Nuclear New York

Cornell Atkinson Center for Sustainability

Nuclear is Clean Energy Columbia University

Nuclear Symposium 2025:

Comprehensive Program Guide

Event Overview

Date: September 24, 2025
Location: Verizon Executive Education Center, 34 N Loop Rd, Cornell Tech Campus, New York City
Theme: "Accelerating Clean Energy Innovation"

As global demand for electricity accelerates—driven by AI, electrification, and industry reshoring—the need for clean, scalable, and reliable energy has never been more urgent. Nuclear energy stands at the nexus of this challenge and opportunity. The Nuclear Symposium 2025 brings together leading voices across policy, finance, and technology to identify innovations enabling rapid and cost-effective deployment of nuclear energy.

Event Goals

The Nuclear Symposium 2025 aims to:

1. Facilitate Productive Conversations & Relationships
    - Foster cross-sector engagement among policymakers, operators, and investors
    - Advance high-level discussions on regulatory alignment and market design
    - Attract mission-driven talent to critical roles in the nuclear value chain
2. Showcase Frontier Technologies & Innovative Business Models
    - Highlight advancements in reactor technologies, grid integration, and delivery models
    - Examine project finance strategies, supply chain resilience, and labor force development
    - Position nuclear as a key enabler for AI-driven energy demand and industrial reshoring
3. Make the Case for Abundance with Nuclear Energy
    - Articulate nuclear's role in ensuring energy security, economic competitiveness, and climate alignment
    - Align demand-supply signals to unlock private and public investment
    - Explore how complementary energy technologies can accelerate a just and rapid transition

Full Program Schedule

10:10 - 10:20 AM | Keynote: The Empire State of Atom

Doreen M. Harris (President and CEO, New York State Energy Research and Development Authority)

Leads NYSERDA's efforts to advance policy frameworks, clean energy technologies, and solutions driving statewide economic development while creating hundreds of thousands of good-paying clean-energy jobs. Under her direction, NYSERDA is advancing infrastructure and innovation, including advanced nuclear and energy storage.

10:20 – 10:45 AM | The Nuclear Imperative: Energy Security, Decarbonization and 24/7 Power

This fireside chat examines nuclear energy's critical role in addressing three interlocking challenges: ensuring energy security in an increasingly uncertain geopolitical landscape, meeting ambitious decarbonization targets, and providing reliable 24/7 power for a rapidly electrifying economy. What role should nuclear play in energy independence strategies? How do reliability challenges of intermittent generation sources strengthen the case for nuclear expansion? What policy frameworks best support nuclear as a cornerstone of clean energy transitions?

Dave Turk (Distinguished Visiting Fellow, Columbia University's Center on Global Energy Policy; Former U.S. Deputy Secretary of Energy)

- Deputy Secretary of the U.S. Department of Energy 2021-2025, overseeing a $50 billion organization focused on energy, basic science, and nuclear security. Turk implemented historic clean energy legislation and previously served as Deputy Executive Director of the International Energy Agency, helping countries progress on clean energy transitions.

Moderator: Jeffrey Merrifield (Global Energy Section Leader and Partner, Pillsbury Winthrop Shaw Pittman LLP; Former NRC Commissioner)

Brings a unique perspective as both a former NRC Commissioner and a current leader in energy law at Pillsbury. His experience spans regulatory policy, nuclear licensing, and international nuclear development. Merrifield's insights on regulatory reform and efficient licensing processes are particularly valuable for accelerating nuclear deployment while maintaining safety standards.

10:45 – 11:40 AM | Design to Deployment: Nuclear Technology and Supply Chain

This panel addresses critical innovations in reactor design, manufacturing approaches, and supply chain optimization that can accelerate deployment timelines and reduce costs for new nuclear projects. Discussion will focus on lessons from recent successful builds globally, strategies for modularization and standardization to improve construction efficiency. How does the coordination

between technology providers, construction firms, and operators need to evolve? What practical pathways exist for scaling from demonstration to commercial deployment and what advanced manufacturing techniques transform nuclear construction?

Moderator: Alexander Kaufman (Field Notes newsletter)

Journalist specializing in energy and climate issues, featured in Lattitude Media, HuffPost, The Atlantic, MIT Technology Review, and more. His reporting examines the intersection of technology, policy, and finance in the clean energy transition. As a moderator, Kaufman leverages his ability to distill complex technical and policy discussions into accessible insights for diverse audiences.

John Battaglini (Vice President - New Market Development & Sales - Americas, Westinghouse)

- Brings extensive experience in clean energy development and global business strategy from Westinghouse, one of the world's leading nuclear technology providers. His expertise spans supply chain management, advanced manufacturing techniques, and business development for nuclear technologies.

Jeffrey Olson (Vice President, Business Development & Finance, Kairos Power)

- Leads business development and finance at Kairos Power, an advanced nuclear engineering company developing a fluoride salt-cooled, high-temperature reactor. He focuses on market adoption of technology through strategic partnerships and creative financing models.

Patrick O'Brien (Director, Government Affairs and Communications at Holtec International, Holtec International)

- Represents Holtec International, a global provider of equipment and systems for the energy industry, including spent fuel management systems and small modular reactors. His experience encompasses regulatory affairs, project management, and stakeholder engagement for nuclear projects.

Florent Heidet, Ph.D. (Chief Technology Officer and Head of Reactor Development, Nano Nuclear)

- Brings technical expertise in advanced reactor designs and nuclear fuel cycles. His background includes work on innovative microreactor concepts and portable nuclear power solutions, focusing designs that can significantly reduce construction timelines.

11:40 AM – 12:35 PM | Lunch

12:35 – 1:00 PM | Rad Future

This fireside chat provides a visionary perspective on the role of nuclear energy in a sustainable,

prosperous world. It will challenge conventional thinking about energy systems and highlight the transformative potential of nuclear.

Isabelle Boemeke

Founder and Executive Director of Save Clean Energy and the creator of the online persona, *Isodope*. She led a successful grassroots campaign to prevent the closure of the Diablo Canyon nuclear power plant in California and was named a TIME Magazine next-generation leader. She is the author of *Rad Future: The Untold Story of Nuclear Electricity and How It Will Save the World* (2025).

Moderator: Madison Hilly

Prominent nuclear researcher and advocate, whose work is cited in major publications including Forbes, the New York Times, and USA Today. Her organizing efforts built a coalition of industry and civil society that led to the world's largest pro-nuclear demonstration. She has advised policymakers and journalists across six countries, and launched the Campaign for a Green Nuclear Deal to address interconnected energy and climate challenges.

1:00 – 1:45 PM | Policy and Regulatory Innovation: Creating Pathways for Rapid, Equitable Nuclear Deployment

This panel examines regulatory frameworks and policy mechanisms that reduce deployment barriers while creating broad-based economic benefits. It explores successful models from around the world reduce nuclear development costs, schedules, and risks. How should electricity markets evolve to properly value nuclear's reliability and zero-carbon attributes? How can federal, state, and local regulatory approaches create clear pathways? How to build effective coalitions across labor, industry, environmental, and community stakeholders? What is the role for public power entities?

Moderator: Malwina Qvist, Ph.D. (Director, Nuclear Energy Program, Clean Air Task Force)

Serves as the Nuclear Energy Program Director at CATF, where she leads efforts to accelerate the deployment of new nuclear technologies globally. With a strong foundation in nuclear engineering, she combines deep technical expertise with robust analytical capabilities to advise senior policymakers, ministers, and private sector developers on various low-carbon energy sources.

Justin E. Driscoll (President and Chief Executive Officer, New York Power Authority)

- Leads NYPA, the nation's largest state-owned electric utility, overseeing 17 generation facilities and 1,550 circuit-miles of high-voltage transmission. Through his leadership, the Power Authority is helping New York meet its nation-leading clean energy goals. His experience in infrastructure development and public power operations provides valuable perspective on scaling nuclear deployment.

Jeffrey Miller (Vice President, Business Development, TerraPower)

- Leads business development and strategic partnerships for TerraPower's Natrium advanced reactor program, bringing more than 20 years of deep expertise in navigating complex policy frameworks, business generation, and relationship management in the nuclear industry and government. He previously directed sales and marketing for Centrus Energy and served in the U.S. Department of Energy's Japan Office.

Lara R. Skinner, Ph.D. (Executive Director, Climate Jobs Institute, Cornell University School of Industrial and Labor Relations)

- A nationally recognized expert in labor and employment impacts of climate change and clean energy policy. Under her direction, Cornell has designed jobs-led climate programs for eight U.S. states and helped form coalitions of labor unions, elected leaders, environmental organizations, and industry experts.

1:45 – 2:40 PM | Age of AI: Accelerating Clean Energy and Industrial Growth

This panel will explore the synergistic relationship between artificial intelligence and nuclear energy, examining how AI and advanced computing are driving unprecedented electricity demand while simultaneously offering tools to accelerate the advancement of energy solutions. Discussion will address: Nuclear’s unique ability to meet the reliability needs of digital infrastructure, how small modular reactors serve distributed computing needs? How can AI tools improve nuclear plant design, licensing, operations, and maintenance? What opportunities exist for co-locating data centers with nuclear facilities?

Moderator: Mark Nelson (Managing Director, Radiant Energy Group)

Holding an M.Phil in Nuclear Engineering from Cambridge University, Mark is a consultant to the clean energy industry and environmental organizations around the world. Known for his expertise in energy systems analysis and advocacy for nuclear energy, Mark focuses on the intersection of nuclear power and advanced computing needs.

Ashley Finan, Ph.D. (Global Fellow, Columbia University’s Center on Global Energy Policy)

- Founding Director of the National Reactor Innovation Center at Idaho National Laboratory, enabling testing and demonstration of advanced reactor concepts. Formerly Executive Director for the Nuclear Innovation Alliance, Dr. Finan focuses on applying digital technologies, including AI, to accelerate nuclear innovation and bridging technical developments with policy implementation.

Zackary Rad (Chief Regulatory Officer, LucidCatalyst)

- Brings expertise in regulatory strategy and advanced nuclear licensing from LucidCatalyst, a consulting firm specializing in climate and energy solutions. With experience leading licensing at the existing nuclear fleet and advanced technologies, he focuses on creating efficient regulatory pathways to meet the fast-growing need for clean energy.

Philipp Leutiger (Partner, Roland Berger)

- Specializes in technology strategy and digital transformation at Roland Berger, a global management consulting firm. His expertise spans the intersection of digital technologies, including AI and energy systems, providing perspective on how industrial energy consumers are evolving and how nuclear energy can position itself to meet growing demand.

Samuel Gibson (Founder & CEO, Hadron Energy)

- Leads Hadron Energy, focusing on innovative energy solutions for high-performance computing and AI applications. His work addresses the critical challenge of providing reliable, clean power for data-intensive operations, offering insights into the evolving relationship between digital infrastructure and energy systems.

2:40 – 3:00 PM | Afternoon Networking Break

3:00 – 3:55 PM | Innovating Finance: De-risking Through New Models and Capital Stacks

This panel will delve into innovative financing mechanisms and investment structures that can reduce the cost of capital for nuclear projects and distribute risk more effectively. What financing models from other long-lived, capital-intensive industries could be applied to nuclear projects? How can public and private capital be most effectively blended to reduce financing costs? How can nuclear's grid reliability and climate attributes be monetized to improve project financing? What role should international financial institutions and philanthropic foundations play to catalyze commercial investment in advanced nuclear, especially in emerging markets? What innovative risk-sharing mechanisms could transform nuclear project financing?

Moderator: Charlie Penner (Co-Founder and Head of Engagement, Ananym Capital Management)

Impact and activist investor. Charlie notably spearheaded Engine No. 1’s “Reenergize Exxon” campaign, successfully electing three independent directors to ExxonMobil’s board in 2021 to drive sustainable value creation. Previously, he specialized in shareholder activism and M&A at JANA Partners, Schulte Roth & Zabel and Cravath, and General Electric. Charlie also served in press communications for U.S. Senators Max Baucus and Barbara A. Mikulski.

Simon Irish (CEO, Terrestrial Energy)

- Leads Terrestrial Energy, developing the Integral Molten Salt Reactor (IMSR) for industrial heat and power applications. His background spans finance and energy technology commercialization, bringing expertise in attracting private investment to advanced nuclear ventures and structuring partnerships to distribute development risk.

Guido Núñez-Mujica (Director of Data Science and Senior Policy Analyst, Anthropocene Institute)

- Brings expertise in data analysis and policy development from the Anthropocene Institute, which works to accelerate the transition to clean energy. His research focuses on quantifying the economic and environmental benefits of nuclear energy and developing frameworks for risk assessment and mitigation.

Brianna Lazerwitz (Nuclear Finance Specialist, International Atomic Energy Agency)

- Specializes in nuclear finance at the IAEA, bringing an international perspective on funding mechanisms for nuclear energy projects. Her work focuses on creating frameworks for sustainable investment in nuclear infrastructure, particularly in emerging markets, including multilateral financing arrangements and export credit agency support.

Jay Yu (Founder, Executive Chairman and President, Nano Nuclear)

- Leads Nano Nuclear Energy, Wall Street's top IPO performer in 2024. Jay brings 20 years of capital markets experience including investment banking at Deutsche Bank: structured financing, corporate restructuring, and innovative capital strategies. His work focuses on developing new financing models to accelerate microreactor technology deployment.

3:55 – 4:50 PM | Socio-Economic Multiplier: Workforce and Community Benefits

This panel will explore how nuclear energy can create lasting socioeconomic benefits through high-paying, multi-generational jobs, substantial tax revenues, and community investment. Key questions include: what strategies build diverse talent pipelines? How can labor unions and industry collaborate to create career pathways with family-sustaining wages? What benefit-sharing mechanisms ensure equitable distribution of economic opportunities? How can nuclear projects advance environmental justice goals while supporting just transition for fossil fuel communities?

Moderator: Philip Hult (Development Manager, Generation Atomic)

Promotes the dual goals of expanding access to energy and reducing the impacts of climate change. As a key strategist with Generation Atomic, he works to organize advocacy initiatives and build coalitions across traditional social and political divides.

Philip Church (County Administrator, Oswego County)

- Brings practical experience in balancing local government needs with energy infrastructure development in a county hosting nuclear power facilities that provide significant tax revenue and employment opportunities. Church has fostered positive relationships between the nuclear industry and local communities.

John Murphy (International Representative, United Association of the Plumbing and Pipe Fitting Industry)

- Advocates for skilled trades workers in the energy sector with extensive experience in labor relations and workforce development, including apprenticeship programs and training initiatives designed to meet the specific needs of the nuclear industry. He focuses on creating high-quality union jobs through partnerships with government and industry.

Carolyn Amon (Manager, Energy, Resources & Industrials, Deloitte)

- Analyzes global trends in energy and power sectors, with 15 years of experience in research, consulting, and project management in the energy and industrials sectors. At Deloitte, she focuses on market analysis, economic impact assessments, and strategic advisory, including the socioeconomic impacts of energy projects and labor market dynamics.

Michelle Zietlow-Miller (Strategic Program Director, Gateway for Accelerated Innovation in Nuclear)

- Directs strategic programs at GAIN, an initiative designed to provide the nuclear community with access to technical, regulatory, and financial support. Her work focuses on creating pathways for innovation in the nuclear industry through public-private partnerships and targeted assistance programs.

5:00 – 7:00 PM | Open-Bar Networking Mixer

Location: Panorama Room, Graduate Hotel, 22 N Loop Rd, New York City

Relax and connect with participants at this venue with breathtaking views of the Manhattan skyline.

Event Organizers

The Nuclear Symposium 2025 is organized by a coalition of organizations committed to advancing nuclear energy as a key solution to climate and energy challenges:

- Cornell Atkinson Center for Sustainability: Cornell's hub for cross-campus sustainability research, funding interdisciplinary projects and fostering partnerships across academia and beyond.

- Generation Atomic: A nonprofit inspiring and empowering advocates for a clean future powered by atomic energy.
- Nuclear New York: An independent, non-partisan nonprofit working towards a prosperous decarbonized future and nature conservation.
- Nuclear is Clean Energy (NiCE) Columbia University: Empowering the next generation leaders in Nuclear Energy.

Audience

The event is designed to attract:

- Commercial Leaders & Operators from energy suppliers and customers
- Public Policy Makers & Shapers including regulators, politicians, journalists, academics, and advocates
- Investors and capital allocators interested in the future of nuclear and its applications
- Ambitious Students interested in climate, energy, and career opportunities in nuclear
- Curious Professionals & Intellectuals eager to learn more about nuclear energy's role in addressing contemporary challenges

For More Information

Visit www.nuclearsymposium.com for registration details, speaker updates, and sponsorship opportunities.