



DOECAA

Agenda

DOECAA SPRING 2026 CONFERENCE

APRIL 22-23, 2026

“Energy and Transformation”

Hosted By:

Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory
Batavia, Illinois

and

Argonne National Laboratory
Lemont, Illinois

Conference Co-Chairs

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Wednesday, April 22, 2026

**Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory
Wilson Hall**

- 7:30 am Continental Breakfast and Networking**
- 8:30 am DOECAA Welcome and Conference Co-Chairs' Opening Remarks & Logistics**
- 8:45 am Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory and Leadership in Neutrino Science, Exploring the Quantum Universe and Beyond**
- 9:00 am Networking Break**
- 9:15 am Off the Beaten Path: Legal Strategies for Driving Success and Innovations in Project Approaches**
Panel: Ellen Chapelle (Partner at Gould & Ratner, LLP), **Alec Rubenstein** (Associate General Counsel at Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory), **Kevin Jerbi** (Environmental and Safety Counsel at Argonne National Laboratory)
This panel addresses special considerations for complex projects involving construction, international partnerships, and more.
- 10:15 am Taking Charge During Change: Highlighting Risks and Opportunities in Domestic and International Transactions**
This panel explores legal and regulatory strategies attorneys can use to navigate an evolving tariff landscape, changes to the Federal Acquisition Regulation, updates to DOE Orders, and anticipated revisions to the Department of Energy Acquisition Regulation.
Moderator: Shade Amole (Associate General Counsel, Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory)
Panel: Tiffany Schafer (Legal Counsel at Argonne National Laboratory), **Paul Ellison** (Assistant General Counsel, Privacy, Security & Trade / Export/Import Control Compliance Manager at Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory), **Mike Pratt** (Senior Managing Counsel at Sandia National Laboratories), **Jessica Rifkin** (Principal at Olsson Frank Weeda Terman Matz PC)
- 11:15 am Lunch in the Second Floor Crossover/Art Gallery**
Lunch Breakout for New to Complex in Comitium Conference Room - Second Floor Crossover
- 12:30 pm First-of-a-Kind Agreements → First-of-a-Kind Technologies: How Legal Counsel Enable Critical Partnerships in Advanced Nuclear and Fusion**
This panel explores the enabling role legal counsel can play in supporting national laboratory partnerships with industry leaders in crucial fusion and advanced nuclear projects.
Panel: John Myer (Senior Counsel at Husch Blackwell), **Stephen Burdick** (Senior Counsel, Idaho National Laboratory), **Sachin Desai** (Vice President Global Affairs, formerly General Counsel, Pacific Fusion), **David Tressler** (Chief Legal Officer, Commonwealth Fusion), **Austin Raynor** (General Counsel at General Matter, Inc.)
- 1:30 pm With Great Power Comes Great Responsibility: Counsel Perspectives on Guiding Clients and Managing False Claims Act (FCA) Risk**
With increasing innovation, funding, and partnerships, there are also a variety of increased risks facing contractors. This panel provides some focus on increased risk related to the False Claims Act.
Panel: Jane Morris (General Counsel, Ames National Laboratory), **Therese Leone** (General Counsel, Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory), **Reggie Jones** (Partner at Fox Rothschild LLP), **Keeley McCarty** (Partner at Fox Rothschild LLP)



- 2:30 pm Networking Break
- 2:45 pm **Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory Site Tours**
Tour options include the [Superconducting Quantum Materials and Systems Center](#) (SQMS), the [Short-Baseline Near Detector](#) (SBND), [Bison Ranch](#), and [exploring Wilson Hall](#)
Tour signups will be available on site Wednesday morning
- 5:15 pm **Reception**
Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory (separately ticketed, ending at 6:30pm)

Thursday, April 23, 2026

Argonne National Laboratory

Supercomputing and the Theory and Computing Sciences Building (TCSB)

- 8:00 am **Continental Breakfast, Registration and Networking**
- 8:45 am **Argonne National Laboratory and Leadership in Project Genesis**
- 9:15 am **DOE Keynote: Perspectives from DOE Counsel James Durant, Chief Counsel, DOE Office of Science**
- 9:45 am **Legal Leadership and Strategies Supporting Artificial Intelligence**
This panel covers approaches already implemented and those that might be under consideration for legal professionals across disciplines to help: (i) accelerate advanced nuclear, fusion and grid modernization using AI to provide affordable and reliable energy for the country; (ii) accelerate the building of the “quantum ecosytem” that will advance scientific discovery; and (iii) assist in deploying technology and systems to help ensure the safety and reliability of the U.S. nuclear stockpile and accelerate the development of “defense-ready” materials by creating and advancing AI technologies for national security mission.
Panel: Stewart Forbes (Counsel, Hogan Lovells), **Mark Langguth** (Senior IP Counsel, Argonne National Laboratory), **Rachna Talwar** (Senior Attorney Advisor, the Department of Energy)
- 10:45 am Networking Break
- 11:00 am **Employment Law in Focus: Supporting the Workforce Through Rapid Transformation**
Although palpable excitement and energy surround the bold vision for our future, the national need for innovation and the requisite pace of change gives rise to employment law considerations. Employers are seeing increased respectful workplace and mental health disorders issues, sometimes particularly impacting student programs. Legal counsel is increasingly asked to help clients balance considerations between individual employees and the working environment.
Panel: Katherine Kettler (Interim General Counsel, Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory), **Rachel Nichols** (Legal Counsel at Argonne National Laboratory), **Emi Passini** (Senior Associate, Michael Best & Friedrich LLP)
- 12:00 pm Conference Lunch
- 1:00 pm **With Great Power Comes Great Responsibility Redux: Legal Topics on Research Security and Foreign National Access**
Panel: Stewart Forbes (Hogan Lovells), **Dan Raker** (Chief Human Resources Officer, Argonne National Laboratory), **Marta A. Thompson** (Partner, Aiken Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP)



- 2:00pm **Legal Ethics in a Dynamic Landscape**
Presented by: Christina Tackett (Deputy General Counsel, Argonne National Laboratory) and **Mike Vernick** (Partner, Jenner Block)
- 3:00 pm Break
- 3:15 pm **Argonne National Laboratory Site Tours**
Tour options include the [Advance Photon Source \(APS\)](#), [Supercomputing and the Theory and Computing Sciences Building \(TCSB\)](#), and the [Nuclear Energy Exhibit Hall](#)
Tour signups will be available Thursday morning on site

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