

GFO-26-501 Pre-Application Workshop



Innovations in open data and modeling for a climate- and wildfire-resilient electricity system

Energy Research and Development Division

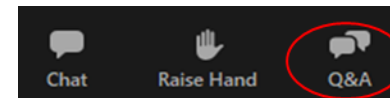
Presenter: Emily Field

September 10th, 2026



Housekeeping

- This workshop will be recorded and posted to the CEC website.
- Updates to solicitation documents will be posted at the Grant Funding Opportunity's webpage: [GFO-26-501 - Innovations in Open Data and Modeling for a Climate- and Wildfire-Resilient Electricity System](#)
- Attendees will be muted during the presentation. Please chat your question using the Q&A window.





Agenda

Time	Item
10:00 am	Welcome and Introduction
10:05 am	Solicitation Background • EPIC Research Program • Purpose of Solicitation • Available Funding
10:25 am	Application Requirements • 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.

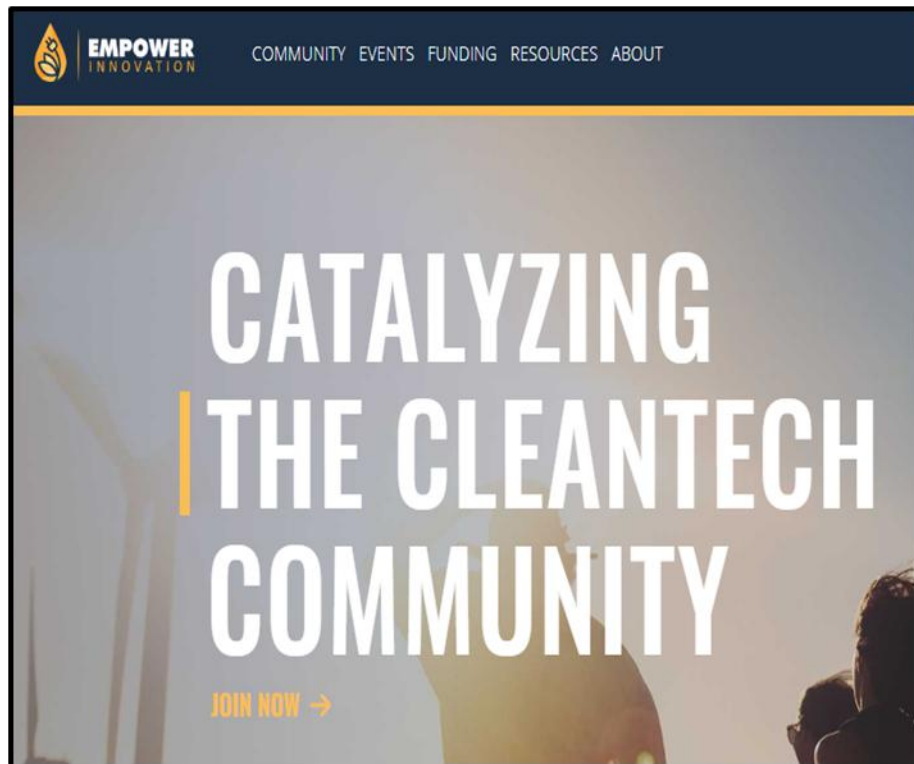
Online participants, please use this link:

[Diversity Survey - GFO-26-501](#)

Thanks!



Connect With Us





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.

[GFO-26-501 Empower Innovation Site](#)



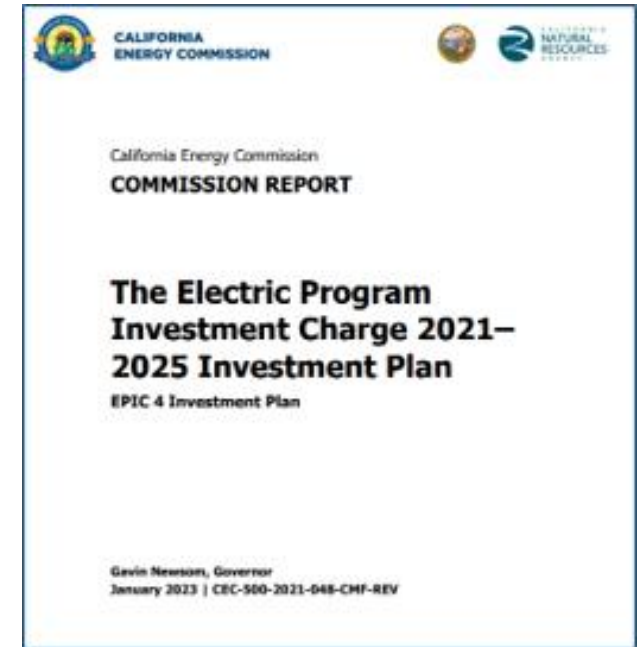
EmpowerInnovation.net





Research Program Background

- This solicitation will award and fund projects from the **Electric Program Investment Charge (EPIC) Program**, an electricity ratepayer surcharge established by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) in December 2011.
 - **Strategic Objective:** “Inform California's Transition to an Equitable, Zero-Carbon Energy System that is Climate-Resilient and Meets Environmental Goals” (Chapter 7)
 - **Initiative:** Climate Resiliency
 - **Topic 44.** Integrating Climate Resilience in Electricity System Planning (pp. 212-218)
- The purpose of the EPIC program is to **benefit the ratepayers** of three investor-owned utilities (IOUs) by funding clean energy technology projects that promote greater electricity reliability, lower costs, and increased safety.



To access report:
<https://www.energy.ca.gov/publications/2021/electric-program-investment-charge-2021-2025-investment-plan-epic-4-investment>



Policy Drivers

R.18-04-019 (Adaptation Rulemaking)	Proceeding opened by the California Public Utilities Commission in May 2018 to guide gas and electricity investment-owned utilities' adaptation planning.
D. 19-10-054 (CPUC Decision)	Defines climate change adaptation for energy utilities in California; identifies California's Climate Change Assessments as the primary source of climate projections, pathways, and scientific studies.
Wildfire Mitigation Plans	Electrical utilities are required to prepare and submit WMPs that assess wildfire risk and provide plans for risk reduction for review and approval.
SB-254 (Becker and Wahab, 2025)	Mandated a state-led wildfire resiliency study to analyze and develop recommendations across insurance, electric utilities, and community resilience to wildfire.



Motivation

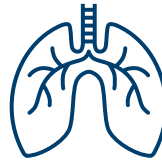
Opportunities for Ratepayer Benefits

Ratepayer Benefits align with [D.21-11-028](#)



Affordability

Support cost-effective IOU investments in climate adaptation and wildfire mitigation



Safety

Reduce health and safety risks associated with climate-driven outages and utility-ignited wildfires.



Environmental Sustainability

Mitigate environmental impacts of climate change.



Purpose of Solicitation

- Applied research to further advance data-driven strategies that enable electricity sector stakeholders to bolster climate and wildfire resilience.
- Deliver open-source, best available data, modeling, and analyses to support resilience and risk mitigation planning balancing safety and affordability
- Develop new climate data products and analytical approaches building off of prior EPIC efforts
- Develop new climate data, analytics, and wildfire risk products.



Available EPIC Funding

Project Group	Available Funding	Minimum Award Amount	Maximum Award Amount
Group 1: Advance foundational data and analytical resources to fortify climate resilience	\$2,800,000	\$2,600,000	\$2,800,000
Group 2: Demonstration of novel analyses, conceptual frameworks, and modeling to advance climate resilience in policy	\$700,000	\$550,000	\$700,000
Group 3: Integrated framework for utility wildfire risk mitigation	\$2,100,000	\$1,900,000	\$2,100,000



Group 1: Advance foundational data and analytical resources to fortify climate resilience

Background:

- Recent EPIC advancements in California-specific data, analytics, and energy system research have laid a strong foundation for climate-informed planning;
- Critical gaps remain in energy system planning, investment, and operations as California's policy landscape and grid operations continue to evolve.



Innovative investments in data-driven resilience strategies for IOUs, state agencies, and other electricity stakeholders to use best-available, open climate data to support cost-effective, resilient planning, investment and operations.



Group 1: Advance foundational data and analytical resources to fortify climate resilience (cont.)

Funding Amount: \$2,800,000

Applicants must:

1. Address at least two or more of the following gaps:
 - a) Development of novel data products that are tailored to shorter-term planning processes (seasonal to decadal).
 - b) Development of novel data products that address barriers posed by a dearth of empirical observations of meteorological parameters.
 - c) Renewable generation in a changing climate as additional analyses are needed to further explore climate-related impacts on zero-carbon generation resources and their role in a decarbonizing grid.
 - d) Analysis of design standards for key infrastructure components and assets to understand how varying weather conditions (including duration, magnitude, and changing likelihood over time) affect specific utility equipment.
 - e) Open concept described and justified by the applicant, must articulate ratepayer benefits, tractability, and alignment with EPIC.



Group 1: Advance foundational data and analytical resources to fortify climate resilience

Funding Amount: \$2,800,000

Applicants must:

2. Either develop new tools that leverage the Cal-Adapt: Analytics Engine (AE) and associated data or propose an alternative means of sourcing open data and providing public access to analytical code and related scientific resources (e.g., guidance).
3. Develop guidance and a knowledge transfer strategy to scale appropriate use of innovative research products.
4. Articulate a plan for supporting sustained engagement with IOUs and other energy sector stakeholders to build capacity for lasting impact of research.



Group 2: Demonstration of novel analyses, conceptual frameworks, and modeling to advance climate resilience in policy

Background:

- High-resolution, multi-scenario climate and weather datasets used by energy stakeholders in California require specialized preprocessing and integration across modeling frameworks.
- Integration of best available climate and weather datasets into CA energy modeling frameworks faces challenges including:
 1. Validation – translating climate projections to applicable energy frameworks requires contextualizing the data outside of energy workflows
 2. Discontinuities – use of new climate data can introduce perplexing results that warrant investigation and socialization.



Support a demonstration phase that will validate integration approaches and establish proof-of-concept for use in rapid, high-stakes planning processes.



Group 2: Demonstration of novel analyses, conceptual frameworks, and modeling to advance climate resilience in policy (cont.)

Funding Amount: \$700,000

Applicants must:

1. Propose a scope of work that demonstrates how open climate data and analyses could be integrated into high-impact policy frameworks and workflows associated with California's electricity system;
2. Rely on open climate and weather data (e.g., data from Cal-Adapt) and make any analyses developed through this work publicly available; justify choice of open data source;
3. Justify their choice of policy, planning, and/or investment setting with regard to ratepayer impact, policy alignment, and prospects for implementation beyond the completion timeframe of the EPIC research; and;
4. Articulate a credible plan for engaging key parties in a manner that builds capacity for appropriate use of climate data, advances electricity sector resilience and is positioned to support uptake of the demonstrated framework.



Group 3: Integrated Framework for Utility Wildfire Risk Mitigation

Background:

- Recent EPIC advancements have laid a strong scientific foundation for understanding wildfire behavior, climate-driven risk, and wildfire risk to and from utility infrastructure
- Research and planning efforts have also begun to evaluate the cost, effectiveness, and tradeoffs of mitigation actions within individual sectors, including utility investments, land management, and community and home hardening
- However, a critical gap remains in our ability to compare diverse interventions across sectors to illuminate pathways to achieve more cost-effective risk reduction



Need for integrated, quantitative evaluation of risk mitigation options to prioritize most cost-effective pathways



Group 3: Integrated Framework for Utility Wildfire Risk Mitigation (cont.)

Funding Amount: \$2,100,000

Applicants must:

1. Engage relevant key parties (e.g., IOUs, energy sector regulators, insurance industry, land managers, fire agencies, community-based organizations) to document key mitigation options, tradeoffs, and costs, as well as planning and implementation processes and timelines;
2. Identify challenges and opportunities for alignment of data, models, and planning across sectors;
3. Develop a cost-benefit framework that integrates mitigation actions across utility and non-utility actors and supports ratepayer-focused evaluation of costs, benefits, and their distribution across sectors;
4. Generate insights from the integrated framework, including comparative analysis of mitigation pathways and identification of cross-sector interactions;



Group 3: Integrated Framework for Utility Wildfire Risk Mitigation (cont.)

Funding Amount: \$2,100,000

Applicants must:

5. Identify key knowledge gaps, uncertainties, and recommended next steps for research and development to inform future investments;
6. Demonstrate project team expertise relevant to project tasks, including multi-disciplinary team composition or plan to engage relevant experts; and
7. Justify the proposed research funding by explaining how it advances the long-term goals of more cost-effective wildfire mitigation planning that improves grid reliability and safety outcomes across the state while reducing ratepayer costs; the justification should also describe how the research will achieve – or lay the groundwork to achieve – the applicant’s selected additional desired elements from the list below.



Group 3: Integrated Framework for Utility Wildfire Risk Mitigation (cont.)

Funding Amount: \$2,100,000

It is desirable that proposals also include:

1. Collection and synthesis of best-available data on mitigation effectiveness, costs, and non-monetary benefits or tradeoffs.
2. Scenario-based or optimization analyses using the developed framework to evaluate alternative mitigation portfolios.
3. Leverage of existing open-source data and modeling platforms in the framework (e.g., Planscape, Wildfire, Ecosystem Resilience, and Risk Assessment Initiative (WERK) data products, State Catastrophe Model when available, or other publicly accessible tools).
4. Harmonization with, where appropriate, state and federal processes to develop consistent outcome metrics (e.g., USFS outcome-based change metrics).



Eligible Applicants

- This is an open solicitation for public and private entities.
- 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 include the following:

1. Executive Summary (.docx)	7. CEQA Compliance Form (.docx)
2. Project Narrative (.docx)	8. Past Projects Information Form (.docx, .pdf)
3. Project Team (.docx, .pdf)	9. Commitment and Support Letters (.pdf)
4. Scope of Work (.docx)	10. Project Performance Metrics
5. Project Schedule (.xlsx)	11. Applicant Declaration (.docx)
6. Budget (.xlsx)	



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 will 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.



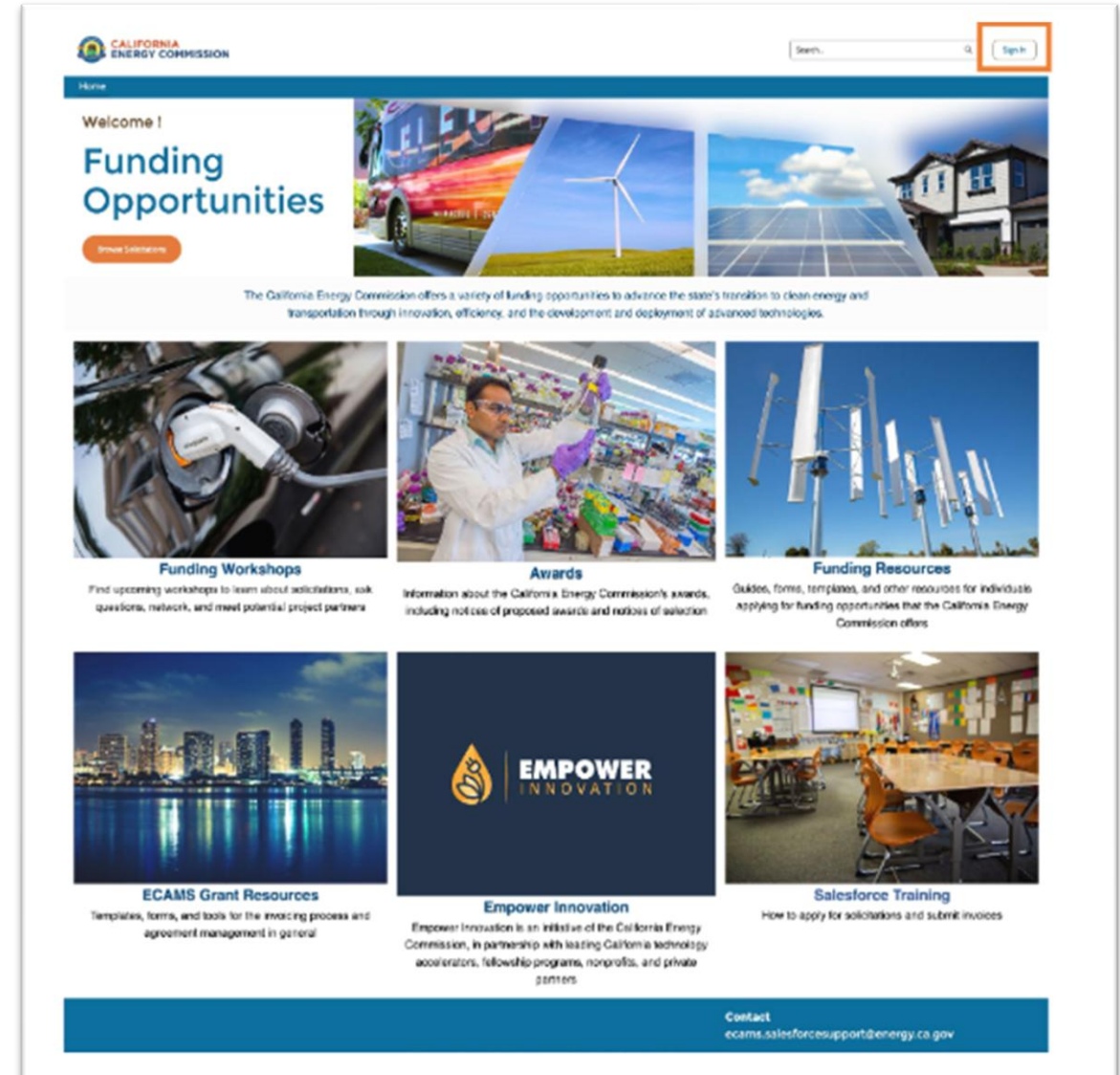
Commitment and Support Letter Forms (Attachment 9)

- 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

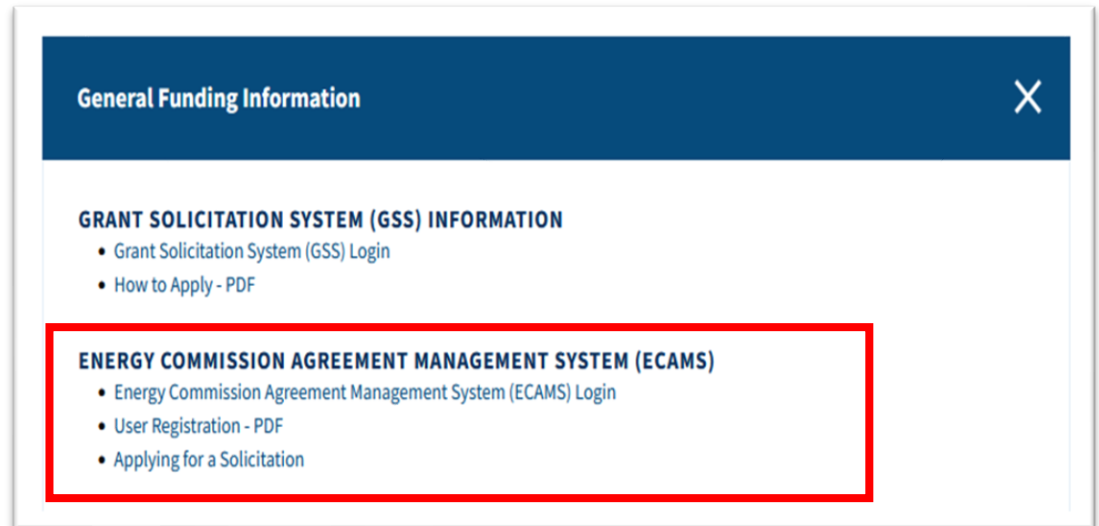
- Applicants must have or must create a user account to submit a solicitation application. To create an account, please see the guidance **User Registration Instructions** at: [ECAMS User Registration Instructions](https://www.energy.ca.gov/media/7893ECAMS%20User%20Registration%20Guide.pdf) <https://www.energy.ca.gov/media/7893ECAMS User Registration Guide> **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.)

- 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.)



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? (cont.)

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



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	August 28, 2026
Pre-Application Workshop	September 10, 2026 at 10am
Deadline for Written Questions	September 22, 2026 at 5:00 pm
Anticipated Distribution of Questions and Answers	Week of October 12, 2026
Deadline for ECAMS Submission Support	Ongoing until November 20, 2026 at 5:00 pm
Deadline to Submit Applications	November 20, 2026 at 11:59 pm
Anticipated Notice of Proposed Award Posting	February 19, 2027
Anticipated Energy Commission Business Meeting	April 2027
Anticipated Agreement Start Date	June 2027
Anticipated Agreement End Date	March 2031



Questions and Answers



Please chat your question in the Q & A window or raise your hand and you will be called on to unmute and introduce yourself.



Keep questions under 2 minutes to allow time for others.



Note that our official response will be given in writing and posted on the GFO webpage.



Additional Questions

Please send all questions related to GFO-26-501 to:

Chester Hong

Commission Agreement Officer

1516 Ninth Street, MS-18

Sacramento, CA 95814

(916) 890-4694

Chester.hong@energy.ca.gov

Deadline to submit questions:

September 22, 2026 at 5:00 PM



Thank You!