



School for Communication
and Journalism

*Center for Climate Journalism
and Communication*

**The Center for Climate Journalism and Communication at the USC Annenberg School
Launches Season 2 of the Podcast Series, *Electric Futures*, Focused on the Energy Transition**

Electric Futures Season 2 Available Across Podcasting Platforms June 25, 2025

The USC Annenberg Center for Climate Journalism and Communication is pleased to announce the launch of season two of *Electric Futures*, a podcast that focuses on the people and communities on the frontlines of the energy transition. In *Your Community, Electrified*, the four-episode arc dropping on June 25, 2025, host Chip Zukoski explores a new neighborhood in Southern California that was built with climate disasters in mind. This community and other building projects like it generate and store their own energy, bypassing the electric grid – and blackouts. What happens now that federal support for these initiatives is drying up? Can America still electrify? To find out, Zukoski speaks to experts like:

- Ivan Penn, New York Times energy correspondent
- Dr. Rajit Gadh, UCLA Professor of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering at the UCLA Henry Samueli School of Engineering and Applied Science and the founding director of the UCLA Smart Grid Energy Research Center
- Christina Bellantoni, USC Annenberg School for Journalism Professor of Professional Practice, political pundit and former longtime political journalist and editor
- Ram Narayanamurthy, Deputy Director of the Building Technologies Office at the U.S. Department of Energy

Additional highlights include:

- Insights from Indiana and Washington, where other projects that bypass the grid are in development.

- The science behind the electric grid, how microgrids work, and the state of grids in the U.S.

Season one of the acclaimed podcast, launched in 2024, explored narratives from the Imperial Valley in Southern California, an area rich with community – and critical minerals – on the brink of an energy transformation so big, it has potential to completely change the lives of residents. Accolades for season one include:

- 2025 LA Press Club SoCal Journalism Awards finalist, Limited Series Podcast
- 2024 Quill Podcast Awards nominee, Best Science and Medicine Podcast
- Charted on the Top 50 Science Podcasts chart on Spotify and Apple Podcasts
- Featured in the LA Times, La Opinion, and NPR's KCRW

Electric Futures season 2 debuts June 25, 2025, on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, and Amazon Music. In addition to the host, former USC provost Charles Zukoski, the team includes CCJC director Allison Agsten as executive producer, a veteran of Spotify's top podcasting studios and USC Annenberg adjunct professors Mallory Carra and Megan Donis as lead producers, concurrent undergraduate at USC Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences and graduate student at USC Iovine and Young Academy Natalie Lopez as associate producer, USC Annenberg public diplomacy graduate Spencer Cline as associate producer, and USC Dornsife College of Letters, Arts and Sciences undergraduate Rebecca Torres as production assistant with cover art by USC Annenberg journalism undergraduate Kim Ly.

Listeners can find both seasons of *Electric Futures* on [Spotify](#), [Apple Podcasts](#), and [Amazon Music](#). Follow along on [Instagram](#) at @usc_electricfutures. For further information, email redhot@usc.edu.

Funding for the podcast and associated research is provided by USC's Office of the Provost, with additional support from the USC Viterbi School of Engineering.

For media inquiries, including to schedule interviews with host Charles Zukoski or executive producer Allison Agsten, contact the Center for Climate Journalism and Communication at redhot@usc.edu.

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