“A plan to make the United States the world leader in clean energy innovation and rise to an existential challenge—creating exciting new jobs along the way.”

—John F. Kerry, 68th US Secretary of State

ENERGIZING AMERICA
A Roadmap to Launch a National Energy Innovation Mission

Varun Sivaram, Colin Cunliff, David Hart, Julio Friedmann, and David Sandalow
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Clean energy innovation is central to the fight against climate change. The dramatic success in lowering the costs of solar panels and wind turbines in the past decade must be replicated across a wide range of other energy technologies. Doing so will open extraordinary economic opportunities.

To rise to this challenge, the United States should launch a National Energy Innovation Mission. Led by the president and authorized by Congress, this mission should harness the nation’s unmatched innovative capabilities—at research universities, federal laboratories, and private firms (both large and small), in all regions of the country—to speed the progress of clean energy technologies. To jumpstart this mission and unlock a virtuous cycle of public and private investment, the US federal government should triple its funding for energy research, development, and demonstration (RD&D) over the next five years.

Although a growing bipartisan chorus is calling for more ambitious public investment in clean energy innovation, no detailed roadmap exists for how Congress and federal agencies can most effectively increase funding. This volume aims to fill that gap. We offer policymakers a strategic framework to build a growing RD&D portfolio over the next five years, detailed funding proposals across the full spectrum of critical energy technologies, and recommendations for immediate action. In making these proposals, we have surveyed the scholarly literature, distilled decades of US historical experience,
drawn on dozens of legislative proposals, and assembled the most up-to-date database of federal clean energy RD&D funding to derive lessons for maximizing the return on public investment.

This volume has two parts. Part I makes the case that the federal government should dramatically increase funding for clean energy innovation. Part II provides a detailed roadmap for doing so.

Part I: The need to increase federal investment in clean energy innovation

Leading the world to a clean energy future is in the US national interest. Unchecked climate change endangers our security, economy, and well-being. The devastating hurricanes and wildfires of recent years are a grim foretaste of a warmer future. Although the global slowdown from COVID-19 lowered greenhouse gas emissions, they are already surging back as the world economy recovers. Averting catastrophe will require new and improved clean energy technologies to enable the world to reach net-zero emissions in the coming decades, a herculean task known as “deep decarbonization.”

The United States also stands to prosper by seizing the opportunity to lead the low-carbon industries of the future. Around the world, countries are eagerly investing in clean energy—to cut air pollution, reduce dependence on imported fossil fuels, and fight climate change. Today, China is the world leader in deploying clean energy technologies and invests heavily in clean energy innovation. The United States—with the world’s best and largest innovation system—could lead the world in clean energy innovation in the decades ahead, but not without commitment and effort.

Federal funding is critical to US energy innovation. Emerging clean energy technologies face steep barriers to market success. Risk-averse incumbent firms, byzantine regulations, and the inertia of existing infrastructure and subsidies built around fossil fuels can sink even the most promising ventures. It will take strong and sustained public RD&D investment to stimulate the massive private investment needed for deep decarbonization. Such public funding could complement near-term stimulus measures to help the economy recover from the COVID-19 crisis. RD&D investments should be paired with policies to support the market deployment and export of clean energy
technologies, so that innovative energy industries of the future sustain long-term prosperity and inclusive economic growth.

The National Energy Innovation Mission would open a new chapter in the storied history of US innovation. Federal funding has accelerated the development of life-saving drugs, modernized the military’s arsenal, and put a man on the Moon. These past missions have helped make the United States the world’s science and technology superpower.

By comparison, the federal government has neglected energy innovation. Prior surges in federal energy RD&D spending have been short-lived, and recent funding increases have been tepid. Today, the federal government invests less than $9 billion per year on energy innovation, less than a quarter of what it invests in health innovation and less than a tenth of what it invests in defense innovation. The United States remains well short of meeting its international commitment under the 2015 Mission Innovation compact to double public funding for RD&D to $12.8 billion by 2021.

This should change. The federal government should elevate energy innovation as a core national priority and fund it accordingly. Over the next five years, annual public funding for energy innovation, across a range of federal agencies, should triple to $25 billion. A wealth of research shows that US research institutions and private firms are capable of absorbing this scale of federal support and translating it into rapid technological progress—delivering economic returns that far outstrip public investments.

**Part II: A National Energy Innovation Mission**

Federal policymakers should develop a strategy for ramping up federal funding to most effectively invest in clean energy innovation—and take swift action to set this strategy in motion (Figure ES-1). To prioritize funding, they should build RD&D programs around ten technology pillars, each representing a critical challenge for deep decarbonization. In addition, as policymakers design and execute these programs, they should heed six principles that will maximize the effectiveness of federal investments. And following the inauguration in 2021, the next Congress and administration should take three immediate actions to launch the National Energy Innovation Mission.
FIGURE ES-1: Strategic and tactical guidance to the next administration and Congress

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technology Pillars</th>
<th>Strategic Principles</th>
<th>Immediate Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Foundational science &amp; platform technologies</td>
<td>1. Match the funding portfolio to critical decarbonization needs</td>
<td>1. The President should launch the National Energy Innovation Mission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Clean electricity generation</td>
<td>2. Support all stages of the innovation pipeline</td>
<td>2. Congress should increase energy RD&amp;D funding by 30% in FY22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Advanced transportation systems</td>
<td>3. Marshal the full capacity of the federal government</td>
<td>3. The United States should reassert international leadership on energy innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Clean fuels</td>
<td>4. Harness the innovative capacity of National Laboratories, universities, and the private sector</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Modern electric power systems</td>
<td>5. Partner with state &amp; local governments to support regional innovation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Clean and efficient buildings</td>
<td>6. Set predictable long-term funding targets, while adapting to new data</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Industrial decarbonization</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Carbon capture, use, &amp; sequestration</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Clean agricultural systems</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Carbon dioxide removal</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Tripling the federal energy RD&D budget over five years will enable the United States to pursue the full deep decarbonization innovation agenda. The federal government’s current energy RD&D portfolio focuses heavily on clean electricity generation—only one of the ten technology pillars. Organizing the National Energy Innovation Mission around all ten will significantly improve
the prospects for rapid progress on a wide range of technologies. Few of these technologies have yet achieved widespread commercial success anywhere in the world, so the United States has an opportunity to lead in nascent and growing markets including carbon capture and storage, digital energy technologies, long-duration grid energy storage, advanced transportation technologies, and clean fuels such as hydrogen. For each of the pillars, we propose specific federal government initiatives.

In shaping the energy RD&D portfolio as it grows to $25 billion annually by 2025 (that is, by Fiscal Year 2026, which begins October 1, 2025), policymakers should follow six strategic principles. The first five call for diversification—across topics, stages of innovation, federal agencies, research partners, and regions of the United States. In addition to covering all ten technology pillars, federal energy RD&D investments should cover the entire innovation pipeline from early-stage research to commercial-scale demonstration projects. They should expand beyond the Department of Energy (DOE) and its National Laboratories (Figure ES-2). Although DOE and the Labs will continue to provide core expertise on energy innovation, Congress should also provide growing funding for energy innovation at the Departments of Defense (DOD) and Agriculture (USDA), the National Science Foundation (NSF), the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), and other federal agencies. Participating agencies should invest across the innovation ecosystem, from federal labs to universities to private ventures, and partner with local and state governments to build regional clusters of excellence. Finally, the sixth principle recommends a strategy for managing the portfolio over time: Policymakers should adopt long-term funding targets but adapt the portfolio over time as circumstances change and as they learn from experience.

In recent years, bipartisan momentum has grown in support of energy innovation investments, providing a window of opportunity. The 117th Congress and the presidential administration that will be sworn in in 2021 should take immediate action to set the National Energy Innovation Mission in motion by taking three concrete steps.

First, the president should issue a Presidential Policy Directive announcing the National Energy Innovation Mission, establishing energy innovation as a national priority, setting a goal of tripling federal funding for energy innovation in five years, and creating a White House Task Force to coordinate
among agencies and speed implementation. (A draft of a Presidential Policy Directive is included as Appendix A.) Second, the next Congress should pass an ambitious budget for Fiscal Year 2022 (FY22) that sharply increases federal energy RD&D funding—focusing particularly on currently underfunded technology pillars—and sets the United States on a path to tripling the budget by 2025. (Figure ES-3 outlines a specific proposal for the FY22 energy innovation budget, summarizing the line-item recommendations in Table ES-1 to congressional appropriators for funding each agency and office.) Third, the United States should immediately reassert its international leadership by recommitting to Mission Innovation, courting bilateral collaborations to advance energy technologies, and stimulating a competitive race-to-the-top to raise global public funding for clean energy innovation.

**FIGURE ES-2:** Historical clean energy RD&D funding by federal agency and proposal to ramp up to an annual clean energy innovation budget of $25 billion by 2025
These three immediate actions will launch the next national innovation mission. The United States has a proud history of rising to global challenges by unleashing its potential to innovate. If policymakers decisively invest in the clean energy technologies of the future and sustain that investment, history will repeat itself. On the heels of the global coronavirus crisis, the United States will lead the response to an even graver global threat—climate change—and prosper as the world transitions to clean energy.
# Executive Summary

**TABLE ES-1:** Proposed FY22 federal energy innovation budget, by agency and office ($ millions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding Agency</th>
<th>Funding Office/Organization</th>
<th>FY 2020 Est.</th>
<th>FY 2022 Proposed</th>
<th>% change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dept. of Energy</td>
<td>Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy (EERE)</td>
<td>2,228</td>
<td>2,682</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vehicle Technologies Office (EERE/VTO)</td>
<td>396</td>
<td>488</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bioenergy Technologies Office (EERE/BETO)</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>320</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hydrogen &amp; Fuel Cell Technologies Office (EERE/HFTO)</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>185</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Solar Energy (EERE/SETO)</td>
<td>280</td>
<td>303</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Wind Energy (EERE/WETO)</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>113</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Water Power (EERE/WPTO)</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>160</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Geothermal Technologies Office (EERE/GTO)</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>170</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Adv. Manufact. Office (EERE/AMO)</td>
<td>350</td>
<td>432</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Building Technologies Office (EERE/BTO)</td>
<td>230</td>
<td>301</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Office of Carbon Management (CM)*</td>
<td>472</td>
<td>812</td>
<td>72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carbon Capture (Power &amp; Industrial)</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>300</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carbon Utilization</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>25</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carbon Storage</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>120</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Adv. Energy Systems/Crosscutting</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>150</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Negative Emissions Technologies (new office)</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Methane Leak Detection &amp; Mitigation</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>22</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Office of Nuclear Energy (NE)</td>
<td>1,493</td>
<td>2,028</td>
<td>36%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Versatile Test Reactor</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>450</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reactor Concepts RD&amp;D</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>163</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Fuel Cycle R&amp;D</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>255</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Advanced Reactor Research, Development and Demonstration</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>520</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Office of Electricity (OE)</td>
<td>190</td>
<td>520</td>
<td>174%</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Office of Science (SC)</td>
<td>2,151</td>
<td>2,572</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Advanced Scientific Computing Research (SC/ASCR)</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>200</td>
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### Funding Office/Organization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding Agency</th>
<th>FY 2020 Est.</th>
<th>FY 2022 Proposed</th>
<th>% change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dept. of Energy</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Biological and Environmental Research (SC/BER)</td>
<td>451</td>
<td>523</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Energy Sciences (SC/BES)</td>
<td>661</td>
<td>766</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fusion Energy Sciences (SC/FES)</td>
<td>671</td>
<td>740</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Advanced Research Projects Agency-Energy (ARPA-E)</td>
<td>425</td>
<td>516</td>
<td>21%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subtotal, DOE</td>
<td>6,959</td>
<td>9,130</td>
<td>31%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dept. of Agriculture</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture Advanced Research and Development Authority (AGARDA)</td>
<td></td>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Agricultural Research Service (ARS)</td>
<td>99</td>
<td>158</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NIFA Agriculture and Food Research Initiative (NIFA/AFRI)</td>
<td>106</td>
<td>169</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal, USDA</td>
<td>205</td>
<td>377</td>
<td>83%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dept. of Defense</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Army Research Laboratory (ARL)</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>202</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Naval Research Laboratory (NRL)</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>127</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>U.S. Air Force</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>332</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (Defense-Wide, DARPA, ESTCP)</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>391</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Subtotal, DOD</td>
<td>804</td>
<td>1,053</td>
<td>31%</td>
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<tr>
<td>NASA</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Biological Sciences (BIO)</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer and Information Science and Engineering (CISE)</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>34</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Engineering (ENG)</td>
<td>156</td>
<td>219</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directorate for Mathematical and Physical Sciences (MPS)</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>227</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other NSF</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>29</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtotal, NSF</td>
<td>804</td>
<td>1,053</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (NIST, NOAA, USGS, FHWA, EPA-ORD)</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>8,894</td>
<td>11,758</td>
</tr>
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*This is the proposed new name for the current Office of Fossil Energy*

FY 2020 funding levels for non-DOE programs are estimates of the portion of funding that goes to clean energy / clean agriculture. Agency and Office totals include estimates of program direction and RD&D facilities (not shown in the table) and may be greater than the sum of RD&D programs.
About the Authors

**Dr. Varun Sivaram** is a Senior Research Scholar at the Center on Global Energy Policy at Columbia University and a faculty affiliate of its Data Science Institute. A physicist, bestselling author, and clean energy technology expert, his experience spans the corporate, public, and academic sectors. Most recently, as Chief Technology Officer of ReNew Power, Dr. Sivaram led research and development for a multibillion-dollar company recognized as India’s largest producer of renewable energy as well as its most innovative energy company. His corporate experience also includes consulting for McKinsey & Co., and he serves as senior advisor to Camus Energy and Radia, Inc., and as advisory board member to Glint Solar. Dr. Sivaram has also shaped government policies supportive of innovation as the director of the energy and climate program at the Council on Foreign Relations and as a senior energy advisor to the Los Angeles mayor and New York governor’s office. A widely published scientist and innovation scholar, he serves on the boards of Stanford University’s energy and environment institutes, as a senior fellow at the Aspen Institute and Information Technology and Innovation Foundation, and previously as professor at Georgetown University where he created the course “Clean Energy Innovation” to train the next generation of energy leaders. He is one of the 25 advisors to the UN COP26 climate conference in 2021 and serves on the World Economic Forum’s Global Future Council for the Energy Transition. His books include *Taming the Sun: Innovations to Harness Solar Energy and Power the Planet* (MIT Press, 2018) and *Digital Decarbonization: Promoting Digital Innovations to Advance Clean Energy Systems* (CFR Press, 2018). TIME Magazine named him one of the TIME 100 Next most influential people in the world. A Rhodes and Truman Scholar, he holds a Ph.D. in condensed matter physics from Oxford University and undergraduate degrees from Stanford University.

**Dr. Colin Cunliff** is a senior policy analyst with the Information Technology and Innovation Foundation. He previously worked at the US Department of Energy Office of Energy Policy and Systems Analysis as an AAAS Science & Technology Policy Fellow, with a portfolio focused on energy sector resilience and emissions mitigation. Prior to that, he was the American Institute of Physics/American Association for the Advancement of Science (AIP/AAAS) Congressional Fellow in the office of Senator Dianne Feinstein, where he
served as a staff science adviser on energy, climate, and transportation. He holds a Ph.D. in physics from the University of California, Davis, and a bachelor’s degree in physics and mathematics from the University of Texas at Austin.

**Dr. David M. Hart** is a professor of public policy and director of the Center for Science, Technology, and Innovation Policy at George Mason University’s Schar School of Policy and Government and senior fellow at the Information Technology and Innovation Foundation (ITIF), where he leads the clean energy innovation policy program. Recent ITIF reports include *Mind the Gap: A Design for a New Energy Technology Commercialization Foundation* and *More and Better: Building and Managing a Federal Energy Demonstration Project Portfolio*, both of which were published in May 2020. He is the co-author (with Richard K. Lester) of *Unlocking Energy Innovation* (MIT Press, 2012). In 2011 and 2012, Dr. Hart served as assistant director for innovation policy at the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy, where he focused on advanced manufacturing issues. Hart served as senior associate dean of the George Mason School of Public Policy during the 2014 and 2015 academic years. He currently co-chairs the Innovation Policy Forum at the National Academies of Science, Engineering, and Medicine. His other books include *The Emergence of Entrepreneurship Policy* (Cambridge University Press, 2003), and *Forged Consensus: Science, Technology, and Economic Policy in the U.S., 1929–1953* (Princeton University Press, 1998). He earned his Ph.D. in political science from MIT in 1995.

**Dr. Julio Friedmann** is a Senior Research Scholar at the Center on Global Energy Policy at Columbia University. He recently served as Principal Deputy Assistant Secretary for the Office of Fossil Energy at the Department of Energy where he was responsible for DOE’s R&D program in advanced fossil energy systems, carbon capture and storage (CCS), CO$_2$ utilization, and clean coal deployment. His expertise includes large-scale carbon management, CO$_2$ removal, CO$_2$ recycling, oil and gas systems, international engagements in clean fossil energy, and interagency engagements within the US government. He has also held positions at Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, including Senior Advisor for Energy Innovation and Chief Energy Technologist. He is also the CEO of Carbon Wrangler, LLC, is a Distinguished Associate at the Energy Futures Initiative, and serves as a special advisor to the Global CCS Institute. He was recently named as a Senior Fellow to the Breakthrough...
Institute and the Climate Leadership Council. Dr. Friedmann is one of the most widely known and authoritative experts in the US on carbon removal (CO₂ drawdown from the air and oceans), CO₂ conversion and use (carbon-to-value), and carbon capture and sequestration. His expertise includes technology, policy, and operations. In addition to close partnerships with many private companies and NGOs, Dr. Friedmann has worked with the US State Department, the US Environmental Protection Agency, and the US Treasury. Dr. Friedmann received his Bachelor of Science and Master of Science degrees from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), followed by a Ph.D. in Geology at the University of Southern California. He worked for five years as a senior research scientist at ExxonMobil, then as a research scientist at the University of Maryland. He serves as a formal and informal advisor to several clean energy and CarbonTech companies.

**David Sandalow** is the Inaugural Fellow at the Center on Global Energy Policy and co-Director of the Energy and Environment Concentration at the School of International and Public Affairs at Columbia University. He founded and directs the Center’s US-China Program and is author of the Guide to Chinese Climate Policy. During Fall 2019, he was a Distinguished Visiting Professor in the Schwarzman Scholars Program at Tsinghua University. Mr. Sandalow has served in senior positions at the White House, State Department and US Department of Energy. He came to Columbia from the US Department of Energy, where he served as Under Secretary of Energy (acting) and Assistant Secretary for Policy & International Affairs. Prior to serving at DOE, Mr. Sandalow was a Senior Fellow at the Brookings Institution. He has served as Assistant Secretary of State for Oceans, Environment & Science and a Senior Director on the National Security Council staff. Mr. Sandalow writes and speaks widely on energy and climate policy. Recent works include *Leveraging State Funds for Clean Energy* (September 2020, co-author), *China’s Response to Climate Change: A Study in Contrasts* (July 2020), *Decarbonizing Space Heating With Air Source Heat Pumps* (December 2019, co-author), *Industrial Heat Decarbonization Roadmap* (December 2019, project chair), *Guide to Chinese Climate Policy 2019* (September 2019), *Electric Vehicle Charging in China and the United States* (February 2019, co-author), *Direct Air Capture of Carbon Dioxide Roadmap* (December 2018, project chair), *A Natural Gas Giant Awakens* (June 2018, co-author), *The Geopolitics of Renewable Energy* (2017, co-author), *Financing Solar and Wind Power: Lessons from Oil and Gas* (2017, co-author), *CO₂ Utilization Roadmap 2.0* (2017, project chair) and
The History and Future of the Clean Energy Ministerial (2016). Other works include Plug-In Electric Vehicles: What Role for Washington? (2009) (editor), U.S.-China Cooperation on Climate Change (2009) (co-author) and Freedom from Oil (2008). Mr. Sandalow is a member of the Innovation for Cool Earth Forum (ICEF) Steering Committee and chair of ICEF Innovation Roadmap Project. He serves as a director of Fermata Energy. Mr. Sandalow is a member of the Zayed Future Energy Prize Selection Committee, Global CO₂ Initiative Advisory Board, Electric Drive Transport Association’s “Hall of Fame” and Council on Foreign Relations. Mr. Sandalow is a graduate of the University of Michigan Law School and Yale College.