



Sustainable Career Pathways

Analysis of Clean Energy & Sustainability Job Listings from 2021

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Introduction

Ed's Clean Energy & Sustainability Jobs List is one of the oldest (if not THE oldest) and most well-known jobs newsletters in the energy and sustainability space. It's the number one resource I mention during every lecture, coaching session, and networking conversation I have.

It's a weekly jobs newsletter hand curated by Ed Carley and it's the most comprehensive, targeted collection of energy and sustainability job listings that I've encountered in over a decade of working in this space.

As part of my work as a job search strategist, job seekers are constantly asking me questions about the energy and sustainability jobs landscape:

- When should I be applying to jobs?
- Can I find work in this space if I don't live on one of the coasts?
- Is it possible to find remote work?
- How much experience do I really need?

This report is my attempt to provide job seekers with as definitive answers to questions like these as I can provide in this moment in time.

I hope that this report provides you with some valuable insights that can help you on your job search journey. Be sure to visit the Conclusions page for a summary of my key findings.

Best of luck in your search!
-Trish

Trish Kenlon
Founder, Sustainable Career Pathways
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Meet Trish Kenlon

Hi, I'm Trish and I'm the woman behind Sustainable Career Pathways and the author of this report.

Like Ed, the inspiration for the work that I do came from a desire to address some of the challenges and frustrations that I had with my own sustainability job search and a sincere commitment to making the experience easier for others.

My personal mission is to inspire, educate, and connect current and future generations of sustainability professionals. I work towards that mission every day by providing free in-depth, actionable job search resources on my website, offering personalized job search coaching, and serving on the board of the Utah Sustainable Business Coalition.

Please use the link to the right to visit my website and take advantage of the many interviews, articles, podcasts, networks, and other resources I've curated in the hopes of helping you and others to join in the professional fight against climate change that much sooner.

I invite you to connect with me and follow Sustainable Career Pathways on LinkedIn so that you'll never miss a new resource I provide. Don't forget to include a quick note so that I know you're a reader.

See you out there!
-Trish



[Visit the Sustainable Career Pathways website](#)

[Connect with Trish on LinkedIn](#)

[Follow Sustainable Career Pathways on LinkedIn](#)

[Follow @SustainableCP on Twitter](#)

Meet Ed Carley

Ed Carley is the man behind Ed's Clean Energy & Sustainability Jobs List and the Senior Program Director for the Buildings program at the National Association of State Energy Officials (NASEO). Ed's List is not affiliated with NASEO or Ed's work there.



A Message from Ed:

One of my goals for the jobs list is to illustrate the diversity of roles and organizations doing environmental work, but the selection of jobs that are included is influenced by my readers' interests and the interests of those in my network. The list is by no means a comprehensive set of all of the jobs available and there are certainly jobs in many more locations and subspecialties than are highlighted in this report.

Many subscribers have told me that they have gotten jobs that they saw on the list and many of my colleagues have hired people who found them through postings on the list; however, the list has over 11,000 subscribers, so competition for these jobs is often significant.

As a result, job seekers should use the list as a tool in their toolkit, but not the only tool. I recommend reviewing the list each week to gain familiarity with the roles and organizations that resonate with you and using that insight to help you focus your wider job search efforts.

There are a lot of opportunities out there as we work to eliminate carbon dioxide emissions and address the myriad environmental challenges that we face today; I hope that my list can help you find the right one for you.

Good luck!
-Ed

[Subscribe to Ed's Clean Energy & Sustainability Jobs List at edsjoblist.com](#)

Send jobs to Ed at edscleanjobs@gmail.com

Please submit jobs in the following format:

Job title. Organization. Location. Hyperlink to job description. X-Y years experience.

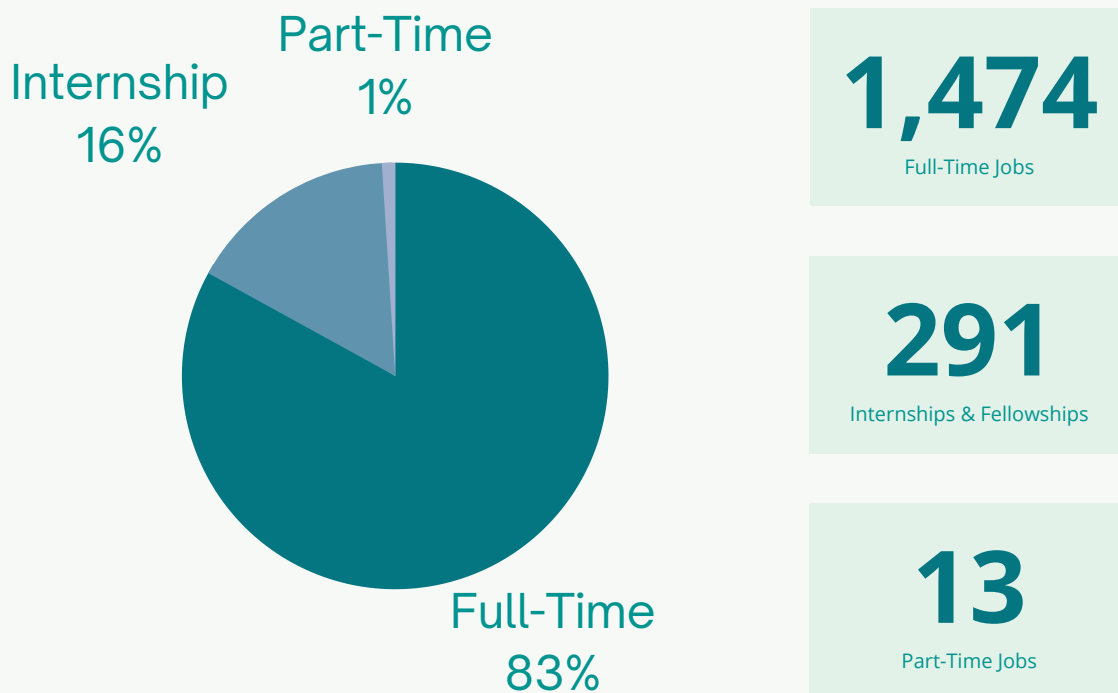
Example:

Ironman. The Avengers. New York, NY or remote. {link}. 5-10 years experience.

Job Listing Overview

Key Takeaways

- This data can give us a good window into some of the overall trends in energy and sustainability job listings in the US from 2021
- It's not a completely exhaustive data set; don't be discouraged if you don't see a lot of data related to the specific types of jobs or locations you are targeting



Observations

- 1,778 job listings across 37 newsletters in 2021
- The majority of jobs were US based; approximately 2% were either outside of the US or included an international location as one of multiple options
- Only 1% of all job listings were for part-time work

Data Considerations

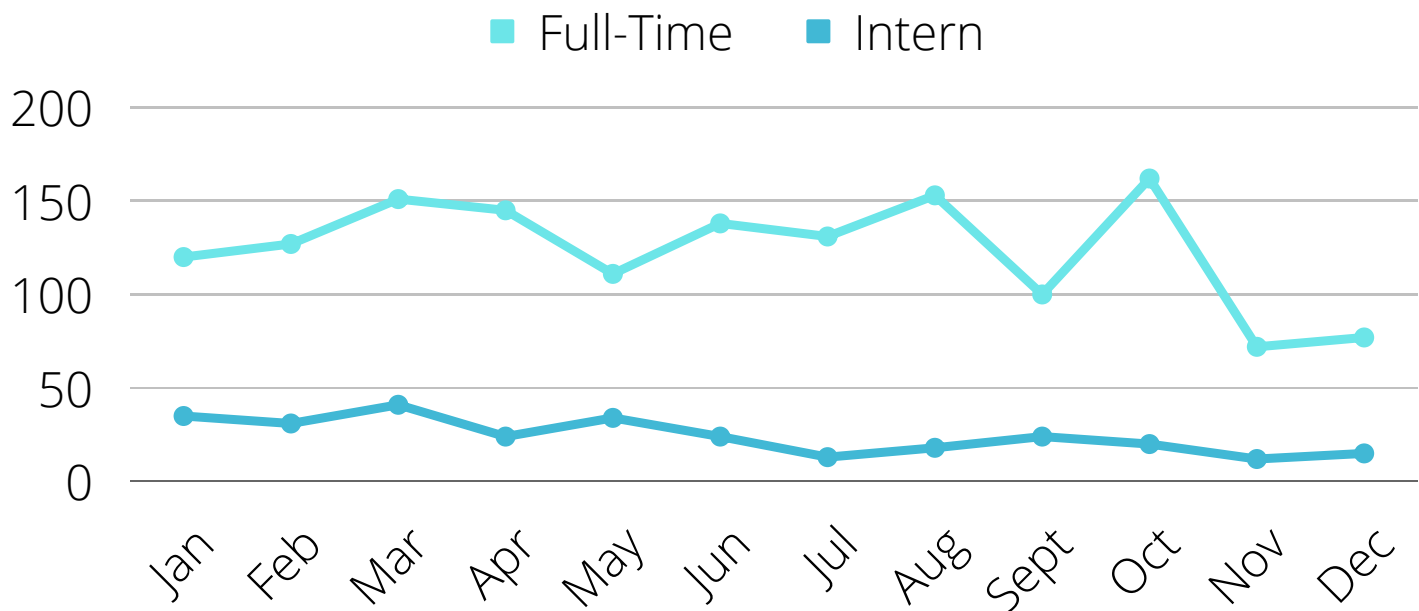
- Some job listing counts, job types & organizations were likely over or underrepresented due to the logistics associated with curating job listings manually and analyzing them retrospectively

When Should I Apply?

Key Takeaways

- There was no absolute "Best" or "Worst" time of year to apply; **start looking as soon as you are ready and apply to openings as quickly as possible**
- Even though twice as many internships & fellowships were posted in the first half of the year; several programs opened applications as early as 6-9 months before the anticipated start date; **start researching as far in advance as possible to maximize your options**
- While many internships had start dates that aligned with semester and summer starts, several had immediate start dates; **it's never too late to look for an internship**

Jobs by Month Listed in Newsletter



Observations

- The number of full-time job postings listed in the newsletter in November & December dropped by about half from an October peak; however, this was largely due to the reduced number of published newsletters in these months. The total number of job postings was fairly consistent across all four quarters of 2021
- About 65% of internships & fellowships were posted in the first half of the year

Data Considerations

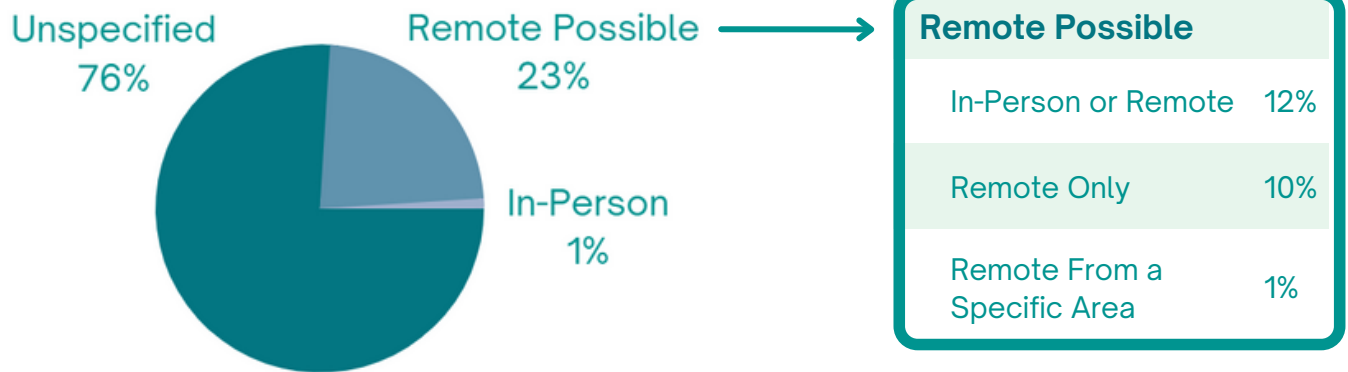
- Newsletters were not sent on major holidays and Ed does not list postings for positions that have been closed; Ed reported that the number of postings that were sent to him in November & December was similar to the number he received throughout the rest of the year
- Internship & fellowship start times varied between 0 and 9 months after application
- Several programs that regularly hire dozens of interns or fellows were undercounted because they only had one listing in the newsletter which did not specify the total number of openings; these programs also tended to open applications several months in advance of the anticipated start date

Can I Work Remotely?

Key Takeaways

- While the majority of job listings did not specify if remote work would be available, almost a quarter explicitly offered a remote option; **it is possible to work remotely in energy and sustainability**

Remote Work Potential



Observations

- Only 1% of postings explicitly required in-person work; most simply did not specify if remote work was possible
- Almost a quarter of all job postings explicitly offered a remote option
- 12% of postings explicitly mentioned that candidates could choose between in-person or remote work
- 10% of postings were for exclusively remote work
- 1% of postings were for remote work from a specific area such as a region of the United States, a specific state, or within a certain time zone

Data Considerations

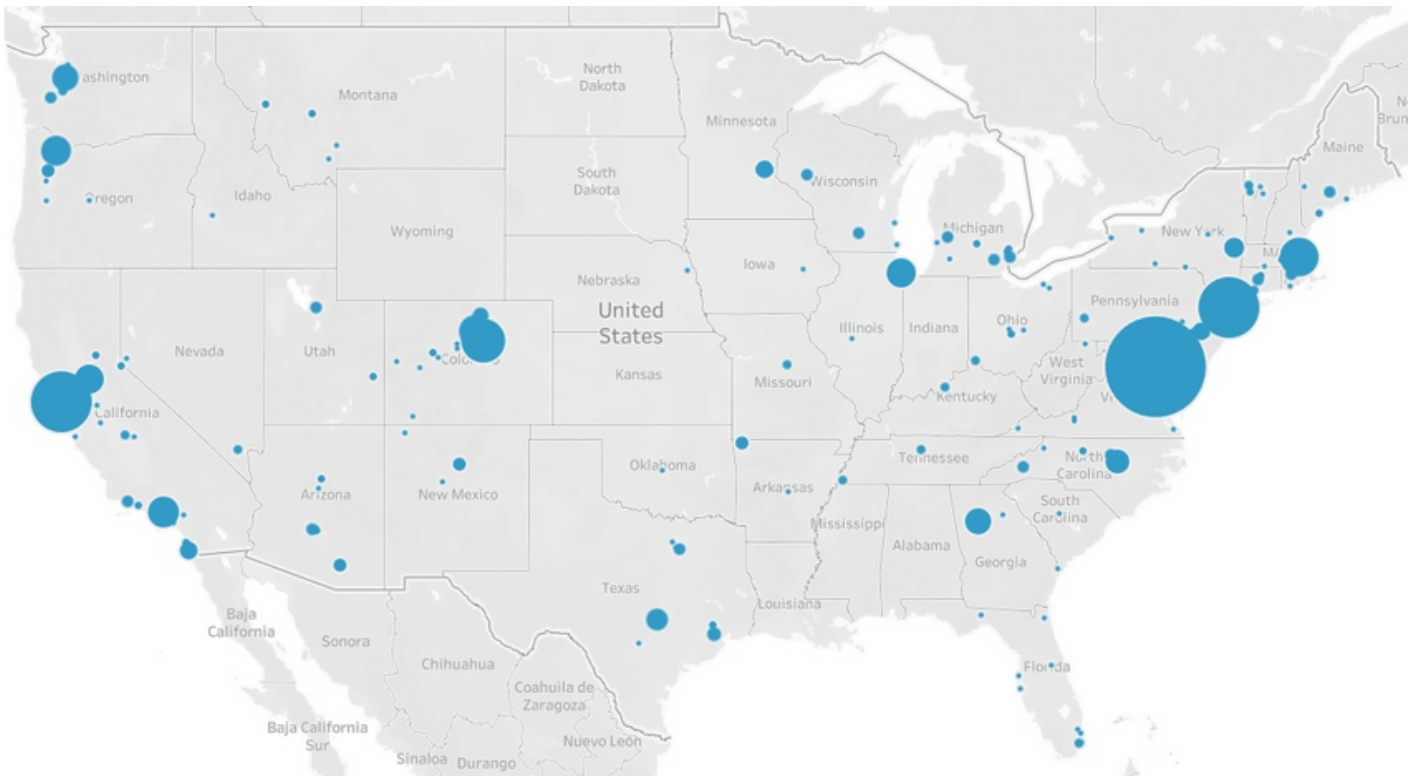
- This analysis was based solely on the information that was available in the newsletter, more organizations may offer remote work options than are represented here

Where Can I Work?

Key Takeaways

- While almost 30% of all job listings were for jobs in Washington, D.C., San Francisco, or New York, 45 states had at least one job listing. **It is possible to work in energy and sustainability outside of the top three markets**

Number of Job Listings by City



Observations

- The top 10 states with the most job listings were: CA, DC, NY, CO, MA, OR, WA, NC, VA, and IL
- The top 10 cities with the most job listings were: Washington, D.C., San Francisco, New York, Denver, Boston, Boulder, Los Angeles, Portland, Chicago, and Sacramento
- The number of job listings in DC is very high because of the large number of federal and policy related jobs located there

Data Considerations

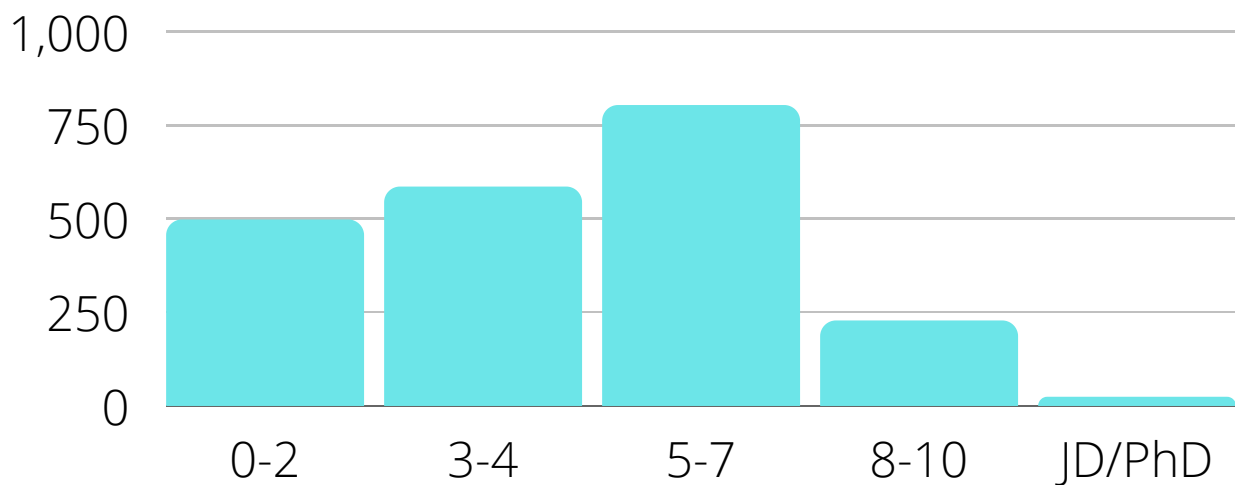
- While not shown on the map, there were also job listings for work in HI, AK and cities outside of the US

How Much Experience Do I Need?

Key Takeaways

- Professionals with 5 to 7 years of experience were the most in-demand
- While 23% of job listings were for professionals early in their careers, only 5% were explicitly entry-level; truly entry level positions were rare

Number of Full-Time Job Listings by Years of Experience Required



Observations

- 38% of listings required 5-7 years of experience
- 27% of listings required 3-4 years of experience
- 23% of listings required 0-2 years of experience
- 11% of listings required 8-10 years of experience
- 1% of listings required a JD or PhD
- 5% of jobs were listed as entry-level or specifically included 0 in the range of years of experience required (such as "0-2 years experience required")

Data Considerations

- Only full-time job listings requiring 0 to 10 years of experience were included in this data set, internships & fellowships were excluded
- Jobs that listed a range for years of experience required were counted towards each year that was included in the range, so the total number of jobs in this chart exceeds 1,778

What Job Titles Should I Look For?

Key Takeaways

- The most popular job titles were Manager, Analyst, and Director; but most titles have very broad ranges of experience required, **don't eliminate opportunities from consideration based on the job title**

Most Popular Job Title by Years of Experience Required

| 0 - 3 Years | 4 - 6 Years | 7+ Years |
|-------------|-------------|--------------------|
| Analyst | Manager | Director |
| Associate | Engineer | Associate Director |
| Specialist | Lead | Chief |
| Coordinator | Consultant | Vice President |

Observations

- 33% of job titles included the word "Manager"; years of experience required for manager roles had a range between 0 and 10, but the majority of listings required between 2 and 8 years
- 15% of job titles included the word "Analyst"; years of experience required for analyst roles had a range between 0 and 10 years, but the majority of listings required between 0 and 5 years
- 11% of job titles included the word "Director"; years of experience required for director roles had a range between 2 and 10 years, but the majority of listings required between 5 and 10 years

Data Considerations

- Only full-time job listings requiring 0 to 10 years of experience were included in this data set, internships & fellowships were excluded
- Jobs that listed a range for years of experience required were counted towards each year that was included in the range, so the total number of jobs in this analysis exceeds 1,778

What Subject Matter Expertise Do I Need?

Key Takeaways

- The most popular subject matter expertise categories included in job titles were Energy, Sustainability, and Carbon & Climate; however, most job titles didn't include specific subject matter expertise at all. **Don't eliminate opportunities from consideration based on the job title**

% of Job Titles with Specific Subject Matter Expertise (SME)

| SME | % of Titles |
|--------------------------|-------------|
| None or Other | 47% |
| Energy | 13% |
| Sustainability | 13% |
| Carbon & Climate | 11% |
| Clean & Renewable Energy | 4% |
| EVs & Transit | 4% |
| Built Environment | 2% |
| Equity & Justice | 2% |
| ESG | 2% |
| Waste & Recycling | 0.7% |
| Circular Economy | 0.3% |

Observations

- The popularity of ESG, Circular Economy, and Equity & Justice jobs was a big story in the sustainability jobs space in 2021 but there were not a large number of jobs with those key words in the title in this data set; it is likely there were many jobs in the newsletter that work on these subjects but simply did not include the expertise in the actual job title

Data Considerations

- Similar subject matter expertise keywords have been consolidated into single categories; for example, "solar" "wind" and "renewables" have been included in the "Clean & Renewable Energy" category
- As most of the job listings had been taken down by the time of this analysis, the data available was limited to the information in the job title

Conclusion



Look for Job Postings Year Round

- There is no absolute "Best" or "Worst" time of year to look for a job; apply to any openings you find as quickly as possible
- Start researching fellowships & internships as far in advance as possible to maximize your options
- While a late start will likely mean you'll have fewer choices, it's never too late to look for an internship



Energy & Sustainability Work Can Happen Almost Anywhere

- The majority of job listings did not specify if remote work would be available, but almost a quarter explicitly offered a remote option; it is possible to work remotely in energy and sustainability
- Almost 30% of all job listings were for jobs in Washington, D.C., San Francisco, or New York, but 45 states had at least one job listing; it is possible to work in energy and sustainability outside of the top three markets



Don't Eliminate Opportunities from Consideration Based on the Job Title

- The most popular job titles were Manager, Analyst and Director; but most titles have very broad ranges of experience required
- The most popular subject matter expertise categories included in job titles were Energy, Sustainability, and Carbon & Climate; however, most job titles didn't include specific subject matter expertise at all

Acknowledgements

Dear Trish, I'm so glad that you came to me with this great idea and that you put so much time into examining the jobs lists that were sent out over the last year. I'm amazed by the deep analysis you've done and the insights that you've collected here. I'm sure that this document will be a great help to lots of job seekers and career changers, and to the educators and career services professionals who work with them. Thank you for the great work, and I hope that we can do the same thing with 2022 data! -Ed

Dear Ed, many thanks for working with me on this report, and for all the work that you do to share these opportunities with job seekers around the world. Looking forward to 2022!

-Trish

This report was produced using Canva, Tableau, and Excel.

Unless otherwise noted, all photos are from Canva.
Ed Carley & Trish Kenlon portraits courtesy of Ed & Trish.
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Yes photo by Kelly L from Pexels.

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