NextGrid: Utility of the Future Study
Framing Core Study Questions (Draft)

Overview

The following questions are intended for Working Group (WG) Leaders to use as guidelines for identifying issues, organizing content and conducting group process. They may be modified and adapted to suit the WG subject matter and used to reach consensus at the outset about the scope and focus of the WG's efforts.

Using Illinois-specific analyses to the extent possible,

1) What "Smart Grid" technologies/policies/practices currently exist in Illinois? Are they being used to maximize their value? What additional needs exist that cannot be met by currently available Smart Grid elements?

2) What are specific opportunities for grid modernization in Illinois and how will they improve grid operations, reliability, power quality, and resilience? What are the challenges to be overcome to make those opportunities realizable?

3) What changes in technologies are occurring that will provide new methods and means to provide Smart Grid products and services?

4) What are the barriers to customer, utility and market adoption of beneficial technologies and new products/services?

5) How can those benefits and associated costs be projected and quantified?

6) How will relevant trends in technology, customer behavior, and markets affect reliability, service quality, resilience, and costs to customers and utilities?

7) What are the existing statutory and regulatory goals, policies, programs, rate structures, and legal requirements, if any, covering these functions, products, and services?

8) What specific policies and regulatory initiatives exist or could be implemented to encourage further development and integration of distributed generation and renewable energy resources, community initiatives such as PV and energy storage projects, and greater deployment of energy efficiency technologies.

9) What is the existing and potential role of state regulatory policy regarding interconnected smart devices and appliances, micro-grids, electric vehicles, big data and analytics?

10) What legal and practical steps would be needed to establish a framework allowing buyers and sellers of distribution-connected resources to conduct and settle transactions in an effectively competitive market?

11) What are the options for modifying existing goals, policies, programs, rate structures, and legal requirements to optimize future outcomes for the grid and its users?

12) What policies, programs, and initiatives can ensure that grid modernization will educate and empower customers and communities, drive economic development, support innovation, and optimize the Illinois electric utility industry for the 21st Century?