

Notice of Fund Availability
New Jersey Board of Public Utilities
Availability of Grant

The New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (“BPU” or “Board”), located at 44 South Clinton Ave, Trenton, New Jersey 08625, hereby announces the availability of a grant using funds from the New Jersey Clean Energy General Fund.

Name of Program: COMMUNITY ENERGY PLAN GRANT (“CEPG”) PROGRAM

Purpose:

In 2019, the New Jersey Board of Public Utilities (“Board” or “BPU”) created the Community Energy Plan Grant program with the purpose of providing funds to New Jersey municipalities to develop localized energy plans that are aligned with the goals of New Jersey’s Energy Master Plan.¹ New Jersey’s Energy Master Plan established that community-level action is necessary to achieve the state’s goal of 100% clean energy by 2050.

In 2021, BPU’s Office of Clean Energy Equity evaluated the program’s first year to look for ways to improve the program. As a result, program improvements included prioritizing assistance to low- and moderate-income communities and addressing barriers to participation for all communities.

The Board approved the second program year of CEPG in October 2021, with a grant term spanning from June 2022 to November 2023.²

In November 2023, the Board approved the opening of the third program year of CEPG.³ As part of Board approval of program year three, the following changes were made:

1. Grant term was shortened from eighteen months to twelve months;
2. Criteria for determining overburdened municipalities (“OBM” or “OBMs”) expanded to maintain a steady pipeline of OBMs eligible for participation.

Goal:

¹ In re the Clean Energy Programs and Budget for Fiscal Year 2019 Trued Up and Revised Budget, BPU Docket No. QO18040393, Order dated March 29, 2019. See also New Jersey Board of Public Utilities, 2019 New Jersey Energy Master Plan: Pathway to 2050, https://nj.gov/bpu/pdf/publicnotice/NJBPU_EMP.pdf.

² In re New Jersey Clean Energy Program Fiscal Year 2022 Community Energy Planning, BPU Docket No. QO21091113, Order dated October 6, 2021.

³ In re New Jersey Clean Energy Program Fiscal Year 2024 Community Energy Plan Grant Program & In re New Jersey Clean Energy Program Fiscal Year 2024 Community Energy Plan Implementation Grant Program, BPU Docket Nos. QO23090714 & QO23100729, Order dated November 17, 2023.

The goal of this grant program is for municipalities to create energy plans that address the needs of their respective communities, while also helping the state reach the goals set in the New Jersey Energy Master Plan.

GRANT APPLICATION PROCESS

Amount of funds available in the program: A total of \$4,574,034 is available for this program.

Eligible Entities: All New Jersey municipalities are eligible to apply for funding.

Application Instructions:

Municipalities applying for this grant must submit an administratively complete application in order to be considered for funding. All applications must contain the following items and information in order to be deemed administratively complete:

- A) Completed Application Form
- B) Applicant Contact Information
 - a. Municipality Information
 - b. Information for Mayor
 - c. Primary Municipal Contact
 - d. Primary Municipal Fiscal Contact
- C) Applicant Certification
 - a. Applicants must certify that the information provided on the application is accurate and that the submitter has the authority to submit the application package on behalf of their municipality.
 - b. The certification form must be completed, signed, and notarized.
- D) Executed Municipal Resolution
 - a. The resolution must contain language supporting the application for this grant program and the development of a Community Energy Plan.
 - b. A template resolution is contained in the application packet.

Applications for this program must be completed using the application form available on the New Jersey Clean Energy website at:

<https://view.officeapps.live.com/op/view.aspx?src=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.njcleanenergy.com%2Ffiles%2Ffile%2FBPU%2FFY24%2FCommunity%2520Energy%2520Plan%2FCEPG%2520Pr og%2520Yr%25203%2520Application.docx&wdOrigin=BROWSELINK>

Completed applications must be submitted to the CEPG program email at community.energy@bpu.nj.gov.

Application due date: All applications must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. Eastern Time on Friday, May 24, 2024.

Reporting Requirements:

Upon project completion, all awardees must submit the completed Community Energy Plan, a fully executed Resolution adopting the plan, and one (1) final performance report by the end of

the grant term. Additional reporting requirements for CEPG vary based on grant award amounts. Awardees receiving a \$25,000 grant award must submit three (3) quarterly financial reports and one (1) final expenditure report. Awardees receiving a grant award of \$10,000 are required to submit one (1) final expenditure report at the end of the grant term. The financial reporting requirements shall begin three (3) months following receipt of grant awards.

Evaluation Criteria:

Administratively incomplete applications will not be considered for evaluation. An application will only be considered administratively complete if it meets the criteria outlined above. In the event that BPU receives more administratively complete applications than there is funding available, the following factors will be considered in funding determinations:

- 1) Priority to OBMs
- 2) Equitable distribution across all regions of the state
- 3) Municipalities who have not yet participated in the CEPG program

Grant Award:

All New Jersey municipalities are eligible to receive a \$10,000 grant award. Municipalities identified as being OBMs are eligible to receive a \$25,000 grant award. All municipalities participating in this program are eligible to receive technical assistance from Sustainable Jersey; however, OBMs will receive priority technical assistance during the application and plan development stages. A list of OBMs can be found at www.njcleanenergy.com/CEP and in the application packet.

Grant funds must only be used to develop Community Energy Plans and to fund activities that support the creation of said plans.

Successful applicants will be notified that they have received funds under the CEPG Program within 30 days of the application window closing.