Why is DOE conducting the project?
As a result of workforce analyses conducted for the MD-715 Report to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), the Office of Civil Rights and Equal Employment Opportunity (OCR-EEO) has committed to executing a pilot project to further explore potential barriers to advancement at DOE. OCR-EEO is a neutral party with the relevant expertise to conduct this type of research project.

What is the purpose of the pilot project?
Twofold: One, to explore employee experience related to career development and advancement at DOE and, two, to identify barriers and enablers for employee advancement among groups identified in the MD-715 barrier analysis as facing potential barriers to advancement.

Why is the project a pilot?
DOE is a large organization with Departmental Elements that vary in pay structure, specific mission, locations, and types of work conducted. The pilot project allows us to methodically research employee experience while keeping factors such as pay structure and location consistent.

Who is eligible to participate?
Permanent federal employees from Headquarters Staff and Program Offices are eligible to participate in the focus groups and federal employees across DOE who are members of AAPIN, BIG, CALDOE, and POWER Employee Resource Groups (ERGs) are eligible to participate in employee forums.

Why only employees from Headquarters Staff and Program Offices are invited to participate in focus groups?
Limited resources allow OCR-EEO to only focus on one organization at this time. In addition, WAPA, BPA, NNSA, and SWPA submit their own independent MD-715 reports. HQ Staff and Program Offices are the largest organization in the MD-715 report that also includes 11 field sites.

Who makes up HQ Staff and Program Offices?
You can find details on the Energy Hub, under the “Who We Are” tab.

What is the difference between the focus groups and employee forums?
There will be eight focus groups, five non-supervisory and three supervisory, for which participants will be randomly selected from permanent federal employees at HQ Staff and Program Offices. Employee forums will be conducted in partnership with four ERGs: AAPIN, BIG, CALDOE, and POWER. All ERG members, who are currently DOE federal employees, will be eligible to participate in an employee forum. Both focus groups and employee forums will last 90 minutes and will be virtual.

What should I do if I receive an invitation to participate in a focus group?
We hope you will be able to participate! Your valuable insights will help us enhance our career development programs, identify areas for growth, and foster a more supportive and rewarding work environment for all employees. Having said that, participation is completely voluntary!

What if I am a Bargaining Unit employee?
Participation is open to both Bargaining Unit and non-Bargaining Unit employees. The Union has been briefed and consulted on this project. If you have any questions, please reach out to Sonia Kassambara sonia.kassambara@ee.doe.gov (NTEU Chapter 213 – Forrestal) or Kim Parker at kim.parker@nuclear.energy.gov (NTEU Chapter 228 – Germantown).
What if I am not part of HQ Staff and Program Offices but would like to share my opinions?
In addition to the focus groups, for which participants will be randomly selected from HQ Staff and Program Offices, we will be conducting employee forums in partnership with four ERGs: AAPIN, BIG, CALDOE, and POWER. If you are a member of one of these ERGs, you will have an opportunity to participate in an employee forum, even if you are not part of HQ Staff and Program Offices. You do, however, need to be a federal employee.

Who should I contact if I require a reasonable accommodation to participate in a focus group or employee forum?
Please reach out to Agata Gluszek at agata.gluszek@hq.doe.gov or 240-393-2687.

What will be done with the results of the research project?
OCR-EEO’s social scientists, Drs. Agata Gluszek and Lisa Frehill, will analyze the results of the pilot project together with workforce data and Federal Employee Viewpoint Survey (FEVS) data, to develop recommendations for improving employee experience at DOE. In addition, they will create a toolkit for conducting focus groups and employee forums, so that other organizations at DOE or ERGs can conduct a similar project.

What if I have more questions?
Reach out to OCR-EEO’s social scientists, Drs. Agata Gluszek and Lisa Frehill, at EDResearch@hq.doe.gov. We want to hear from you!