

Employing Women in Clean Energy



Direct outreach and job training can help women access stable, high-paying clean energy jobs. Targeted workplace supports like child care and paid leave can also help to attract and retain women in these fields.

Diversity

The clean energy sector continues to have an all-around lack of gender and racial diversity. The sector is predominantly white and male, with women representing only 26% of the energy workforce, despite making up 47% of the overall workforce in 2022. By diversifying, the industry will gain innovation and talent while also allowing more women to access stable jobs that pay enough to support a family.

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are joint partnerships between educational institutions, employers, and unions that allow people to earn money and learn technical skills on-the-job and in the classroom, while letting employers train and invest in their future employees.

Women make up only 14.4% of current registered apprenticeships across all fields.

The median hourly wage for women who completed registered apprenticeship programs was only 54.6% of the wage of their male counterparts (\$22.00/hr compared to \$34.07/hr).

Key Policies

The provision of the CHIPS and Science Act requiring some semiconductor manufacturers seeking federal subsidies to provide a plan to provide childcare for workers is a critical first step to helping women succeed in these growing industries.

In December 2023, the Biden administration also announced a \$1.4 billion investment in the Women in the Sustainable Economy (WISE) Initiative. This investment aims to improve women's access to employment, training, leadership roles, and financing in industries like energy, climate-resilient food processing and health care. The Inflation Reduction Act also expands career opportunities in the trades by incentivizing companies to use registered apprentices and pay the prevailing wage.

The Apprenticeships Pathways Act of 2023 would support workforce intermediaries who connect employers and secondary schools to help establish apprenticeship programs.

The Pre-Apprenticeships to Hardhats (PATH) Act of 2024 would expand apprenticeships for young people and address workforce shortages.

Benefits

Ensuring more women in clean energy sectors have access to registered apprenticeship and union training programs can help with recruitment. Access to workplace supports including paid leave and child care, and assuring equal pay can help with retention in these rapidly expanding fields. This will diversify and strengthen the workforce while supporting women's economic empowerment.