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**UNIFORM NOTICE OF FUNDING OPPORTUNITY (NOFO)**

**Summary Information**

	Data Field	
1.	Awarding Agency Name:	Illinois Finance Authority (IFA), in its capacity as the Illinois Climate Bank (ICB)
2.	Agency Contact:	Claire Brinley, <a href="mailto:climatebank@il-fa.com">climatebank@il-fa.com</a> , 312-651-1319
3.	Announcement Type:	<input type="checkbox"/> Initial announcement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Modification of a previous announcement
4.	Type of Assistance Instrument:	Grant
5.	Funding Opportunity Number:	IFA-CPRG-06
6.	Funding Opportunity Title:	Illinois Climate Pollution Reduction Grant: Small Utility Clean Energy Planning Grant Program
7.	CSFA Number:	560-03-3643
8.	CSFA Popular Name:	Illinois Climate Pollution Reduction Grants: Small Utility Clean Energy Planning Grant Program
9.	Assistance Listing (formerly CFDA Number):	Enter "not applicable" if Source of Funding does not include Federal or Federal pass-through funds
10.	Anticipated Number of Awards:	2-8
11.	Estimated Total Program Funding:	Up to \$1,600,000
12.	Award Range	Up to \$200,000
13.	Source of Funding:	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Federal or Federal pass-through <input type="checkbox"/> State <input type="checkbox"/> Private / other funding
14.	Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
15.	Indirect Costs Allowed Restrictions on Indirect Costs	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If yes, provide the citation governing the restriction: US EPA General Terms and Conditions, Sec. 18; Assistance Amendment between IL Environmental Protection Agency and US EPA (limiting budget to 10% de minimis rate).
16.	Posted Date:	January 30, 2026
17.	Application Range:	Applications will be accepted until April 17, 2026.
18.	Technical Assistance Session:	Session Offered: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No Session Mandatory: <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No Session will be recorded and made available at: <a href="https://illinoisclimatebank.com/financing-programs/local-governments-nonprofits/stretch-building-code-adoption-support/">https://illinoisclimatebank.com/financing-programs/local-governments-nonprofits/stretch-building-code-adoption-support/</a>

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# NOFO

## **A. Program Objectives**

**NOFO Purpose:** Illinois Finance Authority (IFA), in its capacity as the Illinois Climate Bank (ICB), invites project proposals under Illinois' award for the Illinois Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG): Small Utility Clean Energy Planning Grant Program (Program). With this NOFO, IFA/ICB invites eligible entities interested in applying for funding under this program to file their application proposals in compliance with the terms of this NOFO.

IFA/ICB reserves the right to revise any part of this NOFO by issuing addendum(s) at any time. Issuance of this NOFO, or subsequent addendum(s), if any, does not constitute a commitment by IFA/ICB or the State of Illinois to fund any project. In addition, IFA/ICB may cancel this NOFO at any time, without incurring any liability from responders or potential responders.

### **Illinois Small Utility Clean Power Planning Grant Overall Objectives**

In July 2024, Illinois was announced as one of the recipients of an award under the [Climate Pollution Reduction Grant](#) program, created by the [Inflation Reduction Act](#). The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) awarded \$430,251,378 to the State of Illinois to implement a variety of programs over the five-year grant period (2024-2029). The Small Utility Clean Energy Planning grants are one of these programs.

The Small Utility Clean Energy Planning Grant Program will support municipal electric utilities and cooperative electric utilities in aligning power generation planning and procurement with the CO<sub>2</sub>e and copollutant emissions limitations set forth in 415 ILCS 5/9.15 (Illinois' Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA)).<sup>1</sup> The program will provide financial assistance to support the planning and implementation of clean energy strategies, including the transition away from fossil fuels, and to track resulting greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions related to those strategies. This program is designed to ensure that small utilities can fully participate in Illinois' clean energy transition by building the capacity to plan, execute, and evaluate their progress toward CEJA-aligned goals.

This Program may also support planning activities that assist utilities, meaning a municipal power agency, municipality, or electric cooperative, including a generation and transmission electric

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<sup>1</sup> See 415 ILCS 5/9.15, available at <https://www.ilga.gov/Documents/legislation/ilcs/documents/041500050K9.15.htm>

cooperative that provides wholesale electricity to one or more distribution electric cooperatives, in meeting planning and procurement responsibilities under Public Act 104-0458, (Clean and Reliable Grid Affordability Act (CRGA)),<sup>2</sup> provided that such activities demonstrate a clear commitment to advancing clean energy strategies and aligning utility planning and procurement decisions with the CEJA goals.

Illinois' investment decisions in selecting projects under this program are guided by CEJA, CRGA, and the Small Utility Clean Energy Planning Grant Plan published on the IFA/ICB's website.

### **Small Utility Clean Power Planning Grant Subaward Objectives and Eligible Activities**

Subawards to eligible entities under this Program may be used for projects that demonstrate a clear strategy to support CEJA-aligned clean energy transition planning and procurement, facilitate the retirement and replacement of fossil fuel-based electricity sources, facilitate contracting for clean energy resources, and result in projected and measurable GHG emissions reductions.

All funded projects must address each of the three Subaward Objectives described below. Eligible activities may align with one or more individual objectives; however, applicants must demonstrate how the proposed scope of work, taken as a whole, advances all three objectives and supports Illinois' CEJA goal of achieving 100 percent carbon-free power by 2045, and the CO<sub>2</sub>e and copollutant emissions limitations set forth in 415 ILCS 5/9.15.

#### **Objective 1: CEJA-Aligned Power Planning and Decision Making**

*Objective:* Support municipal and cooperative electric utilities in conducting power planning, scenario analysis, or decision support activities that evaluate and prioritize CEJA-aligned, carbon-free resource pathways. Activities under this objective must support the selection of planning or procurement scenarios that advance transition away from fossil fuel-based generation or contracts for generation and align with Illinois' carbon-free goals and emission limitations.

This objective may include integrated resource planning (IRP) or IRP-related analysis only where such efforts go beyond the minimum requirements for IRPs and explicitly evaluate, select, and advance CEJA-aligned scenarios.

*Objective 1 Timeline:* Where a clean energy roadmap is developed under Objective 1, the roadmap must be completed within twelve (12) months of grant agreement execution; however, if the applicant is undertaking activities related to an Integrated Resource Plan (IRP), the development timeline may align with the applicable statutory planning and filing requirements established under CRGA.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://ilga.gov/legislation/PublicActs/View/104-0458>

Use of Existing Plans: Applicants that have already completed, or are currently undertaking, an integrated resource plan, clean energy roadmap, or other long-term power supply planning document may submit that plan as part of their application to demonstrate alignment with Illinois' clean energy and emissions reduction goals. Applicants are not required to duplicate existing planning efforts to meet this objective.

Where an existing IRP or roadmap is provided, grant funding under this objective is to be used for supplemental or enhanced planning activities that build upon prior work, such as additional CEJA-aligned scenario analysis, emissions modeling, refinement of clean energy procurement pathways, or other analytical work necessary to advance implementation consistent with CEJA. Applicants with existing plans may also elect to focus their proposed activities under Objectives 2 and 3, provided they demonstrate how prior planning aligns with CEJA and supports the proposed scope of work.

### Objective 1 Eligible Activities

Eligible Activities under this objective may include:

- **Conducting Technical and Financial Assessments:** Staff time or consultants to perform comprehensive analyses evaluating clean energy options, determining cost-effectiveness, and assessing system compatibility and infrastructure readiness for eligible entities.
- **Hiring External Consultants or Technical Experts:** Contracting with subject matter experts to support power supply planning, roadmap development, IRP-related scenario analysis, feasibility modeling, regulatory analysis, or other planning activities that evaluate CEJA-aligned resource pathways.
- **Clean Energy Roadmap, Strategy, or IRP Scenario Development:** Development or refinement of clean energy roadmaps, long-term planning documents, or IRPs that assess generation mix alternatives, load growth, and resource scenarios consistent with CEJA's carbon-free and CO<sub>2</sub>e and copollutant emission limitation goals. This includes writing, compilation, finalization, and public release of these plans. Planning activities must demonstrate how CEJA-aligned scenarios are evaluated and prioritized.
- **Emissions Baseline Development and Scenario Modeling:** Establishment of baseline GHG emissions from existing power supply portfolios and modeling of projected emissions outcomes under alternative planning or procurement scenarios aligned with CEJA.
- **Community Engagement for IRP-Related Planning:** Where IRP or IRP-related planning activities are proposed, eligible activities may include planning, coordination, and facilitation of community engagement activities required by CRGA, including stakeholder outreach, public meetings, incorporation of community input into planning documents, and documentation of engagement outcomes, provided that such activities support CEJA-aligned planning and decision-making.

### **Objective 2: Clean Energy Procurement Readiness and Implementation Enablement**

*Objective:* Build utility readiness to implement CEJA-aligned power planning decisions by supporting procurement planning, internal capacity building, governance processes, and contract or financial analysis necessary to execute clean energy procurement strategies.

#### Objective 2 Eligible Activities

Eligible activities under this objective may include:

- **Clean Energy Procurement Strategy and Execution Support:** Development of procurement strategies, implementation plans, or supporting analyses that translate CEJA-aligned planning outcomes into actionable clean energy procurement pathways, including contract structures, timing considerations, and resource selection.
- **Securing Renewable Energy Power Purchase Agreements (PPAs) or Clean Power:** Funds may support staff time or external support for designing and executing specific clean energy procurement actions, including negotiating PPAs or structuring other carbon-free electricity supply arrangements. Activities under this category must be tied to identifiable procurement outcomes and support documentation of the amount of clean energy procured, including megawatt-hours (MWh) of carbon-free electricity added and the corresponding displacement, retirement, or replacement of fossil fuel-based generation or electricity contracts, as applicable.
- **Staff Capacity Building for Procurement and Contract Management:** Support for staff time, training, or technical assistance to build durable internal capability to manage and oversee clean energy procurement activities. This may include developing internal expertise to evaluate procurement options, negotiate and administer contracts, manage PPAs over their full term, and coordinate procurement activities across departments or governing bodies.
- **Governance, Financial, and Contract Readiness:** Activities that support internal governance processes, board or council engagement, financial modeling, contract review, or preparation of procurement documentation such as RFPs or negotiation frameworks necessary to implement CEJA-aligned procurement decisions.
- **GHG Data Management and Reporting Readiness:** Development of internal processes, workflows, or staff capabilities necessary to collect, manage, and report power supply-related GHG emissions data, including preparation for CPRG reporting requirements and coordination with consultants or data service providers.

### **Objective 3: Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction and Accountability**

*Objective:* Support measurable and projected reductions in GHG emissions through the transition from fossil-based generation to carbon-free resources, consistent with CEJA's CO<sub>2</sub>e and copollutant emission limitation goals. Activities under this objective must generate sufficient baseline, projected, and ongoing data to support Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) reporting requirements and enable IFA/ICB to calculate and report emissions reductions attributable to funded activities.

#### Objective 3 Reporting Framework

Grantees will be required to report baseline, projected, and ongoing power supply and GHG emissions metrics consistent with CPRG reporting requirements.

**Baseline:** Grantees will be required to report the following baseline metrics and GHG emissions data.

- Baseline year
- GHG emissions associated with the baseline total megawatts (MW) and megawatt hours (MWh) served (required)

**Projected:** Grantees will be required to report the following projected metrics and GHG emissions data associated with the CEJA-aligned roadmap, strategy, or IRP funded under this grant. Projections must extend through at least 2045 and align with the planning horizon described in Attachment A.

Year	GHG emissions estimates per year (metric tons CO2e)	MW of clean energy procurement planned	MWh of clean energy procurement planned	MW of fossil fuel generation or contracted supply targeted for retirement or replacement	MWh of fossil fuel generation or contracted supply targeted for retirement or replacement
2027					
2028....					
2045					

**Actual:** Grantees will be required to report the following ongoing and actual metrics and GHG emissions data for each reporting period, consistent with the reporting requirements outlined in Section F of this NOFO and the CPRG program.

- Actual GHG emissions for the reporting period
- MWs and MWhs of clean energy procured or contracted within the reporting period
- Procurement method (PPA, self-generation, supply contract, etc.)
- MW and MWhs of fossil fuel generation or contracted supply retired or replaced in the reporting period

**Objective 3 Eligible Activities**

Eligible activities under this objective include activities necessary to develop, populate, maintain, and report the data described above. Eligible activities may include, but are not limited to:

- **GHG Emissions Reduction Modeling and Quantification:** Modeling of projected GHG emissions reductions associated with CEJA-aligned planning scenarios, procurement strategies, or clean energy transitions, including projections extending through at least 2045 (and where feasible, 2050). Modeling must include assumptions related to changes in electricity procurement,

including estimated or actual megawatts (MWs) and/or megawatt-hours (MWh) of clean energy procured and fossil-based electricity displaced or retired over time.

- **GHG Emissions Tracking Tools and Resources:** Acquisition or implementation of software, tools, or data services to track, monitor, and report clean power procurement and GHG emissions over time, consistent with CPRG reporting requirements. This includes tools or processes to track ongoing clean energy procurement, including megawatts (MWs) and/or megawatt-hours (MWh) of clean energy procured, fossil fuel-based electricity displaced or retired, and associated emissions impacts, consistent with CPRG reporting requirements.
- **GHG Reporting and Data Development:** Establishing or refining baseline electricity supply and GHG emissions data for the load covered by the proposed activities. Supporting staff time or consultant support to prepare CPRG-compliant GHG reporting inputs. Preparation of baseline emissions data, projected emissions trajectories, and supporting documentation necessary to complete the reporting requirements described above.

Applicants must demonstrate that proposed activities under this objective will produce the data necessary for IFA/ICB to calculate projected emissions reductions associated with CEJA-aligned planning or procurement decisions.

## **B. Funding Information**

This award is utilizing federal funds. This NOFO solicits project applications for the first two to three years of the Program. The total target funding available under this NOFO is up to \$1,600,000. IFA/ICB reserves the right to make no awards, to make partial awards, or to fund fewer or more projects than anticipated, subject to the availability of funds and program priorities.

- **Expected amounts of individual state awards:** up to \$200,000 per project.
- **Type of assistance instrument:** Grant
- **Award structure:**
  - **Payment Method:** Funding will be provided on a reimbursement basis for documented costs incurred and approved through Amplifund. For subawards that support integrated resource planning (IRP) or IRP-related activities, IFA/ICB reserves the right to provide partial reimbursement on an interim basis and to withhold remaining reimbursement until the applicable planning deliverables are completed and demonstrate alignment with Illinois' clean energy and emissions reduction goals.
  - **Allowable Costs:** All reimbursement requests will be reviewed by IFA/ICB and must be prudent, reasonable, allowable, and allocable in accordance with applicable federal cost principles (2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E).
- **Anticipated start dates:** Spring 2026
- **Period of performance:** Until September 2029
- **Cost match requirement:** None.
- **Indirect costs allowed:** Based on applicant's annually negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (see below for further information).

## **C. Application Guidance**

## **Evaluation Focus**

The Small Utility Clean Power Planning Subprogram provides funding to support municipal and cooperative electric utilities in advancing CEJA-aligned power planning, procurement readiness, and GHG emissions reduction accountability.

Projects funded under this Subprogram are expected to demonstrate a credible pathway to achieving all three Subaward Objectives within the period of performance, including:

- CEJA-aligned power planning and decision-making;
- Readiness to implement clean energy procurement and manage associated contracts and data; and
- The ability to quantify and report projected and ongoing GHG emissions reductions resulting from clean energy procurement and fossil fuel displacement.

IFA/ICB will evaluate applications based on the applicant's ability to use grant funds efficiently to advance CEJA-aligned outcomes and to generate the information necessary to support CPRG program-level GHG reporting.

## **Required Application Components**

Applicants must include all of the following components in their application submission through Amplifund in accordance with Section D of this NOFO. IFA/ICB has provided templates for specific application components. Applicants must use the provided templates; no substitute formats will be accepted. These templates must be completed and uploaded to Amplifund along with all other required application materials. Incomplete or missing information may result in lower scoring or deem the application ineligible for review.

Applicants must use the templates provided in Attachment A. Attachment A replaces long-form narratives and serves as the primary source of information for evaluating eligibility, alignment with CEJA and CRGA, feasibility, and readiness to achieve Subaward Objectives.

Incomplete applications or applications submitted in alternative formats may be deemed ineligible for review.

### **Applicant Information (Attachment A, Table 1)**

Applicants must complete Attachment A, Table 1: Applicant Information and Authority, which is intended to establish the applicant's eligibility, qualifications, role in power planning and procurement, and authority to implement the proposed activities under this Subprogram.

### **CEJA Alignment, Planning Context, and Proposed Activities (Attachment A, Table 2)**

Applicants must complete Attachment A, Table 2: CEJA Alignment, Planning Context, and Proposed Activities, which serves as the primary narrative component of the application. Table 2 is designed to provide IFA/ICB with a clear and consistent understanding of the applicant’s commitment to aligning power planning and procurement decisions with the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA), including the State’s goal of achieving 100 percent carbon-free power by 2045 and CO<sub>2</sub>e and copollutant emissions limitations as set forth in 415 ILCS 5/9.15, as well as the applicant’s existing planning context, authority to act, and proposed activities under each Subaward Objective.

In Table 2, applicants must describe their CEJA commitment, relevant planning and procurement authority, and any existing power supply contracts or obligations that affect the proposed activities. Responses should focus on the portion of the load, resources, or planning horizon addressed through this application and demonstrate that the applicant has authority to undertake the proposed work.

Applicants must also describe the activities proposed under each of the three Subaward Objectives, or, where applicable, explain how existing planning efforts satisfy a particular objective. Applicants must clearly reference the eligible activities identified in NOFO Section A that correspond to the proposed scope of work. Applicants are not required to propose activities under every eligible activity category; however, the proposed scope of work, taken as a whole, must address all three Subaward Objectives. Responses in Table 2 should be concise and focused on how proposed or completed activities advance CEJA-aligned planning, procurement readiness, and GHG emissions reduction and reporting outcomes.

### **Milestones and Deliverables (Attachment B)**

Applicants must complete Attachment B, which is intended to translate the activities described in Attachment A into a clear implementation plan. Attachment B must demonstrate how the proposed scope of work will be carried out over the grant period and how progress toward the Subaward Objectives will be achieved and documented. Applicants must identify the key tasks, interim milestones, and final deliverables associated with the proposed activities and must indicate how those milestones and deliverables align with the eligible activities identified in NOFO Section A.

Milestones and deliverables must align directly with the activities described in Attachment A and must collectively demonstrate progress toward achieving all three Subaward Objectives. Deliverables should be sufficient to demonstrate completion of proposed planning, procurement readiness, capacity-building, or emissions-tracking activities and to support GHG emissions reporting requirements under the CPRG program. Applicants are not required to propose milestones for every eligible activity; however, Attachment B must clearly show how the proposed activities will be implemented and how completion will be verified by IFA/ICB.

### **Brief Narrative (Optional)**

Applicants may provide a brief project narrative to supplement their responses in Attachment A and Attachment B.

The narrative should be no longer than one-half page in 11- or 12-point font and may be used to

describe key aspects of the application, in alignment with this NOFO, that are not fully represented in the applicant's Attachment A or B responses.

Submission of a project narrative is elective and not required. Narratives that exceed the stated length limit may be excluded from consideration during the IFA/ICB review and selection process described in Section E.

## **D. Eligibility Information and Prioritization**

Proposed projects must meet the grant requirements described below.

### **Eligible Entities**

Municipal and cooperative electric utilities in Illinois are eligible to apply. Applicants included in the SAM.gov Exclusion List and Illinois Stop Payment List will not be eligible for an award.

Other entities identified as a "utility" under the Clean and Reliable Grid Affordability Act (CRGA), including a municipal power agency, municipality, or electric cooperative such as a generation and transmission electric cooperative that provides wholesale electricity to one or more distribution electric cooperatives, may apply on behalf of one or more eligible municipal or cooperative electric utilities, provided that the applicant demonstrates authority to conduct power planning, procurement, or integrated resource planning activities on behalf of its member utilities.

### **Non-Eligible Entities**

Investor-owned utilities serving electric load in Illinois are not eligible to apply under this Program.

### **Geographic Priority**

Priority will be given to eligible entities that meet the following criteria:

One or more census tracts designated as [Equity Investment Eligible Communities](#) under CEJA. These include the Restore, Reinvest, and Renew (R3) Program areas ([R3 Areas](#) map), which include areas where residents have historically been excluded from economic opportunities, as evidenced by rates of child poverty, unemployment, gun injuries, and incarceration, among other factors.

### **Programmatic Priority**

In addition to geographic considerations, IFA/ICB may prioritize applications that demonstrate a strong potential to achieve significant GHG emissions reductions through CEJA-aligned power planning or procurement decisions. This may include, but is not limited to, applicants that have already completed a

clean energy roadmap or IRP demonstrating alignment with CEJA, or that propose activities expected to result in substantial clean energy procurement or fossil fuel displacement.

### **Eligible Activities**

Eligible activities are described in Section A of this NOFO and within each Subaward Objective and must align with the Program and Subprogram objectives outlined herein. If an applicant proposes activities that are not explicitly listed, the applicant must explain in Attachment A why the proposed activities are necessary and how they directly support achievement of the Subaward Objectives.

### **Non-eligible Activities**

A subaward to an eligible entity under this grant Program may not be used for:

- Activities that do not support municipal and cooperative electric utility alignment with CEJA goals or contribute to the reduction of GHG emissions from procured energy sources;
- Construction related activities;
- Equipment purchases or rental;
- Activities that support measures, activities or projects outside the boundaries of the ten EPA regions;
- Costs of acquiring “intangible property,” as defined in [2 CFR 200.1](#); or
- Lobbying activities or union organizing.

### **Indirect Costs Rate**

To charge indirect costs to a grant, the applicant must have an annually negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA). There are three types of NICRAs:

**Federally Negotiated Rate.** Organizations that receive direct federal funding, may have an indirect cost rate that was negotiated with the Federal Cognizant Agency. Illinois will accept the federally negotiated rate. The organization must provide a copy of the federally negotiated NICRA.

**State Negotiated Rate.** The organization may negotiate an indirect cost rate with the State of Illinois if they do not have a Federally Negotiated Rate. If an organization has not previously established an indirect cost rate, an indirect cost rate proposal must be submitted through State of Illinois’ centralized indirect cost rate system no later than three months after receipt of a Notice of State Award (NOSA). If an organization previously established an indirect cost rate, the organization must annually submit a new indirect cost proposal through CARS within six months after the close of the grantee’s fiscal year.

**De Minimis Rate.** An organization that has never negotiated an indirect cost rate with the Federal Government or the State of Illinois is eligible to elect a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct

cost (MTDC)<sup>3</sup>. Once established, the De Minimis Rate may be used indefinitely. The State of Illinois must verify the calculation of the MTDC annually in order to accept the De Minimis Rate.

All grantees must complete an indirect cost rate negotiation or elect the De Minimis Rate to claim indirect costs. Indirect costs claimed without a negotiated rate or a De Minimis Rate election on record in the State of Illinois centralized indirect cost rate system may be subject to disallowance.

## **E. Application Submission Information**

### **Contact to Request Application Package and Accommodations**

The full application is available through the [www.grants.illinois.gov/portal](http://www.grants.illinois.gov/portal). If any assistance is needed in accessing application materials or submitting application due to limited Internet access or other limitations, the potential applicant should email [climatebank@il-fa.com](mailto:climatebank@il-fa.com) or schedule time with the Illinois Climate Bank AmpliFund Support Desk. Support sessions can be scheduled using this [link](#).

### **Submission Approach**

This NOFO is a competitive process to solicit project applications from interested entities to meet the funding objectives of this program. This process has been designed to reduce the burden on entities seeking to apply for funding and ensure alignment on funding objectives with respondents.

1. **Initial application window.** The initial application process will provide respondents with an accessible, easy-to-navigate method for outlining their proposed project to IFA for selection.
2. **Candidate selection.** IFA will evaluate projects submitted under the application process on their likelihood and ability to meet all program objectives, as described further herein. Based on the review of applications, projects will be identified for funding and award.

### **Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), SAM.gov & GATA registration**

To submit an application, the applicant must register and pre-qualify through the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) Grantee Portal, [www.grants.illinois.gov/portal](http://www.grants.illinois.gov/portal). Registration and pre-qualification are required annually. Selected applicants must also register with the federal SAM.gov and must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) assigned in SAM.gov. Applicants included in the SAM.gov Exclusion List and in the Illinois Stop Payment List will not be eligible for an award. The Grantee Portal alerts the entity of “qualified” status or informs how to remediate a negative verification (e.g., missing UEI Unique Entity Identifier assigned in SAM.gov, not in good standing with the Secretary of State). Inclusion on the SAM.gov Exclusion List cannot be remediated.

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<sup>3</sup> MTDC is defined at [2 CFR 200.1](#).

## Mandatory Forms & Attachments

All project submissions must include the following mandatory forms and attachments:

- a. Uniform State Grant Application (accessible through the Grantee Portal);
- b. Budget using the [Uniform Budget Template](#);
- c. Attachment A (available at the IFA/ICB website [here](#));
- d. Supporting project documents or materials uploaded as evidence for information provided in Attachment A (documents);
- e. Attachment B including the key deliverables and milestones (available at the IFA/ICB website [here](#)); and
- f. Brief project narrative (Optional)

## Grant Administration and Compliance Requirements

- a. **Project costs breakdown.** Respondents should fill out the budget in their application response through the [www.grants.illinois.gov/portal](http://www.grants.illinois.gov/portal). All expenditure must be allowable, allocatable, and reasonable in accordance with the applicable federal cost principles. For more information, see [2 CFR Part 200 Subpart E](#) - Cost Principles as well as applicable provisions of [2 CFR Part 1500](#).
- b. **Performance measurement.** Grantees will be responsible for ensuring all reporting requirements associated with the federal funding are met. This includes providing timely and accurate reporting to the Climate Bank in compliance with all federal and programmatic obligations. The Climate Bank will ensure that reporting processes are adjusted as necessary to meet updated or additional requirements issued by U.S. EPA. Reporting will include, but is not limited to, project financial and activity report, and assistance in developing sample project case studies.

Reporting will include semi-annual reports to assist the Illinois Climate Bank in showing progress on achieving this program's purpose. These semi-annual progress reports will be due to US EPA within 30 calendar days of the end of the semi-annual reporting period. Consequently, to allow time to compile reports from multiple grantees, reports may be due to the Climate Bank within as few as 3 days of the end of the semi-annual reporting period, which run from October 1 to March 31 and from April 1 to September 30 of each year.

Grant recipients will track the impact of the small utility clean energy planning program through the metrics identified in the funding opportunity and as may additionally be requested by IFA/ICB.

- c. **Funding Compliance Requirements.** In responding to this NOFO, applicants must acknowledge compliance with the requirements related to this US EPA subaward:
  - i. **Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and other Federal statutes and regulations** prohibiting discrimination in Federal financial assistance programs apply, including provisions protecting free speech, religious liberty, public welfare, and the

- environment per [200 CFR 200.300\(a\)](#), as well as regulations, including [2 CFR 200.300\(b\)](#) prohibiting discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity.
- ii. **Consultant Cap.** Grant funds available for salary paid to individual consultants is limited to the maximum daily rate for Level IV of the Executive Schedule.<sup>4</sup>
  - iii. **Management Fees.** Management fees or similar charges in excess of the direct costs and approved indirect rates are not allowable.<sup>5</sup>
  - iv. **Foreign Work and Materials.** IFA must obtain written consent from US EPA prior to awarding a subaward that will be performed in a foreign country. Alert the IFA in the proposal if any portion of the project will be performed in a foreign country.<sup>6</sup>
  - v. **Reporting Executive Compensation.** Certain subrecipients receiving federal funding may be required to report executive compensation. For more information, refer to [US EPA General Terms and Conditions](#), section 15.3 and 15.4.<sup>7</sup>
  - vi. **Conflicts of Interest.** Applicants must have systems in place to address, resolve, and disclose conflicts of interest and must disclose conflicts of interest to IFA, as described in [US EPA's Conflicts of Interest policy](#).<sup>8</sup>
  - vii. **Utilization of Disadvantaged Business Enterprises.** US EPA requires that subrecipients make good faith efforts to utilize Disadvantaged Business Enterprises when procuring services and supplies, and retain documentation of doing so. The specific six good faith efforts can be found at [40 CFR Section 33.301\(a\)-\(f\)](#).
  - viii. **Other Ineligible Activities.** Certify that the requested funding will not be used to encourage or support political activities such as the collection and dissemination of information related to potential, planned, or pending legislation or directly or indirectly support or oppose union organizing.<sup>9</sup>
  - ix. **Refreshments.** IFA has not received advance permission from US EPA to fund light refreshments or meals served at meetings, training workshops, or outreach events. Thus, applicants may not use funds from this grant for these purposes.<sup>10</sup>
  - x. **Procurement Standards.** The procurement standards in [2 CFR Part 200](#), including those requiring competition when the subrecipient acquires goods and services from contractors (including consultants), and Domestic preferences for procurements at [2 CFR 200.322](#) will apply to grant awardees.

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<sup>4</sup> For more information, see [US EPA General Terms and Conditions](#), effective October 1, 2024, Section 8.7.

<sup>5</sup> [US EPA General Terms and Conditions](#), effective October 1, 2024, Sec. 9.

<sup>6</sup> [US EPA General Terms and Conditions](#), effective October 1, 2024, Section 8.11.

<sup>7</sup> [US EPA General Terms and Conditions](#), effective October 1, 2024, Sec. 15.3, 15.4.

<sup>8</sup> [US EPA General Terms and Conditions](#), effective October 1, 2024, Sec. 23.2.

<sup>9</sup> [US EPA General Terms and Conditions](#), effective October 1, 2024, Sec. 13 (union organizing) and Sec. 45 (lobbying).

<sup>10</sup> See [US EPA General Terms and Conditions](#), effective October 1, 2024, Sec 35.

**NOTE:** Applicants selected for funding under this Program will be subject to the terms and conditions of the Illinois Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (FAIN 00E03862) and US EPA’s [General Terms and Conditions](#), as they apply to subgrantees. Review and Selection Criteria

## **Minimum Requirements**

To be eligible for funding, the proposed project must be located in Illinois, be submitted by an eligible entity, and propose eligible activities as described in Section A.

## **Selection Criteria**

Applications will be reviewed on a competitive basis. IFA/ICB will evaluate applications for selection based on the criteria described below, using information provided in Attachment A (Tables 1 and 2) and Attachment B (Milestones and Deliverables). All funded projects must demonstrate the ability to address all three Subaward Objectives through the proposed eligible activities, even if individual activities are weighted more heavily toward one or more objectives.

- **Feasibility and Readiness:** This criterion evaluates the extent to which the applicant demonstrates readiness to undertake the proposed planning, procurement, or capacity-building activities. Reviewers will consider the applicant’s authority and control over power supply planning or procurement decisions, the appropriateness of the proposed planning structure (e.g., full requirements, partial requirements, standalone, or non-IRP approach), and the applicant’s demonstrated ability to implement the proposed activities within the grant period. Consideration will also be given to the applicant’s internal capacity and/or partnerships to successfully complete the proposed work.
- **Quality and Clarity of Proposed Activities:** This criterion evaluates the clarity, completeness, and coherence of the proposed scope of work. Reviewers will assess whether the activities described in Attachment A are clearly defined, aligned with eligible activities identified in NOFO Section A, and logically connected to the milestones and deliverables presented in Attachment B. Strong applications will present a well-structured set of activities with clearly articulated outputs, timelines, and implementation steps.
- **CEJA-Aligned Power Planning and Decision Making:** This criterion will place particular emphasis on the clarity and credibility of the applicant’s commitment to CEJA goals and the extent to which proposed or existing planning efforts explicitly prioritize CEJA-aligned power supply pathways. Reviewers will assess how proposed or existing integrated resource plans, clean energy roadmaps, or other planning efforts align with CEJA’s goal of achieving 100 percent carbon-free power by 2045, CO<sub>2</sub>e and copollutant emissions limitations as set forth in 415 ILCS 5/9.15, and support the transition away from fossil fuel-based generation or electricity contracts. For applicants with existing plans, scoring will consider the extent to which those plans demonstrate CEJA alignment, include fossil fuel transition strategies, and support actionable clean energy procurement or implementation pathways.
- **Clean Energy Procurement Readiness and Implementation Enablement:** This criterion evaluates the extent to which the proposed project builds readiness to implement CEJA-aligned

decisions. Reviewers will consider how proposed activities strengthen internal staff capability, governance processes, contract management, procurement planning, or other implementation-enabling functions. Projects where a utility already has CEJA-aligned planning in place and seeks support to move toward execution may score strongly under this criterion.

- Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction and Accountability:** This criterion evaluates the degree to which the proposed project will support measurable and projected GHG emissions reductions. Reviewers will assess the applicant’s ability to establish or refine emissions baselines, model projected emissions outcomes, track clean energy procurement (including megawatt-hours of carbon-free electricity procured), document fossil fuel displacement or retirement, and support CPRG-compliant GHG reporting. Strong applications will clearly demonstrate how proposed activities will generate sufficient data to support emissions calculations and ongoing reporting.

## Scoring Framework

A successful project must score at least 30 points out of a maximum of 50 points to be considered for funding. Each criterion will be scored within the ranges shown below based on the strength of the application and the likelihood that the proposed activities will successfully achieve the intended outcomes.

Program Objectives Category	Maximum Points	Poor	Fair	Strong
Feasibility and Readiness	10	1-3 points	4-7 points	8-10 points
Quality and Clarity of Proposed Activities	5	1-2 points	3-4 points	5 points
CEJA-Aligned Power Planning and Decision-Making	15	1-5 points	6-10 points	11-15 points
Clean Energy Procurement Readiness and Implementation Enablement	10	1-3 points	4-7 points	8-10 points
Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reductions and Accountability	10	1-3 points	4-7 points	8-10 points
<b>Total Points</b>	<b>50</b>			

Each category will be evaluated in the Poor, Fair, or Strong bracket based on the description of the benefits in the project application and the likelihood of the applicant’s ability to achieve them as a consequence of the proposed project activities and to successfully measure these benefits.

IFA/ICB may exercise discretionary prioritization in awarding grants based on geographic considerations, as well as other priority factors outlined within this NOFO.

## F. Award Administration Information

### Schedule



IFA/ICB reserves the right to deviate from this schedule at any time and without notice.

### **Activity/Event**

Public Notice of Round 3 NOFO:	January 30, 2026
Deadline for Receipt of Applications:	April 17, 2026

### **Anticipated Announcement and Award Notices**

IFA/ICB will aim to notify applicants of the selection decision within 45 days after the deadline for application submission.

Projects may require review and approval from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) and US EPA. **NOTE:** Any notice of selection is not an authorization to begin performance of the project or incur costs. Costs incurred before entering into a subaward agreement with the IFA/ICB will not be recoverable.

### **Reporting**

The awarded projects will be required to report project metrics semiannually. IFA/ICB may post these reports on the IFA/ICB's public website(s). In addition, the applicant will be required to submit project management reports quarterly throughout the life of the project.

### **State Awarding Agency Contact(s)**

Contacts for questions and assistance:

Claire Brinley, IFA/ICB Program Manager  
phone: 312-651-1319  
email: [climatebank@il-fa.com](mailto:climatebank@il-fa.com)

### **Other Information**

**No Funding Commitment.** The State is not obligated to make any award as a result of this NOFO. This NOFO will **not** commit the State of Illinois or IFA/ICB to any contracts for any supplies or services or any grant of funding awards. All costs associated with responding to this NOFO are at the applicant's expense.

**Confidential and Proprietary Information:** Any information obtained in response to this NOFO may be used by the IFA/ICB and the State of Illinois for program planning on a non-attribution basis. All submission materials become State property and will not be returned. The State will accept requests from any interested party to keep the information in its submission confidential and will agree to

confidentiality, if reasonable, in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations. Any material within a response to this NOFO identified as confidential must be clearly marked and will be handled in accordance with applicable rules and regulations. Any response marked as confidential or proprietary in its entirety may be rejected without further consideration or recourse. The State may publicly post a summary of the responses received.

**Appeal Process:** IFA/ICB will follow the appeal process under 44 ILL. Adm. Code 7000.350. IFA/ICB intend to give the applicants that were not selected in this round of solicitation sufficient opportunities to develop their application further and resubmit their projects in the future rounds of project solicitations as they open.