NUCLEAR INNOVATION ALLIANCE

Expected Advanced Reactor Engagement with the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission in FY26

New nuclear energy technologies require approval from the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission (NRC) before they can be commercialized. A number of advanced reactor developers are engaging with NRC to prepare to apply, or to apply for, regulatory approvals. Their experience is helping to lay the groundwork for rapid commercial expansion of advanced nuclear energy in the next decade and beyond.

The figure below outlines the anticipated engagement between advanced reactor developers and projects with the NRC during Fiscal Year 2026. It provides an overview of the expected activities and review stages for various advanced reactor projects, including Construction Permit (CP), Operating License (OL), Combined License (COL), Standard Design Approval (SDA), and Early Site Permit (ESP) applications. For more information on the NRC licensing process, see [Nuclear Reactor Licensing 101].

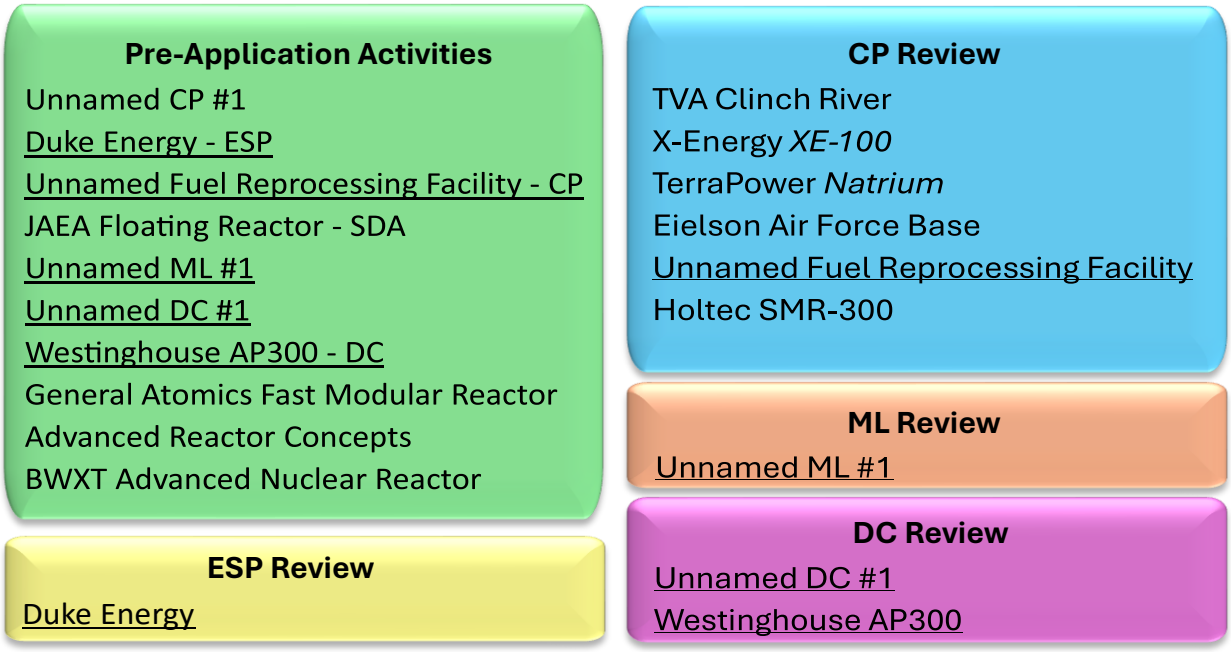

Figure 1: Expected Advanced Reactor Engagement with NRC in FY26 from the NRC Congressional Budget Justification FY26; Source: NRC NUREG 1100, Volume 41. Underlined indicates pre-application and application reviews expected