

Inclusive Energy Innovation Prize



I3 Energy Team

Transitions Towards Tribal Energy Sovereignty

The Ignite, Innovate, Indigenize (I3) Energy Team is a joint effort between Sarah Smith, owner of a small, disadvantaged, Native American, Women-Owned business (8th Fire Consulting, LLC), Dr. Chelsea Schelly, Associate Professor of Sociology at Michigan Technological University (MTU), Dr. Ana Dyreson, Assistant Professor in Mechanical Engineering-Engineering Mechanics at MTU, and Dr. Robert Handler, Senior Research Engineer in the Dept. of Chemical Engineering at MTU. The goal of I3 is to support a local Tribal Nation within the Midwest Tribal Energy Resources Association (MTERA) in their transition to clean, affordable, reliable energy that enhances Tribal sovereignty. Tribal Nations are considered disadvantaged communities as defined in the Office of Management and Budget Memo M-21-28. Further, the Tribal Nation to be assisted is situated within a community characterized by rural poverty, high energy prices and demand, and multiple utility service providers. These disadvantages and complexities can be overcome through organizational innovation that enhances energy sovereignty for the Tribe. The I3 Energy Team proposes to work with the Tribal Nation and regional energy transition leaders to develop decision making tools and support to the community so that they can pursue development of local ownership of renewable energy using processes that can be replicated in other Indigenous communities.

<https://youtu.be/2ZqVdXdO9kA>

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