Objective Strategic Session (OSS)

CWX-024-CESER

Office of Cybersecurity, Energy Security, and Emergency Response (CESER)

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ConnectWerx (CWX) Resources

COMMUNICATIONS

Stay **engaged and connected** with our various outreach channels

- CWX web & opportunities page
  - Opportunities / Awards
  - Events
  - Resources
- CWX emails and outreach
  Join the Network!
- CWX social media

VIRTUAL EVENTS

Take part in **opportunities** through virtual events

- CWX & DOE Objective Strategic Sessions (OSS/Webinars)
  - Learn about PIA opportunities facilitated by CWX.
  - Overview of opportunity and additional details to participants.
  - Q & A
- CWX & DOE Office Hours
  - Ask direct question to DOE and CWX.
  - Note: review application prior.

CONFERENCES

Encourage & coordinate **involvement** at conferences

DEFENSE TECHCONNECT INNOVATION SUMMIT & EXPO

SBIR/STTR FALL INNOVATION CONFERENCE

November 19-21, 2025
National Harbor, MD
Booth #501

The mission of ConnectWerx is to **Engage**, **Match**, and **Collaborate** across the US Industrial and Academic base to help the Department of Energy (DOE) address **energy**, **environmental** and **nuclear** challenges through transformative science and technology solutions.

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Agenda

- Overview of CESER
- SENTRY Overview
- SENTRY Opportunity
- Application Process
- Q&A Session

CESER Overview

About CESER

- Misson
  - Strengthen the security of the U.S. energy sector
- Vision
  - A secure, resilient, and adaptive energy sector capable of withstanding emerging threats and providing reliable energy for national defense and all Americans.

CESER Core Capabilities

Risk Analysis

Develop and distribute actionable risk information to energy stakeholders to mitigate the impact of threats and disruptions.

Energy Infrastructure Hardening

Mitigate risk to the Energy Sector and its supply chains through planning, deployment of tools, training, and exercises.

Cutting Edge Innovation

Build resilience within the energy sector through research and development and capacity building activities.

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Response, Restoration, and Recovery

Enable the Energy Sector to quickly respond, restore, and recover from disruptions.

SENTRY Overview

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SENTRY has 4 Distinct Topics

1. Energy Sector Risk Quantification Framework
2. ICS/OT Cybersecurity Enhancement and Threat Emulation
3. Secure Decentralized Asset Management Systems (DAMS)
4. Counter-Drone Capabilities for Critical Infrastructure

Why Focus on These Four Areas?

CESER's prioritization of these four program objectives stems directly from ongoing dialogue and critical feedback received from our utility partners. These discussions highlighted key challenges and strategic needs within the energy sector, indicating that these areas are crucial for:

- Addressing Evolving Threats
  - Directly targeting the most pressing cyber and physical vulnerabilities identified by those on the front lines.
- Enhancing Sector Resilience
  - Building capabilities that utilities specifically requested to better withstand and recover from disruptions.
- Enabling Future Grid Operations
  - Supporting the secure integration of new technologies and decentralized systems essential for grid modernization.
- Optimizing Resource Allocation
  - Providing the necessary tools and frameworks for utilities to make informed, efficient investments in security.

This focused approach ensures our efforts are directly responsive to the operational realities and immediate requirements of the energy industry.

SENTRY Opportunity

Program Objectives

- Energy Sector Risk Quantification Framework
  - Develop and implement an energy-sector-specific risk quantification framework to guide data-driven security investments and operational strategies.
- ICS/OT Cybersecurity Enhancement and Threat Emulation
  - Significantly enhance the cybersecurity posture and resilience of Industrial Control Systems (ICS) and Operational Technology (OT) networks through advanced threat emulation and specialized tool development.
- Secure Decentralized Asset Management Systems (DAMS)
  - Develop and validate secure, efficient, and interoperable frameworks for the integration and operation of Decentralized Asset Management Systems (DAMS) with built-in advanced cybersecurity capabilities.
- Counter-Drone Capabilities for Critical Infrastructure
  - Enhance physical and cyber-physical security by establishing effective and widely deployable counter-adversarial drone capabilities for critical energy infrastructure.

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Energy Sector Risk Quantification Framework

- Develop and disseminate a specialized framework for energy utilities.
- Enable accurate quantification of security risks.
- Tie risk quantifications to existing utility metrics and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).
- Facilitate more informed investment and operational decisions.
- Ensure risk quantification is meaningful to utilities.

ICS/OT Cybersecurity Enhancement and Threat Emulation

- Strengthen cybersecurity posture of energy sector Industrial Control Systems (ICS) and Operational Technology (OT) networks.
- Establish advanced capabilities for simulating sophisticated threat actor behaviors.
- Implement specialized training programs focused on adversarial tactics and defense evaluation.

Decentralized Asset Management Systems (DAMS) and Integration

- This effort focuses on cybersecurity for secure, efficient, and reliable grid integration of Distributed Energy Resources (DERs).
- Develop advanced management and control frameworks specifically for DERs that are secure by design, with leading cybersecurity solutions natively embedded.
- Validate these frameworks to ensure ongoing operational integrity and resilience during grid integration.

Cost-Effective Counter-Adversarial Drone Capabilities for Energy Infrastructure

- Enhance the security of critical energy infrastructure.
- Develop and deploy cost-effective counter-drone technologies.
- Implement counter-drone strategies specifically for utility environments.

Overall Goals

- Strengthen the Security and Resilience of the U.S. Energy Sector
  - This is the ultimate aim, as all objectives contribute to bolstering various facets of security and resilience, from risk management to active defense.
- Ensure a Reliable and Secure Energy Supply for National Defense and All Americans
  - This objective highlights the fundamental societal and national security impact of the program's efforts.

Application Process

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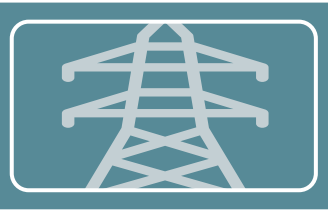
Eligibility

Must meet the Small Business Administration (SBA) definition of a small business for the relevant NAICS code(s) pertinent to the project's scope (e.g., energy generation, cybersecurity, engineering services, R&D).

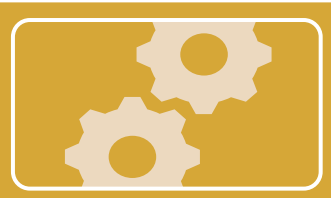
Must meet the "domestic entity" definition for GSA (organized under US laws, majority domestic ownership/control, physical US place of business, and not owned/controlled by a Country of Risk).

The proposed solution or expertise must directly align with one of the four SENTRY project areas (risk quantification, ICS/OT cybersecurity, DAMS cybersecurity, or counter-drone technologies).

Note: Quoters may only apply to one of the four project areas to maximize their expertise.



Possess at least one prior project, contract, or relevant expertise demonstrating capabilities in their proposed technical area. Detailed past performance would be assessed in the review criteria.



Ability to demonstrate sufficient financial resources or access to capital to commence and sustain initial project activities prior to initial payment milestones. A basic financial health check may be necessary.

Application Timeline

Milestones to Consider:	Target Date:
Project Application Period Open: DOE begins accepting applications	September 29, 2025
Informational Webinar / Objective Strategy Session (OSS) presentation posted	October 2025
Office Hours / Questions for potential applicants	November 13, 2025
Submissions Close	December 1, 2025 (5PM ET)
Selections Made	Spring 2026
Kickoff	Spring 2026

Review Criteria

1. Technical Merit and Innovation

- **Understanding of the Problem:** Clarity and depth of understanding of the specific energy sector challenge being addressed.
- **Proposed Solution:** Soundness, feasibility, and technical approach of the proposed solution. How well does it address the problem statement outlined in the Topic Area Challenges to Address section.
- **Innovation:** Degree of novelty, creativity, and potential for breakthrough solutions. Is the approach unique or an improvement upon existing methods?
- **Technical Expertise:** Demonstrated expertise of the key personnel and their technical capabilities relevant to the proposed work.
- **Scalability and Adaptability:** Potential for the solution to be scaled up, applied across diverse energy utility environments, and adapted to evolving threats or technologies.

2. Impact and Broader Implications

- **Energy Sector Impact:** Potential for the proposed solution to significantly enhance the security, resilience, or efficiency of the US energy infrastructure.
- **National Security Implications:** Contribution to national security objectives through protection of critical energy infrastructure.

Review Criteria

3. Team Qualifications and Experience

Key Personnel: Resumes and experience of the principal investigator and key team members, emphasizing direct relevance to the project's technical domains.
Organizational Capabilities: Overall capacity and infrastructure of the small business to successfully execute the proposed work.
Past Performance: Documented successful past performance on similar or related projects, particularly those involving advanced technology development, R&D, or deployment. (Focus on relevance rather than the sheer size of past contracts).

4. Cost Effectiveness and Value

Budget Justification: Realism and reasonableness of the proposed budget, with clear justification for all costs.
Cost-Benefit Analysis: Potential for the proposed solution to deliver significant value or cost savings to the energy sector relative to investment.
Leverage: Any co-funding, in-kind contributions, or other leveraging of resources that demonstrate commitment and maximize the impact of DOE funding.

Open Forum Q&A

How to Participate

1. Review details on eligibility, evaluation criteria, and how to apply.
2. Review the Informational Webinar / Objective Strategic Session presentation.
3. Attend the Office Hours on November 13, 2025 at 2 PM ET, click here to **join** OR submit your questions **here** by November 13, 2025.
4. Download the Project Overview & Plan template.
5. Complete the online application & upload completed Project Plan & Overview and other required documents in the application **link** for CWX-024-CESER.

Submissions are due no later than Monday, December 1, 2025 at 5 PM ET.