

PROGRAM OVERVIEW >>>

Pathways to TrustSM is a comprehensive professional development curriculum designed to prepare individuals and organizations to build effective, respectful partnerships with Tribal Nations. Developed by the Alliance for Tribal Clean Energy, this program addresses the critical knowledge gaps that often undermine cross-cultural collaboration and provides practical frameworks for developing successful working relationships with Tribes.

PHILOSOPHY >>>

The curriculum is built on the principle that successful Tribal partnerships require more than good intentions — they demand deep understanding of Tribal sovereignty, governance, history, and contemporary realities. Rather than treating cultural competency as a checkbox, the program positions ongoing learning and relationship-building as essential professional skills.

DESIGNED FOR >>>

- Clean energy developers and service providers
- Federal and state government employees working with Tribal communities
- Legal professionals and consultants navigating Tribal law and jurisdiction
- Project managers and community liaisons looking to build cross-cultural partnerships
- Non-profit organizations serving Tribal communities



CURRICULUM STRUCTURE >>>

The full Pathways program will consist of five interconnected modules, each approximately four hours long, for a total of about 20 hours of content. The modules are designed to build foundational knowledge progressively, with each segment deepening understanding and reinforcing the skills gained in earlier sessions.

Currently, the first module of the online program is available on the Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA) learning platform. Additional modules will be available online within the coming months. The full program is available for in-person, instructor-led delivery.

CORE LEARNING OBJECTIVES Participants will develop competencies in four key areas:

1. Legal and Political Literacy

- Understanding Tribal sovereignty as inherent, not granted
- Navigating complex jurisdictional frameworks
- Recognizing Tribal sovereignty and decision-making processes
- Tribal-Federal government-to-government relationship principles

2. Historical Awareness

- Comprehending the colonial foundations that continue to shape policy
- Understanding historical trauma and its contemporary impacts
- Recognizing patterns of resistance, resilience, and adaptation
- Connecting historical context to present-day partnership challenges

3. Cultural Competency

- Identifying and addressing implicit biases and misconceptions
- Respecting diverse governance structures and cultural protocols
- Adapting communication styles to different cultural frameworks
- Building authentic relationships beyond transactional interactions

4. Partnership Skills

- Conducting appropriate research and preparation
- Engaging in meaningful consultation processes
- Creating mutually beneficial partnership structures
- Developing long-term, trust-based relationships

KEY THEMES AND PRINCIPLES >>>

- **Sovereignty-Centered Approach**

All modules emphasize Tribal sovereignty as the foundation for understanding Tribal-federal-state relationships, moving beyond paternalistic frameworks to recognize Tribes as governmental partners.

- **Diversity Recognition**

The curriculum consistently highlights the tremendous diversity among the 574 federally recognized Tribes, challenging homogenizing assumptions and encouraging Tribe-specific learning.

- **Historical Consciousness**

Historical modules provide essential context for understanding contemporary Tribal priorities, concerns, and partnership approaches, connecting past policies to present realities.

- **Practical Application**

Each module includes real-world examples, case studies, and actionable strategies, ensuring participants can immediately apply learning to their professional contexts.

- **Ongoing Learning Mindset**

The program positions cultural competency as a journey rather than a destination, encouraging continuous education and relationship-building.



PROGRAM IMPACT >>>

Pathways to TrustSM addresses a critical gap in professional development, providing essential knowledge often absent from traditional education and training programs. By building competency in Tribal partnerships, the program supports more effective collaboration, reduces project risks, creates better outcomes for all parties, and contributes to the broader goal of equitable relationships between Tribal Nations and external partners. The curriculum represents a significant investment in relationship-building and cultural bridge-building, positioning participants as more effective partners in Tribal communities while supporting Tribal self-determination and sovereignty goals.



FOR MORE INFORMATION OR TO SIGN UP FOR PATHWAYS TO TRUST, VISIT:

<https://learn.seia.org/product/pathways-to-trust-a-learning-journey-towards-equitable-tribal-partnerships/>



ABOUT THE ALLIANCE >>>

The Alliance for Tribal Clean Energy is an Indigenous-led 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to supporting the self-determined and just transition of Native American Tribes to a clean energy future. Our mission is to advance energy sovereignty as a pathway to economic security, climate resilience, and the protection of Mother Earth for future generations. We are 100% philanthropically funded, allowing us to offer Tribes the highest level of clean energy development expertise-at no cost.