

Solar for All DC - Innovation and Expansion Grants
DOEE Responses to RFA Questions

Q1: “I am in the process of building a sculpture studio for my small DCRA Licensed business. The studio will be in the back of my residential property. I am permitted by zoning to have a small business on site. Would I be eligible to apply for this grant for my small business electric needs? The roof slopes directly south. Please let me know.”

A1: Please refer to the Eligibility criteria specified in Section 1.6 of the Notice of Funding Availability and Request for Applications located here: https://doee.dc.gov/sites/default/files/dc/sites/ddoe/release_content/attachments/Request%20for%20Applications_13_1.pdf. Criteria 2, 4 and 5, in particular, provide guidance regarding this issue. This grant opportunity is not intended to be a rebate program for individual households or businesses to install solar systems.

Q2: “Are developers from outside the DC area eligible to apply? We are a solar developer based outside the District, but most of our work is in the District, and we would like to submit an application. My confusion stems from pages 17 and 18 of the RFA, which state that a DCRA Certificate of Good Standing and Tax Exemption Affirmation Letter are required documents, which I interpreted to mean that only DC non-profits and businesses can apply. However, I am hoping that those documents are only required if either of those situations apply to the applicant, and that we are in fact eligible to apply.”

A2: Developers from outside the District are eligible to apply. If they are already doing business in the District, they should have determined whether they were required to file with the DCRA Superintendent of Corporations, and whether taxes, fees or reports were required.

In order to apply for consideration, an applicant must be “current on all obligations outstanding to the District” and provide a certificate of good standing to prove it (RFA 3.4; RFA App. 2 - PCA sec. II.D (p 3).

In order to receive a grant from the District, grantees must be registered to do business in the District. Please click here for more information on how a foreign filing entity may do business in the District (<https://dcra.dc.gov/service/corporate-registration-foreign-filing-entity>).

The Tax Exemption Affirmation Letter is applicable only if the entity is a non-profit. The confirmation of non-profit status is required regardless of the jurisdiction of origin, and should be reflected in the documentation required for the registration of foreign filing entities.

Q3: “How is the kWh (or financial equivalent) transferred to low income residents?”

A3: Respondents are encouraged to provide well-justified proposals that provide innovative yet viable approaches for allocating energy or other financial benefits to low income residents. (Please see Section 7.2 Project Description, Core Barriers 4.)

Q4: “What rate (\$/kWh) should we use to calculate the financial equivalent when completing our financial models?”

A4: Determining the cost per kWh assumed in a financial model is at the discretion of the respondent. Because electricity rates, financing structures, and other factors are highly variable and project-specific, proposals should include all relevant assumptions used to calculate project costs and benefits.

Q5: How are low income recipients selected to receive the kWh (or financial equivalent)? If we have affordable housing in our portfolio, can we prioritize these tenants in our application or does the city determine who receives the benefit?

A5: Determining methods and approaching for selecting project beneficiaries is at the discretion of the respondent, and should be clearly detailed in the grant proposal. Tenants receiving benefits must meet the criterion of 80% Area Median Income (AMI) as identified in section 1.2 Purpose of the Grants.

Q6: “Would a project on a multi-unit (~25 units) low-income housing building owned and run by a non-profit qualify for the Solar for All grants?”

I do see that single family low-income housing (4 units or less) is specified, but wasn’t sure if this might fall under “Owner-Occupied non-profit.”

A6: Based on the limited information presented, the project described above qualifies for the Solar for All grants as it relates specifically to the types of buildings that are eligible under the grants (see Section 1.2, paragraph 2 of each RFA). Sections 1.6 and 1.7 of the RFAs provide additional guidance regarding eligibility. Please also note the following, as stated in Section 1.6 of the RFAs:

“DOEE intends to separate the competition for the funding according to building type. In the event of an applicant’s reasonable mistake in interpreting the scope of one of these RFAs, DOEE retains the discretion to reclassify a proposal, or part of it, to the other.”

The applicant should therefore determine the category for which an application will be submitted, based on the specific characteristics of the project.