# Questions and Answers

**California’s Electric Vehicle Charger Reliability and Accessibility Accelerator (EVC RAA) Program**

**GFO-24-603**

**December 16, 2024**

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

**Eligibility**

**Q1. Who is eligible to apply?**

A1. Eligible Applicants include Electric Vehicle Service Providers (EVSPs) (including electric vehicle supply equipment manufacturers, charging network providers, and charge point operators), installation and maintenance contractors, and public entities that own ports on the Federal Highway Administration’s Final List and Final List Addendum of Non-Operational Chargers (Section II.A.1. of the Solicitation Manual).

**Q2. If a site already has Direct Current Fast Charging (DCFC) chargers, but those chargers require repair, can a party qualify for a grant under this program?**

A2. Per Section II.B. of the Solicitation Manual, the ports are eligible for funding under this program if they satisfy the following:

* Listed on the Federal Highway Administration’s Final List or Final List Addendum of Non-Operational Chargers; AND
* Not compliant with 23 CFR 680; AND
* Not covered by a warranty that covers the cost of needed repair/replacement work.

Additionally, the Applicant must be an eligible Applicant. (See Section II.A.1 of the Solicitation Manual).

**Q3. Are Community Choice Aggregators (“CCAs”) eligible to apply for funding under this solicitation?**

A3. Section II.A.1. of the Solicitation Manual defines public entities that own ports on the Federal Highway Administration’s Final List and Final List Addendum of Non-Operational Chargers as eligible applicants.As public entities, CCAs are eligible to apply for funding under this solicitation if they own ports on the Federal Highway Administration’s Final List and Final List Addendum of Non-Operational Chargers.

**Q4. If certain charging equipment has qualified for funding under the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure program, would this equipment be eligible for this grant solicitation?**

A4. It is the Applicant’s responsibility to ensure that the charging equipment and network they select comply with the requirements outlined in Section II.B. of the Solicitation Manual.

**Project Requirements**

**Q5.** **Are Applicants expected to inspect each charging station listed in the**  **solicitation to determine whether repairs or replacements are needed,**  **and then submit a proposal for funding approval for these actions?**

A5. Per Section II.B. of the Solicitation Manual, to be eligible for funding under this solicitation, ports on Federal Highway Administration’s Final List and Final List Addendum of Non-Operational Chargers must:

* + Not be compliant with 23 CFR 680; AND
	+ Not be covered by a warranty that covers the cost of the needed repair/ replacement work.

Applicants are expected to inspect the ports for which they intend to apply for funding under this solicitation to ensure they meet these requirements. Additionally, Applicants must have an estimate of the costs for both repairing (if feasible) and replacing each port for which funding is requested as this information is required to be included in the Charging Station Application Template (Attachment 5).

**Q6. Are Applicants required to collaborate exclusively with the original installation provider at a listed site for equipment replacement? And, if so, does it stipulate that the replacement must be new equipment from the same manufacturer?**

A6. Applicants are not required to collaborate with the original installation provider. The Applicant does not have to use the same manufacturer for the replacement charging equipment. As specified in Section II.B.10. of the Solicitation Manual, Applicants may use any Electric Vehicle Service Provider and charging equipment that complies with the requirements in Section II.B. in entirety, so long as they have consent from the station host to complete the work at the charging station. See Section III.D.10.a. of the Solicitation Manual for more information about the station host consent requirements.

**Q7. What specific documentation is required for site host agreements?**

A7. Station host agreements are not required at the time of application; however, as described in Task 2 of the Scope of Work (Attachment 2), they will be required for stations proposed for award. Station host agreements may include, but are not limited to, requirements for restroom availability and cleanliness, 24/7/365 public access to the charging station for charging stations located along an Alternative Fuel Corridor, access to the charging station at least during business hours for charging stations not located along an Alternative Fuel Corridor, and keeping the charging station well-lit and clean.

At the time of application, per Section III.D.10.a. of the Solicitation Manual, for each proposed charging station, Applicants must submit a letter signed by the station host demonstrating consent for the requested repair and/or replacement work, and additional port installations as necessary to comply with 23 CFR 680. The letter must include language demonstrating that the station host consents to the selected Electric Vehicle Service Provider and charging equipment.

**Q8. Are other ports at eligible sites—ports not included on the Federal Highway Administration’s Final List or Final List Addendum of Non-Operational Chargers —able to be claimed as eligible replacement costs where existing infrastructure is replaced with 23 CFR 680-compliant infrastructure? For example, if a site includes two ports marked as inoperable in the Final List or Final List Addendum of Non-Operational Chargers and two additional ports not marked as inoperable on the Final List or Final List Addendum but do not meet all requirements of 23 CFR 680, are all four ports eligible or just the two marked as inoperable on the Final List and Final List Addendum?**

A8. In the example described, the two non-operational ports at the charging station that are listed on the Federal Highway Administration’s Final List or Final List Addendum of Non-Operational Chargers may be repaired if feasible, and if the repair costs are lower than the cost of replacing the ports. They may also be replaced if the costs are lower than the cost of repairing them, or if it is not feasible to repair them and still meet 23 CFR 680. Additionally, to meet the four-port minimum required by 23 CFR 680, the other two ports at the charging station that are not listed as inoperable on the Federal Highway Administration’s Final List or Final List Addendum of Non-Operational Chargers may be upgraded or replaced to meet 23 CFR 680 requirements.

Existing operational ports that are upgraded or replaced to comply with 23 CFR 680 at a charging station where non-operational ports from the Final List or Final List Addendum of Non-Operational Ports are repaired or replaced are considered additional ports. As additional ports, they must be included on the “Additional Ports” tab of the Charging Station Application Template (Attachment 5). This is clarified in Section II.B.5 of the Solicitation Manual and the Charging Station Application Template (Attachment 5) in Addendum 2.

**Applicant Resources**

**Q9. Given the complexity of the application process and the cash match requirement, are there any additional resources or support available for small businesses to help them navigate the process and successfully apply for this program?**

A9. Small businesses may reach out to the Commission Agreement Officer (Eunice Lemos-Adair) for assistance with questions related to the solicitation.

Contact Information for Commission Agreement Officer:

Telephone: 1(279) 226-1065

E-mail: eunice.lemos-adair@energy.ca.gov

Additionally, small businesses are encouraged to register for [Empower Innovation](https://www.empowerinnovation.net/), which can be accessed at www.empowerinnovation.net. Empower Innovation is a free online networking platform the CEC developed in partnership with leading California technology accelerators, fellowship programs, nonprofits, and private partners. It offers individuals and organizations an opportunity to connect and explore potential partnership opportunities.

**Q10. Can the CEC provide introductions to companies eligible to participate in this funding opportunity?**

A10. The CEC cannot facilitate introductions to eligible companies. Entities are encouraged to register for [Empower Innovation](https://www.empowerinnovation.net/), which can be accessed at www.empowerinnovation.net. Empower Innovation is a free online networking platform the CEC developed in partnership with leading California technology accelerators, fellowship programs, nonprofits, and private partners. It offers individuals and organizations an opportunity to connect and explore potential partnership opportunities.

**The Federal Highway Administration’s Final List and Final List Addendum of Non-Operational Chargers**

**Q11. How do EV chargers get onto the Federal Highway Administration’s Final List and Final List Addendum of Non-Operational Chargers?**

A11. The Federal Highway Administration published the Final List and Final List Addendum of Non-Operational Chargers in October 2023 using data from the Alternative Fuels Data Center which is available at https://afdc.energy.gov/stations#/corridors?show\_corridor\_routes=false&state=CA. Per the Federal Highway Administration’s EVC RAA Notice of Funding Opportunity, only chargers listed on the Final List or Final List Addendum of Non-Operational Chargers are eligible for EVC RAA funding. The CEC does not control the list or any decisions regarding whether updates are published. The CEC cannot add or remove sites or chargers from the lists.

**Q12.**  **Are updates to the Federal Highway Administration’s Final List and Final List Addendum of Non-Operational Chargers published annually? How does one have its site or charger(s) added to the list?**

A12. The Federal Highway Administration has not announced any plans to update the lists, and the CEC does not control the lists or any decisions regarding whether updates are published. The CEC cannot add or remove sites or chargers from the lists.

**Q13. Will the CEC directly contact all eligible site hosts about this**

**funding opportunity? Has this already happened earlier in the solicitation development process?**

A13. In February 2024, Caltrans and the CEC sent out a mailer to each address on the Federal Highway Administration's List and Final List Addendum of Non-Operational Chargers notifying them about the upcoming funding opportunity. The mailer included a QR code that directed to a web page with more information about the program and an option to sign up for email updates about the program.

**Application Evaluation**

**Q14. If multiple applicants apply to the same location, how will the awarded project be determined?**

A14.As described in Section IV.A.6. of the Solicitation Manual, the CEC will only fund one applicant at each charging station. If multiple applicants apply for the same charging station, the CEC reserves the right to only fund the highest scoring applicant. As noted in Section I.E. of the Solicitation Manual, the CEC reserves the right to choose charging stations with lower passing scores that might not otherwise be selected, if required, to fund at least 1,302 ports and meet Justice40 objectives.

**Reimbursable and Match Share Requirements**

**Q15. After completing the installations or repairs, is the process to then apply for reimbursement of the associated costs?**

A15.Applicants must first apply for funding to conduct repair or replacement work at an eligible charging station under this solicitation. If awarded, the Applicant will enter into an agreement with the CEC to conduct the proposed project according to the terms and conditions for the solicitation (Attachments 13 and 14). After the agreement is fully executed with the CEC and after Federal Highway Administration’s authorization of the project, the Recipient may begin incurring reimbursable and match expenditures. Per Section 17 of the EVC RAA Program Terms and Conditions (Attachment 13), the Recipient may request payment from the CEC at any time during the term of the Agreement. Payments will generally be made on a reimbursement basis, i.e., after the Recipient has incurred the cost for a service, product, or other approved budget item. Additionally, the CEC will retain 10% of any payment request or 10% of the total award. At the end of the project, if the terms of the Agreement have been fulfilled, the CEC will release the 10% retention.

**Q16. How is the match funding calculated for different types of charging stations, especially for Alternative Fuel Corridor and non-Alternative Fuel Corridor stations? Could you provide an example of how the match funding should be structured for both categories?**

A16. For non-Alternative Fuel Corridor charging stations OR Alternative Fuel Corridor charging stations that do not include upgrading Level 1 or Level 2 ports to DCFC ports, Applicants must provide match share equivalent to at least 50% of the total allowable cost for the charging station. For Alternative Fuel Corridor charging stations that include upgrading Level 1 or Level 2 ports to DCFC ports, Applicants must provide match share equivalent to at least 30% of the total allowable cost for the charging station.

Please see examples of how to calculate the match share for each charging station type in Section II.C.1. of the Solicitation Manual.

**Q17. Regarding the match funding requirements, does this mean an Applicant is required to provide the match upfront to qualify for funding approval? Will a recipient send the money in cash and then get sent the full amount or how does the process work?**

A17. Match is not provided to the CEC in advance. Match is claimed on invoices to the CEC. After the agreement is fully executed with the CEC and after Federal Highway Administration’s authorization of the project, the Recipient may begin incurring reimbursable and match expenditures. Match consists of "cash or in-kind (non-cash) contributions provided by the Applicant/Recipient, Subrecipients, or other parties that will be used in performance of the proposed project." See Section II.C. of the Solicitation Manual for more details regarding match requirements.

**Q18. Who is responsible for securing the match funding? Is it the Applicant, or can the Applicant partner with other organizations to fulfill this requirement?**

A18. The Applicant is responsible for identifying and obtaining the match funding. However, the match funding may be provided by the Applicant or a third party. Per Section III.D.10.c. of the Solicitation Manual, Applicants must submit a match funding commitment letter from each entity that is committing to providing match funding. Any match share contributors (including the Applicant and/or a third-party) must identify the intended amount of match that will be committed to the project, the funding source(s), and state that the match share contributor will provide the identified match funding.

**Q19. Since at least 50% of the match must be in cash, can in-kind contributions, such as labor, equipment, or materials count towards meeting the remaining 50% match requirement?**

A19. Yes, per Section II.C.3. of the Solicitation Manual, the balance of the total match share requirement beyond the cash match share requirement may be met through in-kind match share contributions. In-kind match share contributions are: 1) non-cash contributions provided by the Applicant; 2) cash or non-cash contributions provided by a subrecipient; and 3) cash or non-cash contributions provided by other third parties. Applicant in-kind match share can be in the form of volunteer labor, existing equipment, existing supplies, and services provided by a third-party or subcontract. Applicants should carefully review the Match Share Restrictions (Section II.C.4. of the Solicitation Manual) and Unallowable Costs (Reimbursable or Match Share) (Section II.D. of the Solicitation Manual) to ensure their match funding sources proposed are allowed.

**Q20. How are in-kind contributions valued and verified in the application?**

A20. The value of in-kind match is based on the fair market value of the goods and services provided at the time it is claimed as match (Section II.C.3. of the Solicitation Manual). Applicants must submit a match funding commitment letter from each entity that is committing to providing match funding. Match share contributors (including the Applicant and/or a third-party) must identify the intended amount of match that will be committed to the project, the funding source(s), and state that the match share contributor will provide the identified match funding. Please see Section III.D.10.c. of the Solicitation Manual for more information about the requirements for the match funding commitment letters.

**Q21. Can other grants or government funds be used to cover the match funding requirement, especially the cash portion? Are there any restrictions on the types of funds that can be applied for this purpose?**

A21. Other sources of CEC funding may not be claimed as match share. This includes block grants funded by the CEC. Other sources of Federal funding may also not be claimed as match share, unless specifically allowed by law to be used as non-Federal match. Additionally, upgrades that are paid for by a utility program, tariff, or other sources of ratepayer funding are not an allowable cost and may not be considered match share. Please see Section II.C. and Section II.D. of the Solicitation Manual for more information about match share restrictions and costs that are not allowable as match expenditure.

**Q22. What documentation or proof will be required to confirm that the match funding, particularly the cash portion, has been secured and is available for the project?**

A22. Applicants must submit a match funding commitment letter from each entity that is committing to providing match funding, including cash match. Any match share contributors (including the Applicant and/or a third-party) must identify the intended amount of match that will be committed to the project, the funding source(s), and state that the match share contributor will provide the identified match funding. Please see Section III.D.10.c. of the Solicitation Manual for more information about the requirements for the match funding commitment letters.

After award, as described in Task 1.7 of the Scope of Work (Attachment 2), Recipients must submit a letter to the CEC documenting the match funding committed to the Agreement in the proposal. This applies to both cash and in-kind match funding. For cash match, the letter must include the amount of each cash match fund, its source, including a contact name, address and telephone number and the task(s) to which the match funds will be applied. Please see Task 1.7 of the Scope of Work (Attachment 2) for more information about the match fund letter Recipients will be required to submit.

**Q23. Is there a specific timeline or deadline by which the match funding must be secured and confirmed? How early in the process should match funding be demonstrated?**

A23. Applicants must submit a match funding commitment letter from each entity that is committing to providing match funding. Any match share contributors (including the Applicant and/or a third-party) must identify the intended amount of match that will be committed to the project, the funding source(s), and state that the match share contributor will provide the identified match funding. Please see Section III.D.10.c. of the Solicitation Manual for more information about the requirements for the match funding commitment letters.

Additionally, after award, Recipients must submit a letter to the CEC documenting the match funding committed to the Agreement in the proposal. This letter must be submitted at least two working days prior to the kick-off meeting. Please see Task 1.7 of the Scope of Work (Attachment 2) for more information about the match fund letter Recipients will be required to submit.

**Q24. What happens if the required match funding is not met or if there is shortfall in the cash portion of the match funding? Are there penalties or disqualification from the funding opportunity?**

A24. Per Section 30 of the EVC RAA Program Terms and Conditions (Attachment 13), the CEC may, for the Recipient’s noncompliance of any Agreement requirement, withhold future payments, demand and be entitled to repayment of past reimbursements, or suspend or terminate the Agreement.

**Q25. How are maintenance contracts evaluated for matching fund requirements?**

A25. There are no specific match funding requirements for maintenance subcontracts under this solicitation. If the Applicant, or a third-party supported by a letter of commitment, commits to providing the applicable minimum match share percentage required for the charging station, the charging station will pass the match share evaluation criterion described in Section IV.E.2. of the Solicitation Manual.