

## Safer Foundation

# Solar Energy Demand Skills Training Program

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# Role of Team Members

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**Awardee:** Safer Foundation **Role:** Administrative responsibility of contract, program and partners, as well as providing direct services, including participant recruitment, job readiness training, case management, developing an industry collaborative and providing job placement and retention support.

**Subrecipients:** Faith in Place; Little Village Env. Justice Org.(LVEJO); Kankakee County Renewed Opportunity (KRCO) **Role:** Participant recruitment

**Subrecipients:** Grid Alternatives (GA); Midwest Renewable Energy Association (MREA); Kankakee Community College (KCC) **Role:** Screening and training

**Subrecipients:** InterUrban (WDC); Reconstruction Technology Partners (RTP); Elevate Energy, Illinois Solar Energy Association (ISEA) **Role:** On-the-job training and Industry partners

# Background

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Safer Foundation (Safer) specializes in workforce development programming for people with arrest and conviction records. This project will advance its Solar Energy Demand Skills Training program to fill the growing workforce needs of the solar industry. Experienced solar industry trainers, employers, and partners will combine classroom training, hands-on lab experience, and real-world installations to enable participants to better understand the sales, design, and installation jobs within the Solar industry.

# Project Objectives

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**Overarching Project Goal:** To develop people with arrest and conviction records through skills training to prepare them for solar industry jobs, and to build career path options for them with solar energy system installers/developers

**Objective 1:** Engage solar industry partners to establish an industry collaborative to develop a diverse pipeline of qualified workers

**Objective 2:** Train and prepare people with arrest and conviction records for solar industry jobs

**Objective 3:** Fulfill solar industry job opportunities with people with records so they earn a living wage, and advance in solar careers

# Project Implementation

## Partnerships

- Advisory Team: Collaboration and feedback to support program implementation and progress
- Members: Community Based Organizations (Recruiters), Trainers, Employers, Industry Experts

## Recruitment

- Eligibility: People with arrest and conviction records (both male and female), Ages 18+
- Suitability Screening: Interest, aptitude, education level completed (minimum 8<sup>th</sup> grade), Boot Camp

## Training

- Solar Training: Includes Solar installation delivered by industry partners, both on-the-job and in class/ lab
- Soft Skills: Delivery of Safer's job readiness training and intensive case management support

## Job Opportunities

- Solar industry experts help build career path knowledge for living wage jobs and employer engagement
- Employers identified for engagement to outline industry skill needs, pathways and job opportunities

# Project Results

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## Industry Engagement

- Quarterly industry collaborative (advisory) meetings with partners to build engagement and pipeline needs
- Participate in annual peer grantee meetings to share best practices and learn from peers

## Job Placement

- Engaged employers hiring people with records, and regular industry hiring events for participants
- Participants hired into in-demand solar jobs, and provided job retention and advancement services

## Evaluation

- Program activity data points monitored and measured weekly / monthly against expected activity progress
- Program performance metrics tracked and feedback provided to program staff for redirection (if needed)

## Sustainability

- Sustainability plan is developed which includes engaging partners such as Safer social enterprise, RTP, and funding sources, to support ongoing programming and a participant pipeline for more people with records

# What does Success Look like?



## Project Outcomes

- People with records are provided access to support services and in-demand solar industry job training
- Employers, community and industry partners are engaged and actively developing a candidate pipeline
- Qualified graduates are connected to the solar industry in living wage jobs to fulfill industry labor demand and expand solar system implementation

## Project Impact and Sustainability

- Solar industry labor pool expands to help meet the demand in solar system installations
- People with records are provided living wage job opportunities to help lift themselves out of poverty and not return to incarceration
- Solar system installation social enterprise is built to create more jobs and increase renewable energy use

