

DOE Awards \$12 Million For Solar Technology Research

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U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Secretary Steven Chu says the DOE's National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) will invest up to \$12 million in total funding - \$10 million from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act - in four companies to support the development of early-stage solar energy technologies and help them advance to full commercial-scale.

Companies awarded funding under DOE's Photovoltaic Incubator Program will work with NREL to transition prototype and pre-commercial PV technologies into pilot and full-scale manufacturing. The anticipated subcontracts, worth up to \$3 million each, will be awarded as 18-month phased subcontracts with payment made upon completion of project milestones.

Alta Devices Inc., based in Santa Clara, Calif., will focus efforts on developing an innovative, high-efficiency (>20%), low-cost compound-semiconductor photovoltaic module, with market entry expected in 2011.

Solar Junction Corp., based in San Jose, Calif., will develop a manufacturing process to produce a very-high-efficiency multi-junction cell. These cells will be utilized by concentrating PV (CPV) manufacturers to produce lower-cost CPV systems.

Tetra Sun, based in Saratoga, Calif., will focus its efforts on a back-surface passivation for high-efficiency crystalline silicon (c-si) solar cells. This effort will result in a high-efficiency, low-cost c-Si solar cell.

Semprius Inc., based in Durham, N.C., will focus its efforts on developing a massively parallel, microcell-based CPV receiver. This approach combines the benefits of unique-to-solar manufacturing techniques with the performance and operational benefits of microcell concentrating photovoltaics.

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Energy