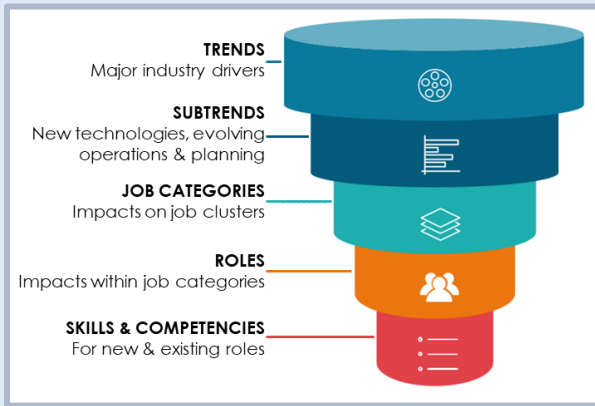


# DISTRIBUTION WORKFORCE SKILLS ASSESSMENT AND PLANNING



*GridEd methodological framework for skills transformation*

## PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

- Access to skills taxonomy for 30 electric power utility roles; the set of roles will be shaped by funder interests.
- Creation of Electric Power Workforce Intelligence Dashboard Version 1.0.
- Identify and make initial connections with new workforce talent pipelines (e.g., certification programs, schools).
- Identify actionable organizational recommendations that support workforce development planning.

## Background, Objectives, and New Learnings

It is anticipated that utilities will lose a significant amount of institutional knowledge due to workforce retirements over the coming decade while also preparing for emerging labor demands related to decarbonization goals. The utility workforce must also develop new roles and skills as the electric power system adopts an increasing amount of distributed energy resources (DERs), intermittent renewable generation, and digital technologies, all while increasing the electrification of end-uses such as mobility and building space and water heating.

This 12-month project aims to identify electric power distribution workforce needs (i.e., new roles, skills, required training) over the next ten years using industry data, and input from experienced utility subject matter experts and human resources staff. The assessment will be organized around identified job roles and skillsets and will run a gap assessment that considers the incumbent workforce, current training programs, and the existing talent pipeline. Roles and skills sets will include distribution planners, operators, protection, safety, cyber security, asset management, electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE) installation/maintenance, etc., driven by funder prioritization.

This project will increase utility workforce readiness by enabling utility human resources (HR) and distribution leaders to:

- Identify training to accomplish targeted skills/competency development.
- Update distribution, or other key utility job descriptions to find better-fit talent.
- Identify training needs to support the utility’s current talent pipeline and identify new talent pipelines.

This project extends part of the work of EPRI’s [GridEd](#) Center for Grid Engineering Education, funded by the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) over the last decade to establish a consortium of university, utility, national laboratory, and industry partners. In particular, the work started in the HR Committee within GridEd. This effort will also leverage the expertise, deep industry partnerships, and grid planning tools within EPRI’s EVs2Scale2030 to improve workforce preparedness.

## Benefits

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Funder benefits include:

- Increase understanding of current workforce and pipeline skills pathways, and gaps.
- Inputs for workforce development planning.
- Reduce costs associated with talent recruitment.
- Cultivate a more diverse talent pool and supporting managing institutional knowledge.
- Identify new roles and skillsets needed to prepare for emerging demands like transportation electrification.

In addition to the direct benefits to project funders, there is broad public benefit by ensuring robust distribution staff preparedness to support system reliability, safety, and affordability.

## Project Approach and Summary

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Quarterly Collaborative Calls will be held to regularly review project findings. Project approach summary:

1. Develop Skillset Taxonomy for 30 electric power utility distribution, storage, transmission jobs, and a website to access the taxonomy.
2. Assess expected gaps in utility distribution workforce knowledge, skills, and competencies.
3. Conduct systematic review of workforce pipeline, programs and syllabi of training, certification, or degrees (i.e., if, where, and how skills are or could be obtained). Each participant may choose three local institutions to include in this assessment.
4. Prioritize identified workforce gaps in terms of urgency and scope roles and actions for utilities, delivery partners, and stakeholders.
5. Identify actionable recommendations for tactical and strategic gap fill, e.g., new partnerships, urgent training needs, recruitment initiatives.

## Deliverables

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- **Project kickoff meeting** to firm project timeline including quarterly calls, roles and responsibilities
- Access to online **Workforce Intelligence Dashboard** with the 30-job **Skills Taxonomy**

- **Final project report**, available to participants only
- **Distribution Workforce Transformation** brief or white paper, to be made publicly available for free

The non-proprietary results of this work will be incorporated into EPRI's Distribution R&D programs, and available to the public for purchase, or otherwise.

## Price of Project

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The price of this project is \$35k per funder. EPRI member utilities may use Self-Directed Funds (SDF). To execute the full scope as described, six participants are needed, however the project may launch with fewer than six and a limited scope.

## Project Status and Schedule

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Project participation is a 12-month commitment beginning in November 2024 ending in October 2025. This project along with the companion Distribution Training & Development supplemental project continue the work of GridEd beyond 2024 DOE award completion.

## Who Should Join

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Participants interested in an assessment of their current workforce and talent pipeline in light of changing operational and planning needs.

The project is designed to interface with the funder's HR team as the main point of contact. The project will also rely on input from subject matter experts from the funder's distribution department.

## Contact Information

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For more information, contact the EPRI Customer Assistance Center at 800.313.3774 ([askepri@epri.com](mailto:askepri@epri.com)).

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