

Grants

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Department of Energy Awards \$300,000 Grant to Next Generation Economy Inc.

WASHINGTON, DC — The Department of Energy (DOE) today announced that it will award \$300,000 to the Next Generation Economy Inc., (NextGen), a community reuse organization (CRO) located at the department's Sandia National Laboratory in Albuquerque, NM. The organization's goal is to diversify the regional economy, increase the number of quality jobs in the region and the state, and reduce the region's economic dependence on the federal government.

A CRO is an organization recognized by the Energy Department that can apply for funding for programs that can modify the impacts of workforce restructuring at its facilities and reduce community dependence on the department's activities.

"The Energy Department is a good neighbor to the communities surrounding our sites," Secretary of Energy Spencer Abraham said. "We will continue to work with the Next Generation Economy and other community reuse organizations around the country, to retain, expand or create jobs for workers affected by restructuring efforts."

The Energy Department and NextGen have created or retained 460 new jobs, and estimate that 1,710 jobs will be created or retained by 2005.

The flagship initiative for NextGen is a Microsystems Fabrication Facility where Microsystems, tiny machines with components that can sense, compute, act and communicate, will be built. The microsystems, developed at the department's Sandia National Laboratory, have widespread use in transportation, telecommunications and medicine. Another initiative of NextGen is NextJob New Mexico, a workforce development effort to establish a web-based database for the use of job seekers, employers and education/training providers.

NextGen had been working with the Intel Corporation to receive a complete production line of equipment to assist in the establishment of a Microsystems Fabrication Facility. In order to receive this equipment, NextGen needed funding for insurance, storage and maintenance, and to buy additional equipment. Last year, the Department of Energy awarded \$682,000 to ensure NextGen could meet these conditions, and earlier this year, Intel donated 74 pieces of equipment to NextGen valued at \$17.5 million.

NextGen was established in 2000 to assist the Central New Mexico region with possible job losses resulting from downsizing at the Sandia National Laboratory.
