

## Funding Opportunity Announcement

### Fiscal Year 2026 Affordable Electrification Outreach Grant Program

#### Program Purpose

The Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) presents the Fiscal Year 2026 Affordable Electrification Outreach Program (Program). Low- to moderate-income (LMI) households across Maryland continue to experience disproportionately high energy burdens and rising utility costs. Affordable residential electrification, meaning the pairing of electrification measures holistically with energy efficiency upgrades (including responsible pre-electrification measures), and renewable energy solutions, offers a pathway to long-term energy and utility bill savings, healthier and safer homes, and reduced greenhouse gas emissions. However, residential electrification remains a relatively new concept to many Marylanders and interested households often lack access to guidance on how to pursue electrification in a cost-effective and beneficial manner.

The Program supports nonprofit and community-based organizations in conducting outreach across the state to educate owners and tenants of single-family and multi-family dwellings on the benefits of building electrification, with an emphasis on how to pair electrification measures with energy efficiency and renewable energy upgrades to maximize savings. As trusted community messengers, these organizations are uniquely well-positioned to communicate the benefits of electrification to the communities they serve. These outreach activities support key state climate policies, including the decarbonization mandates of the [Climate Solutions Now Act \(SB528 2022\)](#), with an emphasis on energy affordability for LMI households and overburdened communities

**Type of Grant Program:** Competitive

**Application Deadline:** December 31, 2025

#### Anticipated Funding

A total of \$250,000 for FY26 is anticipated to be available for the Program. The actual amount available may vary, depending on the quantity and quality of applications received and MEA's available resources. The minimum grant award request is \$50,000 and the maximum grant award request is \$125,000. MEA may increase the maximum amount depending upon applicant qualifications. MEA may also issue partial awards, as described below.

#### Program Description

The Program supports nonprofit and community-based organizations in conducting outreach across the state to educate owners and tenants of single-family and multi-family dwellings on the benefits of an affordable building electrification. Outreach efforts will emphasize how electrification measures can be paired with energy efficiency upgrades and renewable energy technologies to maximize energy and utility bill savings, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and improve home health and safety. Activities may also include connecting residents with available incentives and rebates for electrification, energy efficiency, and renewable energy measures.

#### Eligible Applicants

The Program is only open to organizations classified as 501(c)(3) nonprofits. If selected for award, MEA will only provide grant funding directly to the individual identified to receive funding on the application

form. A successful applicant may provide subgrants or stipends to other organizations or community groups working within Maryland.

### Ineligible Applicants

Residential homes, businesses, and units of government are not eligible for this Program.

### Geographic Allocations

An applicant must specify the communities they intend to serve from the following state region options (see *Figure 1* for map of regions). Region selections do not indicate that the applicant is proposing outreach across the entirety of all selected regions; rather, it provides a general indication of focus. Applicants may use their Narrative application to specify the areas within the selected regions where they plan to conduct outreach in greater detail. *Please Note: to enhance geographic diversity, MEA may also consider an applicant's area(s) of geographic focus when determining a grant award decision.*

- Western Region (GREEN)
- Central Region (ORANGE)
- Eastern Region (BLUE)
- Southern Region (PINK)
- Baltimore City Region (RED)

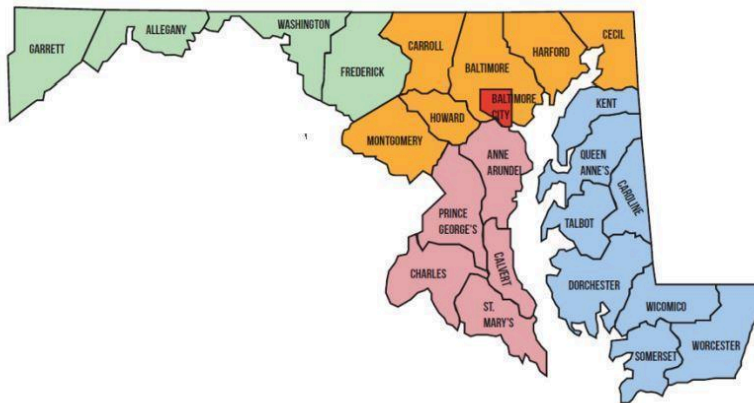


Figure 1

### Eligible Activities

Program grant funds are provided to support affordable electrification outreach to owners and tenants of single-family and multi-family dwellings. Outreach must include in-person engagement with residents and homeowners. Additional outreach methods – such as online resources, phone and email advising, and print materials – are encouraged to complement in-person efforts. All outreach efforts must prioritize communities designated as overburdened as defined in Maryland statute<sup>1</sup> Applicants may use the Maryland Department of the Environment [MDEnviroScreenTool](#) to identify these communities.

Outreach efforts must focus on the following subject matter:

<b>The Benefits of Electrification</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Maximizing energy bill savings by pairing electrification with energy efficiency measures and accessible renewable energy technologies.</li> <li>● Health, safety, and climate benefits of electrification, including reduced indoor air pollution and lower greenhouse gas emissions.</li> </ul>
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<sup>1</sup> “Overburdened” communities are defined in Code of Maryland, Environment Article §1-701, available at <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Laws/StatuteText?article=gen&section=1-701&enactments>.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Improved comfort, performance, and ease of use of modern electric appliances.</li> </ul>
<b>Pre-Electrification &amp; Electrification Opportunities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Responsible pre-electrification measures – e.g., building envelope upgrades (insulation, air sealing, etc)</li> <li>● Electric heat pumps for space heating and cooling</li> <li>● Electric heat pump water heaters</li> <li>● Electric stoves, cooktops, or ranges (conventional electric or induction)</li> <li>● Electric heat pump clothes dryers</li> </ul>
<b>Incentives &amp; Rebates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How residents can combine federal, state, local, and utility incentives to pursue a whole-home decarbonization strategy that maximizes savings by integrating electrification, energy efficiency, and renewable energy.</li> <li>● Programs to highlight may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <b><u>EmPOWER Maryland:</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <a href="#">Potomac Edison</a></li> <li>■ <a href="#">Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative</a></li> <li>■ <a href="#">Baltimore Gas &amp; Electric</a></li> <li>■ <a href="#">Pepco</a></li> <li>■ <a href="#">Delmarva Power &amp; Light</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b><u>Maryland Department of Housing &amp; Community Development (DHCD):</u></b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ <a href="#">EmPOWER Maryland Limited Income Energy Efficiency Program</a></li> <li>■ <a href="#">Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)</a></li> <li>■ <a href="#">Maryland Energy Assistance Program (MEAP)</a></li> <li>■ <a href="#">Multifamily Energy Efficiency and Housing Affordability Program (MEEHA)</a></li> <li>■ <a href="#">BeSmart Energy Efficiency Loans for Homeowners</a></li> </ul> </li> <li>○ <b><u>Maryland Solar Access Program</u></b></li> <li>○ <b><u>Community Solar Programs</u></b></li> <li>○ <i>If the <a href="#">Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Home Energy Rebates</a> become available in Maryland during the Program cycle these may be included in outreach efforts.</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>● Outreach activities under this category may include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Assessing household needs and identifying applicable incentive or assistance programs.</li> <li>○ Screening for program eligibility across multiple programs.</li> <li>○ Assisting with application submission and required documents.</li> <li>○ Providing support services, such as language interpretation or disability access.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

**Ineligible Activities**

The following will not be funded under this Program:

- Contracting work of any kind including, but not limited to, pre-electrification energy efficiency upgrades, appliance installations, appliance removals, and supporting upgrades.
- Managing home electrification installation projects.
- Outreach efforts that target only business owners or HVAC installers.
- Outreach efforts that promote the use of fossil-fuel powered appliances.

### Minimum Eligibility Requirements:

Each of the following requirements must be met in order for an application to be considered “complete” for this Program. Each complete application will then be evaluated under the additional criteria as set forth in the “Competitive Evaluation Criteria” section of this FOA.

- An applicant must be a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.
- An applicant must be registered to do business in Maryland and provide Evidence of Good Standing (see “Required Application Documents” section below)
- An applicant must provide a complete application including all the required application documents (see “Required Application Documents” section below)
- An applicant must specify the regions they intend to serve from the provided region designations.
- The applicant’s proposed outreach efforts must include the required in-person component and focus on the subject matter specified in the FOA.
- An applicant must commit to tracking the required quantitative outcome metrics described in the *Justification & Quantitative Metrics* section of the Competitive Evaluation Criteria below.

### Timeline

The Program application and evaluation process will follow the timeline outlined below. This timeline is provided for program planning purposes. MEA will attempt to meet this timeline however, delays may occur, and grant award decisions may be delayed accordingly.

- **FOA issued:** September 18, 2025
- **Deadline to submit applications:** December 31, 2025
- **Grant agreements signed and executed:** estimate March/April 2026

### Competitive Evaluation Criteria

Each complete application is competitively evaluated based on the following evaluation criteria. Possible points available for each Evaluation Criterion is indicated.

#### Qualifications & Experience (0-4 points)

- The applicant clearly demonstrates how the project’s design and approach align with the program purpose and Eligible Activities (see “Eligible Activities” section above).
- The applicant demonstrates historic success with education and outreach programming, including in-person outreach, focused on energy efficiency, electrification, renewable energy, or related fields.
- The applicant demonstrates a track record as a trusted community partner, or preparedness to immediately leverage relationships with trusted partners across the territory proposed.
- The applicant demonstrates historic success serving overburdened communities, as defined in Maryland statute.<sup>2</sup>
- The applicant proposes a combination of outreach and education channels, incorporating the required in-person component along with other channels, such as online resources, phone and email advising, print materials, and hands-on demonstrations.

#### Project Feasibility (0-4 points)

- The applicant provides a project scope that specifies the project purpose, goals and objectives, and strategies for achieving those goals and objectives.

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<sup>2</sup> “Overburdened” communities are defined in Code of Maryland, Environment Article §1-701, available at <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Laws/StatuteText?article=gen&section=1-701&enactments>

- The applicant identifies anticipated challenges the proposed program will face and how the applicant plans to overcome them, including the role that the proposed investment will play in overcoming those challenges.
- The applicant provides an implementation timeline that aligns with the grant period and is realistic and attainable.
- The applicant effectively identifies the potential challenges to attaining the implementation timeline and mitigation strategies if they are unable to meet their timeline goal.
- The applicant indicates whether and how its proposed project is capable of being scaled larger or smaller, based on availability of funding.

**Justification & Quantitative Metrics (0-4 points)**

- The applicant justifies the proposed expenses in the project budget.
- The applicant clearly articulates how success will be monitored, including quantitative metrics.
- The applicant must commit to tracking the following required quantitative outcome metrics and may include specific numeric targets for these metrics in their application:
  - # of individuals provided with in-person outreach and education
  - # of in-person outreach events held
  - # of individuals screened for rebates/incentives
- In addition to the required minimums, applicants are encouraged to propose and track additional quantitative metrics, and may include specific numeric targets for these. Example metrics include:

<b>Outreach Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # of households or residents receiving one-on-one consultation or advising</li> <li>• # of digital impressions or engagements from online outreach</li> <li>• # of outreach materials distributed</li> </ul>
<b>Education Outcomes*</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• % of residents reached who demonstrate increased knowledge of applicable subject matter</li> <li>• % of residents reached who report willingness to share positive information on applicable subject matter with friends, family, or others in their community</li> <li>• <i>*Measured through pre- and post-engagement surveys</i></li> </ul>
<b>Incentive/ Rebate Outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• # of residents screened for rebates or incentive eligibility</li> <li>• # of residents assisted in completing incentive or rebate applications</li> <li>• # of residents successfully enrolled in an incentive or rebate program</li> </ul>

**Budget and Return on Investment (0-4 points)**

- The project budget is competitive in scale relative to the desired outcomes.
- The project budget includes a breakdown of intended use of grant funds (see “Program Specific Requirements” section below for permitted expenses).
- The narrative provides a description of leveraged funds, including, but not limited to donor funds and other federal, State, local, or philanthropic grant awards.

**Letters of Support (0-2 points)** The applicant may provide letters of support from project partners, such as local businesses, nonprofits, community organizations, faith-based institutions, or government agencies. Two or more letters of support are preferred.

**Review Process**

Each application package will be evaluated competitively by an Evaluation Team (Team) composed of MEA staff with relevant experience. The evaluation includes three (3) review steps that are detailed below:

1. **Program Manager Eligibility Review:** The applicable MEA Program Manager reviews the

application for eligibility according to the Minimum Eligibility Requirements listed in this FOA. An application that does not meet the Minimum Eligibility Requirements will be rejected from funding consideration and the applicant will be notified.

2. **Team Member Individual Review:** Each member of the Team reviews and scores each complete application according to the Competitive Evaluation Criteria established in this FOA.
3. **Team Group Review and Award Recommendation:** The Team convenes for a group review of their findings and scores. A Team member is permitted to modify their score for a complete application considering new information discovered during the Group Review discussion. The final score for each complete application is determined by taking the average of the individual Team member scores for that application. The Team will finalize all scores and make an award recommendation for each application that has been selected for funding. Grants will be recommended in order of highest final score to lowest eligible final score, until all available funding is exhausted, or all eligible grants are funded, whichever comes first.

### Partial Awards

Partial awards are possible under the Program and will be determined based on the applicant's competitive application score, as determined in the Review Process using the Competitive Evaluation Criteria. MEA may issue a partial award if:

1. Needed to ensure equitable distribution of funds across geographic regions; or
2. Sufficient grant funds are not available to fully fund a project.

### Submission Instructions

Applications are due by December 31, 2025. Applications must be submitted using the [application Jotform](#) (online application required; PDF version available on program [webpage](#)). An applicant may **NOT** disclose any sensitive or otherwise confidential information to MEA in the application without prior approval. If sensitive or confidential information must be provided to MEA, the applicant shall first contact MEA to determine the most secure way to transmit this information.

### Required Application Documents

For a complete application, the application package must include the following attachments:

1. **Narrative:** The Narrative should provide a comprehensive overview of the proposed project that addresses each of the Minimum Eligibility Requirements and Competitive Evaluation Criteria listed above. The Narrative should be no more than 10 pages long.
2. **Budget:** The application must include a separate Budget attachment, Excel or a PDF of an Excel or other spreadsheet, that details the budget items listed in Competitive Evaluation Criteria, above.
3. **IRS Form W-9:** All applicants must provide a U.S. Internal Revenue Service (IRS) Form W-9 for the applicant organization. The applicant organization name and address provided on the IRS Form W-9 must match the applicant organization name and address provided in the Application Form submitted through the online application portal. An IRS Form W-9 can be requested from the IRS.
4. **Evidence of Good Standing:** All applicants must provide evidence that the applicant is in good standing with the State of Maryland. Acceptable documentation includes a PDF of the organization's result from Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT) [Business Entity Search](#) that indicates Good Standing, or a Certificate of Status from SDAT that indicates Good Standing. Instructions on how to obtain a Certificate of Good Status are available on SDAT's website [here](#).

### Optional Application Documents

1. **Letters of Support:** An applicant may provide letters of support from project partners, such as local businesses, nonprofits, community organizations, faith-based institutions, or government agencies. Two or more letters of support are preferred.

### Program Specific Requirements

Grant funds may be used to offset the following:

#### Direct Expenses

- Material/equipment purchase costs of an electric appliance for demonstration purposes
- Print collateral and media materials
- Other outreach supplies
- Community event or meeting rentals, food, and supplies
- Online promotions
- Staffing expenditures
- Subgrants or stipends for partner organizations

#### Administrative/Indirect costs

*Source: Consistent with §2-208(c) of the State Finance and Procurement Article, Code of Maryland, a nonprofit organization that is providing services funded with State funds can request reimbursement of indirect costs*

*(1) at the same rate the nonprofit organization has negotiated and received:(i) for indirect costs under a direct federal award; or (ii) from a nonfederal entity based on the cost principles in Subpart E of [federal Office of Management and Budget] OMB Uniform Guidance; or*

*(2) if the nonprofit organization has not negotiated and received an indirect cost rate described in item (1) of this subsection, at a rate of at least 10% of the costs that would be considered modified total direct costs under OMB Uniform Guidance*

#### Grant Period

The grant period will be 24 months, beginning with the effective date of the executed grant agreement. MEA may provide a grantee an extension of time if the grantee shows good cause that is justified with written documentation explaining the need for an extension.

#### Reporting & Reimbursement

Pursuant to the grant agreement, grant funds will be paid in arrears over the course of the grant period for the performance of eligible, approved activities. The grant agreement will also include reporting requirements, which if not met, may result in a delay in reimbursement, disallowance of expense, or suspension of the grant. Reimbursement reporting requirements will include:

- Quarterly progress reports in concert with invoices submitted to MEA
- Final close-out report, including:
  - A final invoice
  - Quantitative metrics that capture outreach efforts and outcomes/impact of those efforts
  - A summary of lessons learned
  - Recommended best practices for future efforts

#### **Grant Program General Provisions**

MEA grant programs are covered by general provisions that apply to all of its grant programs, the most current version of these General Provisions is [General Provisions v3 2.11.22](#). The latest approved version of this document will be incorporated into all FY26 grant agreements issued by MEA.

#### **Regulations**

MEA SEIF-funded grant programs are subject to section 9-20B-05 of the State Government article and the Strategic Energy Investment Program regulations\* (COMAR 14.26.02).

*\*To access these regulations, click [here](#)<sup>3</sup> and use the sidebar “Regulations by Title” to navigate to: 14 - Independent Agencies → 26 - MARYLAND ENERGY ADMINISTRATION → 02 - Maryland Strategic Energy Investment Program.*

### **Program Changes**

Any update (e.g., extension of a deadline) or clarification about the Program and any corrections to inadvertent errors in the Program information will be available on the Program webpage. In addition, MEA will communicate clarifications and updates made after the application deadline directly to applicants or grantees, as applicable, by letter and/or e-mail. The final grant amount for each Grantee will be determined after review of all proposals received and is subject to funding availability for the Program and any relevant legal requirement applicable at that time

### **Program Contact**

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<sup>3</sup> <https://dsd.maryland.gov/Pages/COMARSearch.aspx>