

The background of the slide is a photograph of a wind farm. In the foreground, there is a field of tall, golden-brown grass. In the middle ground, several white wind turbines are visible, with their blades extending outwards. In the background, there are rugged, brown mountains under a blue sky with scattered white clouds. A tall, thin tower is also visible on the left side of the image.

Competitiveness Improvement Project (CIP) Round 2025 Webinar

Brent Summerville
National Renewable Energy Laboratory
January 17, 2025

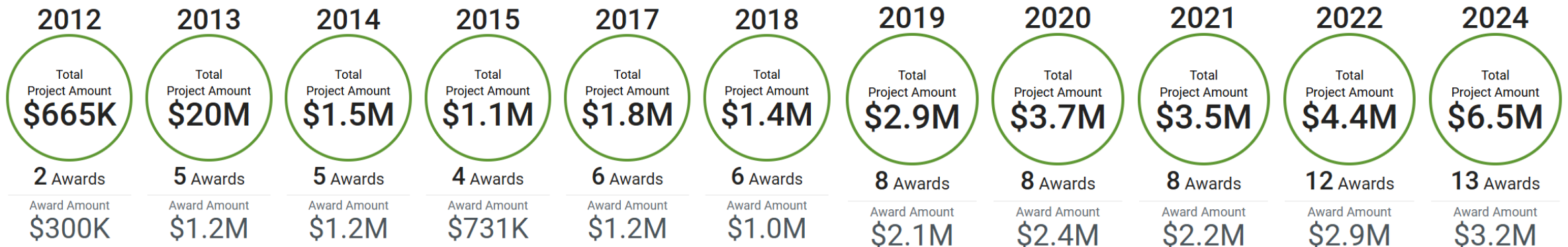
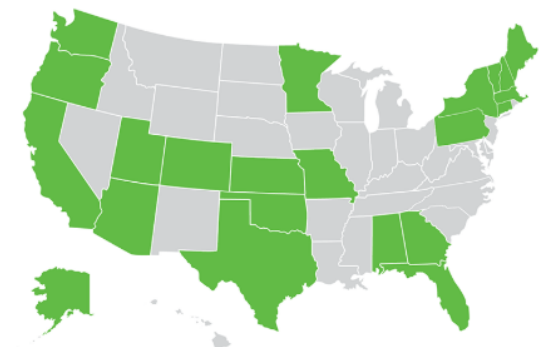
CIP Overview

- Supported by DOE Wind Energy Technologies Office, NREL manages the projects through a defined period of performance subcontract, providing oversight and technical assistance.
- The CIP 2025 RFP considers the current needs of the U.S. distributed wind energy market by prioritizing award topics that:
 - Support distributed wind energy technology development and innovation to improve reliability, increase performance, and drive down installed costs
 - Address the need for inverters built specifically for distributed wind turbines that have achieved listing to national safety and interconnection standards
 - Develop advanced manufacturing processes to reduce hardware costs and meet growing demand
 - Ensure that distributed energy consumers have commercialized wind energy technology options that are certified for performance and quality.

Since 2012, NREL has awarded:



The Competitiveness Improvement Project supports companies from across the nation.



Changes Made per Industry Feedback and CIP Experience

Motivation

- CIP award amounts have been inadequate for some efforts, particularly medium-scale wind turbine development efforts.
- The piecemeal design of CIP slows development cycle; the lag between annual solicitations can delay progress.
- With a strong U.S. market, the need for near-term expansion of access to distributed wind technology remains.

Solutions

- Increase funding amounts for topic areas where awards have proven inadequate, particularly for efforts that scale with turbine size.
- Enable offerors to combine multiple topic areas in one proposal, chaining development efforts together in a multi-phase project.

Impacts

- Higher award amounts enable successful projects and medium-scale development.
- Faster development cycle, reaching commercialization sooner.



Pecos Wind Power testing their 85-kW prototype in Neodesha, Kansas. Photo from Josh Groleau, Pecos Wind Power

CIP 2025 Highlights

- CIP 2025 RFP released January 9, 2025
 - Since this webinar is being held while the RFP is open, we cannot discuss your project ideas, but we hope to highlight and clarify significant changes in CIP 2025.
- Ten topics areas offered
- Increased, simplified maximum award amounts
- Multi-topic area proposals allowed
- Optional concept papers due January 31, 2025
- Technical questions submitted through February 21, 2025
- Solicitation open until 2 p.m. MST, March 28, 2025.



Northern Power Systems returns to the U.S. in 2023 with this Prudhoe Bay installation. Photo from Chris Connor, NPS

Topic Areas and Maximum Award Amounts

- All 10 topic areas offered in CIP 2025.
- Prototype installation now only part of *Prototype Installation and Testing* topic area
 - Previously could be included in *Prototype Manufacture and Installation* topic area.
- Maximum award amounts increased for five topic areas
 - In previous rounds, some award amounts were calculated based on turbine size; now simplified
 - Some efforts scale with turbines size; **proposed costs should be reasonable and clearly justified** (see budget justification instructions in the Price Cost proposal form).

Topic Area	Maximum award amount	Minimum price participation
Prototype Design Development	Maximum \$200,000	20%
Prototype Manufacture	Maximum \$800,000 (from \$400k with size calc.)	50%
Prototype Installation and Testing	Maximum \$400,000 (from \$300k with size calc.)	20%
Component Innovation	Maximum \$400,000	20%
System Optimization	Maximum \$400,000	20%
Small Turbine Certification and/or Listing	Maximum \$300,000	20%
Inverter Listing	Maximum \$800,000 (from \$200k)	20%
Type Certification and Listing	Maximum \$800,000	20%
Manufacturing Process Innovation	Maximum \$800,000 (from \$500k)	50%
Technology Commercialization	Maximum \$200,000 (from \$150k)	20%

Multi-Topic-Area Proposals (Excerpts from RFP)

- “Proposals may be submitted with a combination of more than one (1) topic area with a maximum of three (3) topic areas.”
- “Multi-topic area proposals should be phased in a serial manner (phase one followed by phase two, etc.) **with go/no-go stages between project phases.**”
- “Phased multi-topic proposals may be submitted, but the primary (first) topic must be completed in full, with additional topic areas included as distinct phases of work.”
- “Applicants wishing to implement phased topic areas must provide technical justification for any additional phases of work, addressing topic specific scoring criteria as defined for the appropriate topic area.”

For example, an applicant may propose a Phase 1 effort to manufacture a prototype under the **Prototype Manufacture** topic area, followed by a second phase falling within the **Prototype Installation and Testing** topic area, and then a Phase 3 effort within the **Small Turbine Certification and/or Listing** topic area.



Multi-Topic-Area Proposals (Excerpts from RFP)

- “Phased, multi-topic area proposals shall include a technical proposal as described above for the primary, phase one effort. Proposed follow-on effort(s), consistent with different topic area(s) should include a **general plan**, using the merit criteria in section 6 as a guide, and **estimated project costs per phase.**”
- “For phased, multi-topic area proposals, the Price/Cost Proposal for the primary, phase one effort should be complete and include budget justification. Price/Cost Proposals for the proposed follow-on phase(s) shall also be included but may be **preliminary estimates.**”
- “For phased multi-topic area proposals, the primary (phase 1) effort will be evaluated and scored against the qualitative merit criteria listed above; **follow-on project phase(s) will be evaluated based on the technical criteria for those topical areas and receive a positive or negative decision.** The evaluation of additional phases will have no bearing on the score of the primary (phase 1) topic area.”
- “Following proposal evaluation, **NREL may choose to award the primary, phase one, effort but not the proposed follow-on phase(s).**”



Bergey Excel 15 being installed at NREL's Flatirons Campus. Photo by Joe DelNero, NREL

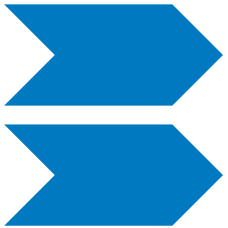
Proposal Options

Several options remain for offerors, including

- Proposed effort under a single topic area



- Multiple proposals under different topic areas



- NEW phased, multi-topic-area proposals



Eocycle S-16 installed in Kansas. Photo from Eocycle America

Concept Papers Offered To Allow Feedback, per Industry Request

- “Offerors may submit an optional Concept Paper for potential proposals to obtain NREL feedback prior to submitting a full proposal (offer).”
- “Feedback will include
 - Overall viability of the proposed concept
 - Alignment with chosen topic area(s)
 - Recommendations on improvement in a full proposal
 - Feasibility of multi-topic areas concepts (if applicable). ”
- “Concept papers are not required and their submittal, or absence, will have no bearing on a future submittal. Concept papers should not include propriety information or sensitive data.”
- “Concept papers must be submitted to Kyndall.Jackson@nrel.gov by **01/31/2025**. NREL will provide written feedback within two to three weeks after the submission deadline via an email address provided.”
- “Concept papers are limited to three (3) pages, including figures, and must include vendor contact information, including email address. See Attachment 7 for the Concept Paper template.”

NREL Transforming ENERGY

Competitiveness Improvement Project (CIP) Concept Paper – Round 2025

Please use this template to develop a Competitiveness Improvement Project (CIP) Concept Paper for the 2025 CIP solicitation. Please do not include proprietary information in the Concept Paper. You may submit papers as PDF documents via email to kyndall.jackson@nrel.gov no later than 2:00 p.m. Mountain Time, 01/31/2025. Concept papers must not exceed three (3) pages including graphics, figures, and tables. Instructional text below can be deleted and replaced as needed.

Project Title [Click or tap here to enter text]
Topic Area(s) [Click or tap here to enter text] *Choose one topic area, or up to three (3) for multi-topic area proposals with project phases identified.*

Author and contact information
Author Name: [Click or tap here to enter text] **Phone:** [Click or tap here to enter text]
Company [Click or tap here to enter text] **Website:** [Click or tap here to enter text]
Email: [Click or tap here to enter text] Incorporated in the United States

Project Description
Overview
[Provide an overview of the proposed project. For multi-topic area proposals, describe phase one (primary effort) and proposed follow-on phase(s)]
Description of the turbine or other distributed wind technology.
[Provide a description of the turbine or other distributed wind technology being proposed in this project. Supporting graphics, figures, and tables are encouraged.]

Project Impacts
[Provide a description of this project's expected impacts. Examples included lower LCOE, new product, new application for existing project, testing to advance product development, product certification/listing, or commercialization of certified technology.]

Basic Project plan
[Assuming a 21-month period of performance (per topic area for multi-topic area proposals), please outline your project plan.]

Team
[List the Team members involved in this project, describe their relevant expertise in relation to the proposed project. (internal staff, subcontractors, consultants, test sites, certification bodies, NRTLs, etc.)]

Attachment 7, Concept Paper template

Other Items

- “Note that legal services are typically an unallowable cost for NREL and should not be included as a cost element in proposals.”
- “The total proposal shall not exceed fifteen (15) pages for single-topic area proposals and twenty (20) pages for phased multi-topic area proposals (not including resumes of team members, prototype testing history, required Attachments, letters of support, price (cost) details, title page, and table of contents).”
- Stay tuned to the CIP website and LinkedIn group for updates.
- Email Kyndall.jackson@nrel.gov to be added to the CIP email list.
- Technical RFP questions submitted to Kyndall.jackson@nrel.gov through February 21, 2025.
- Solicitation open until 2 p.m. MST, March 28, 2025.

Competitiveness Improvement Project

The Competitiveness Improvement Project (CIP) provides financial and technical support to manufacturers of small wind turbines.



The distributed wind energy industry requires rapid innovation to reduce costs and increase customer confidence, but many companies that build small- and medium-sized wind turbines lack the resources to develop, certify, and commercialize next-generation technology.

Managed by NREL on behalf of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Wind Energy Technologies Office, CIP awards cost-shared subcontracts and technical support to manufacturers of small and medium-sized wind turbines. Designed to make distributed wind energy technologies more cost-competitive and reliable, these awards help manufacturers of wind turbines less than 1 MW in capacity to:

- Optimize their designs
- Develop advanced manufacturing processes
- Perform turbine and component testing and certification
- Expand access to distributed wind technology.

Competitiveness Improvement Project Informational Workshop

NREL has posted the [CIP 2025 request for proposals](#) on sam.gov.

An informational webinar for the recently released RFP will be hosted on Friday, Jan. 17, at 10:30 a.m. MT. [Registration is required.](#)

<https://www.nrel.gov/wind/competitiveness-improvement-project.html>

References

- NREL. 2025. “Competitiveness Improvement Project”. <https://www.nrel.gov/wind/competitiveness-improvement-project.html>. Accessed 1/14/2025.
- NREL. 2025. “Request for Proposals (RFP) RFX-2025-10018: 2025 Distributed Wind Turbine Competitiveness Improvement Project”. <https://sam.gov/opp/6fa97365ea194da191629e934d70683e/view>. Accessed 1/14/2025.
- NREL. 2025. “NREL Calls for Proposals From US Wind Turbine Manufacturers:.”. <https://www.nrel.gov/news/program/2025/nrel-calls-for-proposals-from-us-wind-turbine-manufacturers.html>. Accessed 1/14/2025.
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Questions?

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