



Overview of the Selection Process for Puget Sound Energy's (PSE) Resource Planning Advisory Group (RPAG)

Background

In summer 2023, Puget Sound Energy (PSE) launched a new engagement approach for its 2025 Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) cycle. The 2025 IRP engagement process includes two integrated participation tracks:

- A formal Resource Planning Advisory Group (RPAG) convened to advise PSE on an array of technical resource planning matters, including the IRP.
- Public webinars to discuss key topics related to PSE's resource planning work.

PSE created this new engagement approach with the purpose of engaging a more diverse public while providing actionable and technical feedback on the IRP via the RPAG. This approach was developed based on feedback from numerous interested parties, including the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission (Commission) staff, which encouraged PSE to:

- Evaluate and improve outreach efforts with a focus on increasing the number and diversity of participants.
- Make a concerted effort to solicit meaningful feedback during IRP development with a focus on groups who have been poorly represented historically.
- Implement new engagement pathways that support dialogue with interested parties.

The new public participation approach will help PSE hear from more and diverse interested parties and create spaces for meaningful changes to how PSE receives and uses feedback. At the same time, technical and specialty advisors expressed a need for more spaces where technical information can be shared and discussed in more detail than can occur in other public conversations.

To promote a fair process for convening the RPAG, PSE engaged two independent third-party consulting firms, Triangle Associates and Munnings Advisory Group. Triangle Associates has served as the independent third-party facilitator for IRP meetings and related public engagement since 2021. In 2023, Triangle brought on Munnings Advisory Group to lead the RPAG application and selection process as an independent third party with no prior history with the IRP process, interested parties, or other RPAG applicants.

Application

PSE released the RPAG application on August 31, 2023, and requested that applicants submit applications by September 27, 2023, for priority consideration. PSE officially closed the application process on October 3, 2023.

Applicants could complete the application online or call or email PSE to request an application on paper.

The application questions are included in Attachment A.

Balanced Membership Goals

PSE determined that the RPAG should consist of members with technical professional expertise in energy resource planning related matters, with the following requirements:

- Applicants must possess relevant education, expertise and/or professional experience in key fields relevant to energy resource planning or utility regulation.
- Applicants must possess an organizational affiliation and approval to participate in the RPAG on the organization's behalf.
- Applicants will be expected to attend meetings during the IRP cycle and serve for a 2-year term.

To promote a balance of interests, perspectives, and expertise among RPAG members, PSE and the consultant team agreed an ideal group would consist of 10-12 members with no more than 1 individual per organization, and no more than 3 organizations representing a specific interest as included in the application and listed below. PSE and the independent consultants determined that RPAG membership should not include representatives of other utilities or consultants without organizational affiliation representing themselves.

- Utility regulators
- Energy consumers
- Developers of clean energy solutions
- Environmental justice organizations
- Energy policy organizations
- Equity or social justice organizations
- Energy research or planning organizations
- The Washington State Office of the Attorney General Public Counsel Unit
- The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission

Selection Process and Evaluation Criteria

Based on recommendations from the independent consultants, PSE used the following process to select members:

1. **Convened Evaluation Panel:** Five individuals participated in the evaluation panel: three PSE staff members and two independent consultants.
2. **Redacted Key Information:** To minimize bias, a team member who was not part of the evaluation panel redacted names and organizational affiliation from each application, leaving only the answers to the three main application questions. They distributed the redacted applications to members of the evaluation panel.
3. **Individually Evaluated Applicants:** Each member of the panel individually evaluated each applicant using the following evaluation criteria:
 - Experience – Experience regarding planning for future energy production, usage, and availability; assessing the benefits, costs and risks associated with various energy supply options; technological innovation and deployment of clean energy solutions; impacts of energy policy on production, usage, and availability; or promoting environmental or social justice in the context of energy resource planning.
 - Interest – Interest in participating in the RPAG and desired experience from being part of the RPAG.
 - Diversity – Diversity across various dimensions of difference, including perspective on energy planning, professional experience, race/ethnicity, gender, and other identities.

4. **Ranking:** The evaluation panel each ranked their top candidates. The team reviewed and compared the top rankings across each panelist.
5. **Selected Top Applicants:** The evaluation panel selected 12 applicants based on their rankings and fit within the balanced membership goals as outlined in the previous section. At the end of the process, the names and organizations associated with each applicant were revealed.

The list of selected applicants is included in Attachment B. PSE contacted environmental justice/social justice organizations with experience in resource planning in an effort to bring this important perspective to the group. Unfortunately, due to capacity constraints, no environmental justice/social justice organizations submitted applications. PSE intends to leverage the expertise of its Equity Advisory Group and other advisory bodies to continue to integrate equity into the RPAG's work.

Attachment A: Application Questions

1. **Full Name**
2. **Pronouns**
3. **Affiliation/Organization**
4. **Email**
5. **Phone**
6. **I am an adult over the age of 18:**
 - Yes
 - No
7. **Please check the following that apply regarding where you live and/or work in PSE's electric and gas service area:**
 - Whatcom County
 - Skagit County
 - Island County (Whidbey Island)
 - Kitsap County
 - Kittitas County
 - King County
 - Lewis County
 - Pierce County
 - Snohomish County
 - Thurston County
8. **Please check whether you are a member of:**
 - The Washington State Office of the Attorney General Public Counsel Unit
 - The Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission
 - None of these
9. **Please check all entities below that you have experience working for:**
 - Utilities
 - Utility regulators
 - Energy consumers
 - Developers of clean energy solutions
 - Environmental justice organizations
 - Energy policy organizations
 - Equity or social justice organizations
 - Energy research or planning organizations
 - None of these
10. **What organization(s) did you work for when gaining experience with the entities listed in the previous question?**
11. **Please describe your experience related to energy resource planning that you would bring to the RPAG.** In your response, please include specific examples of work related to: Planning for future energy production, usage, and availability; assessing the benefits, costs and risks associated with various energy supply options; technological innovation and deployment of clean energy solutions; impacts of energy policy on production, usage, and availability; or promoting environmental or social justice in the context of energy resource planning.

12. Why are you interested in participating in the RPAG? What experience would you like to gain from your involvement in the RPAG?
13. How would your participation in the RPAG contribute to a greater diversity of voices participating in PSE's resource planning processes?
14. Please share any accommodations you would need to participate fully in the RPAG. (e.g., audio, visual, linguistic, learning, limited internet access, mobility or other needs.).

Attachment B: Final Membership List

PSE extended invitations to join the RPAG to the following applicants (listed alphabetically by first name):

Name	Organization
Aliza Seelig	Pacific Northwest Utilities Conference Committee (PNUCC)
Alondra Regalado	Western Energy Storage Taskforce (WEST)
Dan Kirschner	Northwest Gas Association (NWGA)
Froylan Sifuentes	Western Washington University Institute of Energy Studies
Jim Dennison	Sierra Club
Joel Nightingale	Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission
John Ollis	Northwest Power and Conservation Council (NWPPCC)
Katie Chamberlain	Renewable Northwest
Lauren McCloy	NW Energy Coalition (NWECC)
Megan Larkin	Climate Solutions
Sommer Moser	Alliance of Western Energy Consumers (AWEC)
Stephanie K. Chase	Public Counsel Unit of the Washington State Attorney General Office