

NUCLEAR LIFECYCLE INNOVATION CAMPUS

2026 Nuclear RFI

On January 28, 2026, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) issued a Request for Information (RFI) inviting states to express interest in hosting Nuclear Lifecycle Innovation Campuses (NLIC). These campuses are intended to integrate the full nuclear fuel cycle while driving significant economic growth, creating thousands of jobs and positioning host locations as global leaders in the nuclear industry. Tennessee submitted its response to the DOE on April 1, 2026, showcasing the state's existing nuclear ecosystem and the extensive capabilities already operating or under construction in Oak Ridge and across Tennessee. The response demonstrates that Tennessee is uniquely positioned to support the DOE's vision by building upon infrastructure, expertise and partnerships that are already in place, further strengthening the state's leadership in the nation's nuclear future.

OPPORTUNITIES

- Positions Tennessee as the nation's most complete nuclear ecosystem, capable of supporting every stage of the nuclear lifecycle.
- Demonstrates how Tennessee's existing assets—including ORNL, TVA, Y-12 National Security Complex, a growing fuel cycle industry, advanced manufacturing, universities, R&D activities and workforce programs—align with the DOE's vision.
- Accelerates coordination and expansion of current activities in Tennessee that are envisioned for a Nuclear Lifecycle Innovation Campus through a federal partnership.
- Communicates Tennessee's interest in partnering with the DOE if it establishes a Nuclear Lifecycle Innovation Campus program.

WHAT TENNESSEE'S RESPONSE IS NOT

- An application that results in immediate federal funding or designation.
- A request for state funding or approval of a specific project.
- A commitment from the DOE to establish an NLIC in Tennessee.
- The creation of a new state entity or physical campus today.

NEXT STEPS

- Tennessee has been selected along with several other states to move forward under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the DOE as it explores the statutory and financial flexibility needed to advance Nuclear Lifecycle Innovation Campus concepts toward implementation.
- Continue engaging with the DOE.
- Refine Tennessee's vision with partners, including ORNL, TVA, Y-12 National Security Complex, industry experts, universities and local communities.
- Identify opportunities to further strengthen current nuclear activities in Tennessee while preparing for any future federal funding opportunity.
- Continue recruiting nuclear companies and making strategic investments that strengthen Tennessee's position, regardless of the DOE's timeline.

RFI TIMELINE

- ✓ **FEBRUARY / MARCH**
Stakeholder Engagement & Drafting RFI Response
- ✓ **APRIL 1**
RFI Response Due Date
- ✓ **SUMMER**
The DOE Selects TN for MOU
- **FALL**
Discussions Continue Toward Host Agreement

RFI FUTURE CAMPUS REQUIREMENTS

- Financing prioritized on private and state capital
- Strong support from state and local leaders
- Fuel fabrication or enrichment capabilities
- Long-term storage of used nuclear fuel
- Fuel recycling and reprocessing

RFI PREFERRED CAMPUS ASSETS

- Advanced reactor deployment
- Power generation
- Advanced manufacturing

REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

The DOE Request
for Information



Tennessee's RFI
Response

