

CLIMATECH

ClimaTech 2026

Session Title: Advancing Nuclear's Next Chapter: Financing, Deployment, and Roadmaps for a New Era

Date & Time: Monday, May 4th from 11:00 – 11:40 AM (40 Minutes)

Location: Black Box

Description (*draft*):

This session will explore how coordinated federal, state, and private-sector actions can position the United States—and regional innovation hubs such as Massachusetts—at the forefront of advanced nuclear and fusion energy development. Panelists will examine innovative investment frameworks, deployment strategies, and the policy and market mechanisms essential to accelerating commercialization and establishing durable markets for advanced nuclear energy. Informed by recent regional initiatives, this discussion convenes leaders from industry, academia, government, and finance to identify practical pathways for deployment, market growth, and sustained innovation.

Moderator: Dan Dolan, President, New England Power Generators Association

Panelists:

- Patrick O'Brien, Director, Government Affairs and Communications, Holtec International
- Suresh Aghara, Ph.D., Associate Dean for Research, Francis College of Engineering, UMass Lowell
- Mike Kramer, VP of Data Economy Strategy, Constellation
- Armond Cohen, Executive Director, Clean Air Task Force

Key Themes (feel free to tweak):

1. From Policy Signals to Steel in the Ground

How federal and state policy (tax credits, permitting reform, loan guarantees) actually translates into deployed nuclear projects. What's working—and what still slows projects down—from a developer and operator standpoint.

2. Financing First-of-a-Kind vs. Scaling the Fleet

Bridging the gap between early demonstration and repeatable deployment. This includes innovative capital stacks, risk-sharing mechanisms, and the role of regulated vs. merchant markets in making advanced nuclear bankable.

3. Data Centers, Electrification & the New Demand Pull

With hyperscale computing and electrification driving unprecedented load growth, nuclear is re-emerging as a firm, clean power solution. This theme can tap into how operators and strategists are thinking about long-term offtake, co-location, and 24/7 power needs.

4. Regional Innovation Hubs as Catalysts (Massachusetts Case Study)

How ecosystems like Massachusetts—anchored by universities, workforce development, and public-private collaboration—can accelerate commercialization, talent pipelines, and supply chain readiness for advanced nuclear and fusion.

5. Deployment Pathways: Repowering, Siting & Community Buy-In

Practical strategies for where and how projects get built: retiring fossil assets, brownfield redevelopment, siting challenges, and the importance of community engagement and public perception in unlocking timelines.

Questions:

TO BE DISCUSSED

Mike - Where is Nuclear now and where is it going?
Potential for acceleration of timeline, economic benefits
“Third Nuclear Renaissance”

Pat - Holtec's role; show variation of corporate structure; model for the rest of the country;
workforce

Armond - to focus on the fundamental need for “clean firm power” to address cost, decarbonization and land scarcity, and the need for government support for “early of a kind” deployment risk

Sukesh - Role of university and research; regional coordination; where are we going now; nuclear industry has an opportunity to build trust process and credibility; the mindset needs to shift; financing will pay dividends for many years

How do we think about innovation in this sector?

Session Flow & Tips:

- A “Voice of God” (VOG) will introduce the moderator to the stage
- Panelists will be introduced by the moderator who will give a brief panel introduction.
- Moderators will typically direct questions to individuals, rather than posing open questions to the group.
- Each theme or topic will likely get ~8–10 minutes, so responses that are clear and concise help keep the pace dynamic.
- We aim to end each session with a strong takeaway—this might include a rapid-fire round of predictions or one key insight from each speaker.
- If time runs out, our stage managers will respectfully stop the discussion and ask that the conversation continue off stage and/or during breaks and networking reception.

Logistics & Preparation

Arrival Time: Plan to check-in at speaker registration by 10:30am. Speaker Check-In will be located next to Registration in the Cyclorama. Upon entering the venue’s main entrance, both will be immediately on your right-hand side. Once everyone has arrived, you will be led to the theater space.

Time & Format: 40 min; moderated with prepared questions.

Day-Of Contact

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