

EMPOWER MASSACHUSETTS PROGRAM

PRESENTED BY:
Lisa Dobbs



BACKGROUND: INEQUITABLE ENERGY BURDEN & ACCESS TO CLEAN ENERGY

- Low-income homes have a disproportionate energy burden.
- Research shows that solar adoption lags for renters and minority communities.
- Mass Save's 2020 Non-Participant Study found renters, low-income households, and non-English speaking households more likely to not utilize energy efficiency incentives.

All residents of Massachusetts need and deserve to be part of our collective clean energy future.

Previous models Solarize & Heatsmart offer some lessons learned:

Barriers include limited time, upfront costs, landlord-tenant split incentives, and increased operational costs for some technologies

Not all communities are well served by a volunteer-led model

Communities/businesses have ideas for other models to expand clean energy

Leveraging relationships with trusted community partners is key to campaign success

BARRIERS TO ACCESSING THE BENEFITS OF CLEAN ENERGY

In Massachusetts, a number of barriers have limited Priority Groups access to clean energy and energy efficiency

High Upfront
Cost

Renter Split-
Incentive

Low Credit
Scores (Single
Family)

Customer
Acquisition
Challenges

Renovations
Needed to
Support Clean
Energy

Lack of Available
Space

Lack of
Knowledge

Lack of
“seeding”

Lack of
representative
workers in the
industry

EMPOWER PROGRAM GOALS & OPPORTUNITIES:

Provide **access to the benefits of clean energy** for previously underserved populations in Massachusetts.

And we hope to achieve this through **investing directly in communities and community-based organizations and crowdsource solutions** for program models or projects.

| | |
|--|---------------------------|
| Innovation and Capacity Building Grants | \$5,000-\$25,000 |
| Implementation Grants | \$50,000-\$150,000 |

2021 TIMELINE

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| Current Opportunity | November 10, 2021 – Proposals due for Innovation & Capacity Building Grants Rd2 |
| Previous Opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Workshops hosted in June (60+ participants)• August 18, 2021- Rd1 Proposals for both grants |
| Future Opportunities | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plan to seek proposals for Rd2 Implementation Grants in early 2022• Host more participant workshops in 2022 |

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN EACH GRANT?

- **Innovation & Capacity Building Grant**

- This is a new and innovative idea for a program model or project that **you are exploring that still needs discovery, refinement, etc.** This funding opportunity is meant to provide “seed” funding to build toward future program models or projects, either with future EmPower Implementation Grant funding rounds or through other funding sources.

- **Implementation Grant**

- This is a program model or project that is relatively complete in terms of design, partners, etc., **and is ready to go**, but you need funding to make it happen.
- Note: if you do need to do some initial outreach for example, this could be considered capacity building, but would be built into your implementation grant application.

- **Reminder: One applicant could apply for both grants for two separate ideas. Applicants cannot apply to both grants with the same idea.**

- **We strongly recommend attending office hours to determine which grant is best**

HYPOTHETICAL EXAMPLES & ELIGIBLE USES — INNOVATION & CAPACITY BUILDING GRANT

- A community-based organization applies to receive a grant that would fund staff to conduct community-outreach sessions to help inform design for a potential clean energy campaign.
- A partnership between a municipality and community-based group apply for funding to prepare to launch an energy efficiency campaign with Mass Save Municipal Community First program in 2022.
 - Or alternatively, this team could apply for funding to supplement their Energy Advocate position under the Community First program to go beyond the 5-10 hours encouraged for this position.
- A community-based organization applies for funding to explore clean energy solutions to urban heat-island impacts in a priority group neighborhood

HYPOTHETICAL EXAMPLES & ELIGIBLE USES: INNOVATION & CAPACITY BUILDING GRANT

- Funds can be used for (but may not be limited to): staff time devoted to program concept development or refinement; technical studies needed to move projects forward; costs for a grant-writer, accountant, lawyer, or other professional services; and costs associated with ongoing community engagement
- Can be used towards future clean energy grants not through MassCEC, such as Community First Program
- Funds should be used within two years

ACCESS TO THE BENEFITS OF CLEAN ENERGY

- MassCEC is taking a different approach to defining clean energy to go beyond direct installations on people's homes, although that kind of campaign could be funded under EmPower.
- Typical benefits of clean energy— cost savings (short and long term), clean air, health
- Non-traditional examples of clean energy benefits:
 - Insulation is important for energy efficiency, but also enhances quality of life by offering enhanced soundproofing
 - Well-designed, sustainable lighting enhances a neighborhood
 - Heat pumps for cooling

WHO ARE WE STRIVING TO INCREASE ACCESS FOR?

For the purposes of the program, population “Priority Groups” are defined as:

- Environmental Justice Populations (as defined by 2017 EEA Policy and 2020 Next Generation Roadmap)
- Renters
- Communities disproportionately impacted by environmental hazards, such as air quality or heat

Notes:

- *Potential applicants may reach out to MassCEC if they have any question about the eligibility of their target community or would like to propose another Priority Group for consideration*
- *Priority Groups do not have to be geographically bound*

TARGET APPLICANTS

- **You!**
- **Anyone and everyone looking to increase equitable access to clean energy!**
- Especially community-based organizations with demonstrated history working with priority populations
- Also eligible:
 - Non-profits, individuals
 - Municipalities including MLP communities*
 - For-profit organizations such as clean energy installers, financial institutions*

*Must partner with a community-based organization to be eligible to apply

SUPPORT



THANK YOU FOR JOINING!

- Join the [conversation on slack!](#)
- Visit the website: www.masscec.com/empower-Massachusetts, and the [RFP page](#)
- Reach out to us with questions empower@masscec.com
- Join upcoming office hours
 - Monday, October 25, 2021 12pm-1pm [Click here to register/join.](#)
 - Tuesday, October 26, 2021 5pm-6pm [Click here to register/join.](#)