

COMMUNITY DIALOGUE ON SOLAR ENERGY & ELECTRO-MOBILITY



Opportunities & Challenges for a Just Energy Transition in Connecticut

The Engineering for Human Rights Initiative hosted a hybrid discussion at the Community Dialogue on Solar Energy & Electro-Mobility on February 1, 2023 at the UConn Storrs campus in Storrs, Connecticut. The event was attended by community members, energy advocates, students and interested faculty. The discussion centered “the economics of energy justice”, education and extension, accessibility, and equity in the clean energy initiative. This community dialogue was a step in the direction towards exploring possibilities of university-community partnerships for renewable energy, affordable transportation, and equitable access to emerging technologies for Connecticut residents. A full description of the event can be found on engineeringforhumanrights.initiative.uconn.edu/

Key Themes & Guiding Future Questions



Education and extension – How can UConn support communities on clean energy technologies and assist them in accessing capacity-building/implementation grants or other support for these technologies?



Mapping key stakeholders that make the change and transition to clean energy fair for everyone. These include, but are not limited to, policymakers, energy generators and providers, local officials, worship places, and community representatives, among others. It is also important to identify locations for community connections that are “trusted” and easy to access (for example, a local barber shops). What factors help build influence community trust?



Analyze the intersectionality of different factors such as housing (multi-family housing, renters, etc.) **and infrastructure & services** (e.g., transportation) **and how they are linked to environmental justice in Connecticut.** Does addressing energy justice need to address environmental justice issues first? What is the interdependence between the two? How does infrastructure and technology play a role in linking both of them?



Explore the “economics of energy justice” as the economic impact of fair access to clean energy needs to be measured, as well as the role of incentives that could facilitate that transition. The disadvantages of communities without adequate access to energy are denied the opportunity for economic development, and that missed opportunity could also be quantified. What are the incentives for owners and renters that could promote the transition to clean energy?