Questions and Answers

**GFO-22-307**

**Optimizing Long-Duration Energy Storage to Improve Resilience and Reliability in Disadvantaged and Low-Income Communities and Native American Tribes**

August 4, 2023

The following answers are based on California Energy Commission (CEC) staff’s interpretation of the questions received. It is the Applicant’s responsibility to review the purpose of the solicitation and to determine whether their proposed project is eligible for funding by reviewing the Eligibility Requirements within the solicitation. The CEC cannot give advice as to whether a particular project is eligible for funding, because not all proposal details are known.

# **Section 1: Questions on Technical Requirements**

1. **Q:** The solicitation specifically states that this funding opportunity is open to non–Li-ion, electrochemical or thermal LDES technologies, but does not explicitly deny technologies like flow batteries, compressed air and gravity systems. Thus, the question is – would these energy storage technologies qualify under the GFO?

**A:** This GFO is only open to non-Li-ion electrochemical or thermal long-duration storage technologies and is not open to mechanical energy storage like compressed air and gravity technologies and systems. Flow batteries are considered electrochemical, so those would be eligible for this funding.

1. **Q:** What dataset should applicants use to demonstrate high PSPS impacts in a community?

**A:** This GFO does not define a specific dataset; it is up to the applicant to use modeling tools, reports, etc., to describe the impact of power outages on the proposed demonstration site area. These could be from agencies like the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) or the California Air Resources Board (CARB). CARB reports on durations, locations, and frequency of public safety power shutoffs (PSPS), so this might be a useful resource.

1. **Q:** I wanted to learn more about the benefits that will be evaluated for the disadvantaged and low-income communities. Will reduction in environmental impacts, such as improvement to air quality be considered?

**A:** Yes, reduction in environmental impacts, such as improvement to air quality will be considered, among other factors used by CalEnviroScreen. Project evaluation under Criteria 8, sub-criterion 8.3 “Localized Health Impacts”, include how a project will “reduce or not otherwise impact the community’s exposure to pollutants and the adverse environmental conditions caused by pollution and/or climate change.”

1. **Q:** When would a project need to be online by? I'm not sure if that relates to the agreement start/end date.

**A:** There is a length of duration and completion requirement; however, the commissioning of the storage system depends on the Project Schedule (Attachment 6) and should be within the agreement term start and end dates. As stated in the Project Focus section of the solicitation manual, “The proposed LDES systems must stay in operation for at least one year before the end of the grant agreement, and the recipient must complete this period at least six months prior to the end of the agreement. This requirement ensures that sufficient data on the system's performance and capabilities can be gathered and analyzed to validate its performance.”

1. **Q:** How is ‘technology demonstration and deployment’ evaluated/determined in this FOA? Is there a pre-award demonstration scale? Is there a during-award deployment scale (100 kW storage was mentioned) and how many of these demonstration projects will be expected?

**A:** Under this GFO, projects are required to “fall within the ’technology demonstration and deployment’ stage, which involves the installation and operation of pre-commercial technologies or strategies at a scale sufficiently large and in conditions sufficiently reflective of anticipated actual operating environments to enable appraisal of operational and performance characteristics, and of financial risks.” The total quantity of projects awarded will depend on how much funding each project receives. Funding ranges from $4 million to $9 million for each awarded project. There is no pre-award demonstration scale, however, applicants are required to “Describe what testing and validation has been done to ensure the technology is ready for a demonstration in a real-world environment. Explain who conducted the testing and when it took place.” The technology must be able to achieve 100 kW with a minimum duration of 24 hours within the deployment scale of this project.

1. **Q:** This is a demonstration of storage technology for over 24 hours duration. Can you use California grid to demonstrate Electricity in and out? or it must be green electricity?

**A:** This GFO does not limit electricity sources; applicants can use grid electricity, green electricity, or any combination. However, Scoring Criteria considers environmental impacts and benefits, which may include electricity sources.

1. **Q:** Does the program include LDES that dispatches electricity on demand to the grid or the local community, but is charged directly from the sun and is not charged by electricity from the grid? In other words, solar thermal input, electricity output. I ask because the BIL LDES grant program excluded LDES that was not charged from the grid.

**A:** Please refer to the answer from Question 6.

1. **Q:** Is there any resource the CEC would recommend for identifying areas of the grid that has the capacity to absorb this additional proposed capacity?

**A:** Per page 6 of this GFO, “Demonstration/deployment sites must be located in a California electric IOU service territory”. This GFO defines Investor-owned utility or IOU as an electrical corporation as defined in Public Utilities Code section 218. For purposes of this GFO, it includes Pacific Gas and Electric Co. (PG&E), San Diego Gas and Electric Co. (SDG&E), and Southern California Edison Co. (SCE).

This GFO does not have specific site recommendations/requirements. Provided that the project site is located in a California IOU service territory (i.e., PG&E, SDG&E, or SCE) and that the project benefits a disadvantaged (DAC), low income (LIC), or Tribal community, it is up to the applicant to locate the site, determine the benefits, and describe the approach in the application.

1. **Q:** 100 kW is your minimum target. Are there additional scoring points for a larger system than 100 kW?

**A:** There are no criteria that give preference for higher power; however, it could strengthen the project benefits.

1. **Q:** If the applicant can demonstrate a site that suffers from high outages, but those outages are not considered "PSPS", would that still count as being additionally beneficial in the scoring criteria?

**A:** PSPS is not a requirement but rather one example of many motivating grid impacting factors. Applicants can use PSPS or other grid impact examples on power quality in the demonstration site area to describe grid conditions to be addressed by the project.

1. **Q:** Would a hospital serving an area that includes a low-income community, but not located in one, will it be considered as benefitting that community?

**A:** This GFO does not require the demonstration site to be located in a disadvantaged, low-income, or Tribal community. Demonstration sites must be located in a California IOU service territory, and proposed applications of LDES systems must provide direct benefits to the residents of the identified communities. A hospital serving an area that includes a low-income community, but not located in one, could be considered as benefitting that community.

1. **Q:** Can the project be located on/in a brownfield (i.e., depleted oil and/or gas reservoir) and utilize the existing infrastructure (wells, well equipment, pipelines, roads, tools, and other facilities) at the site?

**A:** Per page 6 of this GFO, “Demonstration/deployment sites must be located in a California electric IOU service territory”. This GFO defines Investor-owned utility or IOU as an electrical corporation as defined in California Public Utilities Code section 218. For purposes of this GFO, it includes PG&E., SDG&E, and SCE. As long as the project site is located in a California IOU service territory (i.e., PG&E, SDG&E, or SCE) and that the project benefits a disadvantaged (DAC), low income (LIC), or Tribal community, nothing in this GFO prevents the project to be located on/in a brownfield and utilize the existing infrastructure at the site.

1. **Q:** There is a possibility that this project produces oil and/or gas due to the nature of the site. What is the project team allowed/supposed to do with any hydrocarbons that are a byproduct of this project?

**A:** Applicants are expected to be knowledgeable about federal, state, and local environmental laws (including the California Environmental Quality Act or CEQA and any permitting requirements). The CEC makes CEQA determinations prior to awards. If the project triggers environmental impacts, applicants will need to demonstrate sufficient mitigation measures in accordance with the law to reduce or avoid the impacts caused by the project.

1. **Q:** Is it acceptable to charge the energy storage using direct solar heat, or must the project be electricity in/electricity out?

**A:** Please refer to the answer from Question 6.

1. **Q:** The solicitation calls for energy storage with "full rated power of at least 100 kW and a minimum duration of 24 hours." I assume this means 100 kW output power for continuous 24 hours. Is there a requirement for minimum or maximum duration of the charging power?

**A:** Yes, "Full rated power of at least 100 kW and a minimum duration of 24 hours" refers to 100 kW output power for continuous 24 hours. This GFO does not specify the minimum or maximum duration for charging.

1. **Q:** Is the following language referring to current costs or future costs e.g., in 3-5 years or with scaling technology up? Also, what does "ability" mean here? “Proposed technologies under this solicitation should have the ability to achieve a Levelized Cost of Storage (LCOS) of 5 cents/kWh or less at scale consistent with ARPA-E goals”

**A:** “Proposed technologies under this solicitation should have the ability to achieve a Levelized Cost of Storage (LCOS) of 5 cents/kWh or less at scale consistent with ARPA-E goals” refers to the future costs of technology after scale-up. The term “ability” refers to a reasonable pathway.

1. **Q:** Page 7 of this GFO has an “Optional” header. Which of the bullet points below the header are optional? Is it only the first two bullet points?

**A:** The “Optional” header on page 7 of the solicitation manual refers to the following two bullet points only:

* Proposals should consider at least one “critical facility” (defined as either a public or private facility that provides critical services to its community in times of public emergency such as a natural disaster, power outage, disease epidemic, or chemical emergency). Some possible examples of critical facilities include:
  + Hospitals
  + Emergency operation centers
  + Care facilities
  + Fire stations
  + Police stations
  + Water and wastewater treatment plants
  + Fueling facilities
  + Ports
  + Critical federal, state, and municipal facilities (e.g., courts and jails)
  + Schools
  + Shelters (e.g., facilities that provide shelter to humans or animals during public emergencies)
  + Supermarkets
* Proposals are encouraged to select demonstration sites highly impacted by PSPS events or located in a Tier 2 or 3 High Fire-Threat District (HFTD), as defined by the CPUC.7 Applicants should describe the impacts of PSPS events on their selected demonstration sites, including the number and durations of past outages.

Everything else under the Project Focus is required and should be addressed in Attachment 3, the Project Narrative.

1. **Q:** The following requirement is listed in this GFO: “Describe the expected level of scale the technology needs to reach to be competitive with lithium-ion energy storage systems.” Can this statement about competitiveness be clarified? What regime does this apply to? Quoting the GFO text: “lithium-ion (Li-ion) technology, useful for shorter duration storage (i.e., less than 8 hours), but economically prohibitive at longer durations.” Li-Ion may not be competitive for long duration storage.

**A:** The competitiveness of the proposed technology, and at what scale, can include but is not limited to factors such as cost, efficiency, performance, and resource abundance.

1. **Q:** Will clean fuels (e.g., clean hydrogen, clean ammonia, as well as biogas) be considered a form of non-battery long duration energy storage for the purposes of this solicitation? For example, renewable-powered electrolytic hydrogen represents a form of stored renewable energy that can be utilized for elongated periods (e.g. > 24 hours), but is not mentioned in the solicitation materials.

**A:** This GFO focuses on non-Li-ion electrochemical and thermal long-duration battery storage technologies. Clean hydrogen, clean ammonia, and biogas will not be considered a form of long-duration energy storage under this GFO.

1. **Q:** Can you confirm that the minimum energy storage capacity required would be 2400 kWh available at a minimum rate of 100 kW for 24 hours?

**A:** That is correct; the minimum energy storage capacity required for this GFO is 2400 kWh.

1. **Q:** If energy storage is restored using solar and/or wind power, can the solar and/or wind power be part of the 100 kW minimum during that 24-hour time period, i.e., not strictly only from energy storage technology? After all, the solar panels and/or wind turbines would be part of the system.

**A:** This GFO is for non-Li-ion electrochemical or thermal long-duration storage technologies with a full rated power of at least 100 kW and a minimum duration of 24 hours. Although you can pair the system with solar and/or wind, the storage technologies must independently meet the full-rated power output for the minimum duration.

1. **Q:** Is it required for the system to be able to meet the 100 kW requirements continuously, i.e., every 24-hour period once in operation? For example, normally, the power from the solar panels would be divided between restoring energy storage and providing power to the users. But in an emergency, all their power could be used to meet your 100 kW requirement during daytime after depletion of storage during the night, so your 100 kW over 24 hours requirement would not be met in the next 24-hour period.

**A:** This GFO does not specify idle times required to charge the battery.

1. **Q:** AreHydrogen Power-to-Power systems for within the scope of this GFO?

**A:** This GFO focuses on non-Li-ion electrochemical and thermal long-duration battery storage technologies. Hydrogen Power-to-Power systems will not be considered a form of long-duration energy storage under this GFO.

# **Section 2: Questions on Administrative Requirements**

1. **Q:** EPIC funds are only for 3 existing private companies, but most environmental justice organizations support many grid structures (LA department water/ power), mini grids. Can people outside of the 3 main Invested Owned Utilities (IOUs), Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E), Southern California Edison (SCE), and San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) apply for funding?

**A:** Applicant eligibility requirements are in Section II (A)(1) of the solicitation manual. The following entities can apply as prime applicants to this GFO:

* Project Developer/System Integrator: An individual, corporation, or other legal entity responsible for the overall planning, installation, and commissioning of the LDES system.
* Site Owner or Operator: The owner or operator of the site where the LDES system will be installed and operated.
* Technology Developer: A for-profit commercial entity or individual with the rights to commercialize the intellectual property being advanced under the proposed project.

However, note that the following entities are not eligible to be prime applicants for projects under this GFO:

* Public and private universities
* National Labs, and
* Private non-profit research organizations.

Finally, all public and private entities, with the exception of local publicly owned electric utilities, may serve as subrecipients for this GFO. In accordance with CPUC Decision 12-05-037 at p. 70, funds administered by the CEC may not be used for any purposes associated with local publicly owned electric utility activities.

If the abovementioned requirements and those provided under this GFO are complied with, people outside of the three main IOUs can apply for funding under this GFO. Note that per Decision 12-05-037 at p. 96, “Eligibility to receive EPIC funding should not exclude entities *located* in POU [publicly owned utility] service territories, so long as their activity can be demonstrated to provide the potential for IOU electricity ratepayer benefits.” Note, however, that “[a]ll demonstration/ deployment sites” must be “located in a California electric IOU service territory (PG&E, SDG&E, or SCE)” under the Screening Criteria on page 37 of the Solicitation Manual.

1. **Q:** I wanted to make sure that I heard the CEC correctly. The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power would not qualify for this funding? Is that correct?

**A:** The Los Angeles Department of Water and Power would not qualify for this funding. This GFO provides that, in accordance with CPUC Decision 12-05-037, “funds administered by the CEC may not be used for any purposes associated with local publicly owned electric utility activities”.

1. **Q:** Is there a list of folks from any pre-award RFI or underrepresented community members who have expressed interest to the CEC to recipients of these kinds of technologies?

**A:** There was no pre-award RFI associated with this GFO, and the CEC does not have a list of underrepresented community members who have expressed interest in LDES technologies.

1. **Q:** Community Choice Aggregators, CCAs, are within the service territory of an IOU. What is determined publicly owned utility? Are CCAs included in that designation?

**A:** A local publicly owned electric utility is an entity as defined in California Public Utilities Code section 224.3. A community choice aggregator is defined by California Public Utilities Code section 331.1. Any entity that meets the definition of California Public Utilities Code section 224.3 will not be eligible, and the key is whether a CCA can provide the potential for IOU electricity ratepayer benefits. If a CCA is located within IOU service territory and can provide IOU electricity ratepayer benefits, they can be eligible for this GFO.

1. **Q:** EPIC (in the past) has only funded projects at sites served by IOU. This used to include Southern California Gas, but this appears to have gone away more recently. Is this still the case?

**A:** The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) established EPIC to provide funding for technology evaluation from 2012-2020. In August 2020, the CPUC approved the renewal of EPIC for 10 years through December 31, 2030. Southern California Edison (SCE), Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E), San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E) and the California Energy Commission (CEC) administer the EPIC Program. In this GFO, “IOU” or investor-owned utility means an electrical corporation as defined in California Public Utilities Code section 218. For purposes of this EPIC GFO, it includes Pacific Gas and Electric Co., San Diego Gas and Electric Co., and Southern California Edison Co. Additionally, this GFO provides that demonstration/deployment sites must be located in a California electric IOU service territory (i.e., PG&E, SDG&E, or SCE). Consequently, EPIC still funds projects at sites served by SCE.

1. **Q:** If a non-IOU served site pays “State Energy Surcharge” fees, are they eligible to apply under this GFO?

**A:** Sites that are located in PG&E, SCE or SDG&E service territory are eligible to apply if they meet the additional applicant eligibility requirements laid out in Section II (A)(1) of the solicitation manual. The following entities can apply as prime applicants to this GFO:

* Project Developer/System Integrator: An individual, corporation, or other legal entity responsible for the overall planning, installation, and commissioning of the LDES system.
* Site Owner or Operator: The owner or operator of the site where the LDES system will be installed and operated.
* Technology Developer: A for-profit commercial entity or individual with the rights to commercialize the intellectual property being advanced under the proposed project.

However, note that the following entities are not eligible to be prime applicants for projects under this GFO:

* Public and private universities
* National Labs, and
* Private non-profit research organizations.

Finally, all public and private entities, with the exception of local publicly owned electric utilities, may serve as subrecipients for this GFO. In accordance with CPUC Decision 12-05-037, funds administered by the CEC may not be used for any purposes associated with local publicly owned electric utility activities.

Please note that per page 6 of the solicitation manual, “Demonstration sites must be located in a California IOU service territory.”

As long as the abovementioned requirements and those provided under this GFO are complied with, an entity can apply for funding under the solicitation.

1. **Q:** Can you please confirm which agencies are included in the designation of "local publicly owned electric utility" that are disqualified from being subrecipients? Is there any role that these entities can play in the grant - as a minor sub, a partner, or some other role?

**A:** A local publicly owned electric utility is an entity as defined in California Public Utilities Code section 224.3. Specific questions regarding which entities meet that definition should be directed to prospective applicants’ legal representatives.

Additionally, this GFO provides that, in accordance with CPUC Decision 12-05-037, funds administered by the CEC may not be used for any purposes associated with local publicly owned electric utility activities.

Considering the above, local publicly owned electric utilities cannot play a role in this grant.

1. **Q:** Is there any value of the host site that can count toward the match?

**A:** The value of the project site cannot count toward the 20% matching requirement. Pursuant to Section I (D)(2) of this GFO, Match funding is required in the amount of at least 20% of the requested project funds. Pursuant to Section I (K) of this GFO, “Match funds” includes cash or in-kind (non-cash) contributions provided by the applicant, subcontractors, or other parties including pilot testing, demonstration, and/or deployment sites (e.g., test site staff services) that will be used in performance of the proposed project. “Match funds” do not include CEC awards, EPIC funds received from other sources, future/contingent awards from other entities (public or private), the cost or value of the project work site, or the cost or value of structures or other improvements affixed to the project work site permanently or for an indefinite period of time (e.g., photovoltaic systems).

1. **Q:** If there is a new patent covering the application sought (discovered through research of material provided in this solicitation request), can we still apply for this solicitation? Does that entity (out of state) need to be involved as it would reduce in state money spent on project?

**A:** Applicants should demonstrate that they have permission from any intellectual property owner. A license or permission/support letter could suffice.

**33 Q:** Will the California Energy Commission (CEC) institute direct deposit or electronic transfer of funds? Current hard check payments method is very inefficient and old.

**A:** While the CEC processes invoices for repayment, the disbursement of funds is managed by the State Controller’s Office (SCO) using the current standard method of hard checks to reimburse invoices. There are currently no options for direct deposit or electronic transfer of funds.

1. **Q:** Will IOU qualify as a partner and matching funder?

**A:** This GFO does not prevent IOUs from acting as a partner or match funder.

Under this GFO, “IOU” or investor-owned utility means an electrical corporation as defined in California Public Utilities Code section 218. For purposes of this EPIC GFO, it includes Pacific Gas and Electric Co., San Diego Gas and Electric Co., and Southern California Edison Co.

Under this GFO, a “project partner” means an entity or individual that contributes financially or otherwise to the project (e.g., match funding, provision of a test, demonstration or deployment site), and does not receive CEC funds.

Further, “match funds” includes cash or in-kind (non-cash) contributions provided by the applicant, subcontractors, or other parties including pilot testing, demonstration, and/or deployment sites (e.g., test site staff services) that will be used in performance of the proposed project. “Match funds” do not include CEC awards, EPIC funds received from other sources, future/contingent awards from other entities (public or private), the cost or value of the project work site, or the cost or value of structures or other improvements affixed to the project work site permanently or for an indefinite period of time (e.g., photovoltaic systems).

**35. Q:** Wilmington is a city of Los Angeles harbor Environmental Justice CommunityOrganization which had 12 blackouts in 2022. There is a LADWP Harbor Generating Plant in Wilmington, but power supports the Port of Los Angeles the cities #1 priority. We support and want independent mini-grid power. Can have LADWP oversite?

**A:** Please refer to the answer for Question 27.

1. **Q:** What is confidential about a published patent?

**A:** As per section D.3 of this GFO, “Though the entire evaluation process from receipt of applications up to the posting of the Notice of Proposed Award (NOPA) is confidential, all submitted documents will become publicly available records after the CEC posts the NOPA or the solicitation is cancelled. The CEC will not accept or retain applications that identify any portion as confidential.”

A patent may or may not be confidential, but if it is included in the application materials, the CEC cannot maintain its confidentiality. Therefore, the applicant should not submit anything confidential in the application materials. Confidentiality concerns should be discussed with applicants’ legal representatives.

1. **Q:** Will military sites qualify?

**A:** Per page 6 of this GFO, “Demonstration/deployment sites must be located in a California electric IOU service territory”. This GFO defines Investor-owned utility or IOU as an electrical corporation as defined in California Public Utilities Code section 218. For purposes of this GFO, it includes Pacific Gas and Electric Co., San Diego Gas and Electric Co., and Southern California Edison Co. Therefore, military sites may qualify if they are located in electric IOU territory (i.e., PG&E, SDG&E, or SCE), and the proposed project will provide benefits to a DAC, LIC, or Tribe.

1. **Q:** This would be related to a concept covered by a patent.

I thought I had a fairly novel approach, but through an initial search from references in the solicitation material and further research, I was able to determine that this concept was pretty much fully covered by a patent recently awarded in 2022 to an entity outside of California.

I do not believe that this entity is required for the completion of the project as all components (and expertise) should be readily commercially available, but what would be our obligations towards this entity?

My initial concern was that, having this entity as part of the project would have reduced the percentage of funds used in California, thereby reduced our score in your evaluation.

Again, what would be the obligations towards patent holders in the power industry considering that they may not have put into practice their IP since they are not a commercial entity?

If there are obligations required (e.g., monetary), would these obligations lower our score (since outside CA) even if we do not use their services?

Looking deeper, they did win a DOE contest as most disruptive innovation and were funded by the DOE to build a small prototype, and other energy institutions have invested in them.

I believe I have identified the ideal site with a critical infrastructure for a full scale implementation (100kW to start with and expandable) in a LIC and serving both LIC and DAC communities.

**A:** The CEC does not provide specific legal advice regarding any applicant's obligations to potential or registered patent holders. Applicant should discuss this with their counsel. If an applicant is selected for an award, the CEC assesses the IP involved in that project during the agreement development phase. The CEC requires the permission of all IP owners for any IP used in a particular project. Sometimes, the IP owner is a project partner or subrecipient. The minimum is a letter of permission and/or license for a project to proceed with funding.

1. **Q:** How many groups appear to be interested in this solicitation? It would be nice to have an idea of anyone's chances considering that you would only fund a maximum of 7 projects.

**A:** This is an open competitive solicitation that does not limit the number of applications; therefore, the CEC does not know how many applications this GFO will receive.

1. **Q:** If an out-of-state entity become a project partner, then our percentage of funds spent in California would decrease, especially if they are required to visit the site for their own research, and our chances of being awarded a grant would be decreased, correct?

Would there be special consideration for being essentially obligated to include them in the project?

Actually, from what you wrote, IP does not need to be disclosed in the initial application, thereby no funds specifically dedicated to IP holders, at least until the agreement development phase. Then again, it does not make sense to not mention the IP since this existing IP should support the viability of the project.

So, would it be possible to mention the IP without considering the funds involved, to avoid being penalized because the IP is not owned in California?

**A:** Under this GFO, "Spent in California" means that:

(1) Funds in the "Direct Labor category and all categories calculated based on direct labor (e.g., fringe benefits, indirect costs and profit) are paid to individuals that pay California state income taxes on wages received for work performed under the agreement. Payments made to out-of-state workers do not count as “funds spent in California.” However, funds spent by out-of-state workers in California (e.g., hotel and food) can count as “funds spent in California.”; AND

(2) Business transactions (e.g., material and equipment purchases, leases, and rentals) are entered into with a business located in California.

(3) Total should include any applicable subcontractors.

Funds Spent in California are based on the percentage of CEC funds used in California to the total amount of CEC funds requested. Match funds are not counted in the Funds Spent in California points calculation. Please note that if at any time during the agreement term, a project’s Funds Spent in California decrease, the project will be reevaluated and if no longer the highest scoring project, it will be terminated.

1. **Q:** I'm reaching out on behalf of MCE to see if we can get more information on local publicly owned electric utility eligibility for GFO-22-307.

MCE (Marin Clean Energy) is a public agency, a joint-powers authority, and is often referred to as a load-serving entity. Would their status disqualify them as a sub recipient based on this opportunity?

**A:** Subrecipient eligibility requirements are laid out in Section II (A)(1) of this GFO which reads “All public and private entities, with the exception of local publicly owned electric utilities, may serve as subrecipients for this solicitation.” A local publicly owned electric utility is an entity as defined in California Public Utilities Code section 224.3. If MCE meets the definition of California Public Utilities Code section 224.3 and qualifies as a local publicly owned electricity utility, then MCE will not be eligible as a subrecipient under this GFO. If MCE qualifies as a CCA, please refer to Question 27 for eligibility matters regarding CCAs.

1. **Q:** Where can I find the presentation material from the June 28 workshop regarding this GFO?

**A:** The Pre-Application Workshop information was posted on July 5, 2023, and will be available on the CEC website’s [solicitation page](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.energy.ca.gov%2Fsolicitations%2F2023-06%2Fgfo-22-307-optimizing-long-duration-energy-storage-improve-resilience-and&data=05%7C01%7C%7Cb545f091a6b5446fdfb708db7db0069d%7Cac3a124413f44ef68d1bbaa27148194e%7C0%7C0%7C638241967204933186%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=bxc3zxykS2qyqR0MZut7INjYcAQQ%2B1LK6DqHlVWea6Q%3D&reserved=0). You need to scroll down to “*Solicitation Events”* to access them once posted.

1. **Q:** Where can I find the answers to questions submitted regarding this GFO?

**A:** The Questions and Answers are due to be posted the week of July 31, 2023. They will be available on the CEC website’s [solicitation page](https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.energy.ca.gov%2Fsolicitations%2F2023-06%2Fgfo-22-307-optimizing-long-duration-energy-storage-improve-resilience-and&data=05%7C01%7C%7Cb545f091a6b5446fdfb708db7db0069d%7Cac3a124413f44ef68d1bbaa27148194e%7C0%7C0%7C638241967204933186%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C3000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=bxc3zxykS2qyqR0MZut7INjYcAQQ%2B1LK6DqHlVWea6Q%3D&reserved=0).

1. **Q:** Regarding the Definitions Table, what is the definition of an “under-resourced community”?

**A:** This GFO supports the EPIC Interim Investment Plan Initiative 4 titled “Optimizing Long-Duration Energy Storage to Improve Grid Resiliency and Reliability in Under-resourced Communities.” Under the [California Energy Commission Proposed EPIC Interim, Investment Plan 2021](https://efiling.energy.ca.gov/GetDocument.aspx?tn=236882) which was approved by [CPUC decision 21-07-006](https://docs.cpuc.ca.gov/SearchRes.aspx?docformat=ALL&docid=394265545), July 15, 2021, the term “under-resourced community” was developed to encompass both legislatively defined categories and underrepresented groups. In the 2021 Investment Plan, “under-resourced communities” includes DAC and low-income communities as defined AB 523 (Stats. 2017, Ch. 551), Native American tribes, and other underrepresented groups.

Under this GFO, DAC are communities designated pursuant to as representing the top 25% scoring census tracts from CalEnviroScreen along with other areas with high amounts of pollution and low populations as identified by the [California Environmental Protection Agency](https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/report/calenviroscreen-40). Low-income communities or LIC are defined as communities within census tracts with median household incomes at or below 80 percent of the statewide median income or the applicable low-income threshold listed in the state income limits updated by the [Department of Housing and Community Development](https://www.hcd.ca.gov/grants-funding/income-limits/state-and-federal-income-limits.shtml). Finally, a California Native American Tribe is defined as a Native American Tribe located in California that is on the contact list maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission for the purposes of Chapter 905 of the Statutes of 2004.