

Fusion Technical Working Group (FUS-TWG)

Discussion of Fusion Policy Options

Wednesday, June 17, 2026; 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. EDT

Discussion Summary

Introductions

- The facilitator from Eastern Research Group (ERG), a New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA) contractor, welcomed TWG members and reviewed the agenda, which focused on fusion regulatory and policy approaches, fusion safety considerations and public confidence, and opportunities for New York State to support fusion development.

Policy Toward Making New York a Fusion Hub

- Brattle/Solestiss, the contractors researching and writing the Fusion Study within the Master Plan for Responsible Advanced Nuclear Development in New York, presented an overview of how New York State can position itself to attract fusion developers, investors, and suppliers.
 - The presentation highlighted three key areas for TWG feedback: regulatory readiness, incentives and supporting policies, and workforce and innovation.
 - Examples from Tennessee, Washington, Wisconsin, and Ohio highlighted how fusion-specific regulatory frameworks, interagency coordination, and clear licensing pathways can support industry growth.
- Participants emphasized that clear and predictable regulatory frameworks can increase confidence among developers, investors, and suppliers considering projects in New York State.
 - Participants emphasized the value of building fusion-specific expertise within state agencies and strengthening coordination among organizations involved in permitting, licensing, and oversight.
- Participants noted that early engagement between fusion developers and knowledgeable regulators can improve regulatory efficiency, reduce uncertainty, and help avoid unexpected challenges during licensing.
- Participants highlighted the importance of balancing public safety, public engagement, and business certainty when developing future regulatory approaches.

Fusion Regulatory Framework

- Brattle/Solestiss provided an overview of the current fusion regulatory framework and discussed opportunities to strengthen regulatory and siting readiness in New York State.
 - The presentation reviewed the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's byproduct material framework, New York State's role as an Agreement State, and examples of fusion regulatory frameworks being developed in other states.

- Potential actions discussed included strengthening interagency coordination, preparing for fusion materials licensing, clarifying permitting pathways, building technical expertise, and reviewing decommissioning requirements.
- Participants generally agreed that establishing an explicit fusion regulatory framework would help support growth of New York State's fusion ecosystem.
- Predictability, transparency, and clearly defined licensing processes were identified as important factors for project planning and investment decisions.
- Participants noted that fusion licensing focused on regulating radioactive materials provides a more streamlined pathway than traditional nuclear licensing frameworks.
- Examples from existing fusion and advanced nuclear projects highlighted the importance of collaboration between developers and regulators throughout the licensing process.
- Participants emphasized that regulatory readiness should support both public safety objectives and efficient deployment of emerging technologies.

Safety and Material Handling

- Brattle/Solestiss provided an overview of key safety and materials handling considerations associated with fusion facilities.
 - Topics included tritium handling and containment, neutron shielding, activated materials, waste management, decommissioning, and public confidence considerations.
- Participants identified tritium management as one of the most significant technical and regulatory challenges associated with future fusion facilities. Accounting systems are needed to accurately track all tritium used.
- Discussions highlighted the need for systems capable of managing, monitoring, recovering, and recycling tritium at scales required for commercial fusion deployment.
- Participants noted that neutron shielding, activated materials, waste management, and decommissioning considerations need to be incorporated into facility planning and design from the outset.
- Existing experience from national laboratories, research institutions, and decommissioning projects was identified as a valuable source of knowledge for addressing future fusion challenges.
- Participants noted that worker protection, such as during maintenance activities, will be an important consideration when developing regulatory frameworks for fusion.
- Participants emphasized the importance of effective public communication regarding safety and materials management, as well as transparently characterizing both the benefits and risks of fusion to build public confidence.

Policy Priorities and Opportunities for State Support

- Brattle/Solestiss presented a framework of potential policy options that New York State could consider to support fusion development, including clean energy policy integration, targeted economic incentives, workforce and innovation support, siting readiness, and state coordination.

- The presentation reviewed examples from other states—including Washington, New Jersey, California, Wisconsin, Tennessee, and New Mexico—that have implemented or proposed policies to support fusion development.
- Participants generally agreed that targeted economic support, workforce development, and public-private partnerships could play important roles in attracting fusion investment and supporting commercialization activities within New York State.
- Participants highlighted examples from other jurisdictions that use grants, tax incentives, workforce programs, innovation hubs, and coordinated state support to attract fusion companies and supply chain development.
- Several participants emphasized that integrating fusion into existing clean energy programs may represent a relatively low-cost policy option that could reduce uncertainty and help establish fusion as part of the future energy mix.
- Participants discussed the potential value of a centralized state coordination body to support collaboration among government agencies, industry, academic institutions, and workforce development organizations.
- Community engagement and education should be integrated into fusion policy from the start. The UK Atomic Energy Authority’s Fusion Futures program was mentioned as a potential model to consider.
- Participants discussed examples of educational programs, internships, workforce training initiatives, and industry partnerships that could help develop the skilled workforce needed to support future fusion deployment, such as the UK Atomic Energy Authority’s FOSTER internship program (under the Fusion Futures program), as well as a fusion program for high school students in Federal Way, Washington.
- Participants noted that research institutions, manufacturers, investors, and technology developers may benefit from stronger coordination mechanisms that facilitate collaboration, testing, demonstration, and commercialization activities.
- Participants discussed the importance of supporting supply chain development, including helping manufacturers access testing facilities, research partners, demonstration opportunities, and funding mechanisms that reduce commercialization risks.
- Participants noted that state-supported funding, cost-sharing programs, and partnership-building activities could help accelerate technology validation and strengthen the broader fusion ecosystem in New York State.

Next Steps and Action Items

Task	Assigned to	Target date
Share June 17 th meeting summary notes and presentation slides with TWG members.	ERG/NYSERDA	July 1, 2026
Distribute agenda for the July 10 FUS-TWG meeting.	ERG/NYSERDA	Week of July 6, 2026
Submit additional comments or feedback following June 17 th meeting.	All TWG members	As needed

Participants

Member Organizations

Cornell University
Fusion Consultants
Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory
Oak Ridge National Laboratory
Princeton Plasma Physics Laboratory

New York State Staff

Andrew Kincaid, Department of Public Service (DPS)
Charles Burns, Department of Health
Emily Barkdoll, DPS
Ian Latimer, NYSERDA
Katherine Thomas, NYSERDA
Laura Welch, Empire State Development

Contractor Team

Audrey Njo, ERG
Cheryl Keenan, ERG
Jay Brister, Brattle/Solestiss
Kaitlin Schneider, ERG
Sarah Sofia, Brattle/Solestiss