

Charging and Fueling Infrastructure (CFI) Discretionary Grant (RFA-FY23-PCD-822) – Partner FAQ

Q1: We are interested in participating as a service partner as opposed to presenting a project. Regarding the budget submission should we propose it on a per project value or for the total amount of work we could complete over a set period of time?

A1: Budget should be broken down by what they would cost per charging station installation to more easily allow for scaling. The total amount for all projects combined can be included. US DOT wants to know how many projects would be funded if the full amount requested is not awarded.

Q2: Does DOEE have a target for the total value of the submission for the DC? Is there a preference for the size of per project cost?

A2: DOEE will apply for between \$500,000 and \$15,000,000 but there is no target value in mind, amount requested will depend on interest/partners.

Q3: Regarding the Separation of Duties Policy, can you confirm what the DOEE is looking for? Should we provide a break-out list of the team members in our company and how their responsibilities will support the project?

A3: Per "The Separations of Duties Policy" on page 17 of the RFP - This statement should: 1. Describe how financial transactions are handled and recorded; 2. Provide the names or titles of personnel involved in handling money; 3. Identify how many signatures the financial institution(s) require on the organization's checks and withdrawal slips; and, 4. Address other limits on staff and board members' handling of the organization's money.

Q4: Regarding partnerships with charging providers and host sites – is it ok to submit and explain what pieces can be provided without having locations finalized?

A4: Yes. The purpose of RFP is to determine who can best support us in the application - what organization(s) can deliver in addition to what services can be provided. Details do not need to be finalized but it is helpful to know where in the process the details are of being finalized at time of submission.

Q5: Partnering with another organization (e.g. co-location sites) – should we submit together or separately?

A5: DOEE has no preference and both joint and separate applications will be accepted, however one organization needs to be identified as the lead.

Q6: Any pointers on the type of information and format DOEE would like to see in the work plan?

A6: The priority for DOEE is to clearly understand what each applicant/organization can provide in terms of expertise, location(s) and services. Include breakdown for budget and ultimate submission.

Q7: What is the process of selection and what degree of transparency will there be in the follow-up to applicants who were and were not selected?

A7: DOEE uses an independent review panel to review, score and rank each application. The panel will recommend the most responsive application for as a partner for this funding opportunity. Potential partners not recommended can request a debrief to get information about why they were not funded. If an entity wants a formal request for reconsideration see the General Terms and Conditions.

Q8: Is DOEE looking for each company to provide the full 20% match or is the city planning to provide any of the matching funds?

A8: Each applicant should provide a statement discussing whether it will provide match or not, and if it will provide matching funding how much it will provide.

Q9a: Is there a page limit or any requirements for length of submission?

Q9b: Are there any length limits (e.g., max words or characters) for responses to the 8 prompts within Section 11: Application Narrative?

Q9c: If there are not specific length limits, are there any suggested guidelines on how long responses to each prompt should be?

A9: No maximum or minimum page length/words or character limit.

Q10: Is a site address(es) required or preferred to be included in RFP responses?

A10: Yes, please include site addresses if you are proposing sites for inclusion in the grant.

Q11: Is a "project" limited to a single site address? Or may a respondent provide multiple locations that are similar in scope within a single RFP response?

A11: Multiple sites/addresses are allowable.

Q12: What's the time horizon DOEE has in mind for the overall project -- e.g., should the solutions span 1 year, 2 years, longer?

A12: Projects should be prepared to start by September 30, 2025 and completed by September 30, 2030.

Q13: What is the limit (5K?) on hardware costs - can you speak to any such limits?

A13: There is no limit on "hardware costs". Any single unit over \$5,000 must be in the equipment category in the budget.

Q14: We are just looking to understand if a workforce development and apprenticeship program would be an eligible expenditure or if it would be considered a "Community and Educational Engagement" activity which per the NOFO cannot exceed 5% of the total grant amount.

A14: DOEE has requested clarification from the U.S. Department of Transportation on this question and will post a response here when we receive it. In the meantime, please include whatever budget for this activity that you think is appropriate.

Q15: Regarding community engagement, would you like us to include partners and letters of support, etc.?

A15: Yes.

Q16: What are DOEE's preferences as it relates to advance payment?

A16: DOEE has no preference.

Q17: Are you looking for Electric Vehicle Charging Manufactures to assist or Turn-Key Contractors to partner with?

A17: Our Request for Partners is open ended. It is up to you what solutions you might want to propose.

Q18: We feel uniquely qualified to support the CFI grant but are limited in our ability to host a site as we do not have land. We are eagerly looking for qualified partners with land or space to install EVSE infrastructure. Has DOEE considered hosting a pre-bid conference to review the solicitation requirements while also providing interested vendors an opportunity to network with other interested parties? Small Disadvantaged Business' like District Fleet could benefit immensely from this type of event.

A18: DOEE hosted a question and answer session for prospective partners on May 2, 2023. If you were unable to attend, you can view [the recording](#). Please note that we are not requiring potential partners to have land and sites identified. You can apply for partnership with your service and technological capabilities.

Q19a: We are interested in being a community partner, therefore fulfilling the piece of the NOFO that allows for 5% of grant funds to go to education and community outreach. Is this RFP the best place to start this conversation?

Q19b: Are customer marketing and community outreach activities allowable costs within the RFP? Examples would include: paid social media posts or print ads promoting EV charging options; hosting in-person community events.

A19: Yes.

Q20: Is publicly accessible charging infrastructure within a publicly accessible garage that requires payment for entry allowable under this grant? Based on the DOT RFP, it does not seem to be, but according to DOEE RFP, it does seem allowable so we wanted to confirm.

A20: No, it would not be allowed

Q21: Is charging infrastructure for private buses that serve routes on which the general public may use allowable? Georgetown has a fleet of 18 buses that we are planning to replace with EV models in the coming years. These buses are owned by Georgetown for our shuttle bus routes that the visitors, patients, and clients to our campuses are able to use so we consider them publicly accessible. Is this bus charging infrastructure an allowable project?

A21: Yes, DOEE is interested in community charging that could support "electrified or alternative fuel multi-passenger or active mobility options that provide alternatives to individual vehicle ownership."

Q22: For any allowable projects, is the deadline for project completion September 2030?

A22: Yes.

Q23a: Would DOEE consider site locations outside of the District of Columbia but that are located within the National Capital Region (NCR)?

Q23b: If a project serves DCA, located in a Justice40 community, but in Virginia, would it be eligible?

A23: Yes, as long as they supported transportation to and from the District.

Q24: If we are not proposing specific sites, what information should we provide in the budget section?

A24: Information on your standard project costs can be substituted for a budget in this case.

Q25: Can you please clarify on the budget section what the following categories should pertain to:

Personnel vs Employees

Fringe Benefits

We just want to make sure our budget is appropriately divided up among them.

A25: Personnel is the total cost of the staff working on the grant, and Employees are the individual staff who will be working on the program. If more than one staff is going to be working on the project please use the Employees category. Fringe benefits are nonwage benefits such as health insurance, unemployment insurance, life insurance etc.

Q26: There is a discrepancy between the maximum allowable award from DOEE in the GMS portal (max = \$2.5M) and the RFP guidance (max = \$15M). Which is the correct maximum award amount, \$2.5M or \$15M?

A26: There was an error in the Grants Management System that is fixed and now it reflects the 15 Million cap.

Q27: Does the max award amount include the 20% match?

A27: No.

Q28: Are advance payments exclusively limited to nonprofit entities? The RFP does not state that this is the case, but when reviewing the advance payment policy document, it appears to be geared toward nonprofit organizations.

A28: The policy does not limit advance payments to non-profit entities.

Q29: Is submitting the budget table as an Excel or .pdf attachment acceptable?

A29: Yes.

Q30: Would proposals for other transportation infrastructure besides PHEV/BEV fast charging be considered? Specifically, hydrogen fueling for zero-emission vehicles would support DC/DOEE's quest to develop zero-emission infrastructure. The CFI grant encourages hydrogen fueling infrastructure proposals, but it's not clear DOEE would seek to partner with such submissions.

A30: DOEE is focused on electrification.

Q31: We are considering submitting two applications, one just for our organization as a community facilitator, and another as a partner with numerous electrification companies. However, if it is easier, we can also submit a single application with all of our components.

A31: DOEE has no preference.

Q32: To whom do applicants address letters of support?

A32: Letters of support should be addressed to Pete Buttigieg, U.S. Secretary of Transportation.

Q33: Would a workforce development and apprenticeship program be an eligible expenditure or would it be considered a "Community and Educational Engagement" activity which per the NOFO cannot exceed 5% of the total grant amount?

A33: Workforce development activities are eligible as direct costs under CFI grants only if they are necessary and reasonable to complete the CFI grant project. General workforce development activities are not eligible as direct costs under CFI grants.

For additional questions and/or to confirm submission of proposal, please email: 2023cfi.grants@dc.gov