

District of Columbia
Department of Energy and Environment



**NOTICE OF FUNDING AVAILABILITY
AND
REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS (RFA)**

Solar Works DC - The District's Low Income Solar Photovoltaic Systems
Installation and Job Training Program
(Short name: Solar Works DC)
RFA # 2021-2123-EA

Publication Date: 8/20/2021

Application Deadline: 9/20/2021 at 11:59 p.m.

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SECTION 1. GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 Introduction

The Department of Energy and Environment (DOEE) solicits grant applications from eligible entities (called “Applicant” or “Applicants”). The goal of this Request for Applications (RFA) is to fund a partner to increase the number of District residents who are trained and able to work in the solar industry and provide pathways to the middle class for District residents. DOEE seeks innovative ideas and approaches to achieve these goals. DOEE, in partnership with the Department of Employment Services (DOES), is soliciting applications from eligible entities to provide a Low-Income Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Systems Installation and Job Training Program. Program training sessions will be a hybrid model of virtual and in-person education modules, combined with simulated exercises/demonstrations and in-person installations for critical hands-on training. The Energy Administration (EA) of DOEE will administer this RFA.

1.2 Purpose of the Grant

The purpose of this grant is to increase the number of District residents who are trained and able to work in the solar industry and provide pathways to the middle class for District residents. DOEE seeks innovative ideas and approaches to achieve these goals. This RFA seeks proposals to expand and build on previous Solar Works DC programs through implementation of creative, effective year-round solar training and installation program(s). Solar Works DC will install solar PV systems on income-eligible single-family homes and small multifamily dwellings. The program will also include training on installation of commercial and other types of installations to maximize training and outcomes for participants.

1.5 Projects and Funds Available

DOEE seeks applications for:

Project Name	Project Amount
Solar Works DC	\$2,080,000

1.6 Eligibility

The following are eligible to apply if an “x” appears:

- Nonprofit organizations, including those with IRS 501(c)(3) or 501(c)(4) determinations;
- Faith-based organizations;
- Government agencies;
- Universities/educational institutions; and

-Private Enterprises.

Continuing conditions of eligibility are that the information in the application is complete and truthful and that the Applicant at all times is able to meet material conditions stated in its application. Ineligible applicants or applications will not be considered for review.

A material condition can be an eligibility condition or it can be some other condition that a reasonable DOEE evaluator would conclude is necessary to the Applicant's carrying out the proposed project.

For instance, an Applicant's nonprofit status was a condition of eligibility and the Applicant lost its nonprofit tax status. That would be a material change in condition, and would require immediate communication. Another example: Applicant's ability to fulfill the terms of the grant is based on the availability of skilled staff. DOEE awards the grant, and then these staff leave. The Applicant must immediately inform DOEE, and follow up in writing.

1.7 Definitions

District - The District of Columbia.

Grantee - The person provided a grant by the District, including a sub-grantee.

Person - A natural person or a legal entity, including a partnership, firm, association, joint venture, public or private corporation, trust, estate, commission, board, public or private institution, cooperative, the District government and its agencies, and the federal government and its agencies.

Writing - A tangible or electronic record of a communication or representation, including handwriting, typewriting, printing, photostat, fax, photography, word processing computer output, and e-mail. A "signed" writing includes an electronic symbol or process attached to, or logically associated with a writing, and executed or adopted by a person with the intent to sign the writing.

1.8 Permissible Use of Grant Funds

A grantee may use grant funds only for allowable grant expenditures. Grant funds related to work performed will be provided on a reimbursement basis, except that, in limited circumstances, an advance of funds may be provided for grant administration expenses in limited circumstances for good cause approved by DOEE at its sole discretion. (*See* Parts 3.2(6)(A), 6.2; Appendix 1 Paragraph 10.g)

1.9 Grant Monitoring

In its sole discretion, DOEE may use several methods to monitor the grant, including site visits, periodic financial reports and the collection of performance data. Each grant is subject to audit.

1.10 General Terms and Conditions

Appendix 1, “General Terms and Conditions” is incorporated by reference in this RFA. Applicants and Grantees must comply with any and all applicable terms and conditions appearing in Appendix 1.

1.11 RFA Conditions - Promises, Certifications, Assertions, and Assurances

Appendix 2, “Applicant’s Promises, Certifications, and Assurances” (“PCA”), is incorporated by reference in this RFA.

1.12 DOEE’s Authority to Make Grants

DOEE has grant-making authority under:

- The Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard Act of 2004 (D.C. Law 15-340, D.C. Official Code §§ 34-1431-40), including § 34-1436(b) and (c)
- The Water Pollution Control Act of 1984, effective March 16, 1985, as amended, (D.C. Law 5-188; D.C. Official Code § 8-103.01 *et seq.*);
- The District Department of the Environment Establishment Act of 2005, effective February 15, 2006, as amended, (D.C. Law 16-51, D.C. Official Code § 8-151.01 *et seq.*);
- The Comprehensive Stormwater Management Enhancement Amendment Act of 2008, effective March 25, 2009, (D.C. Law 17-371; D.C. Official Code § 8-152.01 *et seq.*); and
- Other applicable laws and regulations.

1.13 Conflicts between RFA and Applicable Law

If any requirement of this RFA conflicts with a provision of any applicable law, including a District or federal law or regulation, the applicable legal provision shall control.

SECTION 2. SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION

2.1 RFA Release Date

The release date of this RFA is 8/20/2021.

2.2 Additional RFA Information

This RFA is issued on DOEE's website at <https://doee.dc.gov/page/grants-and-other-funding>.

The contact person for this RFA is Larissa Etwaroo.

2.3 Applications: When and Where

When: All applications must be received at the email address below by 11:59 p.m. on 9/20/2021

An application will be dated and recorded as "received" pending review by DOEE for completeness. DOEE considers an application to be "filed" only if all the required materials are submitted. A late or incomplete application will be considered received, not filed.

What: The contents of the Application are specified in Section 3. Each applicant must submit one electronic copy (e-mail) to solarworksdc2021@dc.gov formatted as a .pdf.

DOEE will not receive faxed copies.

2.4 Award Announcement

DOEE expects to notify each Applicant in writing of its award status within six to twelve weeks after the application due date.

2.5 Updates and Questions and Answers (Q & A)

Additional information may become available before the application is due. It is the Applicant's responsibility to stay up-to-date on the status and requirements of the grant for which it is applying.

DOEE welcomes questions seeking clarification of matters in this RFA. Questions about the RFA should be sent to solarworksdc2021@dc.gov with "RE: RFA 2021-2123-EA" in the subject line.

DOEE will publish updates and Questions and Answers (Q&A) regarding the RFA at doee.dc.gov. DOEE will also create an email list to send updates and information regarding the RFA. A person can be put on the email list by immediately emailing solarworksdc2021@dc.gov with the subject line "RE: RFA 2021-2123-EA – Add me to the email list."

DOEE will provide the information to those on the email list at the same time the information is uploaded to the DOEE website. DOEE will not mail out updates or Q&A materials.

The cutoff date for receipt of any questions is one week prior to the application deadline.

SECTION 3. APPLICATION CONTENT

3.1 Format

An application must be formatted as follows:

- (a) When printed the application would appear on 8 ½” x 11” paper with one-inch margins;
- (b) Limit each project description to 10 double-spaced pages. Budget tables, flowcharts, photographs, the work plan, and other supporting documentation may be attached in addition to the project description; and
- (c) Scan the document and all of the attachments as one file.

3.2 Application Content

DOEE intends to fund a project that will benefit the environment, and, in particular, the environment of the District. The application should use the following format and explain, in increasing levels of detail, how the Applicant will accomplish this.

(Note: Before drafting the application, please read the project description very carefully to see if there are restrictions for the DOEE grant. For instance, certain activities might be required to take place in the District or the scoring might give extra points to labor sourced in the District.)

(a) Cover Sheet

Include a cover sheet in the format specified in Appendix 3. Make certain that the funding amount requested on the cover sheet matches total amount requested in your budget and budget narrative.

(b) Project Summary

Provide a brief one paragraph summary that explains the project. Please place the summary on the cover page (see Appendix 3). DOEE will not count this cover page as part of the 10-page application limit.

(c) Project Description

Organize the Application’s 10-page section of your application in sections that follow the order of the criteria of the scoring box of Section 7. The review panel will seek an explanation of the following as they evaluate your application:

(1) Goals and Objectives

State how: (a) this project will benefit the environmental goal(s) described in Section 7, and (b) the goal(s) this project will advance. Typically a goal is long-term and diffuse. An objective is specific, and it will be discrete and identifiable. A project with one goal may have more than one objective. For example: The goal of a grant might be clean District rivers. Objectives of the application might be: implement a citywide recycling campaign; install trash traps.

(2) Target Audience

Identify the target audience. Whom will this project engage? Whom will this project benefit and how?

(3) Project Activities, Outputs, and Outcomes

Connect the funded activities to quantifiable outputs that produce desired outcomes. DOEE prefers projects that present quantifiable measures. This will show how the project will advance the goal(s) and meet the objective(s). This enables reviewers to evaluate what the proposed project will achieve if funded.

Activities describe how the objectives will be accomplished. A description of activities may include quantity, frequency, duration, and location. For example: “20 community members will participate in a single two-hour-long workshop. There will be a total of 10 workshops. The workshops will take place at community centers in the evening after typical workday hours.”

An **output** is a short-term quantifiable result that one or more activities achieve. DOEE will measure the outputs in order to determine if the grantee successfully implements the activities. For example: “At the end of the project period, 10 recycling workshops will be held, 200 community members will attend the workshops, and 25 social media posts will appear featuring information about recycling.”

A **project outcome** can be a short, medium, or long-term result. It can occur and/or continue during the project and after the project ends. It can be general in nature; or it can be quantifiable. A project can present multiple outcomes. Even if not quantifiable, DOEE may look for an outcome to show that the project is making progress toward achieving a goal.

For example: After several recycling workshops, this project will yield: (a) the Anacostia River will show substantially fewer floating recyclables by next spring, and (b) 60 % of workshop participants will increase their knowledge about where and what to recycle.

(4) Project Budget

You must submit a numeric budget and a separate budget narrative as part of your application package. For the numeric budget, DOEE strongly urges Applicants to use the budget template format provided (Appendix 4).

The budget narrative must explain and justify every line item in the numeric budget. The explanation should be thorough enough to allow a reviewer to understand why expenditure levels were chosen and how the line item amounts were derived. For example: “Personnel will be paid \$xx per hour times xx hours.”

The budget will be the basis for DOEE’s later evaluation of the project and payment requests. DOEE will require documentation for grant payments, and the entire grant will be subject to audit.

i. DOEE’s standard policy on reimbursements vs. advances

In the overwhelming majority of cases, DOEE’s policy is to reimburse supported, approved, and allowable expenses. If the Applicant seeks an advance payment, it must request advance payment in its application and explain why an advance payment is requested. (*See* Parts 1.8, and 6.2; Appendix 1Section 10.g)

ii. Grantee matches and other contributions

Resources provided by the applicant should appear in the column titled “Non-DOEE Match,” meaning the Applicant intends to provide the indicated resources (i.e., the “match,” and that the resources do not come from DOEE). Entries in this column could include both dollars and the value of the in-kind contributions. For example, in-kind contributions can include staff time, volunteer services, already-paid licensing fees, materials, supplies, and the use of equipment or real estate.

Volunteer hours provided to a grantee or sub-grantee must be valued at rates consistent with those the Applicant’s organization ordinarily pays for similar work, including salary and fringes. If the grantee or a sub-grantee does not have employees performing similar work, the rates must be valued the same as rates ordinarily paid by employers in the same labor market for similar work.

iii. Allowable and non-allowed expenditures

The Applicant must show that all costs in the budget are allowable. Typical allowable costs are:

1. Rental of office space, some vehicles, and some equipment;
2. Employee salaries and benefits;
3. Contractor labor, including professional services;
4. Accounting and bookkeeping services;
5. Communications, including telephone and data services;

6. Printing, reproduction, including signage;
7. Materials and supplies;
8. Computers and printers;
9. Small tools;
10. Some field equipment, typically below \$5,000 in value;
11. Postage and shipping;
12. Necessary travel, meals and lodging; and
13. Insurance.

Non-Allowable costs include:

1. Most major equipment, like vehicles;
2. Lobbying, including salaries and overheads and out-of-pocket expenses;
3. Entertainment;
4. Interest payments on loans;
5. Most food; and
6. Land purchases.

iv. Applicant's indirect costs calculation

An Applicant may include its indirect costs in its budget calculation. (*See* the Nonprofit Fair Compensation Act of 2020, DC Act 23-565 [effective March 2021]) This may be done through use of a cost rate. In budget backup materials the Applicant should identify the basis for the calculation, addressing one of the following bases that District law permits it to choose:

1. Its current, unexpired, federal Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA) rate, a negotiated rate with the federal government;

OR

2. One of the following methods:
 - a. 10% of the grant's direct costs;
 - b. A new negotiated rate with DOEE;
 - c. The same indirect rate that it has used with any District agency in the past 2 years;
or
 - d. An independent Certified Public Account's (CPA) calculated rate using federal Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidelines

(The cited statute required DOEE to provide for at least one of these listed methods. However, the statute excludes the following from the requirement: foundation; hospital; university; college.) If the Applicant proposes to use the services of a *nonprofit* subgrantee or contractor, it must propose to apply the same indirect cost rate to that entity's services. (See Appendix 1. General Terms & Conditions, Paragraph 14.g)

Federal rules always control for federal funding. For federal funding that passes through the District to the grantee, the indirect cost rate must be consistent with federal regulation 2 CFR 200.331 or its successor.

(d) Applicant

(1) Organization

Describe the named Applicant's history, mission, and current or past projects that demonstrate the organization's capacity to achieve the project's goals. The Applicant can reference its website or attach an organizational brochure or resume.

(2) Key personnel

Identify the key team members for the project and provide brief biographies or their resumes. The team members can be staff, volunteers, subgrantees, or contractors.

(3) Past performance on District Grants/Contracts

Identify District agencies from which the Applicant has received funding as a contractor, grantee, or partner in the past five years. This should be included as a separate attachment and is not counted toward the 10 page narrative limit. Provide specific information including:

1. The grant(s) or contract(s) title;
2. The District agency/agencies;
3. The grant number(s), contract number(s), or other identifier(s);
4. The amount(s) paid; and
5. What was accomplished as a result of the funding(s).

Briefly describe each dispute, investigation, and/or audit, if any, related to any of these District grants or contracts, grants, or partnerships in the past five years.

(4) Partners

DOEE awards a grant to one entity. When that entity is a legal corporation or partnership, DOEE would award to that entity. Sometimes a "partnership" is informal, just a working arrangement. The "partners" may have decided that multiple participants can improve the success of a project. Such a partnership might be between a government agency, nongovernmental organization (NGO), company, or an individual. One of these "partners" would be the Applicant.

If one or more partners are to be involved in the project, the Applicant must describe each partner's involvement and resource commitments. The partnering organization should attach a letter of support. If the letter is a hard copy letter, or scanned, the document should be written on

the partner's letterhead, and signed by its authorized official. If the letter is an email, the email should clearly identify the writer and position, the partner, its mailing address, website, and an official's contact name, telephone number, and email address.

For the following types of partners, provide the documentation indicated.

i. District of Columbia Public Schools

If the Applicant will work with the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS), it must include a letter of support from the principal of each school with which it will work, and, if available, from each participating teacher. Teachers and principals may send a joint letter.

ii. Property Owner

If the Applicant will work on public land, it must submit a letter of support from an official of the managing agency. Similarly, if the Applicant is to work on private land, it must submit a letter of support from each property owner. If the project includes construction or installation, the letter must acknowledge that the property owner will be responsible (either directly or through an agreement with another entity) for project maintenance.

iii. Partnering Organization

Include a letter of intent from the collaborating organization(s) stating that it agrees to participate in the proposed project, describing the partner's involvement and resource commitments, and explaining the activities and/or services the partner will provide. The letter should demonstrate that the partnering organization understands the project presented for funding and the activities and/or services that the partner will provide. Under the grant terms and conditions, grant-related work or activity that is contracted, subcontracted or subgranted must be in compliance with applicable District laws, including business licensing requirements and documentation of a claimed tax exempt status.

iv. National Park Service - Exception

Projects that would be carried out on National Park Service (NPS) property will require NPS permission. Sometimes the paperwork supporting such permission takes extra time to complete. DOEE will accept more informal statements generated by responsible NPS officials, including an email statement of intent.

3.3 Work Plan

The application must include a proposed work plan that describes the project's activities and the timeline for project implementation.

3.4 Required Documents

Each of the following documents must be filed as part of the application package. If the document is not in this filing, DOEE may classify the grant application as “received” but not “filed,” as specified in Section 2.3. However, if a government agency must issue a required document, and the Applicant has requested the document but not received it, DOEE may accept a copy of the Applicant’s written request to the agency for the purpose of deeming the Application “filed.”

(a) Certificate of Good Standing

Each Applicant must submit a current Certificate of Good Standing from the District Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs. DOEE requires that the submitted Certificate of Good Standing reflect a date within a six-month period immediately preceding the application’s submission.

(a) Certificate of Clean Hands

The Grantee shall submit a validated Certificate of Clean Hands (CCH) from the DC Office of Tax and Revenue. The CCH can be obtained through MyTax.DC.gov

(c) Promises, Certifications, Assertions, and Assurances

Each Applicant must sign and submit the “Promises, Certifications, Assertions, and Assurances” (“PCA”) in Appendix 2. Signing the PCA is a condition of eligibility for this grant. If the Applicant is not prepared to sign the PCA, it should not apply for a grant. Compliance with the promises, certifications, and assurances in the PCA is a continuing condition of eligibility for this grant.

The PCA must be signed by the Applicant or, if the Applicant is an organization, by a duly authorized officer of the organization.

The PCA also includes a sworn statement verifying that the Applicant is not in arrears (i.e. is “current”) on all obligations outstanding to the District, including all District agencies. The Applicant must be “current” as of the date of the application and the date of a grant award. DOEE requires, as a condition of continuing eligibility, that a grantee stay current on such obligations during the period of the grant.

(d) IRS W-9 Tax Form

The Applicant must submit a current completed W-9 form prepared for the U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS). DOEE defines “current” to mean that the document was completed within the same calendar year as that of the application date.

(e) Tax Exemption Affirmation Letter

If the Applicant claims it is a nonprofit organization, the Applicant must prove its nonprofit status. The tax exemption affirmation letter should be provided. It is the IRS's determination letter of non-profit status. If this letter is not available, then the Applicant should provide its most recent IRS Form 990 tax return, if one was submitted. If no return has yet been filed, the organization can submit its application for tax-exempt status. If the group is a "supporting organization" with an IRS tax-exempt status determination, then that organization's tax exemption affirmation letter should also be submitted.

If there is no IRS tax exemption affirmation letter because the organization is a religious organization, then the Applicant may submit the best evidence it can of its status. Examples of potential best evidence for this purpose include, but are not limited to (i) a letter from the leader of the organization verifying that the organization is a religious group; (ii) a letter from the group's board chair or similar official, verifying that the organization is a religious group; (iii) the Applicant's most recently submitted state sales or other tax exemption form, if it exists (Form 164 in the District of Columbia); or (iv) the state's issued tax exemption certificate or card, if it exists. (*See IRS publication no. 1828, Tax Guide for Churches and Religious Organizations.*)

(f) Applicant's Current Fiscal Year Budget

The Applicant must submit its full budget, including projected income, for the current fiscal year, using a format at least as detailed as that presented in Appendix 4. Also, the Applicant should submit a comparison of budgeted versus actual income and expenses of the fiscal year to date.

(g) Applicant's Financial Statements

If the Applicant has undergone an audit or financial review, it must provide the most recent audited financial statements or reviews. If audited financial statements or reviews are not available, the Applicant must provide its most recent complete year's unaudited financial statements.

(h) Separation of Duties Policy

The Applicant must state how the organization separates financial transactions and duties among people within the organization in order to prevent fraud or waste. This may be a statement that already exists as a formal policy of the organization, or the Applicant may create the statement for purposes of the application. The applicant should state which of these situations apply.

This statement should:

1. Describe how financial transactions are handled and recorded;
2. Provide the names and 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.

(i) System for Award Management (SAM) with Federal Government

The Applicant must be registered in the System for Award Management at www.sam.gov and provide evidence of this registration as part of its application package to DOEE.

(j) Indirect Costs Rate Documentation

If the Applicant seeks a 10% indirect costs rate in its proposed budget, no special documentation is required. However, for another rate, include one of the following documents with the application:

1. Unexpired Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement (NICRA);
2. DOEE negotiated agreement;
3. A letter from a District government agency, dated within the last two years stating the negotiated indirect cost rate; or
4. A letter from an independent CPA certifying the indirect cost rate was determined by the nonprofit organization's audited financial statements following OMB Uniform Guidance.

SECTION 4. REVIEW PANEL AND APPLICATION SCORING

4.1 Review Panel

This is a competitive grant. The review panel for the RFA will be composed of individuals with knowledge in the areas directly related to the RFA. The review panel will review, score and rank each Applicant's application.

The panel will recommend the most responsive application for award of the grant.

Review panels vary in size, but typically are made up of three to five people. Review panel members can be from DOEE staff or outside of DOEE, as long as they do not have a conflict of interest.

4.2 Scoring Criteria

The reviewers score each application according to a list of criteria and the points available for each criterion. See Section 7.

The Applicant should read the grant description carefully to determine if matching funds or resources are required, or benefit from preference points.

SECTION 5. GRANTEE DOCUMENT REQUIREMENTS

5.1 Submissions if Applicant Will Receive the Grant

Upon acceptance of DOEE’s award of the grant, the Grantee must provide the following documents.

(a) Certificate of Insurance

The Grantee shall submit a certificate of insurance giving evidence of the required coverage. *See* Appendix 1, General Terms and Conditions Section 29. Insurance, and Appendix 6. Insurance. Ordinarily DOEE will presume that the budget covers the cost of this required insurance and will not later adjust the grant award for this amount.

(b) Assurance of Continued Truth and Accuracy

Upon receiving DOEE’s Grant Award Notice the Grantee must notify DOEE of any changes that may have occurred to its organization since the time of submission of its original application. This obligation continues through the grant period. *See also* Section 1.11. RFA Conditions - Promises, Certifications, Assertions, and Assurances.

SECTION 6. REPORTING, PAYMENT, and OTHER PROVISIONS

6.1 Reporting Requirements

The grantee must submit the following reports as a condition of continuing eligibility for funding.

(a) Quarterly Status Reports

DOEE will provide a quarterly status report template with the Grant Award Notice. These reports, which discuss grant activities for the preceding quarter, will be due on each of the following dates.

Quarter 1 (January - March):	April 15
Quarter 2 (April - June):	July 15
Quarter 3 (July - September):	October 15
Quarter 4 (October - December):	January 15

If a report’s due date falls on a weekend or District holiday, the report will be due the next business day.

The report must detail: actions taken in the quarter preceding the report date, highlight outputs achieved, provide a financial update, and describe unforeseen changes to project timetable, staffing, or partnerships, as well as any other changes that may affect project outcomes.

(b) Final Report

DOEE will provide a final report template with the Grant Award Notice. This report includes quantification by the grantee of the project's outputs and describes the extent to which project outcomes met or will meet the objectives of the funded application. The template requires submission of data and analysis of the data.

6.2 Reimbursement of Project Expenditures, Advances, and Disbursement of Funds

DOEE will not reimburse the grantee for any work undertaken before DOEE awards the grant.

DOEE will reimburse the grantee only for expenditures incurred to perform work under the grant. Ordinarily DOEE pays out grant funds as reimbursements. Advances are exceptions; not the rule. In limited cases, DOEE may advance funds at the beginning of the grant period for good cause approved by DOEE at its sole discretion. If the Applicant seeks an advance payment, **it must request such payment in its application** and explain why an advance payment is being requested. (*See* Parts 1.8, 3.2(c)(6)(A); Appendix 1 Section 10.g)

DOEE operates on the District's fiscal year, which starts October 1 of a calendar year and ends September 30 of the next calendar year. Ordinarily, there is no requirement for weekly or monthly invoicing. The grantee should submit each reimbursement request/invoice during the fiscal year for work performed within that same fiscal year. Each request/invoice must include supporting documentation.

Reimbursements will be mailed to the address on file for the grantee. DOEE may make electronic payments in lieu of mailing checks. DOEE generally pays timely, approved, supported grant invoices within 30 days after DOEE receives them.

DOEE may withhold up to the final 10% of a grant until all required activities have been completed, including receipt of the final report. The grantee should treat the prospect of such withholding as likely.

SECTION 7. PROJECTS PROPOSED FOR GRANT FUNDING

7.1 Summary: Project Name, Period, and Available Funds

Introduction

The Mayor has pledged to make the District of Columbia carbon neutral and climate resilient by 2050, and the Sustainable DC 2.0 plan outlines a commitment to make the District the healthiest, greenest, and most livable city in the United States by 2032. Specific goals in the plan include an increase in the use of renewable energy resources. Under the District of Columbia Office of Energy Act of 1980, DOEE is authorized to promote energy-related employment in the District of Columbia, with special emphasis on renewable resource technologies and markets. DOEE also administers the District's Solar for All Program. DOEE seeks to increase the number of District residents who are trained and able to work in the solar industry and provide pathways to the middle class for District residents. DOEE therefore seeks innovative ideas and approaches to achieve these goals.

DOEE, in partnership with the Department of Employment Services (DOES), is soliciting applications from eligible entities to provide a Low-Income Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Systems Installation and Job Training Program. Program training sessions will be a hybrid model of virtual and in-person education modules, combined with simulated exercises/demonstrations and in-person installations for critical hands-on training. Solar Works DC will be located at the District of Columbia Infrastructure Academy (DCIA) in Ward 8.

Solar Works DC was launched on May 8, 2017. DOEE, in conjunction with DOES, implemented a pilot through a competitive grant process in summer 2016 for the Marion Barry Summer Youth Employment Program (MBSYEP). Success of this pilot led DOEE to seek an applicant to propose a solar installation job training program. A grant was awarded in May 2017 to develop and implement Solar Works DC. In its first four years, the program operated 13 participant cohorts. This RFA seeks proposals to expand and build on that experience through implementation of a creative, effective year-round solar training and installation program.

Solar Works DC will install solar PV systems on income-eligible single-family homes and small multi-family dwellings and ensure that the installed PV systems are maintained and operated for at least 20 years. The program must also include training on commercial and other types of installations to maximize training and outcomes for participants, but the grant will not cover the costs of installation of these systems.

DOEE may award one or more grant(s) to implement Solar Works DC.

Because the funding for this grant includes American Rescue Plan Act of 2021 (ARPA) funds, the Grantee will be required to comply with all federal requirements regarding use of the funds and record-keeping. The citation for ARPA is Pub. L. 117-2 (Mar. 11, 2021). Much of ARPA was codified at 42 U.S.C. 802 et seq.)

Project Period

The project period begins on the date of DOEE's Notice of Grant Award to the selected grantee and continues through September 30, 2022. DOEE may extend the project for up to two additional years with additional funding, for a maximum of three years, subject to grantee performance and the availability of funds.

Project Description

The program will:

1. Engage program participants in all facets of the solar industry by developing a comprehensive curriculum, combining virtual and in-person classroom education modules (AM and PM), in-person simulated exercises/demonstrations, and in-person installations for critical hands-on training;
2. Provide wraparound services, mentorship, and career mapping to program participants, and strengthen soft skills and work readiness skills;
3. Provide full-time case management to identify significant barriers for participants, and develop a remediation plan, and offer services to remove barriers and aid in retention;
4. Implement innovative solutions to increase the number of District residents who are trained and able to work in the solar industry and related fields;
5. Transition program participants to apprenticeships or employment in the solar industry and related fields; and
6. Through hands-on training, increase the District's solar capacity by installing solar photovoltaic systems on homes of and maximizing the benefits to eligible low-to-moderate income homeowners or renters.

The program must train at least 150 District residents in cohorts. During the summer, Solar Works DC partners with the DOEE Green Zone Environmental Program (GZEP) for a six-week program duration under the Marion Barry Summer Youth Employment Program (MBSYEP). The Solar Works/ MBSYEP cohort must recruit District residents, ages 18-24 years in age, who are enrolled in and eligible to participate in MBSYEP. The other cohorts must train District residents ages 18 and over.

The applicant must describe and provide graphs and/or charts in their application to illustrate the number of cohorts, the size of the cohorts, the schedule for and duration of each cohort, and the number of solar PV systems it will install. The applicant must justify how the duration of the cohort and number of installations will be sufficient to provide adequate training to participants for optimal outcomes.

The applicant shall demonstrate an understanding of the challenges facing unemployed and underemployed District residents. The applicant shall also describe how the proposed training will transition them to more sustainable opportunities in the solar industry and related fields, thereby creating pathways to the middle class.

The selected /grantee(s) will work closely with DOEE and DOES/DCIA to coordinate recruitment activities to enroll participants into the program and to facilitate optimal outcomes

for program participants. All program participants are required to complete a general orientation session, pass the Comprehensive Adult Student Assessment System (CASAS) (basic testing for math and reading comprehension), and complete a two-week work readiness session as a prerequisite to being placed in Solar Works DC. The Grantee shall provide continued reinforcement of basic work readiness throughout the program, which is critical for the participant's success.

The program will also increase the District's solar capacity by installing solar PV systems on homes of eligible low-to-moderate income homeowners or renters, and small multifamily dwellings. Low-to-moderate income homeowners or renters are households with a total annual income equal to or below 80% of the Area Median Income (AMI). Applicants must be knowledgeable about solar installation and propose a plan for how they will recruit and create a pipeline of eligible homeowners or renters who qualify for solar PV systems installation through the program.

The application should also address how the applicant will provide training on commercial and other types of installations to maximize training and outcomes for participants. An application should present a comprehensive budget and an accompanying narrative. The proposed budget shall include a financial plan and financial forecasts that show all cashflows, including all sources of revenues and uses of funds.

The project elements are described below:

1. Train District residents who are underserved or underemployed to gain the knowledge and experience required to install solar PV systems and to work in the solar industry and related fields.
2. Place District residents in apprenticeship and careers opportunities (part- or full-time jobs) in the solar industry and related fields. Subcontracts and partnerships for these critical core components are recommended.
3. Use a group-based training model for each cohort. This training model shall include:
 - a. Teaching the skills necessary to enter, succeed, and stay in the renewable energy workforce and be taught using a combination of in-person classroom sessions (AM and PM), virtual sessions, mock installations, and hands-on installations.
 - b. Creating opportunities for participants to learn about and apply for careers, apprenticeships, and additional training in the solar industry or related fields.
 - c. Providing experience installing and operating new solar PV systems and other energy sources in the District.
 - d. Maximizing, to the extent practicable, installations completed by the program participants.
 - e. Teaching the participants based on a curriculum that educates and trains participants on skills related to solar energy and its relationship to sustainability, climate change, and energy efficiency. In addition, the training shall address safety, construction and electrical principles and practices, operating and maintenance, battery storage, energy efficiency, permits and inspections, business operations, marketing and outreach, and related activities.

- f. Providing the following required certifications: Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA)-30 and Flagger, and CPR/First Aid. The training should also prepare participants to sit for the North American Board of Certified Energy Professionals (NABCEP) Associates certification examination.
4. Work with DOEE, DOES/DCIA and partners to maximize training opportunities and ensure job placement in the solar and related industries for program participants.
5. Work closely with DOEE and DOES/DCIA to establish an intake process and recruitment process for both District residents pursuing trade skills training and eligible District homeowners and renters who will receive solar PV systems. The Grantee may use subcontracts and partnerships for these critical core components.
6. Create and implement a separate comprehensive engagement and recruitment plan to engage populations that would benefit from the program, including:
 - a. Military veterans, by developing partnerships with the DC Office of Veterans Affairs and community-based groups;
 - b. Returning citizens, by developing partnerships with the DC Corrections Information Council (DCIC) Incarceration Reduction Amendment Act (IRAA) Inmates Program, the Mayor's Office on Returning Citizen Affairs, and community-based organizations;
 - c. High school students, including Anacostia High School and local STEM schools, with the intent of creating a pipeline of participants for Solar Works DC, focusing on students interested in learning trade skills in green infrastructure; and
 - d. Young adults who are disconnected from education and workforce systems.
7. Place the non-MBSYEB graduating class into part- or full-time jobs or complementary training or apprentice programs, continue to monitor and track participants, and achieve the placement targets specified in the Project Outputs section below. Continue to make connections to employers and solar industry opportunities at least six-months post-program.
8. Develop a systematic method for tracking and evaluating participants during and at least six months after their training, conduct tracking and evaluation at frequent intervals, and share all data with DOEE and DOES/DCIA.
9. Provide sufficient hands-on experience installing and operating solar PV systems to ensure that participants develop the skills necessary for employment in the solar industry or related fields, maximizing, to the extent practicable, the number of installations completed by the program participants.
10. Maximize the benefits from the installation of the solar PV systems for low-to-moderate income District homeowners or renters. Grantee shall enter into an installation contract with the eligible homeowner or renter based on the template in Appendix 7 of this RFA. The installation contract shall include the following benefits for the homeowner:
 - a. The net-metered solar PV system shall result in an expected at least 50 percent reduction to the eligible household's annual electricity costs based on the District of Columbia's average residential electric bills for 2016; and
 - b. 100 percent of the electrical output from each solar PV System shall be assigned to the eligible household at no-cost for a minimum of 20 years.

11. Create a detailed statement of the number of solar PV systems to be installed and how the solar PV systems will be financed. This statement shall explain how the solar PV systems meets or exceeds the installer requirements specified in the DOE template homeowner contract (Appendix 7) and shall include, at a minimum:
 - a. The estimated per-watt installation cost, including a detailed breakdown of the cost;
 - b. A discussion of the monetary benefits to the homeowners and the installer/developer, including how the benefit of Solar Renewable Energy Credits (SRECs) will be divided, who will receive the benefits, for how much, and for how long;
 - c. The assignment of the Solar Investment Tax Credit (ITC), who will apply for and receive the ITC, and for how long, or that ITC will not be utilized; and
 - d. A clear description of the terms for each PV system installed under the grant, including, who will own it, for how long, when ownership would be assigned or transferred, the warranties to be provided, and the projected system performance.
12. Provide comprehensive wraparound services, including case management, and professional development activities (e.g. job fairs).

In addition to a plan for achieving the objectives stated above, the narrative shall include the following:

1. A long-term operations and maintenance plan for the PV systems installed that meets or exceeds the installer requirements specified in the DOE template homeowner contract (Appendix 7).
2. A curriculum of class work and hands-on work to prepare the cohort participants with the soft skills necessary for securing and retaining jobs in the solar industry and related fields. (The curriculum can be an attachment to the application and does not need to be included in the 10-page narrative.)
3. A plan for creating a dashboard to track and monitor participant performance, progress and barriers, and outcomes (e.g. placement post-program, etc.)
4. A plan to develop a social media-based platform for program participants to stay connected to former, current, and future program participants and employers that will allow them to build and grow connections, and foster community support.
5. A strategic plan that develops or has evidence of partnerships in the solar industry and related fields with the intention of placing program graduates in a pool for consideration by employers.

Project Outcomes

1. Program participants will gain knowledge about the solar industry and related fields.
2. Participants will have practical training, hands-on experience installing solar panels, and work experience that will help build their resumes and increase their job readiness.
3. Participants will gain soft skills that reduce barriers to employment.
4. Participants will have a pathway and improved access to apprenticeships and careers in the solar industry and related fields.

5. Returning incarcerated citizens of the District, veterans and high school students will be recruited.
6. An increased number of new solar PV systems on homes in the District will generate renewable energy.
7. Low-to-moderate income homeowners and renters with new solar installations will learn about solar power and have energy savings for at least 20 years.

Project Outputs

1. At least 150 low-income District residents will participate in Solar Works DC in the program year.
2. Participants will complete the minimum number of training hours for each cohort as approved by DOEE.
3. At least 80% of the participants will complete and graduate the program in each cohort.
4. At least 75% of the non-MBSYEP program participants will be placed in career positions (part- or full-time jobs) or apprenticeship opportunities in the solar industry and related fields within 90 days of completing the program.
5. At least 75% of program graduates will have ongoing support (referral services and employment opportunities) for up to 6 months post-graduation.
6. The required number of new solar PV systems will be installed on District homes and multi-family dwellings.

Deliverables

1. A comprehensive plan to engage and recruit military veterans, returning incarcerated citizens of the District, high school students, and disconnected young adults.
2. A dashboard to track and monitor program participant performance and outcomes during and post program.
3. A social media platform for program participants to continue to build and grow connections.
4. Copies of the key documents, including marketing materials, contracts and other agreements, warranties, and training materials.
5. Quarterly financial and other program reports. Detailed report will include key training data related to metrics, barriers and accomplishments, and the amount of energy savings and the financial benefits provided to low-to-moderate income District residents.
6. An annual report of the number of trained participants; number and location of homes receiving solar PV systems; the amount of kW installed; energy utility payments avoided or reduced because of solar installations; additional findings and recommendations to improve the program; and any data or information DOEE may reasonably request.
7. A final financial and program report, with a section addressing the solar PV systems installed, including important data points (e.g. income level(s) served, percentage of bill reduction, etc.), and another section reporting the related employment progress of the program participants and graduates before and after completion of trainings.

8. Any reporting required due to use of ARPA funds
9. A copy of each executed solar PV system contract and maintenance record.

Application Scoring

Each Application will be scored according to the criteria below.

	Scoring Criteria	Points
1	Demonstrates excellent knowledge of the challenges facing unemployed or underemployed adults in the District and proposes realistic solutions, including a comprehensive plan for recruitment and job placement.	15
2	Identifies realistic options for program participants to complete Solar Works DC and obtain employment with solar or related companies, apprenticeships, or additional training and education.	10
3	Demonstrates excellent knowledge and experience working with, training, and educating adults for the skills involved in installing solar PV systems; demonstrates excellent knowledge of and experience in the solar industry and related fields.	10
4	Demonstrates key partnerships in the solar industry in order to develop a pipeline for participant placement during and post-program.	10
5	Demonstrates excellent knowledge and experience installing solar PV systems on low-to-moderate income single family homes and small multi-family dwellings in the District.	15
6	Demonstrates excellent knowledge and experience in communicating with low-to-moderate income homeowners and renters.	5
7	Presents a cost-effective, clear, detailed, comprehensive budget and narrative for training and installation activities, and a separate budget for soft skills and wraparound services, case management, and related activities.	10
8	Offers a creative, effective, clear and feasible plan for accomplishing the grant outcomes, outputs, and deliverables.	15
9	Offers a reasonable detailed plan to track the post-program performance of District residents who have participated in the program.	5
10	Offers a reasonably detailed plan to partner with local area high schools, returning citizens, veterans, and other groups for the purpose of recruiting program participants into this specialized training.	5
11	Maximizes the benefits related to the installation of the solar PV systems for low-to-moderate income households	5

SECTION 8. CHECKLIST FOR APPLICANTS

<p>Instructions for applicants: Ensure that you answer all of the questions below. In the column to the right, indicate Yes, No, or NA for “not applicable”. Submit this completed document as one of the first pages of your application.</p>		
1	Is the cover sheet (Appendix 3) completed and signed – and included as part of the application?	
2	Is the application from one entity, as the Applicant?	
3	Does the application include a Table of Contents?	
4	Is the named Applicant eligible for funding according to section 1.6 of the RFA?	
5	If project eligibility conditions appear in Section 1.6 of the RFA, does the project fit these conditions?	
6	Is the application formatted in accordance with section 3.1 of the RFA?	
7	Does the application include a project description and all of the information required for the scoring rubric that appears at the end of Section 7 of the RFA?	
8	Is there a numeric budget?	
9	Is there a budget narrative justifying each budget line item?	
10	Do the line items in the application budget consider the allowable and non-allowable costs in Section 3.2 subsection c.4 of the RFA?	
11	Does the application include a work plan?	
12	Did the applicant read the General Terms and Conditions document (Appendix 1)?	
13	Does the application package include the first page and signed last page of the DOEE Promises, Certifications, Assertions, and Assurances (Appendix 2)?	
14	Does the application package include a Certificate of Good Standing that reflects a date within 6 months of the deadline date?	
15	Does the application package include a valid Certificate of Clean Hands?	
16	Does the application package include IRS W-9 Tax Form?	
17	If the Applicant is a nonprofit organization does the application package include a Tax Exemption Affirmation Letter?	

18	Does the application package include the applicant's current fiscal year budget?	
19	Does the application package include the applicant's most recent audited or unaudited financial statements?	
20	Does the application package include a Separation of Duties Policy as described in Section 3.4 subsection (h) of the RFA?	
20	Is the Applicant registered in the System for Award Management (SAM)?	
21	If the Applicant is eligible to claim indirect costs and is claiming more than 10% of direct costs, does the application package include supporting documentation for the indirect cost rate?	
22	If applicable, does the application package include letters of support from other entities?	
23	If requested, does the application include resumes of key personnel mentioned in the application?	

APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – General Terms and Conditions

Appendix 2 – Promises, Certifications, Assertions, and Assurances

Appendix 3 – Cover Sheet

Appendix 4 – Grant Budget Template

Appendix 5 – Points for Local Entities

Appendix 6 – Insurance Requirements

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