



NYSERDA

Building Capacity for Applied Equity and Climate Transformation Research in New York State

July 26, 2022

Pathways to an Equitable and Just Energy Transition:
Principles, Best Practices, and Inclusive Stakeholder Engagement

Workshop hosted by the National Academies'

[Committee on Accelerating Decarbonization in the United States: Technology, Policy, and Societal Dimensions](#)

Background

Landmark Climate Legislation in New York State: [Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act](#)

- Just, equitable, and inclusive transition to net-zero economy
- Disproportionate impact (40% benefits of climate-related investments) to historically marginalized communities
- [Draft Scoping Plan](#): *“Outreach...to empower every New Yorker to take part in the transition to a low-carbon economy [is] essential...to ensure successful implementation of the Climate Act and the strategies described in this draft Scoping Plan... and will require “engagement with researchers and innovators” (p. 325)*
- [Disadvantaged Communities Barriers and Opportunities Report](#) recommends that in order to ensure that underserved and overburdened communities are fully empowered to meaningfully participate in and benefit from the energy transition, State agencies should: *“staff... and fund programs to implement co-design processes with communities...[while ensuring] that agencies develop capacities to **support co-design processes with multi-disciplinary research and inquiry and diverse forms of expertise** (p. 20), and “build... capacity for **producing information and resources in partnership with multi-disciplinary researchers and communities.** (p. 32)*

Selected Community-based Initiatives in New York State

- [Climate Smart Communities](#)
- [Clean Energy Communities](#)
- [Regional Clean Energy Hubs](#)
- [DEC environmental justice capacity-building grants](#)
- [Community Solar/Solar for All](#)
- [NYSERDA Community Heat Pumps pilot](#)
- [Climate Justice Working Group develops Disadvantaged Communities criteria](#)
- [NYSERDA develops Disadvantaged Communities \(DAC\) Stakeholder Services Pool](#)

Equity and Climate Transformation Research Program

New Program Authorized in New York through Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) 2022 [Op Plan](#)

- Although techno-economic pathways for decarbonization have been mapped, less is understood about the **social and institutional dimensions** of this deep and rapid transformation
- Program aims to establish an **engaged, participatory research framework** to study **the social dimensions** of an equitable and inclusive transition in a manner that centers the lived experiences of underserved and overburdened communities and prioritizes beneficial outcomes for disadvantaged communities (per Climate Act principle of disproportionate impact)
- Initial funding provides the investment necessary to develop both formal proposals for long-term funding as well as pilot initiatives
- Support **scientifically rigorous inquiry** that also **materially advances transformative, inclusive solutions** to climate action challenges in New York State



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Conceptual Background

Interdisciplinary Social Sciences & Humanities (Science, Technology & Society) + Quantitative Planning/Modeling of Energy Transition (e.g., decarbonization pathways)

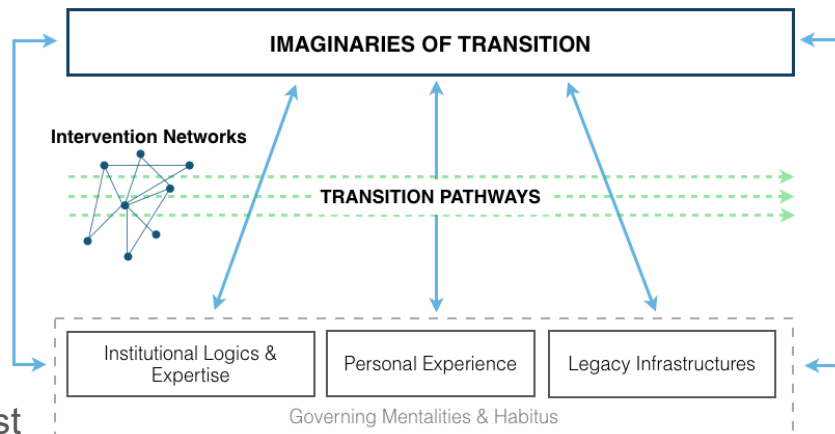
Core Concepts: Co-Production & Socio-Technical Imaginaries

- “Collectively imagined forms of social life and social order reflected in the design of...technological projects” that “at once describe [and prescribe] attainable futures” (Jasanoff & Kim, 2009; Jasanoff & Simmet, 2021)¹.

Co-Production & Imaginaries of Transition¹

- Habitual ways of thinking about how clean energy futures might be realized: Who decides, who acts and how, and by what guiding logics
- Shared senses of how sociotechnical transitions ought to unfold, what transition pathways are possible, and what logics should guide them, as reflected in the design of policy interventions

Mutual Solidarity (e.g., energy justice) > Liberal individualist



¹ See <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11024-009-9124-4> and <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S221462962100298X>

² Wilcox 2015 <https://dspace.rpi.edu/handle/20.500.13015/2057>

Equity and Climate Transformation Research Program

Vision for Equity and Climate Transformation Research Program

- Enhances NYSERDA's capacity to develop rigorous and objective research drawing on multiple standpoints and perspectives
- Centers the lived experiences of underserved and overburdened communities and supports the articulation and realization of community-determined beneficial outcomes
- Prioritizes innovative social sciences and humanities (SSH) approaches
- Fosters collaborative research partnerships between academia, civil society, communities, and government
- Close collaboration between NYSERDA's Energy and Environmental Analysis (EEA) and Energy and Climate Equity (ECE) Teams

Vision, Planning & Scoping

- Outreach to potential advisors and research partners (universities, national labs, research orgs, community-based orgs)
- Initial piloting
- Initial convenings and scoping study

Institutionalizing

- Complete scoping study
- Formalize research network
- Codify process & procedure

Full Implementation

- Extramural research support
- Direct procurement of translational research to inform program planning & structural transformation
- Dissemination of research through peer-review, white papers, workshops, symposia, innovative communication channels



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Thank You

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