



GFO-24-312 Pre-Application Workshop

Advanced Grid Technology Acceleration Projects

Energy Research and Development Division, California Energy Commission

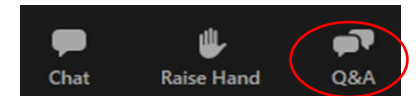
Presenters: Ben Wender, Sebastian Rubio Ruiz – Grid Innovation Unit

Date: July 11, 2025



Housekeeping

- This workshop will be recorded and posted to the CEC website.
- Attendees will be muted during the presentation.
- Virtual participation options:
 - Add your questions in the Q&A window.
 - Raise hand on Zoom.
 - Press *6 on the telephone during the Q&A period.
- Updates to solicitation documents including this presentation will be posted at the Grant Funding Opportunity's webpage:
<https://www.energy.ca.gov/solicitations/2025-06/gfo-24-312-advanced-grid-technology-acceleration-projects>





Agenda

Time	Item
10:00 am	Welcome and Introduction
10:05 am	Solicitation Background <ul style="list-style-type: none">• EPIC Research Program• Purpose of Solicitation• Available Funding
10:25 am	Application Requirements <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project Group Requirements• Attachments• Submission Process• Evaluation Process
11:00 am	Q&As
12:00 pm	Adjourn



Commitment to Diversity

The Energy Commission adopted a resolution strengthening its commitment to diversity in our funding programs. The CEC continues to encourage disadvantaged and underrepresented businesses and communities to engage in and benefit from our many programs.

To meet this commitment, Energy Commission staff conducts outreach efforts and activities to:

- Engage with disadvantaged and underrepresented groups throughout the state.
- Notify potential new applicants about the Energy Commission's funding opportunities.
- Assist applicants in understanding how to apply for funding from the Energy Commission's programs.
- Survey participants to measure progress in diversity outreach efforts.



We Want to Hear From You!

Participation Survey

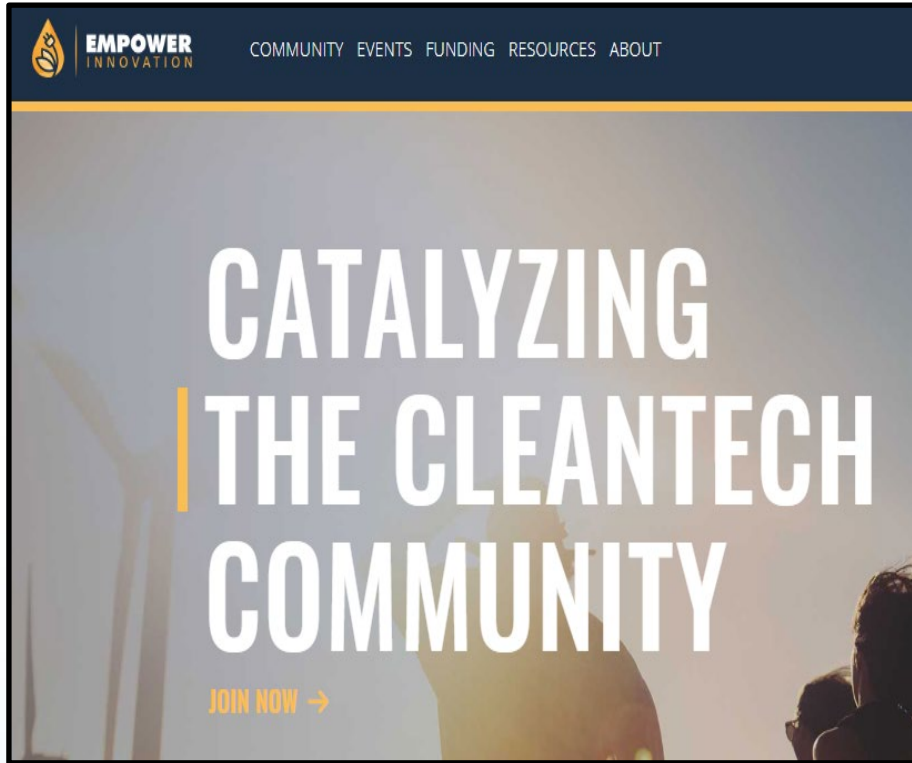
Survey responses will be summarized anonymously to track attendance of underrepresented groups in our workshops for public reporting purposes.

- Online participants, please use this link:
<https://forms.office.com/g/z33Zx9pP2f>

Thanks!



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Find a Partner on EmpowerInnovation.net

Empower Innovation strives to accelerate your clean tech journey with easy access to funding opportunities from the Energy Commission and other funding providers, curated resources and events, and connections to people and organizations.

FIND A PARTNER

Announce your interest in this funding opportunity and message other interested parties to find potential partners.

RESOURCES & TOOLS

Browse the collection of resources for clean tech innovators including Resource Libraries, Funding Sources, Tools, and Databases.

<https://www.empowerinnovation.net/en/custom/funding/view/47743>



EmpowerInnovation.net



https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fenergy.zoom.us%2Frec%2Fshare%2Fw6YBkXhNQdJ4Ay_0NgPvbW56NTABvMNYj3_1ZY56YLFe-w8KrXdAFOAFpT-7qXEp.rYlId0SzrUdcD9Ap&data=05%7C02%7C%7C1a3990e016aa42aa23f608ddc0b212e5%7Cac3a124413f44ef68d1bbaa27148194e%7C0%7C0%7C638878593241089918%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIlwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMilslkFOljoitWTFpbCIsIlIdUljoyfQ%3D%3D%7C0%7C%7C%7C&sdata=UzcKjZKUWaNiqPVzDxIYaTULE2U76lc9qlE7%2F78l%2BXk%3D&reserved=0



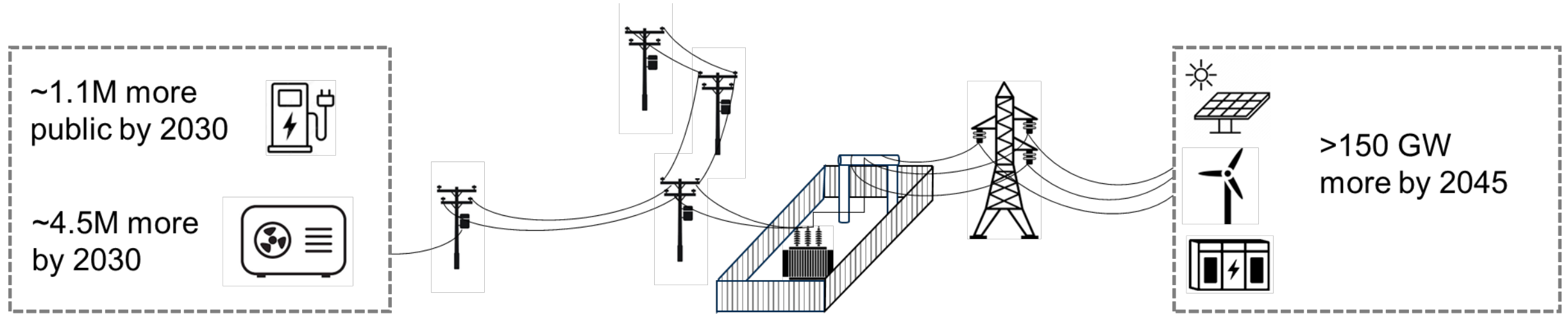
Research Program Background

- The Electric Program Investment Charge (EPIC) Program is an electricity ratepayer surcharge established by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) in December 2011
- The purpose of the EPIC program is to benefit the ratepayers of three investor-owned utilities (IOUs)*
- The EPIC program funds clean energy technology projects that promote greater electricity reliability, lower costs, and increased safety.
 - Applied research and development (ARD)
 - Technology demonstration and deployment (TDD)
 - Market facilitation (MF)

*Pacific Gas and Electric Co., San Diego Gas and Electric Co., and Southern California Edison Co.₉



Policy Drivers



California's multipronged leadership on the climate emergency

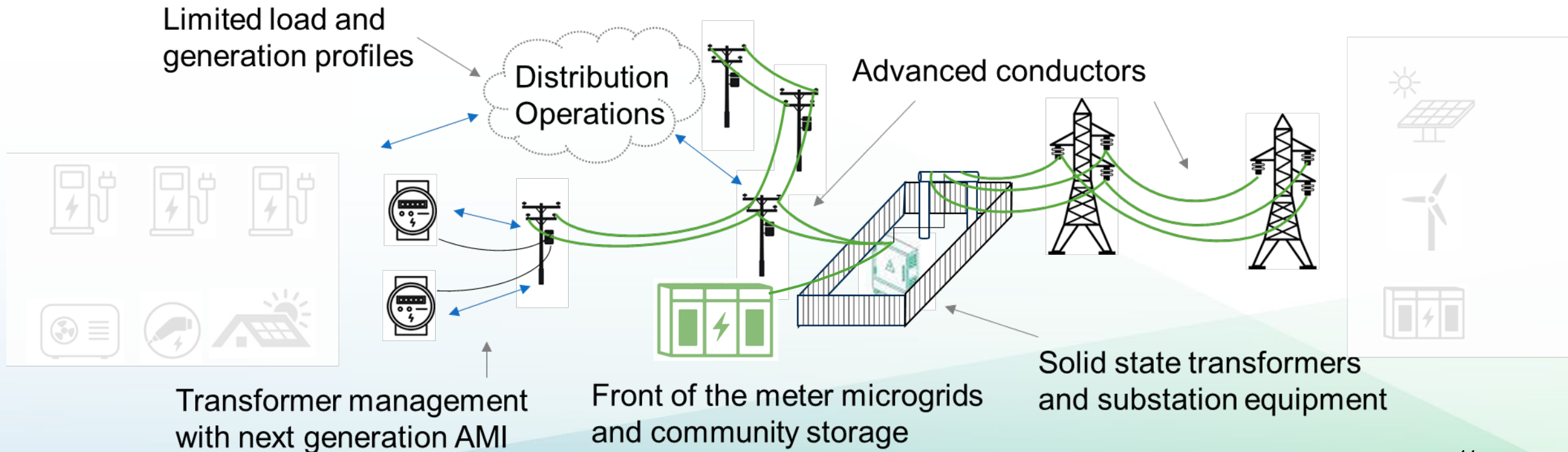
- Rapidly decarbonize electricity supply: e.g., SB100, RPS, IRP...
- Simultaneously electrify of end-uses: e.g., CARB & AQMDs, TEPI...
- Improve infrastructure planning & deployment: e.g., SB410, High DER, Energization...
- While addressing affordability and maintaining reliability



Solicitation Background

The grid is the keystone to achieving climate and energy goals

- However, legacy technologies and processes struggling to keep pace
- Growing challenges include affordability, timeliness, and climate resilience
- Advanced grid technologies can play a critical role





Purpose of Solicitation



- Validate performance and benefits
- Inform inclusion in grid planning and operations
- Develop models and decision-support tools to inform future deployments
- Project specific benefits such as:
 - Increased grid capacity
 - Reduced deployment timelines
 - Reduced congestion and curtailment



Available Funding

	Available Funding	Minimum Award Amount	Maximum Award Amount
Advanced Grid Technology Acceleration Projects	\$24,000,000	\$4,000,000	\$12,000,000



Match Funding

- 30% of match funding is required.
- Match funding contributors **must submit match funding commitment letters** that meet the requirements. Failure to do so will disqualify the match funding commitment from consideration.
- Refer to the Solicitation Manual for more details on match funding.



Requirements

- Projects must demonstrate advanced grid technologies in real-world utility operations
- Demonstration sites must be located in an IOU service territory
- Eligible technologies must be at a technology readiness level (TRL) of 7 to 9.
- Projects demonstrating technologies already in use by the partnering utility are encouraged to focus on novel applications or to deploy suites of technologies to inform how they interact or used together.
- Projects must include development of one of more decision support tools that inform regulatory, planning, capital allocation, or business development decisions to inform future deployment and scale up



Requirements continued (2/3)

- Include the following in Project Narrative (Attachment 2).
 - Description of the project including site location(s), how the technology and project site(s) were selected, and details on the grid need or infrastructure replacement need addressed by the project including if the need has been previously identified in the distribution or transmission planning processes.
 - Description of the existing assets and/or facilities, including relevant characteristics (e.g., rated capacity, peak and average utilization, voltage profile and thermal constraints, reliability metrics) and how the demonstration project will enhance the performance and capabilities of these assets/facilities.
 - Description of the advanced grid technology being demonstrated, including applicable performance metrics, demonstration project goals, and a quantitative comparison to conventional infrastructure enhancements (e.g., cost and timeline for construction of new lines/circuits or transformer replacement/upsizing) to address identified asset replacement or grid needs.
 - Example performance metrics include, but are not limited to, reduced interconnection and energization timeline [days], increased DER or load hosting capacity [MW or %], and increased capacity utilization [%] calculated as ratio of average load to peak rating.
 - The performance metrics and goals should align with those provided in the Project and Performance Metrics (Attachment 10).



Requirements Continued (3/3)

- Include the following in Project Narrative (Attachment 2) continued:
 - Description of the modeling/decision support tool(s) developed and how/they relate to existing planning and regulatory processes, investment, or business model decisions.
 - Description of how the demonstration project will build from, or be integrated with, ongoing improvement efforts such as utility grid modernization plans and the project's alignment with planning processes and relevant CPUC proceedings.
 - Description of the project team, which must include a California investor-owned utility (IOU) as well as an advanced grid technology developer or vendor. Projects are also encouraged to include a community-based organization (CBO) from communities directly served or impacted by the infrastructure improved in the project. Relevant experience should be summarized in the Project Team Form (Attachment 03).



Eligible Applicants

- This is an open solicitation for public and private entities with the exception of local publicly owned electric utilities.
- Applicants must accept applicable EPIC terms and conditions.
 - Standard, UC, and DOE T&Cs available online: <https://www.energy.ca.gov/funding-opportunities/funding-resources>
- Applicants are encouraged to register with the California Secretary of State, as all recipients must be registered and in good standing to enter into an agreement with the Energy Commission: <http://www.sos.ca.gov>



Application Requirements

Each Applicant must complete and including the following:

1. Executive Summary (.docx)

2. Project Narrative (.docx)

3. Project Team (.docx, .pdf)

4. Scope of Work (.docx)

5. Project Schedule (.xlsx)

6. Budget (.xlsx)

7. CEQA Compliance Form (.docx)

8. Past Projects Information Form (.docx, .pdf)

9. Commitment and Support Letters (.pdf)

10. Project Performance Metrics

11. Applicant Declaration (.docx)



Project Narrative (Attachment 2)

- This is your opportunity to explain the entirety of the project. The narrative should explain:
 - Why is your project necessary and important to California.
 - What is your project approach and how will each major task be implemented.
 - How will the project be completed in the term proposed.
 - Does the project have the appropriate resources (team and budget) to complete successfully.
 - How the project outcomes benefit electric ratepayers.
 - Address the requirements for your group as described in Section I.C.

Respond to the scoring criteria described in Section IV.F.



Scope of Work (Attachment 4)

- Tell us exactly what you are proposing to do in your project.
- Identify what will be delivered to the Energy Commission.
- Be sure to include in the technical tasks:
 - At least one product deliverable per task.
 - Address requirements in Section I.C. under Project Focus.
- Be sure to include in the Project Schedule (Attachment 5):
 - Product deliverables that correspond with the Scope of Work.
 - Realistic dates on when product deliverables can be completed.



Budget (Attachment 6)

- Identify how the Energy Commission funds and match funds will be spent to complete the project.
- Subrecipients receiving \$100,000 or more Energy Commission funds must complete a separate budget form.
- Ensure that all rates provided are **maximum** estimated rates for the entire project term and any potential increases are included.
- Travel Restrictions:
 - CEC funds should be limited to project task specific in-state travel.
 - Travel to conferences are generally not considered applicable travel for projects and should not use CEC funds.



Commitment and Support Letter Forms (Attachment 9)

- Follow guidelines provided for commitment and support letters.
 - Commitment letters are required for entities or individuals that are committing match funding, testing/demonstration sites, including the **Applicant** (prime).
 - Support letters describe a project stakeholder's interest or involvement in the project.
- All applicants must submit **at least one** support letter.
- Match funding must be supported by a match fund commitment letter(s).
- Any project partners that will make contributions to the project (other than match and sites) must submit a commitment letter.
- Limit to two pages per letter, excluding the cover page.



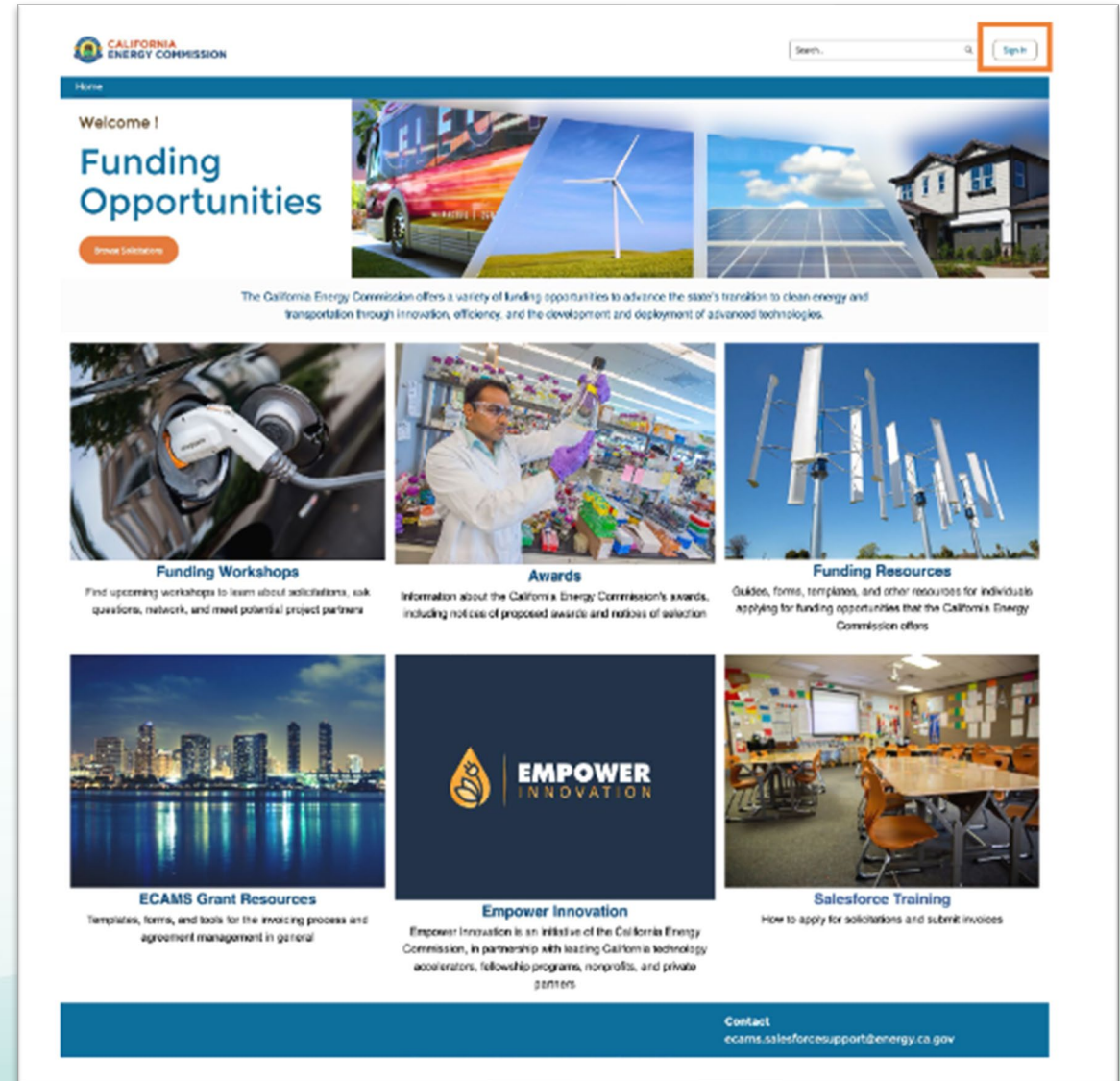
GFO Submission Requirements

- Applicants must have or must create a user account to submit a solicitation application. To create an account, please see the guidance **User Registration Instructions** at:

<https://www.energy.ca.gov/media/7893>

Note: One account manager per organization, but users can be added by account manager

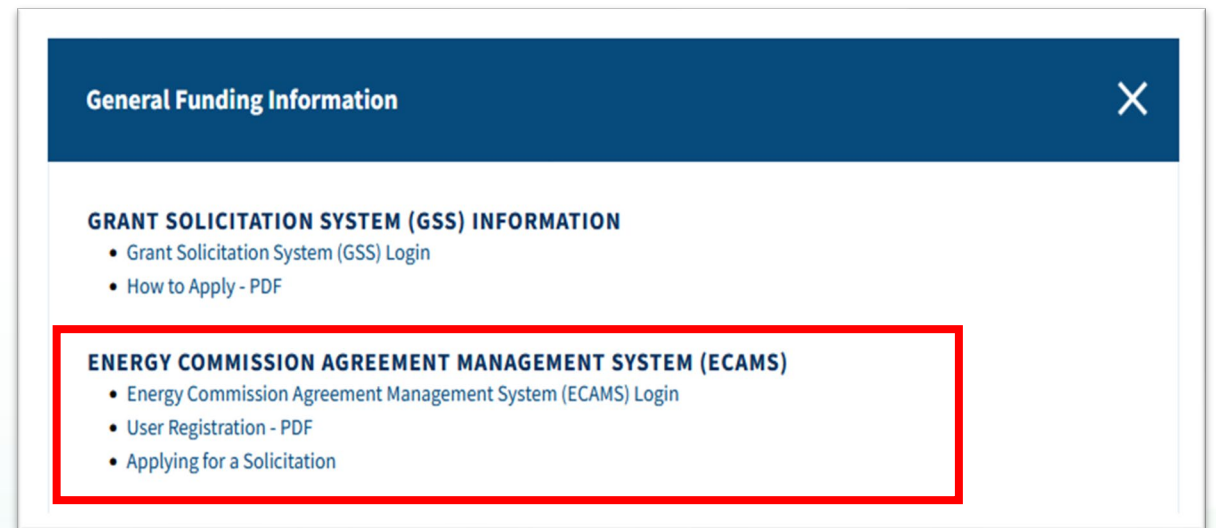
- Applications must be submitted through the **Energy Commission Agreement Management System (ECAMS)** at: <https://ecams.energy.ca.gov/>





GFO Submission Requirements (cont. 1)

- For detailed instructions on application submittal, please see the *Applying for a Solicitation* at: <https://www.energy.ca.gov/media/7956>
- Both referenced guidance documents are available at: <https://www.energy.ca.gov/funding-opportunities/funding-resources> under General Funding Information.
- Questions with the ECAMS system should be directed to: ECAMS.SalesforceSupport@Energy.ca.gov





GFO Submission Requirements (cont. 2)

- Electronic files, other than those requiring signatures, must be consistent with the specific file format provided in the solicitation.
- Application documents should meet formatting requirements, and page recommendations as specified in the solicitation manual.
- Attachments requiring signatures (Application Form and Support/Commitment Letters) may be signed, scanned, and submitted in PDF format.



Submission Warning

START THE PROCESS EARLY!

- Applications must be fully submitted BEFORE the deadline listed in the solicitation manual.
- The ECAMS system will reject applications submitted after the deadline.
- Applications in the process of being submitted prior to the deadline will NOT be accepted after the deadline.
- ECAMS support is ONLY available from 8am – 5pm Monday-Friday.



Application Submission

- Register as a New User (if applicable)
- Log In
- 4-Step Application Submittal Process:
 1. Select Solicitation
 2. Enter Application Information
 3. Upload Files
 - Select documents for upload
 - Tag files with document type
 - Designate confidential documents (if applicable)
 4. Review and Submit
- Confirmation from ECAMS system that submission was successful

All steps must be complete BEFORE the submission deadline



Application Reminders

We recommend you carefully review your application before submission.

- ☐ Verify that all necessary documents have been uploaded.
- ☐ Verify that all documents uploaded are the accurate version you intend to submit as your final.
- ☐ Verify that your documents are not marked "confidential" unless the solicitation allows specific material to be confidential. Most solicitations do not allow submission of confidential information.
- ☐ Verify that your match commitment letters accurately reflect the match amounts included in your budgets, including the match provided by the prime applicant.
- ☐ Verify that support and commitment letters are included, if required.
- ☐ Verify that amounts entered within the system's budget (if any) concur with information included on uploaded budget worksheets.



How will my Application be Evaluated?

Application Screening

Admin Screening Process

- ☐ Energy Commission staff screens applications per criteria in Section IV.E.
- ☐ Criteria are evaluated on a pass/fail basis.
- ☐ Applicants must pass all screening criteria, or the application will be disqualified.

Some Reasons for Disqualification

- ☐ Application is not submitted by the specified due date and time.
- ☐ Application does not include one or more support letters.
- ☐ Application contains confidential material.



How will my Application be Evaluated?

Application Scoring

- **Evaluation Committee applies the scoring scale to the scoring criteria.**
- **Applications must obtain a minimum passing score of 52.5 points for Criteria 1-4 in order to continue evaluation.**
- **Applications must obtain a minimum passing score of 70 points for Criteria 1-7 in order to be considered for funding.**
- **Review Section IV of the manual and ensure the application provides a clear and complete response to each scoring criteria.**

Scoring Criteria	Maximum Points
1. Technical Merit	15
2. Technical Approach	25
3. Impacts and Benefits for CA IOU Ratepayers	20
4. Team Qualifications, Capabilities, and Resources	15
5. Budget and Cost-Effectiveness	10
6. CEC Funds Spent in California	10
7. Ratio of Direct Labor Costs to Indirect Costs	5
Total	100
Minimum Points to Pass	70



How will my Application be Evaluated?

Application Scoring – Preference Points

- **Passing applications (score of 70 or more from Criteria 1-7) will be considered for bonus points. Criteria for bonus points include:**
 - **Disadvantaged & Low-Income Communities**

Scoring Criteria	Maximum Points
8. Disadvantaged & Low-income Communities	10
Total Bonus Points	10



Identifying Disadvantaged Communities

These areas represent the **25% highest scoring census tracts in CalEnviroScreen**, along with other areas with high amounts of pollution and low populations.

<https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/sb535>

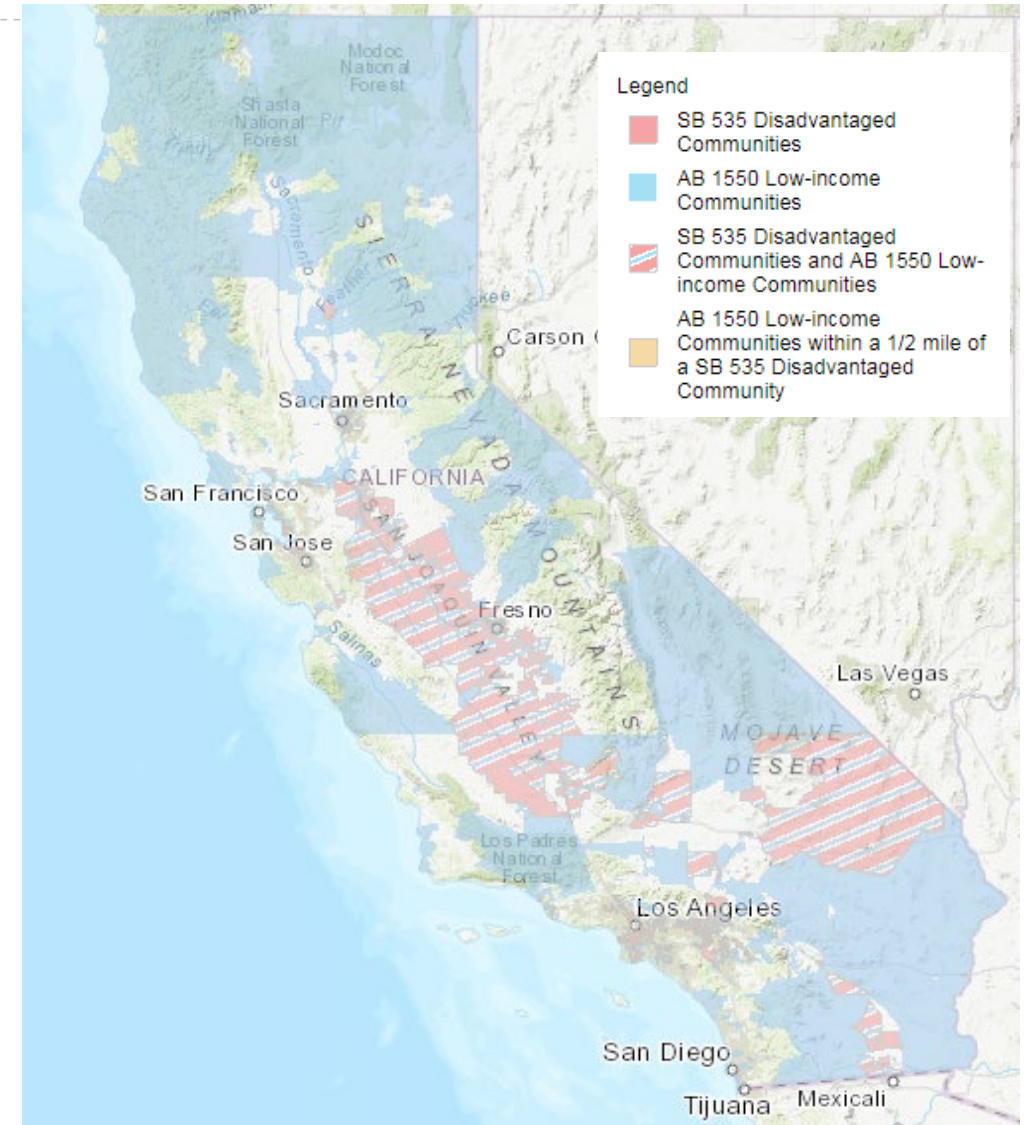




Identifying Low-Income Communities

Energy Commission staff proposes to use the existing low-income mapping tool developed by ARB to determine AB 523 low-income communities

<https://www.arb.ca.gov/cc/capandtrade/auctionproceeds/communityinvestments.htm>

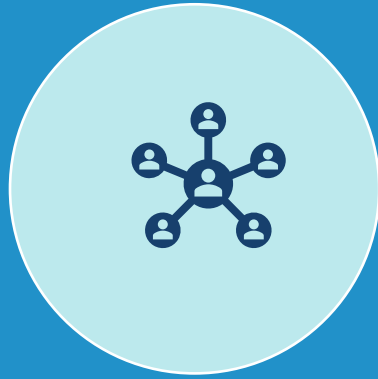




Community Based Organization Requirements



Has an office in the region and meets the demographic profile of the communities they serve



Has deployed projects and/or outreach efforts within the region



Have official mission and vision statements that expressly identifies serving DAC or LI communities



Employs staff specialized in and dedicated to – diversity, equity, inclusion, or is a 501(c)(3) non-profit





Next Steps After Grant Award

- **Notice of Proposed Award:** Shows total proposed funding amounts, rank order of applicants by project group, and the amount of each proposed award.
- **Applicant Debriefings:** Applicants may request a debrief of their application evaluation within 30 days of the NOPA posting.
- **Agreement Development:** Proposal documents will be processed into a legal agreement.
- **Failure to Execute:** The Energy Commission reserves the right to cancel the pending award if an agreement cannot be successfully executed with an applicant.
- **Project Start:** Recipients may begin work on the project **only** after the agreement is fully executed (approved at an Energy Commission business meeting and signed by the Recipient and the Energy Commission).



Key Dates

Activity	Date
Solicitation Release	June 27, 2025
Pre-Application Workshop	July 11, 2025 at 10:00 AM
Deadline for Written Questions	July 18, 2025 at 5:00 PM
Anticipated Distribution of Questions and Answers	Week of August 4, 2025
Deadline for ECAMS Submission Support	Ongoing until September 5, 2025 at 5:00 pm
Deadline to Submit Applications	September 5, 2025 at 11:59 PM
Anticipated Notice of Proposed Award Posting	Week of October 27, 2025
Anticipated Energy Commission Business Meeting	February 11, 2026
Anticipated Agreement Start Date	March 16, 2026
Anticipated Agreement End Date	March 31, 2030



Questions and Answers

Three ways to ask questions:

1. Use the raise hand feature in Zoom:

- Zoom phone controls:
 - *6 – Toggle mute/unmute
 - *9 – Raise hand
 - Introduce yourself by stating your name and affiliation
 - Keep questions under 2 minutes to allow time for others

2. Type questions in the Q&A Box in Zoom:

- Please provide name and affiliation.

3. Submit written questions:

- Email questions to Natalie.Johnson@energy.ca.gov by **July 18, 2025 at 5:00 pm**

Note that an official CEC response will be provided in writing and posted on the GFO webpage in 2 - 4 weeks.



Additional Questions

Please send all questions related to GFO-24-312 to:

Natalie Johnson

Commission Agreement Officer

1516 Ninth Street, MS-18

Sacramento, CA 95814

Natalie.Johnson@energy.ca.gov

Deadline to submit questions: July 18, 2025, at 5:00 PM

Deadline to submit applications: September 5, 2025, at 11:59 PM



Thank You!