**Questions and Answers, Set #2**
**California Clean Energy Planning Program**
**GFO-23-702**
**May 7, 2024**

The California Energy Commission (CEC) provides this Questions and Answers document in response to the questions received through May 6, 2024, 11:59 p.m. on the California Clean Energy Planning Program. Although CEC staff has made efforts to answer eligibility questions, it is the Applicant’s responsibility to review the Solicitation Manual’s Purpose of the Solicitation and the Applicant Eligibility Requirements sections to determine whether or not a project is eligible for funding. The responses below are based on staff’s interpretation of the question, however additional details may result in a different response.

**Administrative Questions**

**Admin. Q1: Is there any document other than the Application Form, Attachment 1 required to submit an application?**

Admin. A1. No. A completed Application Form (i.e., Solicitation Manual, Attachment 1) is the only document that needs to be submitted to apply for a California Clean Energy Planning Program grant.

Please be sure to check the [solicitation webpage](https://www.energy.ca.gov/solicitations/2024-04/gfo-23-702-california-clean-energy-planning-program-first-come-first-served) prior to submitting your application to ensure that you complete the latest version of the Application Form which can be found on the solicitation webpage. At the time of this Q&A (April 30, 2024), the current Application Form is titled “01\_GFO-23-702\_Att\_01\_Application\_Form\_Addendum\_03\_ada.docx.”

**A.Q2. Is there an authorizing resolution template? If not, is the resolution required with the application?**

A.A2. There is not a resolution template. The resolution is not required as part of the application, but applicants with passing applications will need to provide a copy of an authorizing resolution from the tribe’s governing board or the local government’s governing board or equivalent before the grant agreement may be executed.

**A.Q3. By what estimated date would the authorizing resolution need to be submitted by? A lot of the local county counsel’s offices have a pretty significant lead time.**

A.A3: An authorizing resolution must be received before the CEC may execute the grant agreement. The grant agreement must be executed (i.e., signed by both the applicant and the CEC) prior to the encumbrance deadline, June 30, 2024. It is recommended that applicants submit the authorizing resolution no later than June 17, 2024, to ensure that the grant agreement is executed by June 30, 2024.

**A.Q4: What does the authorizing resolution need to contain?**

A.A4: Applicants with passing applications will need to provide a copy of an authorizing resolution from the tribe’s governing board or the local government’s governing board or equivalent showing the applicant’s authority to enter into the grant agreement with the CEC or provide a copy of the law or document showing the applicant’s authority to enter into the grant agreement.

**A.Q5: We plan to submit our application signed by our Dept. of Resource Management Director when the County Board of Supervisors vote to approve the resolution. When the meeting ends, a Supervisor can sign the approved resolution and we can then submit the authorizing resolution. Would this be allowed via the GSS platform and CEC grant rules?**

A.A5: The resolution is not required to be submitted as part of the application, but must be submitted prior to the CEC executing an awarded grant. The resolution must show the applicant’s authority to enter into the grant agreement, in other words, it must show that the Board of Supervisors has approved the county to enter into the grant, not to apply for the grant. It is recommended that awarded applicants submit the authorizing resolution no later than June 17, 2024, to ensure that the grant agreement is executed by June 30, 2024.

**A.Q6: In the Application, Section 5, if applying for Category 2, Project Type 1, do we need to fill out that portion of the Application?**

A.A6: Yes, if applying for Category 2, Project Type 1, then Section 5, parts A through D are required to be completed. Please see the [solicitation webpage](https://www.energy.ca.gov/solicitations/2024-04/gfo-23-702-california-clean-energy-planning-program-first-come-first-served%20Energy%20Planning%20Program%20%28first-come%2C%20first-served%29) for the most current version of the Application Form.

**A.Q7: Are contractors and subcontractors allowed to receive funding. If so, what are the requirements?**

A.A7: Only California Native American tribes, California Tribal Organizations, and California counties and incorporated cities and towns are eligible to apply for funds. Only tribal members or staff of the tribe may receive funding for Category 1 activities. Category 2 and 3 awarded applicants would be able to use the awarded funds to pay for in-house staff or subcontractors such as third-party subject matter experts (SMEs). As stated in Attachment 1, Application Form, if awarded a grant, the applicant would need to identify the in-house staff or SMEs that would work on the project, their credentials, and their direct labor and fringe benefit rates. Additionally, as stated in the Solicitation Manual, Section I.D.2, Budget Costs (page 7 of 16), unreasonable amounts or rates are not allowed.

**A.Q8: When will grant recipients know how much they will be awarded? The tribe’s resolution would need to have the actual dollar amount included.**

A.A8: The CEC Agreement Manager would notify an applicant of the awarded amount as soon as possible after evaluation of the application. In general, the amount requested by the applicant (subject to the Maximum Funding Award Amount identified in Table 1 of the Solicitation Manual) would be awarded, unless the total remaining program funds are less than the requested amount. In that case, the applicant would be offered the amount of the remaining program funds.

**A.Q9: Is there any preference in the scoring for projects requesting less than $100,000?**

A.A9: No.

**A.QA10: Is there any preference in the application scoring related to the allocation of project funds between local government staff costs and non-staff subject matter expert costs?**

A.A10: No.

**A.Q11. By when are the Subject Matter Expert’s credentials, labor rates etc. required?**

A.A11: This question and answer only applies to Category 2 and 3 projects. There is no set deadline, however those deliverables must be submitted along with a description of work to be performed by the Subject Matter Expert (SME), and a budget and schedule for the proposed project broken down by task and month or quarter. Once all of those deliverables are submitted, the grant recipient and the CEC’s Commission Agreement Manager will participate in a Critical Project Review meeting before any additional project work may begin. As a reminder, all activities requested for reimbursement must be completed by March 1, 2026. Submitting the items mentioned above as soon as possible after the grant is executed is encouraged to allow for as much time as possible to complete the grant activities.

**A.Q12: If a county is applying for Category 3 funds, would the county need to provide information for Categories 1 or 2?**

A.A12: No, just provide the information required for Category 3.

**A.Q13: What time is the application window open on May 7th?**

A.A13: The Grant Solicitation System will begin accepting applications starting at 8:00am Pacific Time on May 7, 2024. Please see Solicitation Manual Addendum 3.

**A.Q14: How will I access the Question & Answer document?**

A.A14: The document will be posted on the [solicitation webpage](https://www.energy.ca.gov/solicitations/2024-04/gfo-23-702-california-clean-energy-planning-program-first-come-first-served). Those subscribed to the following topics on the CEC’s website will receive an email notification when the Question & Answer document, or any new document or addendum related to this solicitation, is posted to the grant solicitation webpage: Tribal Program, Joint-Agency Report - SB 100, Energy System Infrastructure Planning, and Solicitations and Awards Announcements. To subscribe to any of these or other CEC subscription topics, please go to <https://www.energy.ca.gov/subscriptions>.

**A.Q15: For Category 1 activities, must event attendees be tribal members or could they be staff members of the tribe?**

A.A15: Event attendees may be tribal members or staff members of the tribe.

**A.Q16. Do I need to submit a budget with the application?**

A.A16. No, the budget should not be submitted with the application. Only if awarded a grant, would an applicant be required to submit a budget and other deliverables (see A.A10 above for a list of the other deliverables). The project budget and the other deliverables, as well as a Critical Project Review meeting with the Commission Agreement Manager, would be required before any additional project work could begin. Please see Attachment 1, Application Form, Section 5.D (page 6 of 11).

**A.Q17. Is a water district eligible to receive funds in this program?**

A.A17. A water district is not eligible to receive funds in this program. Only California counties, incorporated cities or towns, California Native American tribes, and California Tribal Organizations are eligible to receive funds in this program. Please see Solicitation Manual, Section II.A., Eligibility (page 11 of 16).

**A.Q18. Due to scheduling issues on our end, we need to complete our grant application this week for submittal Monday morning at 8:00am. May we use the form as it stands today or does the application need to be on whatever the latest version of the grant form might be?**

A.A18: Please use the most recent version of the application, which can be found on the [solicitation webpage](https://www.energy.ca.gov/solicitations/2024-04/gfo-23-702-california-clean-energy-planning-program-first-come-first-served). Also, to clarify, the application period will begin on Tuesday (not Monday), May 7, 2024, starting at 8:00 a.m. (see Solicitation Manual Addendum 3, Section I.E, Key Activities Schedule (page 8 of 16) on the [solicitation webpage](https://www.energy.ca.gov/solicitations/2024-04/gfo-23-702-california-clean-energy-planning-program-first-come-first-served)).

**A.Q19: What is the schedule of reimbursements? We intend to finish a draft ordinance addressing permitting standards for Battery Energy Storage Systems in unincorporated Solano County in December 2024.**

A.A19: As described in the Attachment 2, Terms and Conditions, the grant recipient may request payment from the CEC at any time during the term of the Agreement for completed project work, but no more frequently than monthly. The CEC typically processes invoices within 30-45 days of receipt.

**Questions A.Q20-A.Q40 were submitted after April 30, 2024, and Before May 6, 2024, 11:59 p.m.**

**A.Q20: Can a tribe apply for both Category 1 and 2 funding activities?**

A.A20: Yes.

**A.Q21: I noticed that the application states that one additional page could be added to respond to certain questions –are lengthy responses not wanted?**

A.A21: Correct. As stated in the application, only summaries of clean energy plans or visions are required.

**A.Q22: I don't currently see this solicitation in the CEC's Grant Solicitation System.**

A.A22: You will be able to see the CCEPP in the CEC’s Grant Solicitation System starting Tuesday, May 7 at 8 a.m.

**A.Q23: If the project we are considering submitting an application for is a part of a larger project, do we have to provide the entire scope of the larger project?**

A.A23: You would only need to explain the scope of the larger project to the extent that it would help the reviewer of application understand the project for this solicitation.

**A.Q24: I am familiar with other CEC solicitations. Will the required budget and schedule be similar to those that have been required in other CEC solicitations?**

A.A24: Yes, they will likely be similar. If awarded a grant, as described in the Application Form, a project budget and schedule broken down by task and month or quarter will be required. If awarded a grant, example budgets and schedules can be provided if requested.

**A.Q25: The Solicitation Manual states that the schedule for the Notice of Proposed Awards (NOPA) would be "ongoing." Do we have to wait for the end of the solicitation period to know who has been awarded?**

A.A25: The CEC Agreement Manager will notify an applicant of the award amount as soon as possible after evaluation of the application and will update the NOPA often to let potential applicants know how much funding remains in each category.

**A.Q26: Do we need to include information (e.g., credentials, direct labor rates, and fringe benefit rates) about the city staff working on the project or just for the subject matter experts that would be working on the project?**

A.A26: If seeking reimbursement for city staff working on the project, then please provide the credentials, direct labor rates, and fringe benefit rates for the city staff as well. Note that this information is not required as part of the grant application. It will need to be submitted after execution of a grant agreement.

**A.Q27: What is the maximum award to a city?**

A.A27: $100,000.

**A.Q28: May a contractor submit the grant via the GSS on behalf of the county as long as the application is signed by the applying county?**

A.A28: Yes.

**A.Q29: Are letters of support required for the application?**

A.A29: No.

**A.Q30: Is this solicitation related to another recent CEC solicitation related to government building decarbonization? Is it ok to apply to both?**

A.A30: No, this solicitation is not related to any other CEC solicitation. This solicitation does not make any prohibitions in regard to any other solicitations. However, staff working on this solicitation are not familiar with the other solicitation that was referred to and you are encouraged to read all eligibility requirements of the other solicitation.

**A.Q31: Are non-profit organizations or private companies eligible for this solicitation?**

A.A31: No, only California counties, incorporated cities or towns, California Native American tribes, and California Tribal Organizations are eligible to receive funds in this program. Please see Solicitation Manual, Section II.A., Eligibility (page 11 of 16).

**A.Q32: What file format should the application be submitted in – Word or PDF?**

A.A32: Either format is acceptable.

**A.Q33: Can this program help my company engage with contracts and grant money to provide services to underserved communities?**

A.A33: No, only California counties, incorporated cities or towns, California Native American tribes, and California Tribal Organizations are eligible to receive funds in this program. Please see Solicitation Manual, Section II.A., Eligibility (page 11 of 16).

**A.Q34: Is a wet signature or an electronic signature preferred?**

A.A34: Either is acceptable.

**A.Q35: Is there a specific way the application must be titled?**

A.A35: No, there is not a specific way application filename(s) must be titled, although it would be helpful to the reviewing staff if the name of the submitting entity were included in the filename.

**A.Q36: Is the only evaluation criteria for this solicitation those listed on page 16 of the Solicitation Manual?**

A.A36: Yes. Note the CEC also reserves the right to reject an application for any reason, including the reasons listed in the Solicitation Manual, Section IV.C, Grounds to Reject an Application or Cancel an Award.

**A.Q37: How will grant recipients be notified?**

A.A37: The CEC Agreement Manager will notify an applicant of the award by telephone and email as soon as possible after evaluation of the application.

**A.Q38: In the Application Form, for Category 1 activities, it asks for the names and titles of the tribal representatives that would be attending meetings. Can the list of members be modified over the duration of the grant term?**

A.A38: Yes, different tribal members may participate in different clean energy-related events throughout the term of the grant. As identified in the Application Form (page 3), the event name, event date, and the names of the tribal member(s) planning to attend the event must be submitted to the CEC’s Contract Agreement Manager for approval at least three business days prior to the event.

**A.Q39: In the Application Form, for Category 2 activities, is one additional page each allowed for Section 5, Part A and for Part C or is only one page allowed for the entire application form?**

A.A39: Yes, one additional page may be submitted for Section 5, Part A and one additional page may be submitted for Section 5, Part C.

**A.Q40: If we are applying for Category 2, Type 1, and we have a vision as detailed on 5a, I assume we don't have to complete the following section that begins, "IF NO,....."**

A.A40: Correct, if the first part of Section 5A was completed, then the second part of Section 5A would not apply.

**Technical Questions**

**Technical Q1: Would hiring a consultant to provide an assessment of public buildings to determine its readiness for energy upgrades be eligible for funding? For example, the consultant would assess whether a building was ready for an upgrade or whether the building needed a new electrical panel before an electric heat pump could be installed. The information gathered in the assessment would feed into future projects.**

Technical A1: No, based on the information provided in the question, this activity is not eligible. The legislation that established the CCEPP grant program, Assembly Bill 128 (Ting, Chapter 21, Statutes of 2021), is specific to new clean energy facilities and related infrastructure to support the state reaching its goals set forth in Senate Bill 100 (SB 100) (De León, Chapter 312, Statutes of 2018). SB 100 establishes a target for eligible renewable energy resources and zero-carbon resources to supply 100 percent of retail sales and electricity procured to serve all state agencies by 2045. SB 100 legislation does not explicitly address building decarbonization or transportation decarbonization activities. Examples of eligible costs for CCEPP Category 3 funds include new or updates to general plan elements, zoning, action plans, policies, or ordinances that advance the development of clean energy; clean energy potential studies; or outreach and engagement of local communities. See Solicitation Manual, Section I.D, Project Scope of Work.

**T.Q2: Would a study on the lifecycle analysis for hydrogen production facilities developed and owned by a tribe be eligible for funding? If yes, would it fall under Category 2, Project Type 1 or 2?**

T.A2: The CEC is not able to answer this question without knowing the generation source of the hydrogen as not all hydrogen facilities are eligible under SB 100's renewable energy and zero-carbon resource policy. If the hydrogen was generated by eligible renewables or zero carbon resources, then the activity in question would likely be eligible for funding under Category 2, Project Type 2, “Subject matter experts selected by the California Native American tribe to provide the tribe with expertise related to clean energy technologies or their impacts” (see Solicitation Manual, Section I.D, Project Scope of Work). If you choose to submit an application with this technology, we encourage you to include information that shows how it is eligible under SB 100.

An alternative resource you may consider is the U.S. Department of Energy hydrogen lifecycle analysis tool, the “Greenhouse gases, Regulated Emissions, and Energy use in Technologies (GREET),” which may be found at: <https://www.energy.gov/eere/greet>.

**T.Q3: Located in Trinity County is an old subdivision with 1,000 parcels/residences without distributed electricity. All residents rely on generators. The county would like to perform a clean energy study to address the problem, such as calculating the reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from the subdivision if the subdivision were connected to the local power company. Would such a study be eligible for funding?**

T.A3: Based on the information provided in the question, this activity is likely eligible for funding under Category 3 and is an example of a clean energy potential study. See Solicitation Manual, Section D, Project Scope of Work.

**T.Q4: Could grant funds be used to develop an application to modify a land use designation for submission to a government agency, for example to the California Coastal Commission?**

T.A4: Yes, based on the information provided in the question, this activity is likely eligible for funding, as long as the ultimate goal of modifying the land use designation is to support clean energy development in a California county or incorporated city or town. The Application Form, Section 6.C asks applicants to describe how the proposed activities support the local government entity’s clean energy plan or vision.

**T.Q5: Although not a land use planning document, could grant funds be used to fund some or part of an overall strategic plan being prepared to help meet our city’s 2030 goal of being carbon-free?**

T.A5: Yes, based on the information provided in the question, this activity is likely eligible for funding, which could be studies, that support the city’s clean energy plan or vision. The Application Form, Section 6.C asks applicants to describe how the proposed activities support the local government entity’s clean energy plan or vision.

**T.Q6: Can these funds be used to fund a study that is part of a larger project that has already begun?**

T.A6: Yes, based on the information provided in the question, this activity is likely eligible for funding, however the funds cannot be used for work that was completed prior to the grant being awarded. Funds can be applied to portions of the project that occur after the grant agreement is executed and finish before March 1, 2026. In section 6.C. of the Application, the applicant must describe the activities being proposed and how they support the local government entity’s clean energy plan or vision.

**T.Q7: Are grant funds only for standalone renewable energy focused elements or could it be for meaningful inclusion of renewable energy policies within different elements?**

T.A7: Based on the information provided in the question, both activities are likely eligible for funding as long as the activities support the local government entity’s development of new or updated land use planning documents that support and advance the development of clean energy in their jurisdiction (See Solicitation Manual, Section I.A., Purpose of Solicitation.) In section 6.C. of the Application, the applicant must describe the activities being proposed and how they support the local government entity’s clean energy plan or vision.

**T.Q8: Would a county-wide electric vehicle charging station plan or strategic plan be eligible for grant funding?**

T.A8: No, based on the information provided in the question, this activity is likely not eligible. The legislation that established the CCEPP grant program, Assembly Bill 128 (Ting, Chapter 21, Statutes of 2021), is specific to new clean energy facilities and related infrastructure to support the state reaching its goals set forth in Senate Bill 100 (SB 100) (De León, Chapter 312, Statutes of 2018). SB 100 establishes a target for eligible renewable energy resources and zero-carbon resources to supply 100 percent of retail sales and electricity procured to serve all state agencies by 2045. SB 100 legislation does not explicitly address building decarbonization or transportation decarbonization activities. Examples of eligible costs for CCEPP Category 3 funds include new or updates to general plan elements, zoning, action plans, policies, or ordinances that advance the development of clean energy; clean energy potential studies; or outreach and engagement of local communities. See Solicitation Manual, Section D, Project Scope of Work.

**T.Q9: Could grant funds be used to modify an existing strategic energy plan to allow for clean energy development in more parts of the county?**

T.A9: Yes.

**T.Q10: Could grant funds be used by tribes that want to hire subject matter experts who are not part of the tribe, to help tribes understand environmental and land use planning documents related to lithium development?**

T.A10: Yes, awarded funds may be used to pay for in-house staff or subcontractors such as third-party subject matter experts (SMEs) to help tribes understand clean energy-related projects and planning documents.

**T.Q11: For Category 1 grants, what kind of evidence is expected to prove that the grant awardee attended the clean energy planning event?**

T.A11: Some examples would be a screenshot of the awardee’s name and picture at the event if attending remotely, or a photo of the attendee’s name on the event sign-in sheet if attending an event in-person.

**T.Q12: If a tribe wanted to engage with the local government on a land use planning document for clean energy, would that be considered an “administrative activity” [on the Application Form]?**

T.A12: Yes, mark “Other Administrative Activity” on Application Form, Section 5.B, and please describe how the work relates to your tribe’s clean energy development goals.

**T.Q13: Could tribes use grant funds to engage with energy projects that are not on tribal land, e.g., understanding and making comments on offshore wind projects?**

T.A13: Yes.

**Questions T.Q14-T.Q15 were submitted after April 30, 2024, and Before May 6, 2024, 11:59 p.m.**

**T.Q14: Would a study to help inform an update to our renewable energy ordinance be eligible for this program?**

T.A14: Yes.

**T.Q15: We think our program falls in Category 2 as it primarily focuses on assessing the energy production development of tribal resources like wind, solar, tidal and biomass. What is unclear to us is the Type as our program includes both salaries of Tribal staff and subject matter experts. Do we indicate both Type 1 and 2 on the application form and identify the costs associated with each type? Does the total of the two need to be no more than $200,000 or can we request up to $200,000 in each category?**

T.A15: Based on the information provided in the question, the project sounds like a Category 2, Project Type 2 project. Please complete Section 5, parts A through D of the Application Form (pages 4 through 6). Please note that Items 1 through 7 (pages 6 and 7), are only required **if awarded a grant**. Those items are **not** required as part of the application. See also response to A.Q11.

As stated in the Solicitation Manual, Table 1 (page 6), the maximum award for all activities under Category 2 is $200,000 per tribe, and per the Solicitation Manual, Evaluation Criteria (page 16), applications requesting more than $200,000 would be inconsistent with the Administrative Criteria and would receive a “No Pass” score.