Cal Poly Humboldt
Schatz Energy Research Center

Job Opening: Senior Project Engineer in Microgrids and Distributed Energy

Open until filled. The current review deadline is Wednesday, July 29, at 5:00pm Pacific

This position is employed by the Cal Poly Humboldt Sponsored Programs Foundation (SPF), a separate nonprofit organization affiliated with Cal Poly Humboldt. It is not a California State University (CSU) position.

The Schatz Energy Research Center at Cal Poly Humboldt is hiring one to two Senior Project Engineers to support the development and implementation of clean energy microgrid and distributed energy projects.

Our microgrid and distributed energy portfolio is focused on delivering real-world projects that improve energy resilience, support Tribal energy sovereignty, and advance grid decarbonization. You will join a team working on multiple large-scale microgrid projects with Tribal partners in Northern California. These projects integrate renewable energy generation, battery storage, and controls in community-serving energy systems.

This position involves work across multiple phases of project delivery, including design coordination, technical analysis, construction support, integration, and commissioning. It is well suited for engineers with experience in public works construction, infrastructure, energy systems, or similar project delivery environments.

This position is expected to start in late August 2026, with flexibility based on candidate availability. The position is based at the Schatz Center in Arcata, California. Staff may work onsite full-time or in a hybrid arrangement, with at least 40% of time spent onsite. Applications are welcome from all who are legally eligible to work in the U.S.

Who we are and what we do

Since 1989, the Schatz Center has been a leader in applied research and project development for clean and renewable energy. Our current portfolio includes microgrid development, sustainable transportation design, carbon life cycle analysis, solar product testing, offshore wind feasibility studies, and planning and policy for clean energy access around the globe.

We are located on the campus of Cal Poly Humboldt in Arcata, California. Arcata's 800-acre community forest and 11 miles of trails through the heart of the redwoods begin just one block away, and we are within biking distance of California's second largest inland bay and the Pacific Ocean.

As residents of a rural coastal community, we are keenly aware of our social and environmental responsibilities. We are committed to increasing energy access and resilience for communities worldwide — and do so through clean and renewable design that reduces climate change and restores environmental and human health.

Our organizational commitments

Our Vision

The Schatz Center envisions a healthy planet with thriving, equitable, resilient communities powered by clean energy.

Our Purpose

Our team is committed to addressing climate change and improving human and ecosystem health through work that supports clean energy, climate-resilience, equity, and justice. Our work includes:

- **Research and Development** – we do applied research focused on energy and environmental issues.

- **Technology Deployment** – we design, integrate, build, test, and operate innovative, renewable, and resilient energy systems that are responsive to social and environmental needs.
- **Collaboration** – we work with public and private partners including Tribal Nations, communities, agencies, academic institutions, foundations, and industry to exchange knowledge and implement innovative solutions locally and internationally.
- **Education and Training** – we support learning that provides practical, hands-on experience for current and future practitioners and leaders.

Our Values

We value:

- **Kindness**: Treating people and the planet with care and respect through acts of inclusion, helpfulness, generosity, and encouragement.
- **Integrity**: Approaching one another and our interdisciplinary research with curiosity, open-mindedness, transparency, and humility.
- **Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion**: Providing a nourishing and rewarding environment for Center staff, students, and partners. Respecting the differences of our colleagues and actively seeking to identify and remove barriers to ensure opportunities to thrive.
- **Justice**: Working to advance racial justice, gender equality and women's empowerment, LGBTQIA+ rights, economic equality, and environmental justice.
- **Teamwork and Collaboration**: Supporting internal and external community building and engagement to create inclusive and innovative solutions. Sharing knowledge with and learning from our colleagues, collaborators, community partners, and the public to advance understanding.
- **Effectiveness**: Using our technical, scientific, and policy expertise to do good work that makes a difference.

Job summary

Ready to engineer the future of clean energy? As a Senior Project Engineer, you'll provide leadership in developing complex, real-world clean energy systems. You will join our Microgrid research area and collaborate with a multidisciplinary team of engineers, analysts, and project managers, reporting directly to a Principal Engineer.

You will help deliver clean energy projects that improve energy resilience, support Tribal energy sovereignty, and advance grid decarbonization. Based on the Cal Poly Humboldt campus, the Schatz Center also offers opportunities to collaborate with faculty and students working on applied energy research and deployment.

You will work on multiple projects simultaneously, contributing engineering and analytical support to help deliver projects on schedule and within budget. Your work will include coordination with internal teams and external partners, preparing and reviewing technical deliverables, supporting planset and construction document development, and helping move projects through design, construction, integration, and commissioning.

This position requires strong technical judgment, attention to detail, and the ability to coordinate work across team members, partners, contractors, vendors, and other project partners. You may also supervise and/or mentor early-career staff or student researchers and represent the Center in project meetings or external events.

You are encouraged to contribute ideas that improve project delivery and team processes, and to help foster an inclusive, respectful, and collaborative workplace. We value input from staff at all levels and support a work environment that promotes professional growth and sustainable workloads.

Core Responsibilities:

- Perform engineering work following industry-standard practices with an appropriate standard of care
    - Under the responsible charge of a licensed engineer or, if the successful applicant is a licensed engineer, in collaboration with other licensed engineers

- Participate in collaborative planning, permitting, and design processes
- Collaborate with clients, partners, and subcontractors, including contract development and management
- Identify problems early and work with others to create and implement solutions to avoid major impacts to project budgets and schedules
- Participate in construction management activities
- Create documentation and provide training for microgrid owners/operators
- Support microgrid project development and proposal submission activities
- Produce and/or review plansets, specifications, submittals, shop drawings, and associated calculations, studies, and cost estimates

Additional Responsibilities:

- Attend/facilitate project, committee, and team meetings
- Support project reporting and deliverables activities
- Participate in Center training, meetings, committees (as applicable), and other Center organizational processes
- Other duties as assigned

Qualifications

Minimum qualifications

Education and experience

- Bachelor's degree in engineering (electrical, civil, mechanical, or related field) or an equivalent combination of education, training, and experience
- At least 7 years of relevant professional experience in engineering, infrastructure, energy systems, or construction-related work

Equivalent combinations of education and experience are evaluated using our Criteria for Prior Education and Experience. Applicants are encouraged to demonstrate relevant knowledge and skills through a range of experiences, including academic work, professional roles, internships, or other applicable activities.

Knowledge, skills, and abilities

- Thorough understanding of engineering fundamentals across electrical, civil, mechanical, or related disciplines
- Significant experience with engineering design processes, construction documentation, and multidisciplinary project coordination
- Significant experience contributing to infrastructure, energy, or construction-related projects across multiple project phases
- Experience with construction-phase support activities such as submittal review, permitting coordination, contractor coordination, or field support
- Strong understanding of relevant codes, standards, and engineering practices and demonstrated ability to apply them to engineering design, permitting, and construction processes
- Demonstrated ability to prepare and review technical deliverables such as drawings, plansets, specifications, calculations, studies, and reports
- Demonstrated ability to perform engineering calculations and apply technical analysis to practical project challenges
- Strong problem-solving skills and ability to apply independent engineering judgment in complex, dynamic project environments
- Effective written and verbal communication with technical and non-technical audiences
- Demonstrated ability to manage multiple priorities, coordinate across teams, and adapt to changing project needs and schedules
- Demonstrated ability to work independently while collaborating effectively within interdisciplinary teams
- Demonstrated ability to build and maintain effective working relationships with colleagues, project partners, contractors, and utilities
- Demonstrated ability to organize work, maintain accurate documentation, and follow through on tasks
- Demonstrated ability to work effectively across diverse, multidisciplinary teams in a respectful and collaborative manner
- Attention to detail and commitment to producing high-quality work

Desirable experience or training

The following are welcome, but they are **not required** to be eligible for the position. Please see important note below.

- Professional Engineer (PE) license, Engineer-in-Training (EIT) certification, or interest in pursuing licensure
- Experience with public works projects
- Experience with design-bid-build or similar project delivery methods
- Experience with engineering or project tools such as AutoCAD, Bluebeam, ETAP, Hypersim, or similar

Important note:

This vacancy announcement includes both (a) minimum qualifications as well as (b) desirable experience or training. Research shows that many women and people of color, in particular, feel that they have to have 100% of both required and desired skills and experience before applying for a new job. We want to reiterate that the additional desirable experience and training options listed above *are not required to apply for a position on our team*. If you meet the minimum qualifications, we encourage you to apply.

Compensation and benefits

Compensation and term

This is a full-time, exempt, benefit-eligible position with a minimum term of one year. Continued employment is anticipated, contingent on funding, workload, and performance.

The full salary range for this position is from $7,579 to $12,963 per month (Steps 1 - 12), with an anticipated hiring range of $7,579 to $9,213 (Steps 1 - 5), depending on skills and experience. Cost of living adjustments are made annually in July. Staff generally become eligible for step increases at regular 2-year intervals, with additional advancement opportunities available through the Center’s advancement framework.

We support professional growth through mentorship, hands-on project experience, and opportunities to pursue licensure and other professional development goals.

Staff may work onsite full-time or in a hybrid arrangement, with at least 40% onsite presence. We aim to support flexible work arrangements and sustainable workloads. The Center also hosts regular team activities, including monthly staff lunches.

Participation in the Schatz Center's microgrid on-call support program is optional and includes additional compensation. Staff who participate in this program support real-time operation of deployed microgrids in coordination with utility and grid operations partners.

Advancement

The Schatz Center supports career growth through a structured advancement framework that recognizes increasing responsibility, impact, and professional development.

Advancement may occur through:

- 2-year step increases, which recognize sustained contributions and professional growth
- Off-cycle step increases, which may be awarded for milestones such as licensure, expanded responsibilities, or demonstrated impact
- Promotions, which reflect advancement to positions with broader scope and responsibility

Advancement decisions are based on demonstrated performance, evolving responsibilities, and alignment with organizational needs, and follow a collaborative review process.

Insurance

Medical, dental, vision, and life insurance are available for employees and dependents, with the employer covering 90% of premiums.

Paid time off

- 14 holidays per year, including December 25 through January 1
- 6 ⅔ hours of vacation per month, with vacation accrual increasing based on years of service
- 8 hours of sick leave per month
- 1 personal day per calendar year

Additional paid leave is provided for voting and jury duty. Programs are available for pregnancy, disability, and family medical leave.

Retirement

After one year of service, the Center contributes 10% of each employee's gross wages to a 403(b) retirement plan.

Professional Development

The Schatz Center supports ongoing professional development through dedicated funding, mentorship, and structured growth opportunities.

Staff have access to funded professional development opportunities such as conferences, specialized training, and support for professional licensure or certifications. Additional time is available each year for informal learning and skill development.

Professional development is aligned with individual goals and project needs, with opportunities to request support throughout the year.

Additional benefit information:

For additional information on leave accruals, insurance, and other benefits, view the Cal Poly Humboldt Sponsored Programs Personnel Manual at: https://research.humboldt.edu/responsibilities-compliance/research-and-institutional-policies

How to apply

This position is employed by the Cal Poly Humboldt Sponsored Programs Foundation (SPF), a separate nonprofit organization affiliated with Cal Poly Humboldt. It is not a California State University (CSU) position.

Deadline

The first round of review will be based on materials that have been submitted by **Wednesday, July 29, at 5:00pm Pacific**. The position will be open until it is filled.

Materials

Applicants must submit all required application materials through the official application form:

Senior Project Engineer Application Form link

The form will ask you to provide your contact information, indicate how you learned about the vacancy, complete required confirmations, and upload the application materials listed below.

Please prepare the following materials for submission:

1. **Formal letter of application / cover letter:** Describe your interest in the position and how your background prepares you for this role. Please address the letter to the *Schatz Center Hiring Committee*.
2. **Resume:** A maximum of 3 pages is preferred; however, we encourage you to include all relevant and transferable experience and skills you wish us to consider. For guidance, view our Criteria for Prior Education and Experience. Please include time-base information, such as hours per week or month, for each experience and/or training.
3. **Contact information for 3 professional references**

4. **Cal Poly Humboldt SPF Employee Information Form for Applicants** https://forms.humboldt.edu/spf-self-identification-form-job-applicants-eif-pre-offer. Fill in **Submission Email/Contact** as follows: Name = Schatz Energy Research Center, Email = schatzenergy@humboldt.edu

Your application will be considered complete when all required materials have been submitted. Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Additional materials may be required from candidates invited to interview.

If you are unable to access or submit the application form, contact schatzenergy@humboldt.edu for assistance.

Equal opportunity

The Schatz Center operates under the Cal Poly Humboldt Sponsored Programs Foundation (CPHSPF), an Equal Opportunity Employer. We consider qualified applicants for employment without regard to race, religion, color, national origin, ancestry, age, sex, gender, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation, genetic information, medical condition, disability, marital status, protected veteran status, or any other legally protected status. More information about SPF's Equal Employment Opportunity hiring can be found at: https://research.humboldt.edu/employment/hiring.

Questions and inquiries

- For assistance with the application process, please submit an Accommodation Request Form, available at https://forms.humboldt.edu/spf-accomodation-request-form, or contact the campus ADA Coordinator at (707) 826-3626 or confidential fax at (707) 826-3625. For more information regarding accommodation, you may also visit the Cal Poly Humboldt Campus Disability Resource Center at https://disability.humboldt.edu/. Individuals in need of a telecommunications relay service may contact the California Relay Service at (877) 735-2929 TTY.

- For additional information, please email schatzenergy@humboldt.edu or call (707) 826-4345.
- Learn more about our employment opportunities at schatzcenter.org/jobs.

At-Will Employment, Visa Sponsorship

- SPF adheres to the policy of employment at-will, which permits the employer or the employee to end the employment relationship at any time, for any reason, with or without cause or notice as permissible by law. No SPF representative other than the Executive Director may modify at-will status and/or provide any special arrangement concerning terms or conditions of employment in an individual case or generally and any such modification must be in a signed writing.
- Maintaining eligibility to work in the United States is a condition of employment. Cal Poly Humboldt Sponsored Programs Foundation does not sponsor visas for staff, management, or temporary positions.