**GRANT FUNDING OPPORTUNITY**

**California’s Fifth Climate Change Assessment**

**Tribal Research Grant Program**

**Round 2**

**GFO-23-701r2**

https://www.energy.ca.gov/funding-opportunities/solicitations

**State of California**

**California Energy Commission**

**July [~~May~~] 2024**



**California’s Fifth Climate Change Assessment**

**Tribal Research Grant Program**

**Executive Summary**

**California’s Fifth Climate Change Assessment**

California is experiencing climate change effects throughout its diverse geography, environments, and human communities, resulting in cumulative adverse impacts to the environment, human health, and critical infrastructure.

California's Fifth Climate Change Assessment (Fifth Climate Assessment; Assessment) will support on-the-ground implementation and decision-making at the local, regional, tribal, and state levels, especially focusing on the needs of vulnerable communities. The Fifth Climate Assessment will include:

* The next generation of downscaled climate projection data
* Primary research that addresses California-specific research needs and questions
* A Tribal Research Program focused on supporting tribally led climate research
* A suite of regional, topical, and statewide synthesis reports that translate this cutting-edge research to the needs and context of every region across the state
* Tools and resources that ensure all this information is driving climate action on the ground

To implement a cross-cutting suite of research products, the Assessment is supported by a collaborative multi-agency team to leverage existing expertise across state agencies, including the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR), California Natural Resources Agency, California Energy Commission (CEC), and California Strategic Growth Council (SGC). OPR is the lead agency for the Assessment and the Tribal Research Program. CEC is administering the Tribal Research Grant Program. Grantees will work closely with both OPR and CEC.

**Tribal Research Program**

Indigenous peoples are on the frontlines of those experiencing and adapting to climate change. California's Fourth Climate Assessment began to explore this connection and showed us that California Native American tribes (tribes) are actively managing climate change with innovative strategies that connect Indigenous Knowledges (IK) with other ways of knowing, including Western science. The Fourth Assessment's “Tribal and Indigenous Communities within California” report charged us to continue building on this effort, stating “this report is the beginning of something truly innovative: a mutual invitation between tribes and the state to share learning with an urgent focus on climate action, incorporating traditional knowledges and practices. This synthesis is the starting point of a new productive climate conversation between tribes and the state” (CA Fourth Climate Assessment Tribal and Indigenous Communities Report, 2018). Through the Fifth Climate Assessment Tribal Research Program, California is collaborating with tribes to support tribally led climate change research initiatives.

The Tribal Research Program aims to:

* Strengthen partnerships with tribes through early, frequent, and meaningful engagement and consultation
* Establish a **Tribal Advisory Group** to ensure collaboration on Indigenous Knowledges and tribal expertise throughout the Assessment
* Support tribally led research through a **Tribal Research Grant Program** to address California-specific tribal research needs and tribally led, local climate assessments.
* Develop a **Tribal and Indigenous Communities Report** that includes tribally led research and summarizes climate change impacts on tribes in California
* Collaborate with tribes to develop **Guidance on Collaboration and Protection of IK and Tribal Expertise** through research processes and report handling

**Tribal Research Grant Program**

The Tribal Research Grant Program will fund tribally led climate change research, assessments, and similar projects deemed a priority by the applying tribe. This includes projects that have an IK focus—a body of observations, oral and written knowledge, and practices that have been historically underfunded in climate initiatives—as well as Western science approaches, and the collaboration of the two knowledge systems. The program will accommodate diverse geographies, environments, project types, and climate impacts with tribal governments and tribal communities. The CEC encourages, but does not require, grant recipients to share the results of projects funded under this solicitation with California's Fifth Climate Change Assessment. Recipients shall inform the CEC whether and how project results can be shared with California’s Fifth Climate Change Assessment during the agreement development phase.

**Tribal Research Grant Program Timeline: Round 2**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Milestones** | **Round Dates** |
| Solicitation Release | May 1, 2024 |
| Pre-Application Workshop: 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. Pacific Time | May 16, 2024 |
| Office Hours:  2:30 – 3:30 p.m. Pacific Time  5:30 – 6:30 p.m. Pacific Time | May 29, 2024  May 30, 2024 |
| **Due Date for Written Questions** | **May 31, 2024** |
| Anticipated Distribution of Questions and Answers | Week of June 10, 2024 |
| **Due Date for Submitting Applications: 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time** | **July 31, 2024** |
| Anticipated Notice of Proposed Award Posting Date | August 23, 2024 |
| Grant Agreement Development Phase, and Anticipated CEC Business Meeting\* | September 2024 to January 2025 |
| Anticipated Agreement Start Date\* | February 1, 2025 |
| Begin Fifth Climate Assessment Collaborations | February 1, 2025 |
| Project Deliverables Submitted to Fifth Climate Assessment | December 2025 |
| Anticipated Agreement End Date | March 31, 2026, or before |

\*Awardees will work with CEC staff to finalize their grant agreements during the agreement development phase in preparation for approval at a CEC business meeting. If approved at a CEC business meeting, the agreement must then be signed by the awardee and CEC. Grant project work may commence after this. We recognize that these activities also depend on a tribe’s internal processes.

**Who informed the development of this grant program?**

The development of the Tribal Research Grant Program was informed by engagement between July 2022 and June 2023 through the following activities:

* 6 tribal workshops and/or listening sessions
* 12 presentations at various tribal workgroups and conferences
* 5 tribes in consultation
* Over 70 specific comments
* Multiple survey responses to identify priority topics and gaps
* Dozens of 1:1 conversations with tribes and tribal serving organizations

**Eligibility**

This solicitation is open to all California Native American tribes, California tribal organizations, and tribal-serving non-governmental organizations (NGOs). California Native American tribes include federally and non-federally recognized tribes on the Native American Heritage Commission list. A California tribal organization is a corporation, association, or group controlled, sanctioned, or chartered by a California Native American tribe that is subject to its laws, the laws of the State of California, or the laws of the United States. A tribal-serving NGO is a non-governmental organization that serves tribes.

Tribes entering into agreement with the CEC will NOT be required to provide a waiver of sovereign immunity covering the scope of the grant agreement.

**How do I apply?**

Detailed submission instructions can be found on page 13 of this solicitation manual in [*Section IV. Application Organization and Submission* *Instructions*](#_Application_Organization_and). Electronic submissions will be accepted through the CEC Grant Solicitation System, available at: <https://gss.energy.ca.gov/>. This online tool allows applicants to submit their electronic documents to the CEC. Hard copy submissions will be accepted via U.S. Mail, Federal Express (FedEx), and United Parcel Service (UPS), mailed to:

GFO-23-701

Attn: Eilene Cary

California Energy Commission

715 P Street, MS-18

Sacramento, CA 95814

**How can I learn more?**

For information on this solicitation, please visit the solicitation's funding page at [Funding Opportunities/Solicitations](https://www.energy.ca.gov/funding-opportunities/solicitations).

For more information on the Tribal Research Grant Program, please visit [Tribal Research Grant Program](https://www.energy.ca.gov/programs-and-topics/programs/tribal-program/tribal-research-grant-program).

For more information on the Tribal Research Program, please visit [Tribal Research Program](https://opr.ca.gov/climate/icarp/climate-assessment/tribal-research.html).

For more information on California's Fifth Climate Change Assessment, please visit [Fifth Climate Assessment](https://opr.ca.gov/climate/icarp/climate-assessment/).

Table of Contents

[I. Introduction 3](#_Toc143623318)

[A. Climate Assessment Background 3](#_Toc143623319)

[B. Tribal Research Program 3](#_Toc143623320)

[C. Tribal Research Grant Program - Purpose of Solicitation 4](#_Toc143623321)

[II. Grant Program Summary 5](#_Toc143623322)

[A. Overview 5](#_Toc143623323)

[B. Confidentiality 5](#_Toc143623324)

[C. Applicant Eligibility and Requirements 6](#_Toc143623325)

[III. Grant Administration 11](#_Toc143623326)

[A. Funding Availability and Activity Schedule 11](#_Toc143623327)

[B. Program Timeline 12](#_Toc143623328)

[C. Notice of Pre-Application Workshop and Office Hours 12](#_Toc143623329)

[D. Questions 13](#_Toc143623330)

[E. Eligible Costs 14](#_Toc143623331)

[F. Ineligible Costs 15](#_Toc143623332)

[G. Invoicing and Payment 15](#_Toc143623333)

[H. Match Funding Requirement 15](#_Toc143623334)

[I. Terms and Conditions 15](#_Toc143623335)

[IV. Application Organization and Submission Instructions 16](#_Toc143623336)

[A. Application Format 16](#_Toc143623337)

[B. Application Content 16](#_Toc143623338)

[C. Application delivery 17](#_Toc143623339)

[V. Evaluation and Award Process 18](#_Toc143623340)

[A. Application Evaluation 18](#_Toc143623341)

[B. Ranking, Notice of Proposed Award, and Agreement Development 22](#_Toc143623342)

[C. Grounds to Reject an Application or Cancel an Award 23](#_Toc143623343)

[D. Miscellaneous 23](#_Toc143623344)

[VI. Applicants’ Admonishment & Responsibility 24](#_Toc143623345)

[VII. Key Words/Terms 24](#_Toc143623346)

**Attachments**

| Attachment Number | Title of Section |
| --- | --- |
| 1 | Application Form |
| 2 | Project Narrative |
| 3 | Project Team |
| 4 | Scope of Work and Schedule |
| 5 | Budget Forms |
| 6 | CEQA/Environmental Compliance |
| 7 (if applicable) | Previous Work Products |
| 8 (highly encouraged) | Letter of Support |
| 9 | Applicant Declaration |
| 10 | Data Sharing Agreement Template |
| 11 | Terms and Conditions |
| 12 | Fifth Climate Assessment Research Topics |

# Introduction

**NOTE: This solicitation is for California's Fifth Climate Change Assessment Tribal Research Grant Program. The solicitation documents are unique and different from other California Energy Commission solicitations. Please do not use attachments from other Energy Commission grant solicitations (e.g., EPIC and FPIP programs).**

## Climate Assessment Background

California is experiencing climate change effects throughout its diverse geography, environments, and human communities, resulting in cumulative adverse impacts to the environment, human health, and critical infrastructure. Expected future trends for climate impacts in California include:

* Rising temperatures and more frequent extreme heat events
* Rising sea levels
* Declining snowpack
* Increasing heavy precipitation events and flooding
* Increasing drought
* Increasing area burned by wildfire

With the passage of Senate Bill (SB) 1320 (Stern, 2020), and funding from the 2021 Climate Budget, California's Fifth Climate Change Assessment (Fifth Climate Assessment; Assessment) will implement the Legislature's direction on climate change research, including building out much needed information on the economic costs of climate impacts and the benefits of adaptation actions. It will also continue to elevate equity and environmental justice issues, as well as California’s leadership in building research partnerships with tribes.

California's Fifth Climate Change Assessment will support on-the-ground implementation and decision-making at the local, regional, tribal, and state levels, especially focusing on the needs of vulnerable communities. The Fifth Climate Assessment will include:

* The next generation of downscaled climate projection data
* Primary research that addresses California-specific research needs and questions
* A Tribal Research Program focused on supporting tribally led climate research
* A suite of regional, topical, and statewide synthesis reports that translate this cutting-edge research to the needs and context of every region across the state
* Tools and resources that ensure all this information is driving climate action on the ground

To implement this cross-cutting suite of research products, the Assessment is supported by a collaborative multi-agency team to leverage existing expertise and roles across state agencies, including the Governor's Office of Planning and Research (OPR), California Natural Resources Agency, California Energy Commission (CEC), and California Strategic Growth Council (SGC).

## Tribal Research Program

Indigenous peoples are on the frontlines of those experiencing and adapting to climate change. California's Fourth Climate Assessment began to explore this connection and showed us that California Native American tribes (tribes) are actively managing climate change with innovative strategies using Indigenous Knowledges (IK) and tribal expertise with other ways of knowing, including Western science. The Fourth Assessment Summary Report from Tribal and Indigenous Communities within California charged us to continue building on this effort, stating “this report is the beginning of something truly innovative: a mutual invitation between tribes and the state to share learning with an urgent focus on climate action, incorporating traditional knowledges and practices. This synthesis is the starting point of a new productive climate conversation between tribes and the state” (CA Fourth Climate Assessment Tribal and Indigenous Communities Report, 2018). Through the Fifth Climate Assessment Tribal Research Program, California is collaborating with tribes to support and invest in tribally led climate change research initiatives. Indigenous Knowledges (short for Indigenous knowledge systems, and also referred to as Traditional Knowledges, Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK), and Tribal Expertise) are bodies of observations, oral and written knowledges, practices, innovations, and beliefs concerning the relationships of living beings (including humans) with one another and their environment. They often evolve by adaptive processes and are handed down through generations by cultural transmission, but can also be learned through ceremonies or spiritual means.

The Tribal Research Program aims to:

* Strengthen partnerships with tribes through early, frequent, and meaningful engagement and consultation
* Establish a Tribal Advisory Group to ensure collaboration on IK and tribal expertise throughout the Assessment
* Support tribally led research through a Tribal Grant Program to address California-specific tribal research needs and tribally led, local climate assessments
* Develop a Tribal and Indigenous Communities Report that includes tribally led research and summarizes climate change impacts on tribes in California
* Collaborate with tribes to develop Guidance on Collaboration and Protection of IK and Tribal Expertise through research processes and report handling

## Tribal Research Grant Program - Purpose of Solicitation

The purpose of this solicitation is to provide funding for tribes, tribal organizations, and tribal-serving non-governmental organizations (NGOs) to conduct tribally led climate change research, assessments, and similar projects deemed a priority by the applying tribe. SB 170 (Skinner, Chapter 240, Statutes of 2021) appropriated $3.625 million in grant funds for the CEC to administer pursuant to this purpose.

The CEC encourages, but does not require, grant recipients to share the results of projects funded under this solicitation with the California's Fifth Climate Change Assessment. Recipients shall inform the CEC whether and how project results can be shared with California's Fifth Climate Change Assessment during the agreement development phase. During agreement development, a grant awardee may request a Data Sharing Agreement. See Section II.B and Attachment 10 for more information.

Please refer to Section III.B: Grant Administration, Program Timeline. Grant awardees interested in submitting project results to the Fifth Climate Assessment may begin collaborations with the Assessment project teams in February 2025. Project deliverables must be submitted to the Assessment project teams in December 2025 for maximum inclusion in the Fifth Climate Assessment reports, although this is optional for grant recipients. Awardees will have until January 31, 2026, to finalize projects for purposes of the grant program.

# Grant Program Summary

## Overview

The Tribal Research Grant Program will accommodate diverse geographies, environments, project types, and climate impacts with tribal governments and communities.

This program provides funding for tribes, tribal organizations, and tribal-serving NGOs to conduct tribally led climate change research, assessments, and similar projects deemed a priority by the applying tribe. SB 170 (Skinner, Chapter 240, Statutes of 2021) appropriated $3.625 million in grant funds for the CEC to administer this grant program.

This program will fund tribally led projects that have an IK focus, as well as Western science approaches, and combinations of the two knowledge systems.

## Confidentiality

Confidentiality in a Grant Agreement Awarded Under this Solicitation

CEC and OPR staff acknowledge and respect the sensitivity of the data and knowledge of tribes and recognize that the safest place for tribes’ confidential information is with the tribes themselves. Accordingly, if an applicant is awarded a grant under this solicitation, they may request a Data Sharing Agreement (see Attachment 10) that will govern the rights and responsibilities of the parties with respect to confidential information submitted in Grant Agreement Products (i.e., tangible items specified for delivery in the Scope of Work, Attachment 4). If a Data Sharing Agreement is requested, CEC, OPR, and the grant Recipient will attempt to negotiate and sign a Data Sharing Agreement and the grant agreement will be conditional upon signing of a Data Sharing Agreement that is satisfactory to all parties. Attachment 10 to this solicitation presents a template Data Sharing Agreement.

Although the option to request a Data Sharing Agreement is available to applicants, it is strongly recommended that applicants only propose to include confidential information in a Product if it is imperative for the project. Applicants are instead encouraged to find solutions so that Products can be delivered without confidential information. Solutions include aggregating data, allowing CEC or OPR staff to view information but not retain it, redacting sensitive information, or summarizing sensitive information so that it is no longer sensitive.

Note that the CEC intends to share Products with OPR, and CEC and OPR may use the Products to inform the Fifth Climate Assessment. The CEC and OPR make no claim of ownership, license, or any other interest to underlying data, intellectual property, IK (such as any religious, spiritual, medicinal, and cultural practices that are linked to a specific geographical location or sacred site), or other information that is not specified for delivery to the CEC in a Product in the Scope of Work.

Note too that if an applicant contributes all or part of its Products for use in the Fifth Climate Assessment, the applicant will work with OPR and a third-party contractor to integrate the relevant project components into appropriate Fifth Climate Assessment reports. The applicant will have the opportunity for a final review of the contributions prior to publishing. Support for capacity in this process may be included in this grant application.

**Confidentiality of Application Documents**

Applicants should not submit any confidential or sensitive information as part of their application. Although the entire evaluation process from receipt of applications up to the posting of the Notice of Proposed Awards (NOPA) is confidential, after the CEC posts the NOPA or if the solicitation is cancelled, all submitted documents will be disclosable if a Public Records Act request is submitted for the documents. The CEC will not accept or retain applications that identify any portion as confidential. If your proposal is working with culturally sensitive or confidential information, CEC recommends that you redact that information and provide a general summary, removing any sensitive information.

## Applicant Eligibility and Requirements

Eligibility

This solicitation is open to all California Native American tribes, California tribal organizations, and tribal-serving NGOs. California Native American tribes include federally and non-federally recognized tribes on the Native American Heritage Commission list. A California tribal organization is a corporation, association, or group controlled, sanctioned, or chartered by a California Native American tribe that is subject to its laws, the laws of the State of California, or the laws of the United States. A tribal-serving NGO is a non-governmental organization that serves tribes.

Tribal organizations and tribal-serving NGOs must provide an explanation as to how California tribes will be the primary beneficiary of their proposed project. Although all benefits and beneficiaries do not need to be within California borders, because this grant program is funded with California taxpayer dollars, most of each project must be located in California, and most of the benefits associated with each project must be for California Native American tribes located within California.

Tribes entering into agreement with the CEC will NOT be required to provide a waiver of sovereign immunity covering the scope of the grant agreement.

Consistency with Tribal and State Climate Goals

The Tribal Research Grant Program encourages projects that align with the goals of the Fifth Climate Assessment and Tribal Research Program or with other tribal and state climate change priorities and goals. Each grant application may include capacity for participation and engagement in the Assessment process such as report writing, regional engagement, and participation in development of the Tribal and Indigenous Communities Report.

Each project will need to align with at least one of the following objectives of the program:

* Support one or more of the broader Fifth Climate Assessment goals to:
  + Produce actionable science and data, specific to California, that depict current and future climate change impacts and trends. Fifth Climate Assessment Research Topics can be found in Attachment 12
  + Conduct and compile original research—informed by foundational climate projections—that supports climate resilient policy and practice in California
  + Translate climate projections, data, and research into regionally and topically specific products with the primary audience of local and regional decision-makers and State agencies to guide climate resilient planning, investments, and implementation
  + Support tribally led processes to address California Native American tribes' research needs and questions related to climate change
* Supports a priority or need identified by the applying tribe or tribes
* Support other state climate change priorities and goals

General Requirements

The Tribal Research Grant Program has identified six (6) distinct groups and categories of eligible projects. Each project must align with at least one group below; however, if more than one group applies to your project, you may identify one (1) primary group and one or more secondary groups. All applications will be evaluated, scored, and ranked against all other applications submitted within this Grant Round regardless of group. Project examples are included to support applicants in determining the correct group for their project. Project examples are not exhaustive.

For all groups, the application must describe which tribal, federal, state, and local environmental laws or policies (e.g., California Environmental Quality Act and National Environmental Policy Act) apply to the project and how the applicant will ensure compliance with those laws and policies. See Attachment 6.

If requesting funding for environmental analysis, applications must describe how the funds will be used to comply with environmental impact analysis and whether you are obtaining additional funds from other sources to conduct the environmental impact analysis.

Project Groups

**Group 1:** **Topic-specific Research.** Grants awarded under Group 1 should focus on one or more climate change topics of concern to the tribe. Applications in Group 1 may propose research on climate change impacts, or climate change responses and mitigation. Methodologies used can be IK, Western science, community knowledge, or a combination of these. *California’s Fifth Climate Change Assessment – Climate Research Topics* may provide additional inspiration and examples for project ideas. See Attachment 12.

*Project Examples:*

* Climate change-related impacts on tribal cultural resources, culturally important species, traditional gathering areas, ceremonial sites, other cultural sites, as well as the impacts communities and individuals may experience due to (further) loss of their culture.
* Effects of climate change on California Native American tribes’ traditional food sources, food systems, and culturally important species.
* Creating a register—for the tribe's use only—of IK-bearers and their areas of expertise
* Interview IK bearers on a topic, such as traditional burning, to support implementation of cultural burning on the landscape
* Conduct a literature review of one or more climate change impacts relevant to the tribe (e.g., sea level rise, flash flooding, changes in vegetation patterns, etc.)
* Study of the state-of-the-art in climate change assessments and adaptive responses
* Study climate change impacts to a resource, for example, sea level rise impacts to tribal cultural resources or a sacred gathering area

**Group 2:** **Climate Assessment.** Projects funded under Group 2 should consist of tribal climate assessments, an assessment oflocally specific climate risks that accounts for the unique priorities, values, and concerns of individual tribes or intertribal groups. Climate assessments must focus on a specific geographic area on tribal lands or areas that affect tribal lands/members. Climate assessments may be as narrow or as broad as the applicant tribe requires.

*Project Examples:*Climate assessments focused on:

* Landscape scale/reservation level assessments
* Sea level rise and related impacts such as water source salinity
* Impacts of warming temperatures on culturally relevant resources

A map of the assessment area, excluding sensitive information, must be submitted for assessment grants. We encourage partnerships as deemed appropriate by the tribe.

**Group 3:** **Implementation.** Projects funded under Group 3 include climate change adaptation and mitigation implementation projects. Implementation grants shall identify the climate change impact(s) the project addresses, the project site’s geographic area, and a description of adaptive or mitigative activities.

*Project Examples:*

* Initial reforestation of tribal lands affected by a catastrophic wildfire
* Eradication of invasive species and reintroduction of a native species
* Protection of cultural resources from a certain climate impact

Applicants must demonstrate that the tribe controls or has permission to work on the implementation site. An executive summary, previous work products, and map of the project area (if applicable) excluding sensitive information, must be submitted for implementation projects. Implementation projects are likely to require maintenance and monitoring for many years. Applicants must indicate how they intend to sustain this project in future years, whether it is through a grant or another mechanism.

**Group 4:** **Information Sharing.** Information sharing maintains and advances practical and culturally relevant knowledge in Indigenous and Western scientific practices alike. The exchange of teaching and learning is important between and among peer groups (e.g., tribal elders, tribal youth, tribal government workers, and non-tribal agency personnel) and especially between generations. Group 4 grants are intended to improve and support knowledge sharing within, among, and between tribes. This may include knowledge sharing with other government agencies as deemed appropriate by tribes. Information sharing grants should focus on communicating climate change research.

*Project Examples:*

* Intergenerational interviews
* IK workshops
* Creation of videos for storytelling
* Intertribal conferences
* Proposals to organize and lead tribal-agency partnership workshops on Indigenous-Western science engagement

Applicants may elect to partner with an agency or other tribal communities on a project.

**Group 5:** **Tool Development.** California Native American tribes each have unique levels of involvement with climate change research. Although California's climate change knowledge base is vast and quickly growing, this knowledge base is not always easily accessible, understood, or made available in a way that is meaningful for tribes. Group 5 grants should develop new tools, or aggregate or expand existing tools to address imbalances in tribal access and use of climate change data.

*Project Examples:*

* Tracking the condition of culturally significant plant stands in a geographic information system (GIS)
* Creating user guides (where they do not exist or are inaccessible to tribes) for complex databases (for example, a database of tribal health information and climate impacts/adaptations)
* Decision trees for interpreting and acting on existing climate change data
* Utilizing existing databases to create or expand interactive planning tools

Applications should include plans for sustaining online tools over time.

**Group 6:** **Other.** Given the unique and diverse climate needs of California tribes, the Fifth Climate Assessment team cannot anticipate all possible types of climate change and IK projects that the Tribal Research Grant Program may fund. Applicants with a relevant proposal that does not clearly fit into groups 1–5 should submit applications under Group 6. Applications in Group 6 may include the implementation of IK that have no or few known parallels in Western science traditions but that accord with tribes’ understanding of human-environment interactions.

*Project Examples:*

* Restoration of a traditional ceremony that establishes or renews the correct relationship between the applicant tribe (and others, as might be applicable) and the natural world.

As stated in the Confidentiality Section (II.2) of this document, the Fifth Climate Assessment team will uphold tribes’ right to protect this knowledge as well as to share it as the tribes see fit.

Funding Levels

A mixture of small, medium, and large grants will provide different funding options for varying tribal needs and priorities. Some examples of projects that would be considered eligible for funding under the different funding amounts are listed below. If an applicant has an idea for a project that is not listed but has been identified as a priority by a tribe, CEC encourages applicants to attend Office Hours as listed in the Timeline or contact the Commission Agreement Officer (contact listed in Section III.D of the solicitation), as it may still be eligible.

**Small Grant (up to $20,000).**

Examples include, but are not limited to:

* **Research**: Single subject focused research (e.g., wildfire or cultural burning)
* **Climate change related project**: Specific task or focus of a larger on-going climate change related project, including a project already funded by this grant program
* **Match**: Match for another topically related grant not funded by this program
* **Indigenous Knowledge**: Specific individual oral history recording or other knowledge sharing project concerning climate change topics (i.e., inter-generational knowledge sharing, youth mentorship, developing and hosting an IK workshop)
* **Convenings**: Convening of a tribally led inter-tribal or state agency gathering
* **CA Climate Assessment Participation**: Attendance of Fifth Climate Assessment regional tribal scoping and planning meetings

**Medium Grant (up to $100,000).**

Examples include, but are not limited to:

* **Research**: Multi-subject focused research (e.g., the cascading and compounding climate impacts associated with fire, flooding, and plants that prevent erosion)
* **Climate change related project**: Large specific tasks or several tasks or foci of a larger on-going climate change related project, including a project already funded by this grant program
* **Match**: Match for another topically related grant not funded by this program
* **Indigenous Knowledge**: Multiple individual oral history recording concerning climate change topics
* **Convenings**: Development of a tribally led extensive knowledge sharing program concerning climate change topics and traditional ecological knowledge (i.e., establishing a youth conservation corps, developing and implementing an IK educational program)
* **CA Climate Assessment Participation:** Development of case studies for the Tribal and Indigenous Communities Report

**Large Grant (up to $200,000).**

Examples include, but are not limited to:

* **Research**: Large multi-subject ecological research (e.g., fire, flooding, botany and erosion, basketry materials and hunting, as related to California Native American community resiliency)
* **Climate change related project**: Large on-going climate change related project, including a project already funded by this grant program
* **Match**: Match for another topically related grant not funded by this program
* **Indigenous Knowledge**: Community oral history recording concerning climate change topic(s) or other knowledge sharing programs
* **Convenings**: Development of a tribally led extensive knowledge sharing program concerning climate change topics and traditional ecological knowledge (i.e., establishing a youth conservation corps, developing, and implementing an IK educational program)
* **CA Climate Assessment Participation**: Development of region or statewide climate planning tool or reports for tribes

**Collaborative Grant (up to $400,000) Must include at least two tribes and all tribes must play an active role in the project.** Examples include, but are not limited to:

* **Regional Network Planning:** Collaboration and planning with multiple tribes to establish regional networks such as a Tribal Climate Stewardship Network
* **Climate change related project**: Landscape or regional scale assessment or climate change project
* **Convenings:** Inter-tribal knowledge sharing program

# Grant Administration

## Funding Availability and Activity Schedule

Amount Available and Minimum/Maximum Funding Amounts

There is up to **$1,767,315** available for grants under Round 2 of this solicitation. There was up to $3,625,000 available for grants in total under this program, and $1,857,685 was awarded in Round 1. Funding levels vary based on project type, from maximum awards of $20,000 to $400,000 per awarded applicant based on the Grant Type.

| Grant Type | Maximum Funding Award Amount |
| --- | --- |
| Small Grants | $20,000 |
| Medium Grants | $100,000 |
| Large Grants | $200,000 |
| Collaborative Grants | $400,000 |

| Round | Amount |
| --- | --- |
| Grant Round 2: 2024-2025  current round open | $1,767,315 |
| Grant Round 1: 2023-2024  past round already awarded | $1,857,685 |

Funding Determination

Funding determination will be based on the Evaluation and Award Process described in Section V.

Statutory Funding Deadlines

Funding through the Tribal Research Grant Program is available for encumbrance (funding reservation) until June 30, 2026.

Change in Funding Amount

Along with any other rights and remedies available to it, the CEC reserves the right to:

* Increase or decrease the available funding, the maximum funding award amounts, and the estimated amounts available in each Grant Round described in this section
* Allocate any additional or unawarded funds to passing applications, in rank order
* Reallocate funding between any of the Grant Rounds
* Reduce funding to an amount deemed appropriate if the budgeted funds do not provide full funding for agreements. In this event, the Grant Recipient and Commission Agreement Manager will reach agreement on a reduced Scope of Work commensurate with available funding

## Program Timeline

The proposed timeline below is for Grant Round 2 and is subject to change. An addendum will be released if the dates change for activities that appear in bold.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Milestones** | **Round Dates** |
| Solicitation Release | May 1, 2024 |
| Pre-Application Workshop: 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. Pacific Time | May 16, 2024 |
| Office Hours:  2:30 – 3:30 p.m. Pacific Time  5:30 – 6:30 p.m. Pacific Time | May 29, 2024  May 30, 2024 |
| **Due Date for Written Questions** | **May 31, 2024** |
| Anticipated Distribution of Questions and Answers | Week of June 10, 2024 |
| **Due Date for Submitting Applications: 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time** | **July 31, 2024** |
| Anticipated Notice of Proposed Award Posting Date | August 23, 2024 |
| Grant Agreement Development Phase, and Anticipated CEC Business Meeting\* | September 2024 to January 2025 |
| Anticipated Agreement Start Date\* | February 1, 2025 |
| Begin Fifth Climate Assessment Collaborations | February 1, 2025 |
| Project Deliverables Submitted to Fifth Climate Assessment | December 2025 |
| Anticipated Agreement End Date | March 31, 2026, or before |

\*Awardees will work with CEC staff to finalize their grant agreements during the agreement development phase in preparation for approval at a CEC business meeting. If approved at a CEC business meeting, the agreement must then be signed by the awardee and CEC. Grant project work may commence after this. We recognize that these activities also depend on a tribe's internal processes.

## Notice of Pre-Application Workshop and Office Hours

CEC and OPR staff will hold a virtual Pre-Application Workshop to discuss and answer questions about the solicitation at the date and time listed above. CEC and OPR staff will also hold Office Hours to answer questions about the solicitation and the application process at the dates and times listed above. Office Hours are mainly opportunities for applicants to ask questions that come up as they develop their applications. Participation in the Pre-Application Workshop and Office Hours is optional but encouraged.

Note that all questions asked at the Pre-Application Workshop, at Office Hours, or which are submitted in writing to the Commission Agreement Officer as described below will be made available in a Q&A document along with the CEC's final answers to those questions. Q&A documents will be posted at this solicitation's funding page at <https://www.energy.ca.gov/funding-opportunities/solicitations>

**Zoom Instructions:**

To join the Zoom meeting, go to <https://zoom.us/join> and enter the Meeting ID below and select “join from your browser.” Participants will then enter the meeting password listed below and their name. Participants will select the “Join” button.

**Meeting ID:** 824 6900 0462

**Meeting Password:** 729189

**Topic:** California's Fifth Climate Change Assessment: Tribal Research Grant Program

**Telephone Access Only:**

Call **1-888-475-4499** (Toll Free) or **1-877-853-5257** (Toll Free). When prompted, enter the meeting number above. International callers may select a number from the Zoom International Dial-in Number List at: https://energy.zoom.us/u/adjzKUXvoy. To comment, dial \*9 to “raise your hand” and \*6 to mute/unmute your phone line.

**Access by Mobile Device:**

Download the application from the Zoom Download Center, https://energy.zoom.us/download.

**Technical Support:**

* For assistance with problems or questions about joining or attending the meeting,

please call Zoom Technical Support at **1-888-799-9666 ext. 2.** You may also contact the CEC's Public Advisor's Office at publicadvisor@energy.ca.gov, or (916) 957-7910.

* System Requirements: To determine whether your computer is compatible, visit:

<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362023-System-requirements-for-Windows-macOS-and-Linux>.

* If you have a disability and require assistance to participate, please contact Erica Rodriguez by e-mail at Erica.Rodriguez@energy.ca.gov at least five days in advance.

## Questions

During the solicitation process, direct written questions to the Commission Agreement Officer (CAO) listed below:

Eilene Cary, Commission Agreement Officer

California Energy Commission

715 P Street, MS-18

Sacramento, California 95814

E-mail: Eilene.Cary@energy.ca.gov

All **technical** questions must be received by the Deadline for Written Questions listed in the “Program Timeline” above. Questions received after the deadline may be answered at the CEC's discretion. **Non-technical** questions (e.g., questions concerning application format requirements or attachment instructions) may be submitted to the CAO at any time prior to 5:00 p.m. of the application deadline date.

The questions and answers will also be posted on the Commission's website at: https://www.energy.ca.gov/funding-opportunities/solicitations

If an applicant discovers a **conflict, discrepancy, omission, or other error** in the solicitation at any time prior to 5:00 p.m. of the application deadline date, the applicant may notify the CEC in writing and request modification or clarification of the solicitation. The CEC, at its discretion, will provide modifications or clarifications by either an addendum to the solicitation or by written notice to all entities that requested the solicitation. At its discretion, the CEC may, in addition to any other actions it may choose, re-open the question/answer period to provide all applicants the opportunity to seek any further clarification required.

**Any verbal communication with a CEC employee or anyone else concerning this solicitation is not binding on the State and will in no way alter a specification, term, or condition of the solicitation.**

## Eligible Costs

The list below provides eligible costs using grant funds. All eligible costs must directly relate to the grant project. Applicants should ensure that costs proposed in the project budget (Attachment 5) are eligible for funding.

* **Staff Costs:** Grant recipients, subgrantees, and their contractors' staff costs, including salary at an hourly rate, benefits, taxes, and leave. Staff may be full or part-time employees. If Applicants wish to use grant funds to pay for interns, fellows, or other positions that are not on an organization's payroll, these costs should be classified in the budget as a direct cost via a consultant contract
* **Program Meeting/Workshop Attendance:** Program meetings and workshops, including regular check-in meetings; peer-to-peer learning sessions; and virtual technical assistance events
* **Travel Costs:** Travel reimbursements should adhere to the [State rates and conditions](https://www.calhr.ca.gov/employees/Pages/travel-reimbursements.aspx) established on the CalHR website, except for “incidentals” and out-of-state travel, which will not be reimbursable under this grant
* **Language Access:** Translation and interpretation for meetings and written materials
* **Evaluation Activities:** Costs associated with evaluation of project activities
* **Administrative Costs:** Costs incurred by the recipient to administer the grant, or costs incurred by subgrantees to perform the tasks necessary to fulfill the deliverables outlined in these guidelines
* **Operating Expenses and Equipment Costs:** Costs that are not included as part of direct project costs (for functions such as accounting, budgeting, audits, business services, information technology, janitorial, rent, utilities, supplies, etc.)
* **Tools, Subscriptions, and Software:** Subscriptions to tools and other software that will help increase capacity, facilitate communication, or otherwise facilitate implementation of the project such as project management software, videoconferencing technology subscriptions, and mapping software
* **Engagement, Outreach, Education, and Training:** Costs related to the development and administration of engagement, outreach, education, and training activities under the grant, including, but not limited to:
  + Materials developed for outreach events, trainings, and other grant activities
* **Access to Proprietary Data or Research Materials:** Costs to conduct research, market, and feasibility studies, compiling and analyzing community needs-related information studies, access to proprietary data
* **Environmental Analysis:** Environmental studies, plans, or documents normally required for project development under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), or the tribe’s own ordinances as applicable
* **Facilitation for Meetings:** 
  + Rental costs of equipment, facilities, or venues
  + Transportation stipends and provision of transportation services for community residents, such as a vanpool

## Ineligible Costs

Grant funds may not be used for the following costs and are not reimbursable:

* Costs that occur outside of the Grant Agreement term
* Direct lobbying
* The following costs associated with community engagement and outreach:
  + Direct cash benefits or subsidies to participants
  + Alcoholic refreshments
  + Participant incentives, such as door prizes, which are unrelated to specific community work
  + General meetings that do not specifically discuss or advance implementation of the Tribal Research Grant Project

## Invoicing and Payment

* Payment is issued as reimbursement for eligible costs. However, an advance payment of up to 25% of awarded grant funds may be available to California 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations. Pursuant to Government Code Section 11019.3, California 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations may receive up to 25% of state grant or contract funds up front as advance payment, subject to Energy Commission approval. If an applicant is a 501(c)(3) non-profit and is awarded a grant under this solicitation, they may request advance payment during the agreement development phase. If requested, the Energy Commission will provide special terms and conditions consistent with the requirements of Government Code Section 11019.3 to the awardee, which will become a part of the grant agreement.
* The Commission Agreement Manager will provide a template invoice spreadsheet to the grant Recipient
* If invoicing for staff time, the template invoice spreadsheet must identify the employee's name, hours worked, and billing rate to be included as a reimbursable expense
* To avoid processing and workload delays, CEC staff encourages invoicing on a quarterly basis
* See Terms and Conditions (Attachment 11) Section 8, Payment of Funds for more information about Invoicing

## Match Funding Requirement

There is no match share requirement under this solicitation. However, if you are providing match funding such as leveraging other funding and State programs, we encourage you to identify the funding in your application.

## Terms and Conditions

Each grant agreement resulting from this solicitation will include terms and conditions that set forth the recipient's rights and responsibilities. Standard terms and conditions are included as Attachment 11. Applicants **must** **read** the terms and conditions carefully.The CEC reserves the right to negotiate changes to the terms and conditions **with a grant awardee** prior to signing grant agreements.

# Application Organization and Submission Instructions

## Application Format

The application formatting**, page guidelines,** and page limit recommendations are **stated** [~~listed~~] in **each application Attachment** [~~Section VIII]~~. **Please reference each individual Attachment for instructions. If no page or word limit is specified, then there is no page or word limit.** Please use the templates provided in **each Attachment** [~~Section VIII: Application Package and Attachments~~] for submission.

Font: 11-point, Arial (excluding Excel spreadsheets, original template headers and footers, and commitment or support letters)

* Margins: No less than one inch on all sides (excluding headers and footers)
* Spacing: Single spaced, with a blank line between each paragraph
* Signatures: Wet or electronic signatures
* File Format: MS Word version 2007 or later (.doc or .docx format), excluding Excel spreadsheets and commitment or support letters (PDF files are acceptable for the letters)

## Application Content

* Each Attachment contains a suggested template and a detailed description of the information requested in that attachment. Completeness in submitting all the information requested in each attachment will be factored into application scoring. All word limits are recommendations, and we anticipate more complex, larger projects to use the upper limit, and less complex, smaller projects to utilize the lower limit.
* **Important: Please do not submit any confidential or sensitive information with your application.** For example, do not include these types of information on tribal maps or project area maps, if maps are submitted. **This information, and all other application documents, will be subject to Public Records Act (Gov. Code, § 7920.000 et seq.) requests once the Notice of Proposed Awards is issued.**
* For all hard copy submissions, submit attachments in the order specified below. Applications submitted electronically in the CEC's Grant Solicitation System (GSS) (see Section IV.C below) will automatically be organized by the GSS system.
* For hard copy submissions, label the proposal application cover “Grant Funding Opportunity GFO-23-701” and include: (a) the title of the application; and (b) the applicant's name.
* For hard copy submissions, separate each section of the application by a tab or page that is labeled with the attachment number and section title indicated below.

| Attachment Number | Title of Section |
| --- | --- |
| 1 | Application Form |
| 2 | Project Narrative |
| 3 | Project Team |
| 4 | Scope of Work and Schedule |
| 5 | Budget Forms |
| 6 | CEQA/Environmental Compliance |
| 7 (if applicable) | Previous Work Products |
| 8 (highly encouraged) | Letter of Support |
| 9 | Applicant Declaration |

## Application delivery

Preferred Delivery Method

The preferred method of submitting applications to this solicitation is the CEC's GSS, available at: <https://gss.energy.ca.gov/>. This online tool allows applicants to submit their electronic documents to the CEC prior to the date and time specified in this solicitation. Electronic files must be in Microsoft Word version 2007 or later (.doc or .docx format) and Excel Office Suite formats unless originally provided in the solicitation in another format. Attachments requiring signatures may be scanned and submitted in PDF format. Completed Budget Forms (Attachment 5) must be in Excel format.

The deadline to submit grant applications through the CEC's GSS is **5:00 p.m. Pacific Time** on the due date listed in the Program Timeline table in Section III.B.

The CEC strongly encourages Applicants to upload and submit all applications **well before 5:00 p.m. on the due date** because CEC staff may not be immediately available when needed and will not be available on weekends to assist with the upload process. Please note that while we endeavor to assist all would-be applicants, we cannot guarantee that staff will be available for consultation on the due date, so please plan accordingly.

Please give yourself ample time to complete all steps of the submission process: do not wait until right before the deadline to begin the process. Due to factors outside the CEC's control and unrelated to the GSS system, upload times may be much longer than expected. For example, some past applicants experienced unexpected issues on their end, causing long delays that prevented timely submission. They spent significant time and resources on applications the CEC will not consider. Please plan accordingly. For instructions on how to apply using the GSS system, please see the How to Apply document available on the CEC website at: <https://www.energy.ca.gov/media/1654>.

First time users must register as a new user to access the system. Applicants will receive a confirmation email after all required documents have been successfully uploaded. You may contact the CAO identified in Section III.D of the solicitation for more assistance.

Hard Copy Delivery

Application hard copies will be accepted via U.S. Mail, Federal Express (FedEx), and United Parcel Service (UPS).

Applications submitted in hard copy must be delivered via U.S. Mail, FedEx, or UPS to the CEC's Contracts, Grants and Loans Office during normal business hours and prior to the Application Deadline shown in Section III.B. Applications received after the Application Deadline in Section III.B are considered late and will not be accepted. There are no exceptions. Postmark dates of mailing, e-mail, and facsimile (FAX) transmissions are not acceptable in whole or in part, under any circumstances. You may contact the Commission Agreement Officer identified in Section III.D of the solicitation for more assistance.

There is no need to submit a hard copy of an application that is submitted through the Grant Solicitation System as it may cause confusion.

Number of Copies: Applicants submitting a hard copy application are only required to submit one paper copy.

Packaging and Labeling

All hard copy applications must be labeled "Grant Funding Opportunity GFO-23-701," and include the title of the application.

Include the following label information on the mailing envelope:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Applicant's Project Manager  Applicant's Name  Street Address  City, State, and Zip Code |  |
|  | GFO-23-701  Attn: Eilene Cary  California Energy Commission  715 P Street, MS-18  Sacramento, California, 95814 |

# Evaluation and Award Process

## Application Evaluation

Applications will be evaluated and scored based on responses to the information requested in this solicitation and on any other information available, such as on past performance of CEC agreements. To evaluate applications, the CEC will organize an Evaluation Committee that consists of State staff. Applications will be evaluated in two stages, described below.

Stage One: Application Screening

The Evaluation Committee will screen applications for compliance with the Screening Criteria below. **Applications that fail any of the screening criteria will be rejected.**

| **Screening Criteria**  *The Application must pass ALL criteria to progress to Stage Two.* | **Pass/Fail** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. The application is received by the CEC by the due date and time specified in the “Program Timeline” in Section III.B of this solicitation and is received in the required manner (CEC Grant Solicitation System or hard copy). | Pass  Fail |
| 1. The applicant is a California Native American tribe, tribal-serving non-governmental organization, or a California tribal organization. | Pass  Fail |

Stage Two: Application Scoring

Applications that pass all Stage One Screening Criteria and are not rejected will be evaluated based on the Scoring Scale below and the Scoring Criteria on the following pages. Each criterion has an assigned number of possible points and is divided into multiple sub-criteria. The sub-criteria are not equally weighted. The Project Narrative (Attachment 2) must respond to each sub-criterion, unless otherwise indicated.

* All applications will be evaluated, scored, and ranked against all other Stage Two applications submitted within this Grant Round.
* The scores for each application will be the average of the combined scores of all Evaluation Committee members.
* **A minimum score of 70%, or 70 points,** is required to be eligible for funding.
* Clarification Interviews: The Evaluation Committee may conduct optional telephone or email interviews with applicants during the evaluation process to clarify and/or verify information submitted in the application. However, these interviews may not be used to change or add to the content of the original application. Applicants will not be reimbursed for time spent answering clarifying questions.

Scoring Scale

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **% of Possible Points** | **Interpretation** | **Explanation for Percentage Points** |
| 0% | Not Responsive | Response does not include or fails to address the requirements being scored. The omission(s), flaw(s), or defect(s) are significant and unacceptable. |
| 10–30% | Minimally Responsive | Response minimally addresses the requirements being scored. The omission(s), flaw(s), or defect(s) are significant and unacceptable. |
| 40–60% | Inadequate | Response addresses the requirements being scored, but there are one or more omissions, flaws, or defects or the requirements are addressed in such a limited way that it results in a low degree of confidence in the proposed solution. |
| 70% | Adequate | Response adequately addresses the requirements being scored. Any omission(s), flaw(s), or defect(s) are inconsequential and acceptable. |
| 80% | Good | Response fully addresses the requirements being scored with a good degree of confidence in the applicant’s response or proposed solution. No identified omission(s), flaw(s), or defect(s). Any identified weaknesses are minimal, inconsequential, and acceptable. |
| 90% | Excellent | Response fully addresses the requirements being scored with a high degree of confidence in the applicant's response or proposed solution. Applicant offers one or more enhancing features, methods, or approaches exceeding basic expectations. |
| 100% | Exceptional | All requirements are addressed with the highest degree of confidence in the applicant's response or proposed solution. The response exceeds the requirements in providing multiple enhancing features, a creative approach, or an exceptional solution. |

Technical Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be considered against each criterion below. The responses must directly relate to the solicitation requirements as stated in the solicitation.

| **Technical Evaluation Criteria** | **Maximum Points** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. **Demonstrated Need or Value** 2. Clearly identifies and provides detailed justification for the need and/or value of the proposal, as well as justification for the need and/or value of each of the technical tasks or activities proposed. 3. Identifies how a California Native American tribe will be the primary beneficiary of this project. 4. Supports the goals, priorities, and needs of a tribe(s). 5. Identifies and discusses any benefits of the proposed activities and who or what will receive those benefits. 6. Identifies whether the tribe is vulnerable to drought, flood, extreme heat/weather, wildfire, sea-level rise, or other climate-change impacts. 7. If the proposal is for a collaborative grant, demonstrates how the project would benefit each participating tribe. | **25** |
| 1. **Climate, Resilience, and Energy Goals** 2. Demonstrates how the proposed plan would progress the tribe toward its current and future climate, resilience, and energy goals. 3. Demonstrates how the proposed plan aligns with the overall goals of California's Fifth Climate Assessment and the Tribal Research Program. | **25** |
| 1. **Methodology, Technical Approach, Scope of Work, and Proposed Tasks** 2. Describes a project or plan with quantifiable/measurable technical, administrative, and economic performance goals and objectives, including what criteria will be used to determine plan successes and failures. 3. Tasks are stated as separate and distinct, clearly defined, and logically presented, with appropriate goals, objectives, and interim and final products. 4. Proposal includes a realistic schedule for completion of tasks during the contract period, as well as clearly described interim and final products for each task and an appropriate budget. 5. Demonstrates a plan to successfully complete proposal tasks and deploy results. 6. Proposal Package is complete and organized correctly. | **20** |
| 1. **Team Qualifications** 2. Explains the role of each project team member, how the various tasks will be managed and coordinated, and how the project manager's expertise will support the effective management and coordination of all project activities by the end of the grant period. 3. Resumes are included for the project team as required **in Attachment 3** [~~under Section VIII~~]. | **15** |
| 1. **Budget and Cost Effectiveness** 2. Overall proposal cost is consistent with the proposed work and products to be provided. 3. Personnel rates/costs, operating expenses, and indirect rates/costs are reasonable for the proposed work and consistent with the experience of the project team. | **15** |
| **Total Possible Points** | **100** |
| **Minimum Passing Score (70%)** | **70** |

## Ranking, Notice of Proposed Award, and Agreement Development

Ranking and Notice of Proposed Award

Applications that receive at least the minimum required score for all criteria will be ranked according to their score.

* CEC staff will post a **Notice of Proposed Award (NOPA)** that includes: (1) the total proposed funding amount; (2) the rank order of applicants; and (3) the amount of each proposed award. The CEC will post the NOPA on the funding opportunities page of its website: <https://www.energy.ca.gov/funding-opportunities/solicitations>. Proposed awards must be approved by the CEC at a business meeting.
* **Debriefings:** Unawarded applicants may request a debriefing after the release of the NOPA by contacting the CAO listed in Section III.D. If a debriefing is requested, feedback will be provided on how to strengthen proposal submissions for future CEC grant opportunities.
* In addition to any of its other rights, the CEC reserves the right to:
  + Allocate any additional funds to passing applications, in rank order; and
  + Negotiate with successful applicantstomodify the project scope, schedule, terms and conditions, project team entity that will receive the award, location and/or level of funding.

Agreements

Applications recommended for funding will be developed into a proposed grant agreement to be considered at a CEC Business Meeting. Recipients may begin the project only after full finalization of the grant agreement (i.e., approval at a CEC business meeting and signature by the Recipient and the CEC).

* **Agreement Development:** The CEC's Contracts, Grants, and Loans Office will send the Recipient a grant agreement for approval and signature. The agreement will include the terms and conditions and will incorporate this solicitation and the application by reference. The CEC reserves the right to negotiate changes to the award documents (including the terms and conditions and Data Sharing Agreement) prior to signing any agreement.
* **Failure to Sign an Agreement:** If the CEC and the applicant are unable to successfully negotiate an agreement in a timely manner, the CEC reserves the right to cancel the pending award and use the funds elsewhere, such as to fund the next highest-ranked, eligible application.

## Grounds to Reject an Application or Cancel an Award

Applications that do not pass the screening stage will be rejected. In addition, the CEC reserves the right to reject an application and/or to cancel an award for any of the following reasons:

* The application contains false or intentionally misleading statements or references that do not support an attribute or condition contended by the applicant
* The application is intended to erroneously and fallaciously mislead the State in any way
* The application does not comply or contains caveats that conflict with the solicitation, and the variation or deviation is material
* The applicant has received unsatisfactory agreement evaluations from the CEC or another California state agency
* The applicant is a business entity required to be registered with the California Secretary of State and is not in good standing
* The applicant has not demonstrated that it has the financial capability to complete the project
* The applicant fails to meet environmental compliance under tribal ordinances, CEQA, or NEPA within sufficient time for the CEC to meet its encumbrance deadline, as the CEC in its sole and absolute discretion may determine
* The application contains confidential information or identifies any portion of the application as confidential

## Miscellaneous

Solicitation Cancellation and Amendment

It is the policy of the CEC not to solicit applications unless there is a bona fide intention to award an agreement. However, if it is in the State's best interest, the CEC reserves the right, in addition to any other rights it has, to do any of the following:

* Cancel this solicitation;
* Revise the amount of funds available under this solicitation;
* Amend this solicitation as needed.

If the solicitation is amended, the CEC will send an addendum to all entities that requested the solicitation and will also post it on the CEC's website at: <https://www.energy.ca.gov/funding-opportunities/solicitations>. The CEC will not reimburse applicants for application development expenses under any circumstances, including cancellation of the solicitation.

Modification or Withdrawal of Application

Applicants may withdraw or modify a submitted application before the deadline to submit applications by sending an email to the CAO listed in Section III.D. Applications cannot be changed after that date and time. An application cannot be “timed” to expire on a specific date. For example, a statement such as the following is non-responsive to the solicitation: “This application and the cost estimate are valid for 60 days.”

Solicitation Errors

If an applicant discovers any ambiguity, conflict, discrepancy, omission, or other error in the solicitation, the applicant should immediately notify the CAO listed in Section III.D of the error in writing and request modification or clarification of the solicitation. The CEC will provide modifications or clarifications by written notice to all entities that requested the solicitation. The CEC will not be responsible for failure to correct errors.

Immaterial Defect

The CEC may waive any immaterial defect or deviation contained in an application. The CEC's waiver will not modify the application or excuse the successful applicant from full compliance with solicitation requirements.

Disposition of Applicant’s Documents

Upon the posting of the NOPA, all applications and related materials submitted in response to this solicitation will become property of the State and will be subject to disclosure under the Public Records Act (Gov. Code, § 7920.000 et seq.). Unawarded applicants who seek the return of any materials, if they submitted hard copy submissions, must make this request to the CAO listed in Section III.D, and provide sufficient postage to fund the cost of returning the materials. **Please do not submit any confidential information with your application.**

# VI. Applicants’ Admonishment & Responsibility

This solicitation manual contains application requirements and instructions. Applicants are responsible for **carefully reading** the solicitation, asking appropriate questions in a timely manner, ensuring that all solicitation requirements are met, submitting all required responses in a complete manner by the required date and time, and **carefully rereading** the solicitation before submitting an application.

Applicants are solely responsible for the cost of developing applications. This cost cannot be charged to the State of California.

# VII. Key Words/Terms

| **Word/Term** | **Definition** |
| --- | --- |
| Adaptation | Adaptation is an action or set of actions that reduce climate risk (definition adapted from 2021 CA State Adaptation Strategy). |
| Applicant | The entity that submits an application to this solicitation. |
| Application | An applicant's written response to this solicitation. |
| Authorized Representative | Authorized Representative, the person signing the application form who has authority to enter into an agreement with the CEC. |
| California Native American tribe (Native American tribe or tribe) | 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. |
| California Tribal Organization | A corporation, association, or group controlled, sanctioned, or chartered by a California Native American tribe that is subject to its laws, the laws of the State of California, or the laws of the United States. |
| CAM | *Commission Agreement Manager,* the person designated by the CEC to oversee the performance of an agreement resulting from this solicitation and to serve as the main point of contact for the Recipient. |
| CAO | *Commission Agreement Officer*, the person designated by the CEC as the main point of contact under this solicitation. |
| CEC | State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission, also referred to as the *California Energy Commission*. |
| CEQA | *California Environmental Quality Act*, California Public Resources Code Section 21000 et seq. |
| Days | Days refers to calendar days. |
| Energy Commission or Commission | State Energy Resources Conservation and Development Commission, or the California Energy Commission |
| Mitigation | A human intervention to reduce the human impact on the climate system; this includes strategies to reduce greenhouse gas sources and emissions, and enhance greenhouse gas sinks. |
| NEPA | *National Environmental Policy Act*, 42 U.S.C. § 4321 et seq. |
| NOPA | *Notice of Proposed Award,* a public notice by the CEC that identifies award recipients. |
| OPR | Governor's *Office of Planning and Research* |
| Project Manager | The person designated by the applicant to oversee the project and to serve as the main point of contact for the CEC. |
| Project Partner | 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. |
| Recipient | An entity receiving an award under this solicitation. |
| Resilience | Resilience describes a state of readiness to face climate risks. (2021 CA State Adaptation Strategy) |
| Solicitation | This entire document, including all attachments, exhibits, any addendum and written notices, and questions and answers (“solicitation” may be used interchangeably with “Grant Funding Opportunity”). |
| State | State of California |
| Tribal Serving NGO | A *non-governmental organization* that serves tribes. |