



**OCEd**  
Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations

# THE OFFICE OF CLEAN ENERGY DEMONSTRATIONS



## Native CDFI Network Policy Summit Energy Improvements in Rural or Remote Areas (ERA) Program

Office of Clean Energy Demonstrations  
U.S. Department of Energy  
December 12, 2024

# Disclaimer

**Only publicly available information provided in the OCED Notice of Funding Opportunity is discussed in this session.**

**Attending the session is completely voluntary and will not impact an applicant's selection.**

**This session is not a rule or regulation. If there are any inconsistencies between the Notice of Funding Opportunity and the statements in this webinar, the Notice of Funding Opportunity is the controlling document.**

# Today's Session Will Cover



**ERA Program Overview**



**Notice of Funding  
Opportunity**



**Next Steps and  
Resources**

# OCED Mandate



## SCALE EQUITABLE, CLEAN ENERGY

Help enable 100% clean electricity by 2035 & net-zero emissions by 2050 through an equitable energy transition



## UNLOCK NEW INVESTMENT

Unlock and scale trillion-dollar clean energy follow on investment from the private sector and other sources of capital



## DE-RISK TECHNOLOGY

Maintain risk-based, balanced, and defensible portfolio of investments



## PROVIDE PROJECT OVERSIGHT

Serve as primary DOE office to deliver full scale clean energy demonstration projects



## ENGAGE & COLLABORATE

Leverage private sector and broader energy ecosystem to inform OCED and DOE technology commercialization efforts







## Energy Improvements in Rural or Remote Areas

*\*Rural or remote areas are defined as cities, towns, or unincorporated areas with 10,000 or fewer people*

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, commonly referred to as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) authorizes DOE to invest **\$1 billion in the Energy Improvements in Rural or Remote Areas Program**, managed by OCED.

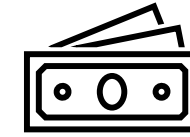
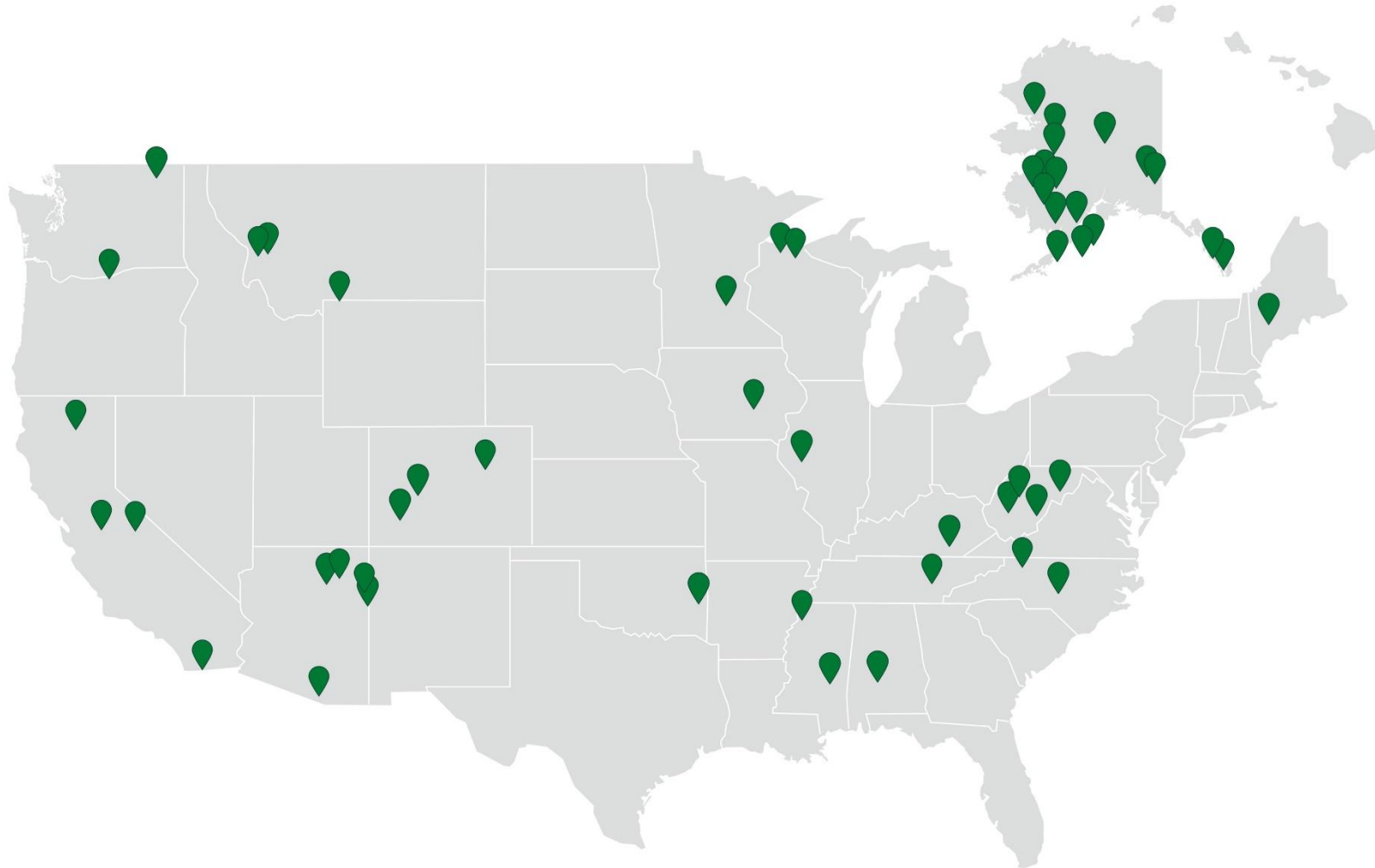
### **Notice of Funding Opportunity (\$400 million)**

- August 22, 2024: Notice of Intent
- **October 3, 2024: Notice of Funding Opportunity**

### **Current ERA projects:**

- August 2024: OCED began awarding projects under two separate funding opportunities

# Current ERA Projects\*

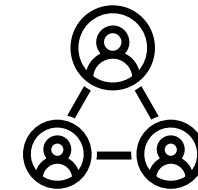


**\$444M**

to be distributed among

**36** community-driven energy projects across

**23**  
States and Territories



**40+**  
Tribal Nations

**11** types of clean energy



\*Does not include an additional \$15M distributed to ERA Prize recipients.



# Scope of ERA Program

## Energizing Rural Communities Prizes



**\$15 million in federal funding** [\$100K for Phase 1 and an additional \$200K for Phase 2 selectees.]



**67 projects selected for Phase 1**  
**33 projects selected for Phase 2**



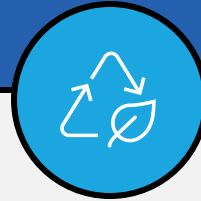
**31 states, 1 territory,**  
**and 19 tribal nations**



**No cost share**

Phase 1 Selections announced Jul 2023  
Phase 2 Selections announced Sept 2024

## Cooperative Agreements



**\$366 million in federal funding**



**17 projects selected**



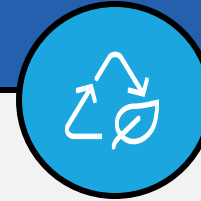
**20 states and 30 tribal nations**



**20-50% federal cost share**

Selections announced Feb 2024

## Fixed Award Grants



**\$78 million in federal funding**



**19 projects selected**



**12 states and 13 tribal nations**



**No cost share**

Selections announced Apr 2024

# Energizing Rural Hopi and Navajo with Solar Powered Battery-Based Systems

## Project Overview

Lead Applicant:

**Native Renewables**

Location:

**Hopi and Navajo Nations**

Federal Cost Share:

**Up to \$8 million**

Technology:

**Solar PV and Battery Storage**

## Key Facts

- **Electrify up to 300 tribal homes** by installing 2.5 kW off-grid solar photovoltaic (solar PV) and battery energy storage systems on the reservations of the Navajo Nation and Hopi Tribe.
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions from kerosene and propane lanterns and gasoline generators

## Community Benefits

- Providing **ongoing education for participating households** on solar electric energy systems and best practices to ensure longevity of solar PV and battery energy storage systems.
- **Engaging with tribal, chapter, or health officials** to identify potential beneficiaries.
- Providing **technical training opportunities for tribal members** to grow the local solar workforce and sustain jobs that offer benefits like on-the-job professional development.





# Mashkiiziibii Minigrid

## Project Overview

Lead Applicant:

**Bad River Band of Lake Superior  
Tribe of Chippewa Indians**

Location:

**Bad River Reservation, WI**

Federal Cost Share:

**Up to \$14.1 million**

Technology:

**Solar PV, Battery Storage, and Mini-  
Grid**

## Key Facts

- Hybrid minigrid (solar PV and battery storage) to power the reservation's Odanah, Aspen Acres, Franks Field, and Birch Hill communities.
- Project aims to help the Bad River Band reach its goal of net zero carbon emissions with **100% renewable electricity generation by 2027**.

## Community Benefits

- Organizing **Community Discovery Workshops, public meetings, presentations, and surveys** to understand the community's priorities, support two-way learning, and inform project decisions.
- **Partnering with the University of Wisconsin's Clean Energy Community Initiative** to distribute a clean energy focused curriculum and skills training to higher and professional education institutions serving tribes and communities in northern Wisconsin.
- **Creating quality jobs** that offer competitive salary packages and hourly wages, comprehensive benefits, and support for professional development, and offering opportunities for current employees to reskill or upskill for project-related opportunities.



# Yakama Tribal Solar Canal & Hydro Project

## Project Overview

Lead Applicant:

**The Confederated Tribes and Bands of the Yakama Nation**

Location:

**Yakama Indian Reservation, WA**

Federal Cost Share:

**Up to \$32 million**

Technology:

**Solar PV and Hydropower Irrigation System**

## Key Facts

- Install solar photovoltaic (solar PV) and micro-hydropower on an irrigation system converted from open canals, demonstrating responsible siting of renewable energy generation using land that does not risk disturbing cultural and ecological resources.
- Intends to **lower energy costs for members of the Yakama Nation**

## Community Benefits

- Creating **10 construction jobs** and **three apprenticeships**.
- Implementing a tracking system to monitor project benefits and **ensure both project funds and community benefits remain within the reservation**.
- Engaging with local schools, farmers, businesses, and non-Native utility customers to provide project updates and **workforce development opportunities**.





# ERA Notice of Funding Opportunity

# ERA Notice of Funding Opportunity Summary

**Total DOE Funding:** Approximately \$400 million

**Number of Anticipated Projects:** 20-50 projects

**Project Funding:** \$2M–\$50M federal awards (5% to 50% non-federal cost share)



**Eligible Activities:** (projects must support at least one)

- Improving overall cost-effectiveness of energy generation, transmission, or distribution systems
- Siting or upgrading transmission and distribution lines
- Reducing greenhouse gas emissions from energy generation in rural or remote areas
- Providing or modernizing electric generation facilities
- Developing microgrids
- Increasing energy efficiency



**Eligible Applicants:**

- **Indian Tribes**
- State and local government entities
- Nonprofit organizations
- For-profit organizations
- **Tribal organizations**
- Rural electric cooperatives
- Farming associations and cooperatives
- Labor unions
- Institutions of higher education
- Incorporated consortia
- Unincorporated consortia



# Addressing Barriers to Adoption

OCED seeks projects that demonstrate how to address **at least one** of the following items:

- ***Community perception:*** Working with community members to choose appropriate technologies, locations, and ownership structures can help create positive perceptions of and relationships with projects.
- ***Permitting & siting:*** Some rural and remote communities are not able to build more renewable energy projects or will soon face limits to new projects, due to challenges with interconnecting to the local electrical grid. Additionally, some rural and remote residents are wary of projects and technologies that may conflict with other uses of land or water, including agriculture.
- ***Downstream value chain:*** Ensuring that a clean energy project provides direct benefits to the people who pay the financial, environmental, and social costs of that project can help make the project more successful.





# Prioritizing Community Benefits in OCED Projects

OCED **requires** applicants to include a Community Benefits Plan to help ensure broadly shared prosperity in the clean energy transition.

By **prioritizing community benefits**, we can ensure the next chapter in America's energy story is marked by greater justice, equity, security, and resilience.

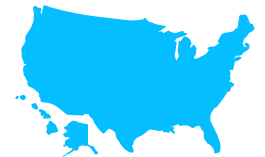
Community & Labor Engagement



Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, & Accessibility



Investing in the American Workforce



Justice40 Initiative



# ERA Notice of Funding Opportunity Topic Areas

Topic Area	Award Size per Project	Total Expected Award Amount for Topic Area	Cost Share from Applicant	Cost Share from Applicant: Eligible for Lower Amount*
1. Open category	\$10M–\$50M	\$150M	50%	20%
2. Dual use and co-location	\$10M–\$50M	\$175M	50%	20%
3. Smaller-scale community-centered	\$2M–\$10M	\$50M	20%	5%
4. Isolated microgrids & unelectrified buildings	\$2M–\$10M	\$25M	20%	5%

*\*Indian Tribes, state and local governments, institutions of higher education, and nonprofit primary applicants are eligible for the lower cost share amount.*

# Projects Not of Interest

- Large transmission projects (i.e., projects >69kV, or proposals of lines >30 miles)
- Single-campus projects that serve only the regular operation of that facility (e.g., solar on individual hospitals or schools)
  - For Topic Areas 3 and 4, applicants may propose single-campus projects that include backup power from emission-free sources for critical community-serving buildings.
- Electric vehicles (EVs)
- Projects solely focused on EV charging
  - EV charging infrastructure may be a component of a broader, otherwise eligible project.
- Projects including only weatherization





# Next Steps & Resources

# ERA Technical Assistance for Potential Applicants to this Funding Opportunity

## National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) Technical Assistance (TA)

- Technical assistance became available **in October** for concept papers and application development
- Includes up to 12 hours of no-cost telephone conversations with each potential applicant
- Example TA Topics include:
  - Describing the technology and/or systems to be developed, construction activities, and infrastructure development
  - Describing a preliminary development plan and timeline
  - Detailing the qualifications, experience, and capabilities of the proposed project team
  - Developing a Community Benefits Plan

Applicants are responsible for completing and submitting their own applications.

For more information, please visit <https://www.nrel.gov/state-local-tribal/era-technical-assistance.html> or email [ERA@nrel.gov](mailto:ERA@nrel.gov)





# Additional Technical Assistance for Potential Applicants

## Environmental Justice Thriving Communities Technical Assistance Centers (EJ TCTACs)

- Partnership between EPA and DOE
- 16 technical assistance centers to help remove barriers and improve accessibility for communities to reliable and safe clean energy
- EJ TCTACs provide:
  - Direct technical assistance
  - Training
  - Capacity building support
  - Guidance on community engagement and meeting facilitation
  - Translation and interpretation services

[Environmental Justice Thriving Communities Technical Assistance Centers Program](#)

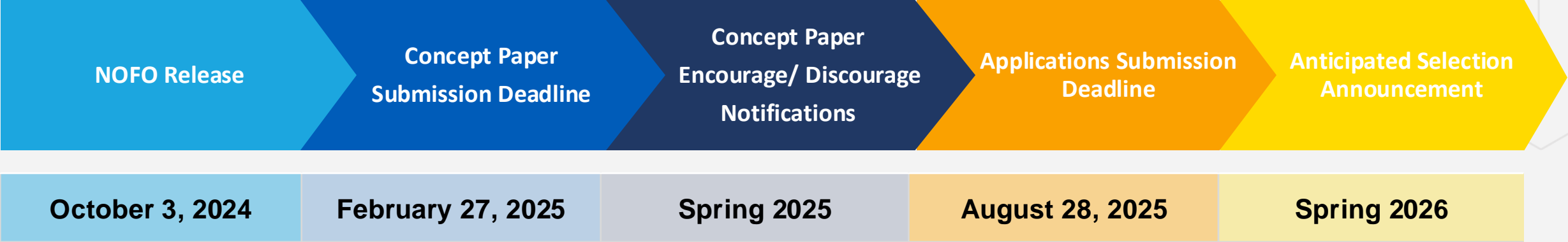
## Federal Energy Funding For Rural or Remote Areas: A Guide For Communities

- A guide for communities planning or building local clean energy projects
- Publicly available resource that highlights:
  - Technical Assistance Programs
  - Renewables Energy and Efficiency Programs
  - Transmission and Distribution Programs
  - Funding Programs that Target Specific Communities

[OCED's Federal Energy Funding for Rural and Remote Areas: A Guide for Communities | Department of Energy](#)



# Application Process Timeline





## Stay Connected

- For questions regarding this ERA funding opportunity: email [ERA2024@hq.doe.gov](mailto:ERA2024@hq.doe.gov)
- OCED Website & Newsletter Sign-up [energy.gov/oced](https://energy.gov/oced)  
*Scroll to bottom to sign up here:*

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# Thank you!



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