



Community Clean Energy 2025 Grant Guidelines

The Funding Opportunity

San Diego Foundation (SDF), San Diego Community Power (Community Power), and Calpine Energy Solutions share a vision of a just, equitable and resilient San Diego. The *Community Clean Energy Grant Program* creates a collaborative pathway for Community Power funds to be reinvested back into the San Diego community to advance a just transition towards a greener economy.

Together, Community Power and SDF, with support from Calpine Energy Solutions, will award funding to new and existing projects that move communities towards a healthier, more sustainable, clean energy future. Grants will be made to support local clean energy projects and programs that provide economic, environmental and health benefits to Community Power's communities.

The *Community Clean Energy Grant Program* will award more than \$600,000 in grants, with grant sizes ranging from \$25,000 to \$100,000. Each organization is eligible to receive a maximum of \$125,000 in grant funds through this funding cycle. This includes any direct grants received as lead applicant as well as any funds received partnering on other grants. Grant funds must be expended within 24 months from their award date. Grant funds may be used for personnel, supplies, equipment, capital purchases, administrative or indirect costs, and any other program costs tied to effectively executing the proposed project.

Grant Eligibility

To be eligible to apply for the grant funding, **applicants** must meet the following criteria:

1. Applications must be led by a nonprofit with 501(c)(3) public charity status.
 - A 501(c)(3) public charity may serve as a fiscal sponsor for another applicant to administer the grant.
 - Any organization may be part of more than one proposal but may only serve as the lead applicant for one proposal.
2. Applicants and/or their partners must have relevant experience serving the Community(ies) of Concern (definition in FAQ section) identified in their application.

To be eligible to apply for the grant funding, **proposals** must meet the following criteria:

1. Proposed projects or programs must serve Community Power customers (cities of Chula Vista, Encinitas, Imperial Beach, La Mesa, National City, San Diego and the unincorporated communities of San Diego County).

2. Proposed projects or programs must be directly related to clean energy and advance one or more of the following focus areas:

- Increasing overall energy literacy of Community Power customers.
- Energy-focused educational programming that encourages clean energy use, particularly for youth.
- Improvements in indoor and/or outdoor air quality related to electrification.
- Workforce development opportunities that support careers in the clean energy industry.
- Improved energy resilience to ensure communities can avoid, prepare for, minimize, adapt to and recover from energy disruptions.

Partnerships and Collaboration

We believe that intentional, strategic partnerships can be essential to maximizing the impact and value of this grant funding. As part of this commitment, we encourage applications with thoughtful collaborations and partnerships in place. Please be sure to demonstrate in your application how any partnerships and roles will be complementary and additive. Please refer to the Funding Opportunity section for more detail on the maximum amount of grant funding organizations are eligible to receive through this grant program.

Application Process

Applicants must submit all application materials using SDF’s grants management system—[Foundant](#). If this is your first time submitting an application through this system, you will need to create a user profile for your organization. For guidance on setting up your account and navigating your applicant profile, please follow this [tutorial](#).

Application Technical Assistance

SDF wants all applications to be as strong and successful as possible. To that end, SDF and Community Power will host a grantseekers webinar on **February 13 at 12:00 p.m.**, providing an overview of the grant guidelines and application questions. Please register [here](#).

If you have questions that are not answered in the webinar, or would like to set up a time to discuss your application with SDF staff, please reach out to environment@sdfoundation.org or call (619) 357-7998. SDF staff will be available to provide technical assistance throughout the application period ending on March 14, 2025.

Application Deadline and Important Dates

All applications must be submitted by **5:00 p.m. PDT on Friday, March 14, 2025**. If you encounter any issues, please reach out to environment@sdfoundation.org or call (619) 357-7998. [Click here to apply](#).

Dates	Descriptions
February 10, 2025	Application period opens
March 14, 2025	Proposals due via Foundant by 5:00 p.m. PDT
Early August 2025	Grant awardees notified and grant agreements executed

About the Review Process

All applications will be reviewed and selected by a collaborative evaluation committee comprised of representatives from Community Power, Calpine Energy Solutions and SDF. Evaluators adhere to a strict conflict of interest policy and other internal controls to ensure that grant funding is distributed in an objective manner based on the merits of each proposal.

Expected Reporting

Grant recipients will be expected to provide a progress update halfway through the project, as well as a narrative and financial final report at the end of the project. These reports will serve to provide insight into project progress and an opportunity to uplift your stories of impact. Grantees will be expected to report on project progress, any adjustments to project, accomplishments, impact metrics and challenges experienced over the course of the project.

Evaluation Criteria

Each application will be evaluated upon the criteria below (out of 50 points).

Criteria	Description	Scoring
Funding Priority Alignment and Program Design	<p>Project/program is designed to meet community needs while advancing one or more of the following focus areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increasing overall energy literacy of Community Power customers.• Energy-focused educational programming that encourages clean energy use, particularly for youth.• Improvements in indoor and/or outdoor air quality related to electrification.• Workforce development opportunities that support careers in the clean energy industry.• Improved energy resilience to ensure communities can avoid, prepare for, minimize, adapt to and recover from energy disruptions.	20 Points

Criteria	Description	Scoring
Feasibility and Readiness	<p>Project/program outlines well-defined goals and demonstrates having the staffing capability, timing, partnerships and applicable skills to successfully implement the project/program.</p> <p>Application includes realistic timelines, and an implementation plan that accounts for all necessary permits, approvals, project requirements, as well as plans for addressing potential permitting or regulatory challenges. Budget is within the allowable grant range and is reasonable for the project/program's scope. Budget includes usage of efficient technologies that are appropriate for the project/program scope.</p>	13 Points
Communities Served	<p>Project/program demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the population to be served and focuses on Communities of Concern in Community Power's service territory. Project/program addresses potential barriers to participation and outlines outreach strategies to engage its target audience.</p>	12 Points

Evaluation Criteria continued on next page.

Criteria	Description	Scoring
Environmental Impact and Growth	<p>Project/program promotes the awareness and adoption of quantifiable clean energy solutions, with the potential to be replicated and/or expanded to other communities in Community Power’s service territory.</p> <p>Project/program contributes to regional clean energy goals such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced carbon emissions • Improved energy usage • Increased energy literacy among participants 	5 Points

Frequently Asked Questions

General

How do I apply?

All applications must be submitted via [Foundant](#) by **5:00 p.m. PDT on Friday, March 14, 2025**. If you encounter any issues, please reach out to environment@sdfoundation.org or call (619) 357-7998.

How much funding is available?

SDF anticipates granting more than \$600,000 in this grant cycle.

How much funding can an applicant receive?

Grant sizes will range from \$25,000 to \$100,000. Grant funds must be expended within 24 months from their award date.

Who is eligible to apply for funding?

- Applications must be led by a nonprofit with 501(c)(3) public charity status.
 - A 501(c)(3) public charity may serve as a fiscal sponsor for another applicant to administer the grant and provide regular financial reporting to SDF.
 - Any organization may be part of more than one proposal but may only serve as the lead applicant for one proposal.
- Applicants and/or their partners must have relevant experience serving the Community(ies) of Concern identified in their application.

Are fiscal sponsors required to meet the applicant eligibility requirements?

The fiscal sponsor must be a 501(c)(3) public charity but does not need to adhere to the other eligibility requirements.

What regulations will the evaluation committee be held to?

All evaluators will adhere to a strict conflict of interest policy, evaluation criteria, and process to ensure that grant funding is distributed in an objective manner based on the merits of each proposal.

Program Design

Can organizations partner on multiple applications?

Yes. An organization can be a partner/collaborator on more than one application but can only serve as the lead applicant on one application. The organization serving as the lead applicant will be responsible for receiving grant funds, upholding the grant agreement, any reporting requirements, distribution of grant funds to its partner organizations and the overall use of grant funds.

Can one organization receive funding across multiple applications?

Yes. An organization is eligible to receive a maximum of \$125,000 in grant funds through this funding cycle. This includes any direct grants received as lead applicant as well as any funds received partnering on other grants (Example: Organization A receives a \$75,000 grant it applies for and \$50,000 in additional grant funds through other Community Clean Energy-funded projects it is partnering on).

Do partnerships need to be in place before submitting the application?

While any partnership can still be developed beyond the application period, it is highly recommended to have partners in place with clearly defined roles and expectations so that reviewers can appropriately assess and score your application.

Can I receive support developing my application?

SDF staff are available to provide technical assistance in an effort to ensure the applications received align with funding priorities and are strong candidates for funding. While SDF staff cannot provide explicit directions on program design, they can provide feedback to ensure alignment with the grant guidelines.

What is a definition applicants can reference for Communities of Concern?

Community Power defines Communities of Concern as communities identified by [California Climate Investments](#) (Assembly Bill 1550 and Senate Bill 535). These include disadvantaged communities identified by CalEnviroScreen 4.0 and low-income communities and households with incomes at or below 80% of the statewide median or below a threshold designated as low-income by the California Department of Housing and Community Development. Community Power also recognizes additional census tracts identified by member agencies as Communities of Concern. Currently, only the cities of [Chula Vista](#) and [San Diego](#) have identified additional census tracts through their Climate Equity Index reports. If other member agencies were to identify additional census tracts in the future, Community Power would recognize those designations under the umbrella of Communities of Concern.

Budget and Financials

What can grant funds be used for?

Grant funds may be used for personnel, supplies, equipment, capital purchases, administrative or indirect costs, and any other program costs tied to effectively executing the proposed project.

What are indirect costs?

Indirect costs are overhead expenses incurred by the applicant organization as a result of the project but are not easily identified with the specific project. Generally, indirect costs are defined as administrative or other expenses that are not directly allocable to a particular activity or project; rather they are related to overall general operations and are shared among projects and/or functions. Examples include executive oversight, accounting, grants management, legal expenses, utilities, technology support and facility maintenance.

Is there a required template for the budget?

Applicants must submit a project/program budget as part of their application and are recommended to use the budget template provided in Foundant.

Grant Awards

When will grant awards be made?

Grant notifications will be made in early August. Please note that this is a tentative timeline.

What happens to any remaining grant funds that are unused after the grant period ends?

Unused funds at the close of your project must be returned to SDF. If your organization anticipates needing a grant extension or an adjustment of funding used, please communicate this as soon as possible with your SDF staff liaison to coordinate around any needed adjustments.