



New Partnership Launches Research Initiative to Support Fossil Fuel-Dependent Economies

The new initiative founded by Resources for the Future, the Center on Global Energy Policy at Columbia University, and the Bezos Earth Fund will fund research and bring together scholars and practitioners to develop strategies that build economic resilience.

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WASHINGTON—Resources for the Future (RFF), the Center on Global Energy Policy (CGEP) at Columbia University’s School of International and Public Affairs and the Bezos Earth Fund, are pleased to announce the launch of the Resilient Energy Economies (REE) initiative. The multi-year effort will fund economic research and build a community of scholars, policymakers, and economic development practitioners dedicated to boosting economic resilience in fossil fuel-dependent regions.

“We are focused on developing innovative solutions by bolstering the people who understand this issue the best: those whose communities are facing uncertain economic prospects due to a heavy dependence on the coal, oil, and gas industries. Our institutions also bring expertise and policy perspectives, but we believe that achieving an equitable transition to a net-zero economy will require local, state, tribal, and federal experts all working together.”

- **Daniel Raimi, RFF Fellow and Director of the RFF Equity in the Energy Transition Initiative**

To kick off their collaboration, scholars from around the country, including RFF, CGEP, the Bezos Earth Fund, Montana State University, the University of Wyoming, West Virginia University, and other members of the REE [steering committee](#) published a report today that describes the current research landscape. The [report](#) also outlines the need for additional scholarship to help communities and policymakers design, implement, and evaluate strategies to support the economies of fossil fuel-dependent regions in the United States.

They write that, although global leaders committed to an equitable transition away from fossil fuels at last year’s COP28 in Dubai, there is very little existing analysis on how to increase economic resilience in fossil fuel-dependent communities. These communities are at risk of losing tax revenue, jobs, and ways of life as fossil fuel use declines. Given that demand for coal, oil, and gas [may peak as early as this decade](#), there is an urgent need to develop tangible strategies that can mitigate risks to fossil fuel-based economies in the United States and around the world.

“Communities all over America depend on fossil fuel industries as sources of jobs and public revenues that fund schools, roads, and hospitals. These communities have provided the energy to help power the global economy for more than a century. Our goal is to work with these communities to build resilient local economies that can successfully navigate a global energy transformation.”

- **Noah Kaufman, CGEP Senior Research Scholar**

To build the body of evidence needed to inform communities and policymakers, REE will fund an initial round of \$1.3 million in grants to support research into economic resilience strategies for US fossil fuel-dependent regions. The research priorities for the grants were identified by members of the initiative's academic steering committee. REE encourages social science scholars, particularly those from fossil fuel-dependent regions, to [submit proposals](#) that can directly address the most pressing topics. Pre-proposal submissions will be accepted starting on **May 1**; full proposals will be invited from the most promising projects. Members of the steering committee will review pre-proposals and help choose which projects will be invited to submit a full proposal.

“The transitions ahead of us are not simple. If we’re all going to share in the benefits of a sustainable US economy, we need the research community to focus not just on how we build a new energy system, but also how we move away from the old one. We’re looking forward to getting some of our best economic thinkers working on this.”

- **Leon Clarke, Director of Decarbonization Pathways at the Bezos Earth Fund**

For more information about the initiative, the new report, the steering committee, and the request for proposals, please visit the new initiative website, ResilientEnergyEconomies.org.

Questions and press inquiries should be made via the [contact form](#) on the REE website.



Resources for the Future (RFF) is an independent, nonprofit research institution in Washington, DC. Its mission is to improve environmental, energy, and natural resource decisions through impartial economic research and policy engagement. RFF is committed to being the most widely trusted source of research insights and policy solutions leading to a healthy environment and a thriving economy.

The Center on Global Energy Policy (CGEP) at Columbia University's School of International and Public Affairs develops evidence-based research to help address the world's most challenging energy and climate problems through research, education, and dialogue. They accomplish this by producing best-in-class research, providing a global platform to communicate, and training tomorrow's leaders and communicators.

The Bezos Earth Fund is helping transform the fight against climate change with the largest ever philanthropic commitment to climate and nature protection. Jeff Bezos has committed \$10 billion in this decisive decade to protect nature and address climate change. By providing funding and expertise, we partner with organizations to accelerate innovation, break down barriers to success and create a more equitable and sustainable world. Join us in our mission to create a world where people prosper in harmony with nature.