

Community Power Accelerator Prize

PCFO IGAP Grant Snapshot

January 30, 2023

<u>Agency:</u> Department of Energy (DOE)	<u>Bureau:</u> N/A
<u>Application Deadline:</u> March 15, 2023	<u>Max Award:</u> \$400,000 (Combined for all 3 phases)

Description

The American-Made Community Power Accelerator Prize is a \$10 million prize competition designed to fast-track the efforts of new, emerging, and expanding solar developers and co-developers to learn, participate, and grow their operations to support multiple successful community solar projects.

Prize Structure

The Community Power Accelerator Prize has three phases (Ready!, Set!, and Grow!), designed to build capacity and guide developers through the steps required for successful community solar project development and financing via the [Community Power Accelerator online platform](#).

Phase 1 (Ready!): \$50,000 per winning competitor

- Up to 25 winning teams will be selected
- Winning teams will have the opportunity to participate in Phase 2 of the prize
- Applicants need to complete their Phase 1 submission package

Phase 2 (Set!): \$200,000 per winning competitor

- Up to 25 Phase 2 winners will be selected
- Winning teams will have the opportunity to participate in Phase 3 of the prize
- Phase 2 is anticipated to last 6 months
- Teams will be expected to:
 - Participate in the [Community Power Accelerator Learning Lab](#), a live, remote course designed to educate developers on community solar in disadvantaged communities starting April 27, 2023
 - Engage direct coaching and mentorship
 - Complete a Credit-Ready Checklist

Phase 3 (Grow!): \$150,000 per winning competitor

- Up to 25 Phase 3 winners will be selected
- Teams will be expected to:
 - Engage fully in the [Community Power Accelerator platform](#), an online meeting place for community solar developers and investors. Using the Community Power Accelerator platform, competitors will secure investment commitments from investors and/or philanthropic organizations for a community solar portfolio of at least 1 MW.

- Work directly with technical assistance coaches to finalize their Credit-Ready Checklist; refine projects on the Community Power Accelerator platform; create an investor pitch deck; and engage with potential funders

Eligible Recipients

The Community Power Accelerator Prize is open to U.S. community solar developers, including new developers, co-developers (organizations who are partnering with a project developer), or developers who are expanding their community solar operations. Developers may include any US legal entity (private, public, nonprofit, community-based, etc). To receive prize money, the competitor must be a member of the National Community Solar Partnership, which is free to join.

Eligible applicants include, but are not limited to:

- Multifamily affordable housing providers
- Community and economic development organizations
- Intermediary organizations such as community development financial institutions
- Community-based organizations that have real estate portfolios and/or are in construction
- General contractors with roofing and/or electrical experience
- Traditional solar project developers who are looking to expand into the community solar space
- Socially and economically disadvantaged individual (SEDI) demographics-related business and women and minority-owned businesses.
- Other large real estate holders that could be available for solar deployment

Matching Grant Requirements

None required

Eligible Projects

This program aims to increase the number of equitable community solar projects by providing funding and resources for developers and co-developers throughout the project pre-development process, including: tools and resources; training; free consulting; and coaching on expanding developers' solar customer markets.

Submissions must meet these requirements:

- The competitor submission represents a community solar power portfolio of projects with the intent to develop a minimum of 1 MW (not exceeding 5 MW for a single facility) of community solar projects in the United States or in U.S. territories.
- Each project within the portfolio submitted must describe how it will include at least two of the five meaningful benefits: (1) low- and moderate-income household access, (2) greater household savings, (3) increased resilience and grid benefits, (4) community ownership, and (5) equitable workforce development.
- Eligible projects can be in any stage of pre-financing. Projects that already have financing may be considered eligible, if the team intends to expand the project scope to include at least two of the five meaningful benefits.
- The benefits realized by the project are not dependent on pending legislation or regulation.

New/Existing Program	New
Tips for Being Competitive	Applicants should demonstrate how their projects incorporate meaningful, equitable benefits of community solar into projects, including low- and moderate-income household access, greater household savings, increased resilience and grid benefits, community ownership, and equitable workforce development.
Labor Requirements	None
Examples of Prior Award Recipients	N/A
Agency Contact	solar.prize@nrel.gov
Upcoming Events	Phase 1 Informational Webinar : February 1, 2023 at 9:00am PT
Types of Partners Required	For the application in Phase 1, there is a “Community Engagement and Partnerships” section where applicants should answer the question “What is your plan to engage with and work with the communities in which you plan to develop community solar projects?” Applicants should demonstrate their experience with community engagement, understanding of the community’s concerns and priorities, and plan for engagement around the proposed project.
Total Allocation	\$10 million
Anticipated Award Date	April 2023 for Phase 1
Links to Grant Opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Community Power Accelerator page on HeroX Platform• Community Power Accelerator Prize Rules• Community Power Accelerator Prize page on DOE