



**DIVERSITY, EQUITY,  
INCLUSION, AND JUSTICE  
CERTIFICATION PROGRAM**

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**ANNUAL REPORT**

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# Introduction



**Abigail Ross Hopper**

*President and CEO  
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**Erika Symmonds**

*VP of Equity and  
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**America's solar and storage industry is quickly transforming our energy system, creating new opportunities in every corner of the country. This rapid growth cannot be haphazard if we want to ensure equitable growth as part of this transition.**

Prioritizing diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (DEIJ) programming is the path forward to helping the solar and storage industry achieve its goals. It's how we spread wealth, deliver upward mobility, and ensure that the workplace support systems we put in place are fully embraced and elevated in tandem with our industry's growth. It's also how we attract and retain the top talent we need to become the dominant energy source in our economy.

This is true at the organization level as well. A company's workforce is its most powerful asset. As companies seek to increase profit and reduce turnover, well-executed diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts are great for business and great for our industry.

This is why the Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA) created the [DEIJ Certification Program](#). We created it to encourage our members and partners to take smart, measurable steps on DEIJ issues.

As the program enters its third year, it's important to reflect on how these programs are working and what kind of impact they're having on the companies that participate.

To date, 52 organizations, including dozens of solar companies, have enrolled in the DEIJ certification program, taking measurable actions on DEIJ.

Every participant has completed an inclusion assessment and 88% have a written DEIJ communications plan. In addition, every participant is utilizing a mentorship program, and nearly three-quarters of program participants require unconscious bias training for their hiring managers. In addition, all 52 organizations report that they are working directly with the frontline communities impacted by energy development and have either created a process or are working on a process to collect feedback from impacted communities.

Each number represents a real-world action a company or organization is taking on DEIJ, marking important progress for our industry. Inclusion assessments, feedback processes, and mentorship programs are valuable, tangible progress. They help boost retention and generate a more inclusive culture. As these programs expand, participating companies will see the benefits and become more competitive when they're trying to hire top talent.

These actions are happening in every part of our industry. Developers, manufacturers, financiers, and service providers are all participating in the program, driving progress across the industry.

This year, RES Group became the first company to achieve the highest level of certification, Platinum. Since RES Group achieved its Bronze certification in 2021, the company has expanded its affinity networks, revised its bereavement policy to include non-traditional family members, and amended its approach to the people-oriented metrics they track.

In addition, Encore Renewable Energy and OneEnergy Renewables achieved Gold and [dozens more have completed the Silver and Bronze certification](#). SEIA is also participating in the program to ensure the organization is 'walking the walk' when it comes to DEIJ. We're proud to report that we've expanded our human resources offerings over the last year and achieved Gold certification.

We also opened the program to non-members and expanded our module offerings to better meet the needs of our industry. This includes new modules on mentorship, LGBTQ+ inclusion in the workplace, creating inclusive spaces, and strategies for attracting, hiring, and retaining military veterans and spouses.

We want to thank all of our program partners and our colleagues at the Human Rights Campaign and SHRM for providing feedback and education to support the DEIJ Certification Program this year. We also want to thank Longroad Energy, Freedom Forever, and McCarthy for sharing their experiences during our webinar series.

Congratulations to everyone on their accomplishments this year. We're making incredible progress, and together, we can create the most inclusive and equitable workforce in America.

The success of the solar and storage industry depends on it.

We look forward to partnering with you on your diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice journey.

# Introduction

The Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA) is releasing this document to recognize two years since we started a first-of-its-kind DEIJ Certification Program, which provides resources and guidance for companies as they analyze their DEIJ practices and implement workplace solutions that improve diversity, equity, and inclusion. The data in this report is collected from October 2022-October 2023.



## Vision Statement

We are dedicated to creating an equitable workplace, inclusive learning environment, and sustainable economy where diversity is a pillar in everything we do. We believe that it is important for our organization, from leadership throughout all employees, to do the necessary internal work that sets a foundation for our DEIJ vision.

## About this Certification

As the national trade association for America's solar and storage industry, SEIA has a responsibility to make sure the industry is prioritizing diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (DEIJ).

In this yearly report, you'll gain insights into how businesses are employing the modules offered by the DEIJ Certification Program. Additionally, you'll discover the advancements SEIA has observed as companies embark on this transformative journey.

SEIA is deeply committed to DEIJ and is striving for the solar and storage industry to reflect the diversity of the nation. This includes welcoming people from underrepresented backgrounds to the industry at all levels, creating equitable opportunities for business ownership, improving access to clean energy technology and its benefits; creating an environment where people feel respected and included, and becoming an industry that helps address injustices of the past and present.

The certification tool will help you get there. The program was designed to meet companies where they are on diversity. It helps companies of all sizes, regardless of their budget or resources, implement evidence-based DEIJ solutions and earn certification for their progress.

The DEIJ Certification Program encourages broad participation and rewards companies working in earnest to create a more inclusive work environment, serve their communities, and attract, hire, promote, and retain diverse talent. This program is part of SEIA's broader DEIJ efforts and underscores the importance of company-level DEIJ contributions to the overall workforce.

The modules, designed by Certified Diversity Professionals and in collaboration with stakeholder groups, cover topics such as improving hiring, promotion, and other practices to remove bias and improve workplace culture and inclusivity.

As companies progress, they receive Bronze, Gold, Silver, or Platinum Certification and earn recognition for their achievement. This one-of-a-kind program has the potential to improve diversity within the clean energy industry dramatically. SEIA hopes the program will serve as a new standard for businesses of all kinds.

Because the program is metrics-based, it is designed to help SEIA track, aggregate, and share annual progress on numerous DEIJ-specific metrics — everything from how many companies have a supplier diversity program to the percentage of clean energy projects that serve lower income customers.

# Key Findings

Over the past two years, **52 companies** have enrolled in the DEIJ Certification Program, **29 organizations** have achieved Bronze certification, **5 achieved Silver**, **2 companies achieved Gold**, and **1 company achieved Platinum**. Participating companies have made tremendous strides and gained a new or renewed commitment to DEIJ efforts within their company and their communities.<sup>1</sup>

**29**

**commitments to action**

**11**

**recommitments to action**

**100%**  
**of companies have performed an inclusion assessment**

**100%**  
**of companies work directly with frontline communities and seek community feedback**



**100%**  
**companies have an Employee Resource Group or committee for LGBTQ+ community members and allies**



**57%**  
**of companies participate in career fairs at minority-serving institutions**



**72%**  
**of companies require unconscious bias training to hiring managers**

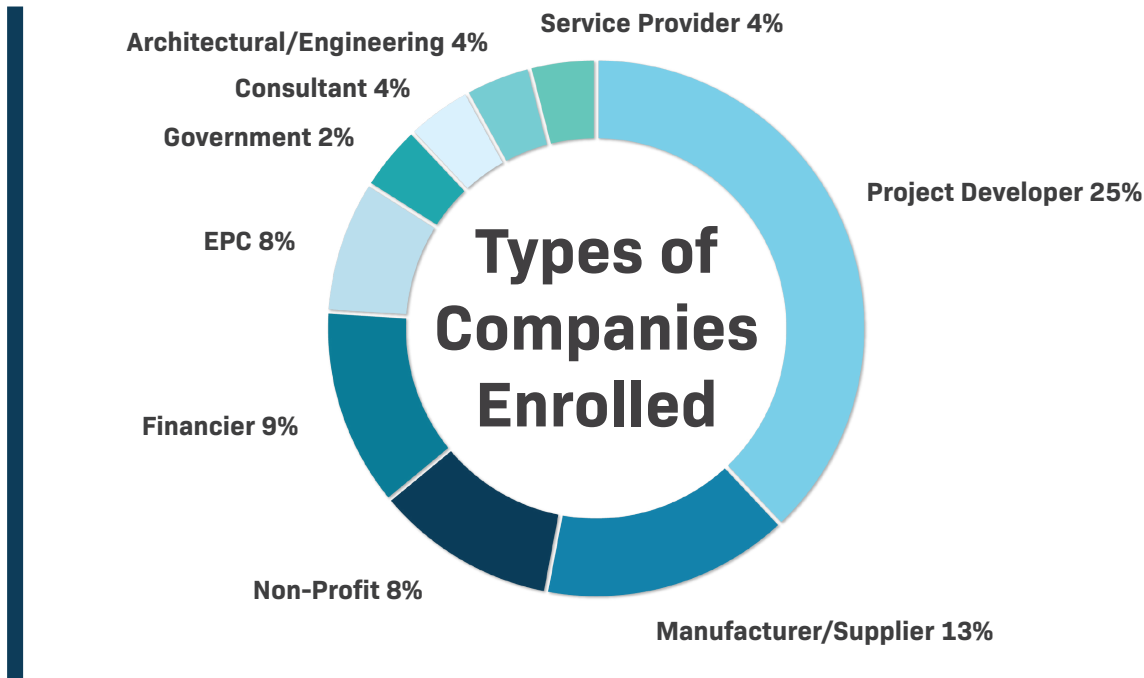


**100%**  
**of companies utilize a mentorship program**

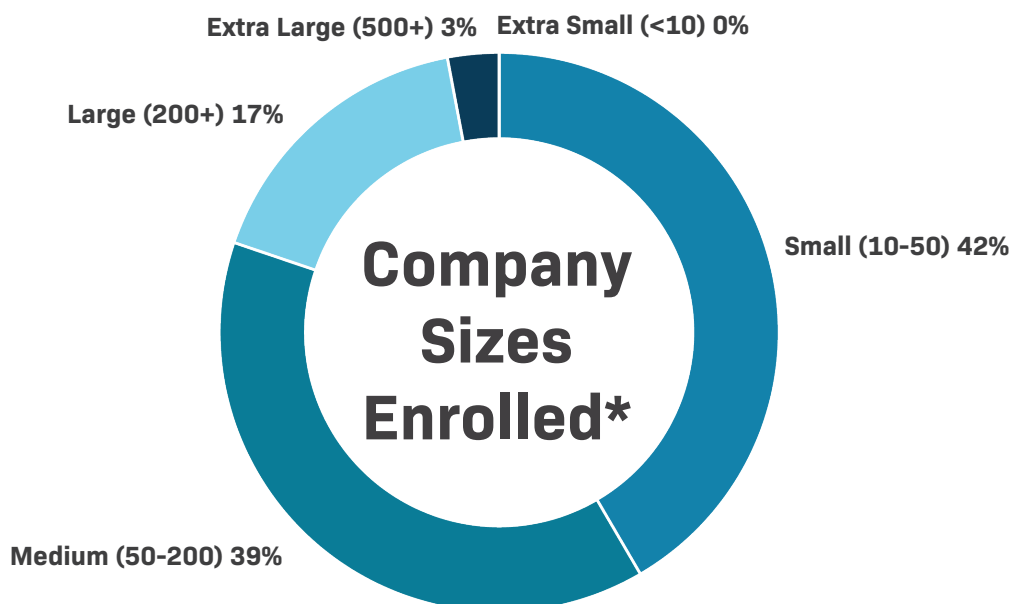
**88%**  
**of companies have a written DEIJ communications plan**

# Participant Data

The program is designed to encourage broad participation and will meet companies where they're at on their DEIJ journey, enabling companies of all sizes and resource levels to advance their DEIJ work.



The program is diverse not only by company type, but also company size. More than 95% of companies in the solar industry are small businesses and three quarters of them have fewer than 50 employees. Many solar companies want to make progress on diversity but as small businesses, lack the resources to hire consultants or human resource staff, making the pricing accessibility of this program even more important. Within the program, 40% of companies self-identified as having 10-50 employees, 37% self-identified as having 50-200 employees, and 20% of companies self-identified as having 200+ employees. This demonstrates how companies, large and small, see the value of the program.





# Awards

Companies enrolled in the program worked hard to reform their practices and make progress. Companies are eligible for Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Platinum certifications.

Below is a summary of the companies who have achieved certifications. They are grouped by the highest level they have achieved.



**Gold**



**Silver**



**Bronze**

Companies achieving this level of certification must achieve 2,000 points. Gold-level companies have taken both internal and external measurable actions to advance diversity, equity, inclusion and justice.

### Gold-Level Certifications

Encore Renewable Energy .....Project Developer  
OneEnergy Renewables .....Project Developer

Companies achieving this level of certification must achieve 1,500 points. Though it is a lower certification level than Platinum and Gold, a Silver certified company must have taken measurable steps to improve their internal

### Silver-Level Certifications

Forefront Power.....Project Developer  
Longroad Energy .....Project Developer  
SEIA .....Non-profit  
Enstall.....Manufacturer/Supplier  
Lightsource bp.....Project Developer

Companies achieving a bronze level certification demonstrate an understanding of the fundamentals of diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice and commit to taking future actions. This is a baseline requirement that all companies must adhere to before advancing to higher levels of certification.

### Bronze-Level Certifications

Arevon.....Project Developer  
New Energy Equity.....Project Developer  
Nextracker.....Manufacturer/Supplier  
Sunpower.....Manufacturer/Supplier  
SOLV Energy.....EPC  
Solas Energy Consulting.....Consultant  
Midwest Renewable Energy.....Non-profit  
SGC Power.....Contractor/Installer  
Nautilus Solar.....Project Developer  
Primergy Solar.....Energy Storage  
Pure Power Engineering.....Contractor/Installer  
Ulteig.....Consultant  
Epcon Partners.....EPC  
Sungage Financial.....Financier  
Namaste Solar.....Contractor/Installer  
Ranger Power.....Project Developer  
Hemlock Semiconductor.....Manufacturer/Supplier  
American Solar and Roofing.....Contractor/Installer  
Enphase Energy.....Manufacturer/Supplier  
Pivot Energy.....Contractor/Installer  
Solariant Capital.....Contractor/Installer  
Dimension Renewable Energy.....Project Developer  
Standard Solar.....Contractor/Installer



## Platinum

The first company to achieve Platinum-Level Certification was **RES Group**

The highest possible level of DEIJ certification, requiring at least 2,500 points. This level of certification demands a degree of effort and adherence that is difficult to attain and sustain without setting clear goals, allocating sufficient resources, and striving for continuous improvement.

# Renewal Data and Process Updates



**9 bronze renewals**



**2 silver renewals**

Over the past two years, companies were required to renew their certifications at each level they attained within one year from the date of their achievement. Starting in October 2023, each company must renew their certification at the highest level they have achieved, also within one year from the date of their achievement. This change was to make the renewal process more accessible for participants and to align it with other certification programs.

The renewal process serves multiple purposes. It allows us to assess the progress made over the past year and evaluate whether measurable strides have been taken towards fulfilling the commitments outlined in the “Commitments to Action” module. Accountability is a fundamental aspect of the certification program, as it empowers customers to rely on third-party evaluations to identify companies truly dedicated to promoting and integrating Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice (DEIJ) within their organizations.

Furthermore, SEIA utilizes these renewals as an opportunity to gather additional program data, which in turn enables us to generate informative reports for benchmarking and progress tracking purposes. As the industry’s trade association, this data is crucial in helping us gain a better understanding of the specific needs of solar companies. This, in turn, allows us to focus our efforts on developing additional resources and support mechanisms to aid your company in its DEIJ journey.

There were nine bronze certification renewals and two silver certification renewals this past year. Twenty-two companies are either approaching their renewal process or have the opportunity to renew now.





# Program Content

To participate in the program, companies complete online modules on a variety of topics related to DEIJ. The entry level modules are designed to meet companies where they're at and help them establish a strong foundation for their own DEIJ programs.

All companies participating in the program are required to complete the following to earn Bronze certification:

- *DEIJ Certification Program Introduction*
- *Company Statement About Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Justice*
- *Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Statements and Policies*
- *Participate in the Solar Census and Diversity Study*
- *Your Commitment to Action*

29 companies completed these modules and earned Bronze.

Higher-level modules include more advanced topics, like best practices for serving low- and moderate-income solar and storage customers, establishing a supplier diversity program, and working with key employee populations, like veterans and people with cognitive or physical differences. The program also features human resources topics like improving retention, creating a conflict resolution system, and community engagement activities that can all lead to a more inclusive work environment.



## Module Review and Scoring

The program is conducted through an online learning management system so SEIA can see where companies are getting stuck or need more help. The module submissions are reviewed and scored by Certified Diversity Professionals and allow for opportunities for direct feedback from the professionals. Companies not enrolled in the program typically seek this type of guidance from external diversity consultants, which is significantly more expensive than our program costs, and therefore can be prohibitive for companies with limited resources. This approach democratizes access to valuable resources and allows companies to validate their efforts with a third party.

## Enrollment Data

On average each company is enrolled in 9 modules. Below is a list of Silver, Gold, and Platinum-Level modules in order of completion.

- *Workplace Flexibility*
- *Cultural Assessment/Inclusion Audit*
- *Diversity Councils, ERGs, and Other Structural Supports*
- *Supporting Organizations that Serve Diverse Communities*
- *Review and Modify Hiring Practices*
- *Effective Onboarding Programs*
- *Receiving and Implementing Community Feedback*
- *Environmental Justice Actions and Policy Support*
- *Establish a Committee, Recurring Forum, or Other Communication Mechanism*
- *Training, Workshops, and Education*
- *Leave, Sabbaticals, and Time Off*
- *Creating an Inclusive Workplace Environment*
- *Creating Inclusive Spaces in the Trades*
- *Leadership Communication and Transparency*
- *Career Pathways and Professional Development*
- *Review and Modify Retention Practices*
- *Review and Modify Promotion Practices*
- *Educate Your Local Community*
- *Review and Modify Recruitment Practices*
- *Strategic Planning, Setting Measurable Goals*
- *Labor Practices in Your Supply Chain*
- *Cognitive Diversity*
- *Conflict Resolution and Grievance System*
- *End of Cycle Considerations/PV Recycling*
- *Serving LMI Customers/Clients*
- *Host or Attend a Career Fair*
- *LGBTQ+ Inclusion in the Workplace*
- *Mentorship in the Workplace*
- *Attracting, Hiring, and Retaining Military Veterans and Spouses*
- *Disability Inclusion in the Workplace*

# Program Content

**SEIA is consistently adding new modules that align with current events, issues, and goals that SEIA members are facing. These modules show a range of the types of content offered and of the company responses.**

## Disability Inclusion in the Workplace

Disability inclusion in the workplace is about more than hiring people with disabilities. It involves creating an inclusive business culture where people feel comfortable, valued, and appreciated because of who they are as an individual, not despite or ignoring their disabilities.

100% of companies enrolled in this module include offering equal employment opportunities for individual with disabilities in their company strategic mission.

75% of companies enrolled have used employee engagement surveys to determine demographics and whether the environment is accessible and inclusive.

## Mentorship in the Workplace

A mentorship program is a structured, often one-to-one relationship. Mentoring allows people to learn from one another, providing a path to skill and knowledge transfer. These programs benefit mentees (those receiving knowledge) and mentors (those providing knowledge, skills, etc.) and help the organizations by building an inclusive mentoring culture centered on learning, sharing new ideas, and creating a shared vision. A mentorship program can diminish isolation and exclusivity while increasing engagement, retention rates, and skill development.

100% of companies enrolled in this module utilize an annual mentorship program.

## Attracting, Hiring, and Retaining Military Veterans and Spouses

Military veterans offer leadership, technical and critical soft skills that are essential to the quickly expanding solar and clean energy industry workforce. Companies benefit from attracting, hiring, and retaining military veterans. Veterans often have a strong commitment to the organization's mission, are highly organized, and have the ability to build effective teams. Military spouses are an often-overlooked segment of the workforce that can be a great asset to companies. Both military veterans and spouses have unique abilities to adapt and thrive in rapidly changing situations; these are definitely valuable competencies in the growing solar industry.

In order to attract and retain military talent, companies must work to cultivate a culture, along with policies and processes, which demonstrate that they value the unique assets military talent brings.

## LGBTQ+ Inclusion in the Workplace

Workplace environments inclusive to LGBTQ+ community members provide increased employee productivity, higher employee retention rates, reduced employee stress levels, and more positive coworker and supervisor relationships. These factors contribute to higher profit margins and better stakeholder and customer relations.

**100% of companies** enrolled in the module have an established Employee Resource Group or committee for LGBTQ+ community members and allies. **60% of companies** enrolled assess the current climate of their LGBTQ+ population. **100% of companies** have reviewed and revised written policies and handbooks to include gender-neutral language.

## Creating Inclusive Spaces in the Trades

Now more than ever, we must work to diversify our industry worksites and organizations and bring more individuals from historically excluded groups into the world of design, installation, construction, and operations & maintenance of solar and clean energy projects. So how can organizations in construction and the skilled trades increase historically excluded populations and work to create more equitable and inclusive environments? Leading with equity means recognizing that different people have different needs and, beyond that, being committed to giving people exactly what they need to succeed. By giving employees what they need to succeed, you are not only improving your employees' success but also your organization's success. This module will explore how organizations can create more inclusive workplaces for historically excluded groups in the trades.

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## Value Proposition

The DEI Certification Program is focused on action and is designed to help companies overcome implementation barriers. The program also features direct feedback from Diversity Certified Professionals, giving companies access to valuable and in demand resources at a fraction of the price.

This approach also gives companies the ability to validate their current DEI efforts with a third party, which can be helpful to larger companies or companies that already have established DEI programs.

# Continuing Education

## Cohort Sessions

Participants in the DEIJ Certification program have access to regular cohort meetings where resources are provided, ideas are discussed and shared, and collaboration is encouraged. Each topic is designed to fit the demands and needs of the cohort.

- **January**- *Mentorship in the Workplace*
- **February**- *Discussing Critical Conversations at Work*
- **April**- *Solar 101*
- **May**- *LGBTQ+ Inclusion in the Workplace*
- **July** - *Supplier Diversity*
- **September** - *Inclusion in the Trades*
- **November** - *Program Updates*

## Webinar Series | Year 2

As part of SEIA's ongoing commitment to diversity, equity, inclusion, and justice (DEIJ) in the solar and storage industry, SEIA created a DEIJ-focused webinar series alongside the certification program. The webinar series is an extension of the certification program and features answers to common questions raised by participants and other hot topics that are of interest to participants.

The webinar series, while related to the program, is open to SEIA members for free and to non-members for a fee. You can locate these webinar recordings at [seia.org/seia-webinar-archive](https://seia.org/seia-webinar-archive).

### Program Updates

March 1, 2023

It's a new year, and some updates have been made to SEIA's Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Justice (DEIJ) Certification program. This webinar will provide an inside look at the program's new resources and review the newly-released annual report highlights. Hear about the successes and future goals of the program and first-hand testimonials from one of the program's Silver-certified companies.

#### Speakers:

- Dani Wolland, The Sleeper Group
- Meghan Hornberger, Longroad Energy

### Mentorship in the Workplace

March 29, 2023

This webinar will explore mentorship programs in the workplace with Laurie McIntosh from Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM).

#### Speaker:

- Dani Wolland, The Sleeper Group
- Laurie McIntosh, SHRM

### LGBTQ+ Inclusion in the Workplace

May 7, 2023

There are many actions companies can take to create LGBTQ+ inclusive work environments. By working to improve LGBTQ+ inclusivity at your company, you are making your workplace more attractive for a variety of diverse workers. Join us at 2:00pm to explore LGBTQ+ inclusion in the workplace with RaShawn "Shawnie" Hawkins, SHRM-CP, the Director of the Workplace Equality Program at the Human Rights Campaign.

#### Speaker:

- Dani Wolland, The Sleeper Group
- Shawnie Hawkins, Director of Workplace Equity, HRC

### Spotlighting Construction Inclusion in the Solar Industry

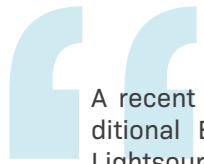
December 5, 2023

Join SEIA as we explore the concept of inclusivity within the trades while spotlighting Construction Inclusion Week. This engaging webinar is a collaborative effort with McCarthy and Freedom Forever, and it promises to provide you with valuable insights from three accomplished speakers who will share their experiences in this domain.

#### Speaker:

- Erika Symmonds, Vice President of Workforce and Equity, SEIA
- Kamecia Mason, Vice President of DEI, McCarthy
- Devina Singh, Director of Human Resources, Freedom Forever
- Janet Gomez, Director of Talent Acquisition, Freedom Forever
- Dani Wolland, The Sleeper Group

# Testimonials from Renewals



A recent culture survey revealed a need for additional ERGs (Employee Resource Groups) at Lightsource bp. In addition to continuing “Pow-erhouse,” our women’s ERG, our team has begun preparing to launch new ERGs for veterans.

- Lightsource bp



In 2021, we launched an annual comprehensive Inclusion Survey that was done post-DEIJ training. The data is reviewed and acted upon by the Leadership Team and Inclusion Working Group to directly develop and implement changes to our hiring, training and company structure. To challenge the status quo, our initiatives include ongoing data gathering, surveys, inclusion content club and annual awareness training.

We believe that DEIJ training is a first step in creating awareness and starting conversations. Our company is more aware of where we have been successful and also open to where we can do better. Our growing team has openly shared about the aspects of DEIJ that they feel our company has overlooked, including disability inclusion. With this feedback, 2023 training and incentives will include disability inclusion.

- Sungage Financial



As of January 21, 2022, Encore will be providing all full-time employees 12 paid weeks in parental leave, regardless of gender or family situation. These 12 weeks may be used all at once or at any time during the first 12 months following the arrival of a new baby. In addition, birth-giving parents have access to short-term disability benefits that provide 8 fully paid weeks of time off work. As of May 1, 2023, two full-time employees have fully utilized the updated parental leave policy.

- Encore Renewables





# RES Group



RES Group achieved the prestigious **Platinum level certification**, becoming the inaugural company to attain this recognition within the program. Learn more about their journey in the program below.

Since starting SEIA's DEIJ program, RES has made significant progress building awareness throughout the business, diversifying our workforce and supply chain and positively impacting our communities. As a strong proponent of advancing our DEIJ initiatives, Americas CEO John Rohde said "RES is committed to creating a more inclusive environment for our people. Platinum certification demonstrates we've taken another step to advance our DEIJ practices. Companies must lead the way toward an equitable clean energy economy, and I'm so proud that RES is at the forefront of the industry's progress."

Some specific steps we've taken since attaining our Bronze certification in 2021 include expanding our affinity networks to include more focused support communities such as veterans, social mobility, origins and families. We have expanded our bereavement policy to include non-traditional family members and miscarriages. Additionally, we have enhanced our people metric tracking and reporting approach to support informed decision-making around people policies. SEIA's DEIJ program has provided us more insight into how our current processes could be more supportive of DEIJ efforts and proposed new ways to approach these topics. As a result of completing in the modules and receiving feedback from the SEIA review committee, we have compiled objectives to help inform our DEIJ/DEIB strategy going forward.

"Diversity is a team sport. Everyone at RES plays a role in embracing diversity and fostering an inclusive environment," said Rohde. "There's still more important work to be done. This recognition inspires us to continue creating an inclusive culture, building a more diverse workforce and supply chain and making a positive impact in all the communities where we live and work."



# 2023 Program Administration and Content Updates



## CERTIFICATION RENEWAL

Over the past year, twelve companies have successfully renewed their certification levels. As of October 2023, the renewal process has undergone modifications to enhance accessibility for participants and bring it in line with other certification programs.



## ADDITION OF NEW MODULES

The following modules were added in 2023:

- Mentorship in the Workplace
- LGBTQ+ Inclusion in the Workplace
- Attracting, Hiring, and Retaining Military Veterans and Spouses
- Creating Inclusive Spaces in the Trades



## LOOKING FORWARD TO 2024

- Auditing and updating our modules
- Welcoming new participants
- Seeing more companies advance to new levels of certification
- Collaborating with partners on new webinars

