# GFO-21-901 Question and Answer

Last Updated: April 8, 2024

# General

Q1) Is there a similar solicitation for PIER also known as the Gas R&D program?

A) Right now, there is only Federal Cost Share for projects that support EPIC goals.

Q2) How do we include CEC cost share awards in our in our application to a FOA?

A) After the applicant is successful in applying for CEC cost share, the CEC will provide the applicant a letter of intent which will represent the commitment to provide cost share if your application to the federal funding opportunity is successful.

Q3) If I find a FOA that matches CEC EPIC goals and would like the CEC to consider it for cost share, how would I do that?

A) Please use the form found at <https://www.energy.ca.gov/solicitations/2022-03/gfo-21-901-cost-share-federal-clean-energy-funding-opportunities> to suggest FOAs for the CEC to consider.

Q4) Where can we sign up to the listserv to be notified when new FOAs are added to the table in Section II?

A) Subscribing to the EPIC email listserv at <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/CNRA/signup/31897> is a good way to stay notified about updates to this solicitation.

Q5) What is the turnaround time for CEC selections for cost share funding?

A) The CEC will plan to supply letters of intent prior to the federal funding opportunity’s full application submission deadline. Typically, this will be 3-5 weeks after the CEC’s submission deadline.

Q6) Will additional new FOAs be added on a rolling basis?

A) Yes, the CEC plans on adding additional eligible FOAs on a rolling basis.

Q7) How does the reimbursement process work for these CEC Federal Cost Share grants?

A) The CEC supplies grant funding on a reimbursement basis for work done during the CEC grant project’s agreement term. Applicants will enter into a grant agreement with the CEC that contains a budget and a scope of work. Invoices will relate back to the budget and scope of work.

Q8) May a subcontractor complete sections of the forms of an application? For example, a subcontractor may be more familiar with the project site and would be better suited to supply CEQA information.

A) The Prime applicant may have subcontractors or project partners complete portions of the applications; however, the Prime applicant is ultimately responsible for ensuring the accuracy of all information submitted as part of its application. Additionally, solely the Prime applicant should sign the Application Form. Please note that the CEC may have waived signature requirements on application materials as described at <https://www.energy.ca.gov/funding-opportunities/solicitations>.

**Q9) Where in the application is the appropriate place to describe the scope of work that CEC funds would support?**

**A) The appropriate place to describe the scope of the work of the proposed project would be within the 1. Technical Merit and Need and 2. Technical Approach sections of Attachment 2. Project Narrative. Attachment 2 can be found within the Solicitation Files at the GFO-21-901 website.**

**Q10) Our initial intention is to fill out the CEQA form only for elements of the project directly funded by CEC. Is this an appropriate interpretation of the requirements and compliant with the application?**

**A) Applicants should describe and fill out the CEQA compliance form based on the proposed  project being submitted for the federal funding application and should not limit information to project elements directly funded by the CEC.**

**Q11) Do direct labor and benefit rate caps apply? Page 15 of the standard grant terms states, "In Exhibit B, the Budget, the rates for Direct Labor and Fringe Benefits are treated as estimates and not capped rates" but there is contrary information in the solicitation manual.**

**A) No, the direct labor and fringe benefits caps do not apply. The direct labor and fringe benefit rates are treated as estimates in the Exhibit B Budget. Note: we are issuing an addendum to remove the contradictory language from the solicitation manual.**

# Eligibility and Terminology

Q1) Will projects that have already received the Federal Award be eligible for CEC Cost Share? What if the FOA has been awarded but the contract has not yet been signed?

A) No, the CEC doesn’t retroactively award cost share, even if the contract with the awarding federal agency has not yet been signed, because the intent of this solicitation is to attract federal funds into the state.

Q2) What is being defined as "Federal Funds" for the leverage ratio. Is it exclusively the funds awarded from the eligible FOA, or is it the total project funds minus the requested CEC cost share?

A) Federal funds would include exclusively the funds awarded by the federal entity for the purposes of calculating the leverage ratio.

Q3) Are Native American Communities automatically considered disadvantaged communities?

A) For this solicitation, disadvantaged communities are identified by the CalEnviroScreen tool found here: https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/report/calenviroscreen-40. CalEPA recently updated its designation of disadvantaged communities and may include certain lands under tribal control as well as other geographic areas. See https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/sb535 for more information.

Q4) If a FOA’s focus is primarily technical, with little direct impact on disadvantaged communities at this time, will the FOA be likely to be listed as eligible by the CEC.

A) A FOA with a primary focus on technology research and development would not be automatically made ineligible even if projects the FOA would support may not directly impact disadvantaged communities. Eligibility will be determined by factors such as consistency with EPIC Strategic Initiatives and available funding.

Q5) For a FOA to be considered, would the entire FOA need to be EPIC appropriate or would only the proposed project?

A) Only the proposed project would need to be EPIC appropriate even if the FOA is more broadly scoped. The CEC may limit eligibility of a FOA to certain Areas of Interest. Please review the table of eligible FOAs carefully to ensure that the FOA and Area of Interest you are applying for is listed as eligible.

Q6) Is a potential FOA applicant allowed to split up their project into a California portion and a non-California portion while applying to the Federal government as one larger, combined project?

A) The project represented by the application to the CEC should represent the project as it would be shown in the federal application. Projects that contain elements within California and outside California are allowed. However, applications will be scored on overall impacts to California and amount of Federal funds spent in California (even if only a percentage of the total funds are spent in California). See the solicitation manual for a full description of scoring criteria.

Q7) Can an applicant split up a federal project/application to take out the non-CA IOU demonstration portions and apply for Cost Share with that smaller, sub-project?

A) Yes, applicants may split a federal application into smaller pieces and apply to Cost Share with that portion of the potential federal funding.

Q8) If an organization receives a cost share commitment and is unsuccessful in their application to the FOA may the organization transfer the project and commitment letter to another organization? What if the original organization receiving the letter of intent joins another project as a subcontractor?

A) No, the cost share commitment cannot be transferred to a different entity than the one that applied and received the original commitment. The CEC cost share funds must go to the entity that applies for and receives a federal award.

**Q9) Our plan is to have CEC funds devoted to other supporting portions of the overall project. Do we need to provide letters of commitment from the communities related to the intention to build energy projects, even if CEC funds are not directly spent building them?**

**A) The more letters of commitment and support an application has, the stronger the application can be considered. However, letters of commitment are not required in order to make the application eligible.**

**Q10) If commitment letters are required, would providing copies of the already-in-process letters that are intended for the federal funding application be sufficient for meeting the requirement that we should have letters of commitment from communities where deployment will be focused? The process for developing new letters typically takes at least two weeks. There are already letters in process that describe the process and intention of building the microgrids; these letters are addressed to the U.S. DOE.**

**A) Letters submitted as part of the application do not need to be solely focused on the CEC project. The already-in-process letters that are intended for the federal funding application can be used.**

# Cost Share Calculations and Requirements

Q1) The CEC’s Cost Share solicitation states that the CEC will only provide 50% of the total Cost Share. Does the applicant need to supply proof to the CEC that the rest of the Cost Share has been secured as part of the application?

A) The applicant is not required to submit proof for the other cost share sources during the Phase I application. However, during the Phase II agreement development phase after the FOA award is received, proof of the additional match funding will be required.

Q2) For the purposes of calculating 50% of the total cost share, do in-kind or other non-cash match funds count?

A) No, only other cash cost shares shall be considered. However, if there are non-cash commitments such as lab space or other match funds, the applicant may supply information in letters of support or elsewhere in the application to strengthen the competitiveness of the proposal.