

IMPORTANT: READ ALL INSTRUCTIONS FOR APPLICATION DETAILS.

The Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) was funded from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) through the U. S. Department of Energy (DOE) Energy Efficiency Conservation Block Grant. DOE's goal is to extend the capacity and capabilities of communities to implement high-impact, self-sustaining clean energy projects. The Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy (NDEE) will provide subawards to communities for energy efficiency projects. Eligible applicants for the Energy Efficiency Grant are counties, cities, and villages of Nebraska. The application can request funding for one project, and only one application per entity is allowed. Recipients must allocate funding to new projects: projects not started prior to the implementation of a grant award. NDEE intends to fund projects in small, mid-sized, and large communities throughout the state.

Grant funding will be distributed to communities for awarded projects by mid-June as required by the U. S. Department of Energy. Recipients will have until September 30, 2026, to complete the project. Quarterly progress reports to NDEE are required through December 2026 to track the progression of projects and evaluate community impacts of completed projects.

DOE awarded funds directly to the 10 most populous counties, 10 most populous cities, and the four Tribes of Nebraska under the same IIJA provision. Directly awarded counties, cities and tribes are ineligible to receive funding under this application.

NDEE anticipates that many communities will submit applications for this one-time competitive grant opportunity. The distribution of funds to communities will depend on the number of applications received, grant amount requested, and project type. The maximum award per project is \$50,000. Recipient awards will be determined by the proposed project, community benefits, and overall quality of the application.

NDEE will assess applications for eligibility and competitive ranking per the information submitted in the application. NDEE encourages communities both large and small to apply. Forty percent of the grant funding will be allocated for Disadvantaged Communities (DACs) identified in the Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST) and communities that have a high energy burden. If NDEE does not receive the quantity of qualified applications from DACs to meet the 40% threshold, unallocated funding will be dispersed to other communities.

Funding will be awarded to four types of energy efficiency projects: replacement of existing lighting equipment, installation of renewable energy systems, construction of pathways, and public education on energy efficiency and conservation. More details are provided on the types of energy efficiency projects in the following instructional pages.

Applicant Information

Eligible entity types are counties, cities, and villages. Enter the type and the name of the entity.

Enter the Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), a 12-character alphanumeric ID assigned to an entity by SAM.gov. Existing registered entities can find their UEI by following the steps [here](#). New entities can get their UEI at SAM.gov and, if required, complete an entity registration. For more information about this transition, visit [SAM.gov](#) or the Federal Service Desk, [FSD.gov](#).

Enter the Head of Entity Name and their title; for example: Mayor, City Administrator, or Chairperson. Enter requested contact information.

Enter the Contact Person for the grant application and their requested contact information.

DISADVANTAGED COMMUNITIES

The Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST) developed by the Council on Environmental Quality of the U. S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), uses datasets to create an interactive map that indicates burdens in eight categories: climate change, energy, health, housing, legacy pollution, transportation, water and wastewater, and workforce development. The tool uses this information to identify communities that are experiencing these burdens. EPA identifies these communities as disadvantaged if they are considered overburdened or underserved. The CEJST mapping tool can be accessed at this link. [screeningtool.geoplatform.gov](#). Use the search bar to identify if the applicant community contains any tracts identified as Disadvantaged.

Budget

Complete the Energy Efficiency for Communities Block Grant Program Budget Worksheet. A template is available on NDEE's [EECBG Program Webpage](#). Fill in all applicable yellow cells in all the individual sheets: Budget Summary, a. Personnel, b. Fringe Benefits, c. Travel, d. Equipment, e. Supplies, f. Contractual, g. Other, h. Indirect Charges. Check Budget worksheet to verify all costs and totals are calculated correctly. From the Budget Summary sheet, enter the Total Project amount, Grant Funding Requested, and Additional Funding into the Application under Budget. Awarded recipients will be required to cover any additional project costs not covered by the award.

BUDGET RELATED FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS-PROCUREMENT STANDARDS

Property procurement and services under a federal award require that states must follow the same policies and procedures used for procurements from non-Federal funds. States are to comply with §§ [200.321](#), [200.322](#), and [200.323](#) and ensure that every purchase order or other contract includes any clauses required by § [200.327](#). All other non-Federal entities, including subrecipients of a State, must follow the procurement standards in §§ [200.318](#) through [200.327 as listed here](#).

BUDGET RELATED FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS-DAVIS BACON ACT

If applicants choose to include personnel costs for construction and labor, they must comply with the Davis-Bacon Act that requires recipients and any subcontractors to compensate workers as required by the Act. Grant recipients must also submit weekly payroll data to the Department of Energy for any federal funding used to pay construction and labor workers.

Please review the Davis-Bacon and Related Acts Fact Sheet available on NDEE's EECBG Webpage for a summary of the federal requirement. More information on the Davis-Bacon Act can be found from the U.S. Department of Labor and accessed at this link: [Davis-Bacon and Related Acts | U.S. Department of Labor \(dol.gov\)](#). If grant recipients and subcontractors choose to pay workers with non-federal funds, Davis-Bacon Act compliance is not required.

BUDGET RELATED FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS – BUILD AMERICA, BUY AMERICA ACT (BABAA)

For equipment and supplies purchased with federal funds, recipients must comply with BABAA. All iron and steel used in any infrastructure project is produced in the United States—this means all manufacturing processes, from the initial melting stage through the application of coatings, occurred in the United States;

- All manufactured products used in the project are produced in the United States—this means the manufactured product was manufactured in the United States; and the cost of the components of the manufactured product that are mined, produced, or manufactured in the United States is greater than 55 percent of the total cost of all components of the manufactured product, unless another standard for determining the minimum amount of domestic content of the manufactured product has been established under applicable law or regulation. The costs of components of a manufactured product are determined in accordance with 2 CFR 184.5; and
- All construction materials are manufactured in the United States—this means that all manufacturing processes for the construction material occurred in the United States. See 2 CFR 184.6 for the meaning of “all manufacturing processes” for specific construction materials.

BABAA only applies to articles, materials, and supplies that are consumed in, incorporated into, or permanently affixed to an infrastructure project. As such, it does not apply to tools, equipment, and supplies, such as temporary scaffolding, brought into the construction site and removed at or before the completion of the infrastructure project. Nor does a BABAA apply to equipment and furnishings, such as movable chairs, desks, and portable computer equipment, that are used at or within the finished infrastructure project but are not an integral part of the structure or permanently affixed to the infrastructure project. The BABAA requirement must flow down to all subawards, all contracts, subcontracts and purchase orders for work performed under the infrastructure project.

The term “infrastructure” includes at a minimum, the structures, facilities, and equipment for, in the United States roads, highways and bridges; public transportation; dams, ports, harbors, and other maritime facilities; intercity passenger and freight railroads; freight and intermodal facilities; airports;

water systems, including drinking water and wastewater systems; electrical transmission facilities and systems; utilities; broadband infrastructure; and buildings and real property.

All applicants must submit either a certificate of compliance or a waiver request as follows.

CERTIFICATION OF BABAA COMPLIANCE

The applicant is required to provide certifications or equivalent documentation for proof of compliance that those articles, materials, and supplies that are consumed in, incorporated into, affixed to, or otherwise used in the infrastructure project, not covered by a DOE waiver or exemption, are produced in the United States. The certification or proof of compliance must be provided by the suppliers or manufacturers of the iron, steel, manufactured products and construction materials and flow up from all sub-awardees, contractors, and vendors to NDEE.

BABAA WAIVER REQUESTS

Applicants can submit a Waiver Request to NDEE if the applicant determines:

- Applying the domestic content procurement preference would be inconsistent with the public interest;
- The types of iron, steel, manufactured products, or construction materials are not produced in the United States in sufficient and reasonably available quantities or of a satisfactory quality; or
- The inclusion of iron, steel, manufactured products, or construction materials produced in the United States will increase the cost of the overall project by more than 25 percent.

Please complete the Waiver Request(s) using the information in *Guidance on Submission of Waiver for DOE Buy America Requirement* that can be accessed on NDEE's EECBG Program Webpage. The guidance details all the information that must be submitted. Applicants must submit any Waiver Request(s) to NDEE with the grant application package; NDEE will submit waiver requests to DOE. DOE may request, and the applicant must provide additional information for consideration of a submitted waiver. Waiver requests may take up to 90 days for DOE to process. DOE's final determination regarding approval or rejection of the waiver request may not be appealed.

Please review the Build America Buy America Fact Sheet available on NDEE's EECBG Program Webpage for a summary of the federal requirement. More rules on BABA can be found at the U.S. DOE website at this link: [Build America, Buy America | Department of Energy](#) and answers to frequently asked questions about BABAA can be found at this link: [Frequently Asked Questions about the Buy American Provisions | Department of Energy](#).

Project Information

Enter the complete physical address of the proposed project where indicated.

PROJECT CATEGORY

Check the box next to the category of the proposed project.

THE REPLACEMENT OF LESS EFFICIENT LIGHTING IN EXISTING GOVERNMENT INFRASTRUCTURE: BUILDINGS, STREETLIGHTS, AND TRAFFIC LIGHTS WITH LIGHTING TECHNOLOGY THAT IS MORE ENERGY EFFICIENT

Energy efficient lighting and technologies lower energy consumption and costs for the consumer, but also provide a system-wide benefit to the electric grid by lowering the demand for electric generation within the system balancing area and across the state. Lowering the amount of electric generation and decreasing load can also ease constraints on transmission paths.

Funds may not be used toward new buildings or construction. Instead, they must be used for efficiency improvements and retrofits to existing structures. For example, an eligible entity may not install new energy efficient streetlights in locations where there are currently no streetlights.

Ancillary equipment to perform energy efficient upgrades that is necessary for the proper functioning and safety, such as electric system upgrades and wiring upgrades required by electrical codes are eligible uses of funds.

- All lighting projects will require completion of the provided Lighting Worksheet in the Lighting & Project Metrics Templates spreadsheet. The spreadsheet is available on NDEE's EECBG Program Webpage. Fill in the type of proposed lighting shown in the left-hand column of the Lighting Worksheet. If replacing lamps and ballasts in existing fluorescent fixtures, identify the lamp and ballast manufacturers and model numbers and the number of each to be installed, and then mark "NA" for the fixture manufacturer but still total the number of fixtures. Or, if installing new fluorescent fixtures, complete the same information as above, but also identify the manufacturer, model number and number of new fixtures to be installed.
- **When replacing streetlights with LEDs on state highways, the applicant must obtain and provide a letter of approval from the State of Nebraska Department of Transportation (NDOT). For further assistance contact NDOT at NDOT at 1500 Nebraska Parkway, Lincoln, NE 68502, (402)471-4567, <https://dot.nebraska.gov/contact-us/>.**

THE INSTALLATION OF NEW RENEWABLE ENERGY SYSTEMS IN EXISTING GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS

The installation of new renewable energy systems such as solar photovoltaic (PV) systems, geothermal energy systems, wind energy systems, and biomass use could reduce energy costs and provide a clean source of energy.

Ancillary equipment to perform energy efficient upgrades that is necessary for the proper functioning and safety, such as electric system upgrades and wiring upgrades required by electrical codes are eligible uses of funds.

- Photovoltaic products must be installed per the manufacturer's installation instructions for optimum operability and output. All installations must meet local, state, and federal codes and regulations. Eligible equipment must be a commercially available system. Wind must be certified by the Small Wind Certification Council (SWCC) to SWCC standards. Solar equipment and other electrical components must be Underwriters Laboratory (UL) rated.
- Biomass systems must meet EPA requirements for particulate, bear the EPA stamp and the EPA stamp must include an efficiency of 75% or more. Units must be direct vented, taking combustion air from outside using either concentric pipe or two pipe exhaust/intake systems.
- Geothermal equipment must hold current certification in the AHRI directory, www.AHRIdirectory.org and copy of the AHRI certificate should be submitted.

THE CONSTRUCTION OF NEW BICYCLE OR PEDESTRIAN PATHS

The use of alternative transportation infrastructure encourages active lifestyles and provide aesthetic improvements for a community while lowering automotive vehicle emissions and fuel consumption. Reduced emissions and fuel consumption would be beneficial for the state.

PUBLIC EDUCATION TO PROMOTE ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND CONSERVATION

Public education programs to promote energy efficiency and energy conservation may lead communities to adopt energy conservation measures and lower energy consumption.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR PROJECTS LOCATED IN A 100-YEAR FLOOD ZONE, WETLAND, OR ON TRIBAL LAND

If the proposed project is located within a 100-year Flood Zone, Wetland, or on Tribal Land, the applicant will be required to complete a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) review before federal funds can be authorized for the project. A NEPA review requires an applicant to complete an Environmental Questionnaire to submit with the application package. Projects that require a NEPA review may delay grant approval up to six weeks depending on the DOE NEPA review and response time.

The 100-year flood zone consists of areas that are at-risk for becoming inundated with water during a 100-year flood. These zones occur in low-lying areas, along rivers, lakes, and coastlines, or in other areas with poor drainage. The 100-year flood zone is used for flood risk mapping by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and the National Flood Insurance Program. More information on 100-year Flood Zones can be found at this link: [Flood Zone Indicator Reference Sheet \(epa.gov\)](http://epa.gov). Access the FEMA Flood Zone map at this link: [FEMA's National Flood Hazard Layer \(NFHL\) Viewer \(arcgis.com\)](http://arcgis.com)

Wetlands are areas that are inundated or saturated by surface or ground water at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps,

marshes, bogs, and similar areas. More information on Wetlands can be found at this link: [Wetlands Protection and Restoration | US EPA](#) . Access the National Wetland Inventory Map at this link: [National Wetlands Inventory \(usgs.gov\)](#) . An Environmental Questionnaire (NEPA) template can be downloaded on NDEE's EECBG Program's Webpage. Please complete the Environmental Questionnaire and submit with the grant application package.

OTHER PROJECTS PROMPTING A NEPA REVIEW

If NDEE determines that there are Extraordinary Circumstances, Cumulative Impacts, Connected Actions, or Integral Actions as defined below, a NEPA Review will be required.

Extraordinary Circumstances would be presented if there was scientific controversy about the environmental effects of the project, the project resulted in uncertain effects or effect involving unique or unknown risks, there were unresolved conflicts concerning alternative uses of available resources for the project.

A Cumulative Impact is defined as the impact on the environment which results from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present, and reasonably foreseeable future actions regardless of what agency or person undertakes such other actions. Cumulative impacts can result from individually minor but collectively significant actions taking place over a period of time.

Actions are connected if they automatically trigger other actions, they cannot or will not proceed unless other actions are taken previously or simultaneously, they are interdependent parts of a larger action and depend on the larger action for their justification.

Integral Actions include:

- Threatening a violation of applicable statutory, regulatory, or permit requirements for environment, safety, and health or similar requirements of DOE or Executive Orders.
- Requiring siting and construction of major expansion of waste storage, disposal, recovery, or treatment actions or facilities.
- Disturbing hazardous substances, pollutants, contaminants, or CERCLA-excluded petroleum and natural gas products that preexist in the environment such that there would be uncontrolled or unpermitted releases.
- Having the potential to cause significant impacts on environmentally sensitive resources.

PROJECTS SUBJECT TO A REVIEW FROM THE NEBRASKA STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

If the project is for a building that is listed on the National Register of Historic Places or is located within a National Historic District, a Section 106 Review through the Nebraska State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) is required before any federal funding can be used for the project.

If the project is for a building that is 45 years or older, a Section 106 Review will be required unless the project involves only indoor lighting. A solar PV system project that is not visible from the street may be

exempt after a Section 106 Review. A SHPO Review is required if a project will result in any ground disturbance.

All projects on Tribal Land require a SHPO and Tribal Historic Preservation Office (THPO) review.

SHPO prefers that communities preserve the architectural character of existing streetlamps when replacing existing street lighting.

Applicants can access a copy of the SHPO form on NDEE's EECBG Program Webpage. Because SHPO Reviews may take up to 30 days for response, please send the completed form directly to SHPO. Please forward SHPO's response and a copy of the original Section 106 form to NDEE.

Project Description (45pts)

Provide a detailed description of the proposed project with supporting data and metrics, as provided in the Project Metrics Template sheet in the Lighting & Project Metrics Templates workbook; explain how milestones will be measured and evaluated; and explain the community's financial need for this grant.

- For upgrades in indoor or outdoor lighting installation provide the projected energy savings; use the provided Lighting Worksheet to obtain the necessary calculations.
- For renewable energy systems, provide projected energy savings with newly installed equipment.
- For projects to build bicycle and pedestrian walkways, include the size and distance of the pathway project, number of people benefited, projected annual number of vehicle miles reduced, and estimated energy savings.
- For public education of energy efficiency and conservation projects, describe how the project will provide information to community businesses and community members.

*Please note: All applications must be accompanied by at least one itemized bid providing a detailed description of the proposed project, such as manufacturers, model numbers, quantities, breakdown of cost for all components, labor, and installation. All bids must be accompanied by equipment cutsheets, or informational sheets, providing proof of any necessary certifications. **However, bids and cutsheets will not suffice in lieu of the Project Description and listing "See attachment" in this section will disqualify the applicant from further consideration.***

Community Benefits

Key components of the IIJA and the EECBG promote improving the community by providing long-lasting benefits such as decreasing the community's energy burden, promoting job growth, and the development of clean energy enterprises.

ENERGY BURDEN is defined as the cost of energy relative to the overall budget. In qualitative terms, describe how lowering the cost of the community's energy will benefit the whole community and have long-lasting benefits. (15 pts)

ENERGY EFFICIENCY and conservation is the use of less energy to perform the same task or produce the same result. Describe how the proposed project will increase energy efficiency and promote energy conservation and have an overall community benefit. Explain how the project might lead to or enhance existing energy efficiency initiatives and projects in the private sector and community at large. (15 pts)

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT is a planned approach to enhance and broaden the skills of individuals outside the workforce seeking employment, entry-level workers looking for job growth, and experienced workers in changing industries. Describe how the project will foster prosperity for individuals, communities, and businesses by providing training, continued education, and professional development opportunities. Additionally, describe how the project will engage multiple stakeholders from the community, educational institutions, and potential employers in developing initiatives in the clean energy industry. (5 pts)

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT is a strategic priority of the EECBG. Describe how the project will encourage the creation or growth of local business ventures particularly in the clean energy sector. Explain how this project will particularly benefit the disadvantaged populations in the community. (5 pts)

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS AND CERTIFICATIONS

By signing the application Acknowledgement and Certification sections, the local official acknowledges the understanding of proper use of federal funding under this grant, specific grant requirements, including compliance with federal rules and regulations for Grant and Subawards under the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations.

CLARITY OF OVERALL APPLICATION

Applicants will be scored up to 15 points. for application clarity. For a maximum score, applicants must propose a well-developed project idea with clear and concise language, a well-prepared and reasonable budget, and communicate an overall goal to improve energy efficiency in the community.

APPLICATION PROCESS & TIMELINE

NDEE will review applications, select subaward recipients, and subaward agreements will be issued. Awarded recipients must be enrolled with the State of Nebraska for Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). The ACH Enrollment Form for EFT is available on NDEE's EECBG Webpage. Funds will be dispersed to the awarded applicant by Summer 2024.

To expedite the application review process, please send the complete application package to ndee.energy@nebraska.gov with "EECBG Application" in the subject line. If electronic submission is not possible, applications can be sent to Nebraska Department of Environment and Energy, Attn. Energy Section EECBG, 245 Fallbrook Blvd, STE 100, Lincoln, NE 68521.