



**CENTER FOR ROOFING  
INNOVATION AND LEADERSHIP**  
CLEMSON® UNIVERSITY

# ANNUAL MEETING

October 15, 2025

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A summary of the meeting minutes for the annual meeting of the **Center of Roofing Innovation and Leadership at Clemson University**, an effort funded and powered by the Roofing Alliance, for the industry, by the industry.

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# INTRODUCTIONS

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Chairman Reed Gooding and Alison LaValley commenced the meeting by thanking everyone for attending the Center Steering Committee and for their time and support.

Tom Leatham, Nieri Department Chair, welcomed the steering committee members on behalf of the department and thanked them for their continued support of all the previous and current initiatives.

In attendance were members from the Industry Steering Committee and the Clemson University team.



## **Steering Committee Members:**

Reed Gooding, 2025-2026 Chairman  
John Campbell  
Kyle Thomas  
Sherri Miles  
Steve Little

Greg Hudson  
Piers Dormeyer  
Greg Bloom  
Bill Good  
R.J. Radobenko (unable to participate)

## **Roofing Alliance Team:**

Alison LaValey

McKay Daniels

## **Clemson University Team:**

Dhaval Gajjar  
Jason Lucas

Vivek Sharma

## **Graduate Assistants:**

Padam Wagle

Stuti Garg

## **Guests:**

Tom Leatham, Nieri Department of Construction and Real Estate Development, Chair

# FUNDING OUTREACH

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Alison LaValley opened the discussion by reviewing the Center's tiered funding levels and reported that \$357,000 in funding has been secured to date.

John Campbell recommended preparing a one-page overview that details the Center's initiatives and provides clear distinctions between the roles, responsibilities, and priorities of NRCA, the Roofing Alliance, and the Center.

The group discussed the possibility of allocating a portion of new Roofing Alliance membership revenue to the Center or offering an additional giving option dedicated to Center support.

Members advised postponing active solicitation efforts until the Center's role within the industry is more clearly defined.

In the interim, Alison encouraged members to engage their industry contacts to raise awareness and secure additional funding moving forward.

# CENTER RECAP

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Dr. Dhaval Gajjar opened the session by expressing appreciation for the committee's support and underscoring the importance of collaboration between academia and industry.

He reviewed the Center's vision and mission and highlighted progress from the six-year partnership between the Roofing Alliance and Clemson University, which has yielded:

- Roofing courses
- A professional continuing education program
- A roofing manual
- A sustainability and resiliency study
- Increased student interest in roofing and revenue generation for the Roofing Alliance

These achievements form a strong foundation for the Center's continued development.

# PROGRESS REPORT

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Dr. Gajjar reported that all items are on schedule except for the Center's website, which is undergoing review. Dr. Gajjar provided a summary of the work supported by the Roofing Alliance Seed Funding:

- Middle and high school outreach initiatives and grant activities
- Expansion of the Roofing Training Program
- Continued development of the roofing curriculum and manual
- Creation of a roofing center facility (modular building and deck)
- A strategic hire to support education and research initiatives
- Additional focus areas identified by the Steering Committee will be pursued through research grants.
- Updates were provided on the High School Bootcamp funded through the DeWalt grant, as well as progress on the Center facility, the strategic hire, and state approval.

To date, the team has submitted grants totaling **\$2,965,000**, aligned with those priority areas.

The session concluded with an open discussion regarding first-year activities.

## Grant Submission Plan

Dr. Sharma presented the 2025–2026 Grant Submission Plan, which aligns with the focus areas identified by the Steering Committee.

The Clemson team provided an example of a submitted grant to demonstrate the level of effort required.

The committee engaged in an open discussion regarding the current grant landscape and the need to adapt proposals based on funding availability.

## Middle School Outreach

Dr. Sharma introduced the Middle School Roofing Outreach Initiative, intended to evaluate curriculum structures and identify target audiences.

- The Steering Committee advised prioritizing **high school outreach**, given recent success at two- and four-year institutions.
- While middle school outreach remains part of the long-term scope and was included due to its presence in the original work plan, the committee agreed that high school outreach should take precedence in the near term.

## Focus Areas

Dr. Sharma and the Steering Committee discussed the need for a strategic plan for each identified focus area, with clearly articulated topics.

These plans should undergo review every two years and include dedicated planning sessions for each area.

# INDUSTRY REPORT

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Dr. Sharma presented the concept for a comprehensive, data-driven State of the U.S. Roofing Industry report, developed in response to feedback from last year's kick-off session.

The report aims to collect real-time insights on workforce trends, technology adoption, and sustainability practices—focus areas identified by the Steering Committee.

Dr. Sharma distributed the draft survey and shared samples of potential white paper and report formats.

The Steering Committee emphasized several priorities:

- Identifying missing data and addressing gaps through targeted surveys
- Shifting toward forecasting metrics rather than lagging indicators
- Leveraging existing industry database tools as models
- Ensuring regional segmentation to reflect geographic differences
- Reducing reliance on contractor-only self-reported data by diversifying sources
- The committee requested adding the following question to the survey:
- “What type of information will help you develop future business goals, or what metrics would be valuable for strategic decision-making?”

Next steps include forming a subcommittee to refine the survey for data collection. Staff will work with Clemson faculty to identify the appropriate subcommittee members.

Dr. Sharma concluded by thanking members for their engagement and reaffirming their shared commitment to advancing the roofing industry through informed, data-driven research.

# TRAINING/EDUCATION

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Dr. Jason Lucas began the session by outlining the three primary areas of education and training:

- Workforce and Professional Development
- Post-Secondary Education
- Middle and High School Programming

He presented a framework illustrating how to introduce roofing industry awareness beginning with general building construction concepts.

## **High School Outreach**

Dr. Lucas described two outreach models:

- Experiential, offering strong impact but limited scalability due to cost and logistics
- Hybrid, a modular format suitable for broad distribution

He highlighted the experiential model implemented through grants from DeWalt and Baker Roofing, which emphasizes team building, communication, career pathways, hands-on learning, and management skills.

The committee discussed opportunities to replicate such bootcamps in additional regions.

The draft list of hybrid module topics was reviewed and approved, with the committee recommending several additions: financial literacy, lifestyle considerations, career success, innovation and technology, and entrepreneurship.

## **Professional Development**

Dr. Lucas reviewed existing training offerings and identified gaps, particularly in leadership and management.

Polling results indicated Communication and Performance Management as the top two priority areas for new professional development courses.

The committee discussed additional subtopics within these areas.

The session concluded with discussion regarding career entry pathways across various educational levels.

# ACTION ITEMS

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1. Develop high school modules based on approved topics.
2. Identify potential content for two additional professional development courses for Steering Committee review.
3. Establish a subcommittee representing manufacturing, distribution, and contracting to refine the State of the Industry survey.
4. Pursue grant opportunities for focus areas beyond the original scope of work.
5. Continue supporting ongoing curriculum, professional development, and manual initiatives.