 57.7 percent of all clean energy jobs.

+ The engineering, research, and professional services value chain is the next largest, with more than 2,700 jobs makes up 19.0 percent of clean energy jobs.

+ Of the ten occupations with the highest projected growth within clean energy, seven have grown consistently in Rhode Island from 2016 to 2022 across the entire economy.

+ HVAC mechanics and installers experienced the largest employment growth of 90.8 percent, increasing from 650 workers in May 2016 to 1,240 workers in May 2022.

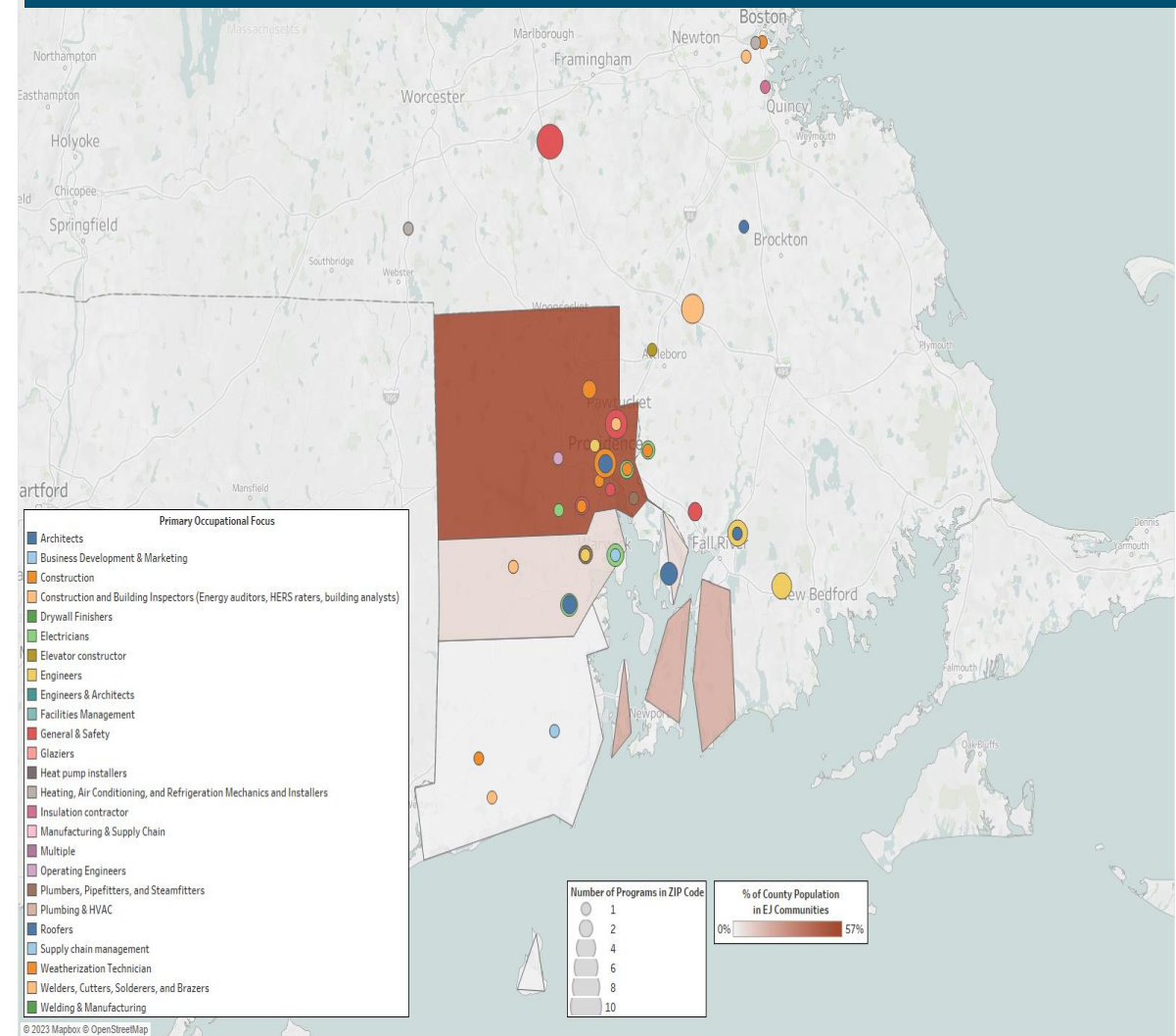
Rhode Island Employment Data for Projected Highest-Growth Occupations, 2022

SOC Code	Occupation	2022 Employment	2016 Employment	Percent Change in Employment (2016-2022)	Location Quotient
43-9061	Office Clerks, General	9,190	9,950	-7.6%	1.13
11-1021	General and Operations Managers	7,040	6,640	6.0%	0.64
47-2061	Construction Laborers	2,590	2,520	2.8%	0.79
47-2111	Electricians	2,330	2,040	14.2%	1.04
47-1011	First-Line Supervisors of Construction Trades and Extraction Workers	2,130	1,870	13.9%	0.91
49-9021	Heating, Air Conditioning, and Refrigeration Mechanics and Installers	1,240	650	90.8%	1.02
49-9050	Line Installers and Repairers	810	690	17.4%	0.39 (SOC 49-9051) 1.89 (SOC 49-9052)
11-9021	Construction Managers	250	480	-47.9%	0.25
47-2231	Solar Photovoltaic Installers	40	26	53.8%	0.65
47-2131	Insulation Workers, Floor, Ceiling, and Wall	104	89	16.9%	1.06
47-2132	Insulation Workers, Mechanical	40	2016 data not available		0.50

Training inventory [Occupations specific to EE]

- + There are 280 training programs for energy efficiency occupations available to Rhode Islanders, with 87 physically in Rhode Island.
 - Half of these programs are hosted by private training companies, and of those, nearly three-quarters are held online.
- + A considerable proportion of the in-person Rhode Island-based trainings are found in the Providence-Warwick Metro Area.
 - There is a wide variety of occupational focus in this area
 - Construction, electrician, and general and safety training programs are the most prominent
- + There is a lack of programs in the northwestern, western, and southern parts of Rhode Island.
- + Counties in northern Rhode Island have the greatest share of residents living in an environmental justice community. There is, however, a lack of training programs accessible to environmental justice communities living north of Pawtucket and west of Providence.

In-Person Trainings Accessible to Rhode Island Residents by Primary Occupational Focus, with Percentage of Environmental Justice Community Residents by Rhode Island County



Different workforce funding programs in Rhode Island [EE]

- + Stakeholders receive federal and state funds, notably from the Rhode Island departments of Education, Human Services, and Labor and Training and the Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources.
- + Local city funds are also available for certain organizations, such as career and technical education centers and community action agencies.
- + Some training providers, including community action agencies and industry associations, may access utility funding for energy efficiency trainings.

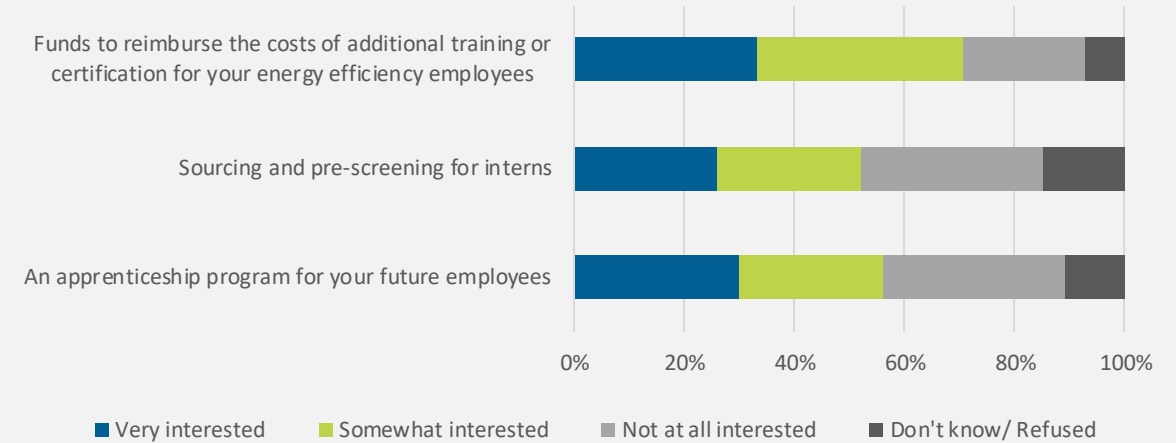
Sample of Energy Efficiency and Workforce Development Funding Opportunities		
Organization Name	Funding Opportunity	Funder Type
Rhode Island State Council on the Arts	Build the Future Grant	State Agency
City of Providence	Hardest Hit Community Organizations Fund	State Agency
City of Providence	Workforce Development Funding Program	State Agency
Governor's Workforce Board	Apprenticeship Initiatives	State Agency
Governor's Workforce Board	Incumbent Worker Training Grants	State Agency
Governor's Workforce Board	PrepareRI	State Agency
Governor's Workforce Board	Real Skills for Youth	State Agency
Governor's Workforce Board	Workplace Accessibility Grants	State Agency
Rhode Island Department of Education	21st Century Technology and Equipment Fund	State Agency
Rhode Island Department of Education	Facility Equity Initiative	State Agency
Rhode Island Department of Education	Funding Formula for Aid to Education	State Agency
Rhode Island Department of Human Services	Rhode Island Works (RIW) Program	State Agency
Rhode Island Department of Human Services	WAP: Weatherization Assistance Program	State Agency
Rhode Island Department of Labor and Training	On-the-Job (OJT) Training Program	State Agency
Rhode Island Office of Energy Resources/Rhode Island Infrastructure Bank	Rhode Island Efficient Buildings Fund (RIEBF)	State Agency
Rhode Island Science and Technology Advisory Council	Internship Grant	State Agency
Rhode Island Foundation	Racial Equity and Social Justice Grants	Private

Past surveys of energy efficiency employers

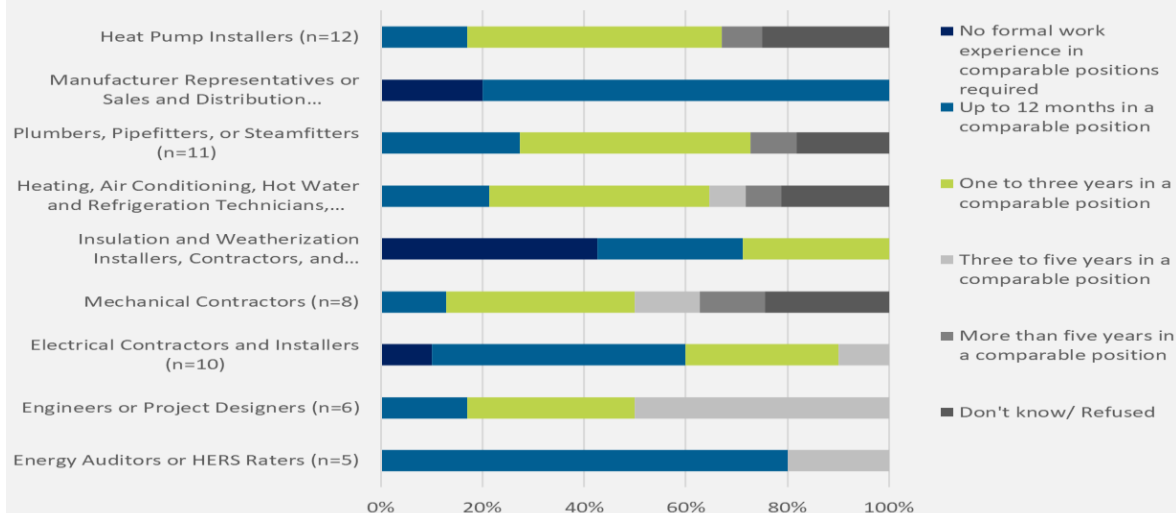
+ The majority of surveyed firms are interested in offering or accessing recruitment and training program offerings. Over half of firms reported they are interested in:

- Funds to reimburse costs of additional training or certification
- Interest in an apprenticeship program
- Sourcing and pre-screening for interns.

Surveyed Energy Efficiency Firms' Interest in Workforce Programs



Energy Efficiency Employers' Requirements for Previous Work Experience by Role



+ Most employers expect some work experience for most roles, but education requirements are lighter.

- At least half of firms require energy efficiency workers to have one or more years of experience
- Respondents report that many of their energy efficiency job openings do not require a college degree.
- Survey data indicates employers value applicants' experience more than specific certifications, training, or education.

Leading Rhode Island education/workforce-related organizations

Career and Technical Education Centers & Community College



COMMUNITY
COLLEGE
OF RHODE ISLAND

Private Companies

CLEARResult



Industry & Labor



State Agencies



**BACK TO
WORK**
RHODE ISLAND



Non-profit



Breakout Session #1: Gaps in Workforce Development related to Decarbonization



Energy+Environmental Economics



Lighthouse Consulting
Group, Inc.

[bw] RESEARCH
PARTNERSHIP

Questions <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RICASWorkforceSurvey>



- + As we think about preparing RI's workforce for expanded decarbonization*, what are the key gaps/opportunities in the state?
- + If you could prioritize workforce funding to address one gap or maximize one opportunity, what would it be?
- + Where would you seek that funding?

** Decarbonization means to eliminate or reduce carbon dioxide emissions from activities like driving, heating our apartments/homes, and using electricity.*

Report Out



Energy+Environmental Economics



Lighthouse Consulting
Group, Inc.

[bw] RESEARCH
PARTNERSHIP

Breakout Session #2: Statewide Coordination of Climate Workforce Strategy



Energy+Environmental Economics



Lighthouse Consulting
Group, Inc.

[bw] RESEARCH
PARTNERSHIP

Questions <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RICASWorkforceSurvey>



- + What would a coordinated workforce strategy across the state look like? How would it be developed?
- + Who would be leading? Who are other critical participants?
- + How can workers be actively involved?

Report Out



Energy+Environmental Economics



Lighthouse Consulting
Group, Inc.

[bw] RESEARCH
PARTNERSHIP

Breakout Session #3: Workforce Transitions and Transfers



Energy+Environmental Economics



Lighthouse Consulting
Group, Inc.

[bw] RESEARCH
PARTNERSHIP

Questions <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RICASWorkforceSurvey>



- + Where are the biggest needs in supporting workers who may need to transition into new fields or occupations based on climate action?**
- + What occupations do you think are most at risk?**
- + What other industries in Rhode Island have experienced transitions or transformation before? What was the worker experience?**

Report Out



Energy+Environmental Economics



Lighthouse Consulting
Group, Inc.

[bw] RESEARCH
PARTNERSHIP

Wrap Up and Next Steps



- + BW and RI will consider feedback from this session when...**
 - Analyzing impacts of decarbonization on workers in Rhode Island
 - Writing the section of the RI Climate Action Strategy focused on workforce needs
 - Considering how to design workforce programs and policies to be equitable and just
- + Feel free to submit additional thoughts on workforce and climate worker impacts in RI in the post-meeting survey: : <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RICASWorkforceSurvey> or in the SmartComment portal: <https://ri.commentinput.com/?id=em4auDNSK>**
- + RI, Lighthouse, and E3 will host additional engagement sessions over the course of April and May**
- + E3 and BW will complete the emissions, workforce, and benefits modeling over the summer**

Upcoming Engagement Opportunities

+ General Stakeholder Meeting [In-person]

- 4/17/2025 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm
- **Providence/Cranston:** Providence Career and Technical Academy

+ General Stakeholder Meeting

- 4/29/2025 11:00 am - 1:00 pm
- Virtual Zoom meeting

+ General Stakeholder Meeting [In-person]

- 5/5/2025 6:00 pm - 8:00 PM
- **Newport:** Newport Public Library

+ Energy Focus Area Meeting

- 5/9/2025 11:00 am - 1:00 pm
- Virtual Zoom meeting

Staying in the Loop on the 2025 Strategy

Sign up to receive ongoing announcements about engagement on the RI 2025 Climate Action Strategy [HERE](#)



Sign up for updates!

Get the latest updates from the Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council (EC4) in your inbox.



Subscribe

Thank You

Cai Steger: csteger@bwresearch.com

Chelsea Petrenko: chelsea.petrenko@ethree.com

Eric Kretsch: ekretsch@lighthousecg.com

Molly Bertolacini: molly.bertolacini@ethree.com

Liz Stone: elizabeth.stone@dem.ri.gov



Energy+Environmental Economics

How did we do? Help improve future engagement events



English



Español