# ONREL
## NATIONAL RENEWABLE ENERGY LABORATORY
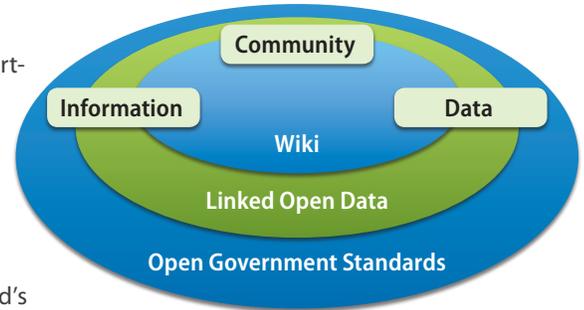
# OPENENERGYINFO

The **Open Energy Information (*OpenEI.org*)** initiative is a free, open-source, knowledge-sharing platform. OpenEI was created to provide access to data, models, tools, and information that accelerate the transition to clean energy systems through informed decisions.

## The Challenge

Although much of the world's energy-related information and data are available as resources on the Internet, they are dispersed among innumerable individuals and organizations, available in widely disparate formats, and highly variable in quality and usefulness.

*OpenEI* supports the U.S. Department of Energy's fulfillment of open government standards: transparency, public participation, and collaboration. As a wiki-based platform following Linked Open Data methodology, OpenEI links the world's energy-related information and data with the energy community (e.g., policymakers, developers, and researchers). The platform provides access to data and empowers the energy community to use and contribute to the collection of information and data.

*Downloadable data spreadsheets*

*Machine-readable data services*

*Input forms for easy information updates*

*Rapid integration of new information*

*Publicly accessible content and data*

*Easy formats to read and sort*

*User-generated maps*

*Citations with links to original sources*

The explosive global growth of renewable energy is being fueled by sun, wind, water—and information. From R&D data to market trends to policy developments, decision makers need to collect and synthesize the best available energy information. The U.S. Department of Energy's *OpenEI* platform aims to be the nexus for this vital information.

## Creating and Editing Wiki Content

**Core content policies.** Before you begin creating or editing pages, review the OpenEI core content policies at *http://en.openei.org/wiki/OpenEI:Core_content_policies*.

OpenEI content should meet the following general guidelines:

- *Neutral point of view:* Content must give a neutral, unbiased viewpoint.
- *Verifiability:* Content must attribute its source.
- *No original research:* OpenEI is not for displaying original research. All content should exist somewhere else on the Internet and be verifiable.

**Creating an account.** To create or edit pages, you must have an OpenEI account. Click "Sign Up" in the upper right corner of any page to start a free account. If you already have an account, click "Log-in" in the upper right corner.

**Creating and editing pages.** To add a new page, log in and click "Contribute" in the menu at the top of the page and then "Add a New Page" in the drop-down menu. To edit a page, click the "Edit" or "Edit with Form" tab on the page you want to edit.

**Help.** OpenEI's Help page, which is linked from the menu at the top of the page, contains a wealth of information about creating and editing OpenEI content. The videos under "Tutorials" are especially helpful for new users. It is also valuable to simply look at the syntax of existing pages (under the "Edit" tab) and copy it where applicable.

## Accessing, Using, or Submitting Datasets

**Finding and downloading data.**
- Go to *http://en.openei.org/wiki/Main_Page*
- Click the "Datasets" tab at the top of the page
- Search for data using keywords (suggested search terms appear as you type)
- View key metadata (e.g., description, rating, and file type)

## Participating in the OpenEI Community

OpenEI maintains several avenues for community participation, communication, and news about site development. All are free, and signing up is easy.

### OpenEI Discussion Group

For communication among the OpenEI community, as well as technical information and feedback from OpenEI programmers, access *http://groups.google.com/group/openei*

Access all OpenEI videos, including tutorials via the OpenEI channel at *http://www.youtube.com/user/OpenEI*

To track renewable energy developments and become a Facebook fan or follow OpenEI on Twitter, access *http://twitter.com/OpenEnergyInfo*.

For the latest news in renewables and energy efficiency, visit the OpenEI Blog at *http://blog.openei.org/*

- Download dataset directly or follow URL to original source.

All members of OpenEI may rate and contribute datasets.

**Rating data.** Aligned with data.gov's format, users rate datasets on a five-point scale based on ease of access and usefulness of the data and corresponding metadata.

**Contributing data.** Contributing data to OpenEI is easy and requires the user to log in, submit a few key pieces of metadata, and then either upload the data directly or provide a URL to the data's existing location on the Web.

The OpenEI approach to *data quality* is to help with community improvement of energy information and data; ensure minimum required metadata is included with all contributions; and verify source, license, and citation information prior to publishing data on OpenEI.

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