



This is the BEST START Digest, a monthly publication by the Energetics Technology Center (ETC) Inc. BEST START provides the crucial support businesses need to bring their visionary technologies to the warfighter. Whether refining smart grid technologies, enhancing renewable energy applications, or creating resilient solutions for power generation, BEST START partners with Minnesota companies to move technology forward. This newsletter aids in this mission.

## Partners

ETC would like to welcome its newest partners in support of energy technology development.

**Update:** Leaders from the BEST START partner companies briefed federal agencies in April to introduce their technology and to receive initial feedback from potential users. Subject matter experts attended from the U.S. Army Combat Capabilities Development Command Army Research Laboratory and C5ISR Center, U.S. Coast Guard Research & Development Center, Department of Energy, NASA, U.S. Marine Corps Systems Command, and Air Force Research Laboratory. Partner companies were provided information about agency priorities and requirements and were given suggestions on shaping their technology for Department of Defense use. Additional information on the partner companies' technologies will be included in the June issue.

## General News

### [DIU barrels ahead with tri-regional expansion plans](#)

*Lauren C. Williams, Defense One, April 24, 2025*

**Excerpt:** "The Pentagon's innovation arm wants to expand its regional footprint, with new hubzones in Kentucky, Minnesota, and Montana to boost outreach with tech companies."

ETC recently prepared a short white paper/fact sheet on the Defense Innovation Unit solicitation and funding processes. Energy is among its several portfolios. Awards can be substantial for successful proposers. To obtain a copy email Gene Lauer at [glauer@etcmd.com](mailto:glauer@etcmd.com).

### [NEW REPORT: Minnesota continues clean energy leadership with record-low emissions and increasing energy independence](#)

*Press Release, Clean Energy Economy MN, April 17, 2025*

**Excerpt:** "The 2025 Minnesota Energy Factsheet shows Minnesota continuing to lead on clean energy. For the fifth year in a row, the majority of Minnesota's electricity is from zero-carbon sources. Power sector emissions hit a record low — down 4% from last year and 52% below 2005 levels. The state also added 388 MW of solar and ranked No. 1 in the Midwest for energy efficiency."

### [New Collaboration May Convert Natural Gas, Coal-Bed Methane into H2 Supplying Data Centers with Off-Grid Power](#)

*Rod Walton, Energy Tech, March 11, 2025*

**Excerpt:** "Gas producer Diversified Energy, fuel-to-electric technology firm FuelCell Energy and energy infrastructure developer TESIAC have announced a strategic partnership to address the urgent energy needs of data centers by supplying as much as 360 MW of electricity to three locations in Virginia, West Virginia and Kentucky."

## BEST START ENERGY TECHNOLOGY PARTNERS

Company	Project
<a href="#">Maxwell Labs Inc.</a>	Photonic Cooling
<a href="#">SYNCRIS</a>	Microgrid Inverter with Model Predictive Control
<a href="#">BWR Innovations, LLC</a>	Hydrogen Fuel Cell
<a href="#">Ascentek, LLC</a>	Sodium Ion Battery
<a href="#">Aza Power Systems</a>	Ammonia Power Combustion
<a href="#">LEMA, Inc.</a>	Dual-axis high-efficiency Solar Power System
<a href="#">Exergi Predictive, LLC</a>	AI-Based Energy Control for Tactical Microgrids

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**SBA Announces Made in America Manufacturing Initiative**

*Press Release, U.S. Small Business Administration, March 10, 2025*

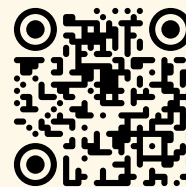
The U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) has launched a “Made in America Manufacturing Initiative” that will cut \$100 billion in regulatory hurdles and expand access to capital. Specific aspects include reducing barriers for the 504 loan program and an expansion of the use of the 7(a) working capital pilot program.

**How the Green Electricity Revolution can Join Sustainability’s Bottom Line**

*Sol Salinas and Jean-Claude Viollier, Energy Tech, April 15, 2025*

*The April 15 Energy Tech Newsletter includes an optimistic forecast on the implementation and competitiveness of “green electricity” in the US.*

**Excerpt:** “The reality is there are no more excuses for enterprises not to implement green electricity practices. With the US forecasted to add nearly 500 GW of renewable energy capacity through 2030, the availability and consumption of green electricity across the US is unlike anything we’ve seen in a long time.”



Scan QR or visit <https://www.beststart.io> for more information.

**Legislative News**

**Chairmen Guthrie and Latta Announce an Energy Subcommittee Legislative Hearing on Assuring Reliable and Abundant American Energy**

*Press Release, Energy & Commerce Subcommittee, April 23, 2025*

**Excerpt:** ““Our nation is at an energy crossroads. It’s clear that securing our electric grid and powering AI will require abundant and reliable energy for decades to come,” said Chairmen Guthrie and Latta. “Over the past

several months, our Committee has heard from energy producers, grid operators, and experts on AI that have discussed the need to produce more baseload power. This legislative hearing offers us the chance to discuss specific policy proposals to help achieve this goal and ensure American energy dominance.””  
Hearing was held on April 30, 2025.

**Solicitations**

**Topics for SBIR/STTR Solicitations Request for Proposals**

The DoD SBIR/STTR April pre-release topics include 2 Army, 1 Navy and 1 Defense Threat Reduction Agency

energy sciences topics. Closing dates for all are 5/21/2025. These can be viewed at <https://www.dodsbirsttr.mil/topics-app/> and by entering “energy” in the search box.

**Resources**

**Inventor and Entrepreneur Resources**

The US Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) provides a robust schedule of learning opportunities geared to entrepreneurs and innovators as well as others looking to navigate patent and trademark topics and processes. FAQs and fact sheets organized by topics and virtual events are provided. Topical information includes such items as navigating patents, IP, patent applications, certification courses and post filing support.

For a detailed May and June 2026 events schedule, go to <https://www.uspto.gov/about-us/events>. Most of these are virtual events.

**UPCOMING EVENTS**

Date	Event	Organizer	Location
May 9, 2025	<a href="#">School of Engineering Senior Design Clinic</a>	University of St. Thomas	St. Paul, MN
May 28, 2025	<a href="#">Members only: The economic potential of retired wind and solar components</a>	Clean Energy Economy MN	Webinar
June 24, 2025	<a href="#">Summer Unwind 2025</a>	Clean Energy Economy MN	Minneapolis, MN
June 9-11, 2025	<a href="#">2025 Midwest Solar Expo</a>	Clean Energy Economy MN	Chicago, IL
June 10-11, 2025	<a href="#">RE+ Mid-Atlantic</a>	RE+	Philadelphia, PA