



Notice of Grant Availability for the FY21 Public Facility Solar Grant Program (Grant Program)

Program Description:

This program implements Governor Larry Hogan's pledge of August 14, 2019 (<https://governor.maryland.gov/2019/08/14/governor-hogan-launches-new-push-for-clean-and-renewable-energy/>), "The state is pledging an additional \$4 million in grants to aid large public institutions, including community colleges and universities, to deploy solar arrays on existing infrastructure—such as parking lots and rooftops—while encouraging state agencies to incorporate solar energy into any future construction."

This program, the "Public Facility Solar Grant Program", provides grant funding to support the installation and planning of solar arrays on existing infrastructure for public institutions.

Up to \$2 million of these funds will be available in FY 21 in three distinct Areas of Interest ("AOI"): funds for purchased systems ("AOI1), funds for 3rd party owned systems (AOI 2), and grant or technical assistance to local governments and public institutions for the development of a solar project. (AOI 3).

State government agencies interested in conducting a solar siting survey of their buildings should reach out to the Maryland Energy Administration Solar Program Manager (David Comis) at solar.mea@maryland.gov, or by calling 443-908-1743 to determine options.

Program Goals:

The Program's goal is to encourage solar projects in support of public facilities.

- Deploy solar arrays on existing infrastructure, such as rooftops and parking lots.
- Replace a portion of the state's purchase of grid electricity with clean solar energy.
- Provide public institutions funding for, or access to technical assistance for the development of a solar project.
- Encourage education and demonstration opportunities to showcase the value of solar in the built environment,
- Demonstrate the State's commitment to clean energy

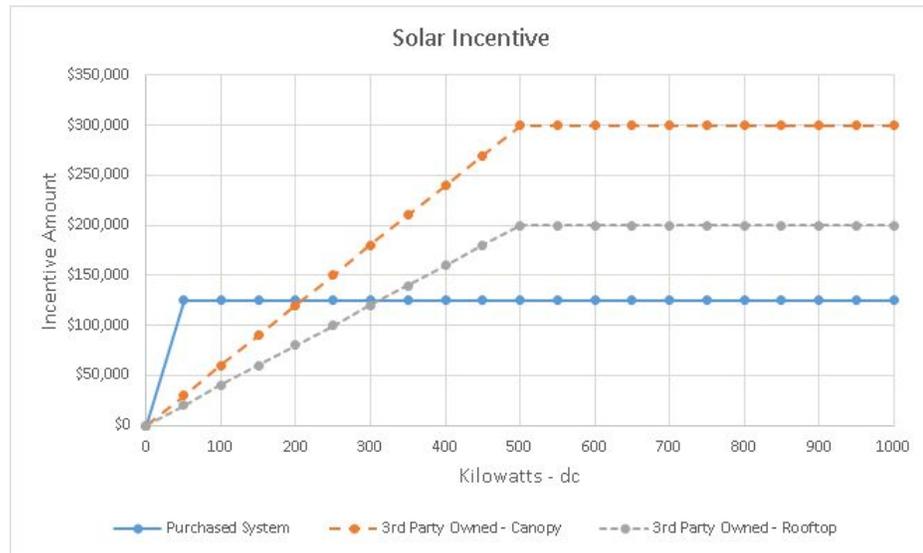
Program Budget:

Up to \$2,000,000 of funding is available from the Maryland Energy Administration (MEA) in fiscal year 2021 (July 1, 2020 – June 30, 2021), subject to funding availability. Up to a combined amount of \$1,500,000 is available for AOI 1 and AOI 2, and up to \$500,000 is available for AOI 3. MEA reserves the right to determine the final grant amount for each Grantee after review of all proposals received and consistent with funding availability at that time. Also, MEA reserves the right to shift funds between the AOI's based on program demand and any other relevant factor.

Grant Award Amount:

AOI 1: For installation of a purchased system, up to \$2,500/kW of grant funds are available with a cap of **\$125,000** per project. On a case-by-case basis, MEA may increase the grant amount to \$3,000/kW with the cap remaining at \$125,000 per project.

AOI 2: For installation of a 3rd party owned solar canopy system, up to \$600/kW of grant funds are available, with a cap of **\$300,000**. For installation of a 3rd party owned rooftop system, up to \$400/kW of grant funds are available, with a cap of **\$200,000**. To be eligible, a system must be net metered.



AOI 3: When selected for an award, MEA will determine if it is appropriate to provide a grantee with up to \$10,000 per project for technical support in grant funds or, in the alternative, an equivalent of \$10,000 in technical assistance funded by the Program and provided through a MEA contractor. To be considered, a request for more than \$10,000 for technical assistance must include justification of why additional funds are needed. Each grantee requesting technical assistance will be required to provide cash or in-kind services equal to at least 15% of the requested award.

Generally, a state agency-grantee will receive access to technical assistance services through the MEA contractor upon request and mutually agreed upon terms with MEA. State agencies interested in participating should contact MEA and the MEA team will determine the level of assistance and vehicle, state agencies will be required to enter into an MOU with MEA.

In all circumstances the determination of the type of technical support provided to a Grantee is within the complete and total discretion of MEA.

Eligibility Requirements:

Applications for the Program will be accepted from state agencies, public universities, community colleges, public schools, and county or municipal government entities for projects in support of their public facilities in Maryland.

- Proposed projects must be to install solar panels on EXISTING infrastructure (buildings, parking lots, etc.), and not on new buildings (AOIs 1 & 2).
- If found to be cost effective, the applicant should consider submitting the solar project for local or host agency funding within the next two budget years. (AOI 3).
- An application for a third party-owned system must specify if the funding is to be provided directly to the applicant, or directly to the third party system owner (AOI 2).

Type of Grant Program:

AOIs 1 & 2: Project awards are awarded on a competitive basis in two separate rounds.
 AOI 3: Applications are awarded on a first-come-first-serve basis.

Application Deadline: AOI 1 & 2 Round 1: All applications for competitive funding must be submitted by November 15, 2020
Round 2: All applications for competitive funding must be submitted by February 17, 2021

Application Deadline: AOI 3 All applications must be submitted by April 15, 2021 and will be awarded on a first-come-first-serve basis

Number of Grants: MEA may fund zero, one, two or multiple grants.

Definitions: For the purpose of this program:

- Existing Infrastructure: An existing building, a site where the land has already been disturbed for ongoing construction, parking lot or parking structure, land covered by asphalt or cement that has been in service for at least 2 years.
- Ground Mounted: A solar power system mounted to the ground on land with existing groundcover (not concrete or asphalt)
- Problem Specific: To solve a specific problem (i.e. aircraft beacon, parking lot light) where running a power line may not be the best solution
- Public Facility: Any building owned or under long term lease (greater than 25 years) by a state, county or municipal agency or political subdivision thereof, including libraries, museums, schools, hospitals, auditoriums, sport arenas, university buildings, etc.
- Project: A clean energy conversion system or assemblage of clean energy conversion systems and related systems and installation components that operate in a coordinated manner, which may or may not be connected to a power distribution grid. Systems that affect the same electric meter in the same direction are considered to be coordinated systems.

Application Content:

AOI 1 & 2:

Applications must provide identification and contact information for the site owner, the site operator, the project developer/installer, as well as a 3rd party system owner (as applicable). Contact information must include physical address phone number and e-mail address for each contact. In addition, the applicant (and 3rd party system owner – if applicable) shall identify the full name and title of the individual(s), with requisite authority to legally bind the entity, who will sign the grant agreement.

Additional information/documents to be provided with the application shall include:

1. IRS Form W-9 for the applicant (and the 3rd party owner if the 3rd party owner is designated to be the recipient of Program grant funds).
2. Site picture showing the location of the proposed solar array(s) (Google Earth with highlighted areas are preferred).
3. Array description, to include location on buildings and parking lots, number, capacity, and types of solar panels, inverters, EV chargers (if installed).
4. A basic electrical schematic of the facility's electrical system (a one-line diagram is acceptable) and where/how the solar array connects to it. If part of a resiliency plan, provide a separate diagram showing potential future components of the resiliency system.
5. calculations for simple payback. A calculation of a Levelized Cost of Energy is also desired (if available). For purchased systems use a discount rate of 4%. For 3rd party owned systems, use a discount rate of 7%. In addition, for a 3rd party owned system, demonstrate the cost savings over a 20 year period using the Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) conditions discussed with the 3rd party owner.
6. For applicant/state owned projects, a letter of intent between the applicant and the system developer/installer.

7. For 3rd party owned systems, a letter of intent between the applicant and the potential system owner, AND a letter of intent between the system owner and the financier. If the 3rd party owner is providing internal financing, it should so state.
8. Timeline for the project (Assume a January 1, 2021 start date for projects submitted by November 15, 2020.
9. Certificate of Good Standing in Maryland for the applicant, developer/installer, and 3rd party system owner (as applicable). (A print of the General Information page of the Business Entity Search on the Maryland State Department of Assessment and Taxation (SDAT) website is normally sufficient.)
10. Evidence that the applicant or third party site owner will have control of the proposed site for at least 25 years after the solar system is expected to be completed. Evidence may be in the form of a deed, a lease, or other appropriate form deemed acceptable by the Maryland Energy Administration

AOI 3:

1. Describe why technical assistance is needed.
2. Justify the desired award amount (if cash is being requested).
3. Describe the technical assistance required, or how the cash and in-kind services will be used.
4. Describe the final deliverable.
5. Provide a site location map showing the location of the expected solar installation.

Proposal Submittal:

Eligible parties may submit applications to MEA by email. Send applications to: solar.mea@maryland.gov .

Application Evaluation Criteria:

AOIs 1 & 2:

Each application will be evaluated using the following criteria:

- Applications that demonstrate leveraging of the grant funding (with other grants, or internal funding, etc.) will receive preferred consideration.
- Applications that provide resiliency to critical infrastructure will receive preferred consideration.
- Projects designed for incorporation into a resiliency plan will receive preferred consideration.
- Applications from institutions that actively teach solar energy courses and would instrument the solar array for educational value will receive preferred consideration.
- Projects that can be rapidly developed and constructed will receive preferred consideration.
- Projects that are able to demonstrate the results/savings to the general public or to students will receive preferred consideration. Example: a public internet dashboard or a public visible dashboard.
- Solar canopy applications that include EV charging capability or are EV charger capable will receive preferred consideration.

MEA reserves the right to adjust project standings in order to obtain reasonable geographic diversity of projects or to provide a reasonable distribution of projects between differing building types.

AOI 3:

- The technical assistance requested must support the siting and design of a solar energy project.
- The applicant must own or control the site for at least 25 years after the proposed solar system is built.
- The applicant must allow 3rd party owned systems to be located on its buildings and/or within its jurisdiction.
- An application for grant funds must be for a specific building, site, or function. An application covering multiple buildings will likely be provided technical assistance through the MEA contractor
- A project that provides resiliency to critical infrastructure will receive preferred consideration.
- A project designed for incorporation into a resiliency plan will receive preferred consideration. A resiliency plan should include current or future capability to separate from, and resynchronize with the grid (i.e. form a microgrid/nanogrid).
- An application from an institution that actively teaches solar energy courses and would instrument the solar array for educational value will receive preferred consideration.

Due to the complexity of the selection process, MEA may request additional information after all applications have been submitted to provide clarity and to facilitate the evaluation process.

Restrictions and Limitations:

- Solar photovoltaic (PV) systems that are supported by MEA grant funding must be installed by an installation contractor who employs at least one North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP) PV Installation Professional Certified person in the design and/or construction of the solar project.
- Non-governmental project developers and owners must be in good standing in the State of Maryland. For a Good Standing Certificate, please see the website for the Comptroller of Maryland,¹ or visit the State Department of Assessment and Taxation website for proof of good standing.²
- Only one MEA renewable energy solar grant may be awarded per project. MEA encourages grantees to consider energy efficiency in concert with a PV project. A grantee may also apply for, and receive a Commercial, Industrial and Agricultural (CI&A) grant for energy efficiency or a Lawton Loan. Developers may use multiple energy efficiency or renewable energy grants from other State or Federal agencies to fund this project.
- Projects will be given up to 2 years to be completed. When necessary, extensions may be requested from MEA at least two months prior to the expiration of the existing grant. (AOI 1 and AOI 2)
- A grantee may invoice up to 10% of the total award at the completion of detailed planning. The grantee may invoice up to 65% of total award funding after ordering all major construction materials (solar panels, inverters, wiring, switchgear, connector boxes, etc.). Remaining funding will be distributed after the solar system is placed in service (i.e. finishes all commissioning tests, has received its Permission to Operate from the local utility, and has passed all permitting inspections) (AOI 1) MEA reserves the right to adjust these funding limits based on actual expenditures. These invoices must be justified by showing summaries of hours worked, receipts for materials ordered, etc.

¹https://comptroller.marylandtaxes.gov/Vendor_Services/Accounting_Information/General_Information/Good_Standing_Certificate.shtml

² <https://dat.maryland.gov/businesses/Pages/default.aspx>

- The project must not have an adverse effect on a historic building or a historic district, as determined by the Maryland Historical Trust.
- Solar systems smaller than 10 kW will not be considered unless they are submitted to address a specific off-grid problem. To be considered, a justification will be required and projects may be considered by MEA on a case by case basis.
- The solar system must meet minimum system requirements as specified in IEEE 1547 and the National Electric Code.
- Each component of the systems must be listed or labeled by a recognized national testing laboratory.

Grant Process:

MEA is encouraging the use of electronic communications, including applications, to streamline processing and reduce environmental impacts. If you choose to “opt out” of electronic communications for this Program, please contact MEA no later than five (5) days prior to the application deadline to identify an alternative method to submit an application and to communicate with MEA regarding this Program.

Application Packages should be submitted electronically to MEA via email to: solar.mea@maryland.gov.

If specifically authorized by MEA, an applicant should mail the supporting documents to:

Maryland Energy Administration
 c/o Public Facility Solar Grant Program
 1800 Washington Blvd, Suite 755
 Baltimore, MD 21230

- MEA will rank proposals that are submitted by the deadline and meet the eligibility requirements using the criteria described above. Projects not meeting the minimum requirements will not be considered.
- MEA will determine the amount of potential grant funds to be awarded to each applicant in the order determined by a competitive ranking process until the complete program funding amount is fully obligated, or there are no more qualified projects. Qualified projects not funded may remain on standby, and may be funded if a higher ranking project drops out before April 1, 2021.
- Upon completion of the project (all zoning requirements met, all permit inspections passed and permits closed, all commissioning tests satisfactorily completed, and permission to operate received from the utility), the developing organization will submit a completion report with all required documentation, and will invite MEA to conduct an inspection.
- MEA may conduct an inspection of the project site, or may simply accept the project and process the invoice for payment. Additionally, MEA showcases selected projects to demonstrate how MEA programs are benefiting Maryland taxpayers. If selected for an award, the MEA grant agreement may require participation in project showcasing.
- For projects that are inspected, all major deficiencies (as specified by MEA) must be corrected before MEA provides grant funds. Minor deficiencies should be addressed/corrected, but distribution of grant funds will not be delayed.

Timeline

- Notice of Grant Availability Posted – September 1, 2020
- Grant Applications Accepted Starting – September 1, 2020
- AOI 1 & 2 Grant Application Deadline Round 1 – November 15, 2020
- Grant Agreement Execution Deadline – January 15, 2021
- AOI 1 and 2 Grant Application Deadline Round 2 – ~~February 17, 2021~~ March 15, 2021
- Grant Agreement Execution Deadline Round 2 – ~~April 15, 2021~~ April 30, 2021
- AOI 3 Application Deadline - April 15, 2021
- AOI 1 and 2 Construction and Commissioning Deadline – April 1, 2023
- AOI 1 and 2 Final Inspection and Document Submission Deadline – May 1, 2023

Additional Information

Historic Review

In order to comply with the Maryland State historic preservation requirements, each building or site included in a project funded by a Public Facility Solar Grant Program must first be reviewed to assure that the proposed grant project will not have any adverse effects on the historical significance of a historic property. MEA will submit project details to its in-house historic professional for review in consultation with Maryland Historic Trust, as necessary. As such, **an applicant is strongly encouraged to submit its project to MEA for historic property screening as early in the proposal development process as possible in order to avoid rejection** of a project due to adverse effects on a historic property where alternative options could be available. Please note that a prominent/visible installation of clean energy systems on historic properties or properties within historic areas/districts will be considered an adverse effect and will not qualify for this Grant Program.

Solar and Energy Storage Installation Certifications

To be eligible for a Public Facility Solar Grant, a solar project installation must be completed by a contractor who assigns at least one North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners ('NABCEP') certified PV Installation Professional to the design and/or installation of the project. An exception may be approved by MEA on a case by case basis for installation of a small project by a Master Electrician who holds all applicable business licenses for Maryland.

Project Location Workforce Requirement

This grant must comply with Sections §§ 9-20B-05 of the State Government Article, which requires that at least 80% of workers participating in a project or program that receives money from the SEIF must reside within 50 miles of the project or program. As the Public Facility Solar Grant Program is a statewide program, MEA will determine compliance based on whether at least 80% of worksite workers reside in Maryland, or within 50 miles of Maryland's borders.

American Manufactured Goods

If the grantee is a unit of State or local government, this grant must comply with Sections §§ 14-416 and 17-303 of the State Finance and Procurement Article.

Solar Renewable Energy Certificates (SRECs)

Except for problem specific small projects, all projects must be connected to the distribution grid serving Maryland and must register for Solar Renewable Energy Certificates. For information concerning SREC registration, consult the PJM EIS website at <https://www.pjm-eis.com/>

Reports

MEA will require **quarterly progress reports** for AOIs 1 & 2 projects, commencing with the grant award and ending with the Completion Report. Progress reports should be made by e-mail to solar.mea@maryland.gov no later than the 10th day of the months of January, April, July, and October. Progress reports should include design and construction progress, as well as any problems that would impede completion of the project. Progress reports that include substantive information may be unformatted. However, MEA reserves the right to require formatted progress reports when it deems necessary, such as if the submitted reports do not provide the required information.

Program Changes

This is the inaugural year of the Public Facility Solar Grant Program. Please note that MEA reserves the right to modify or change the grant program as needed for legal, financial or programmatic reasons. Changes will be available on the MEA Public Facility Solar Grant Program webpage. Changes made after proposals have been submitted will be communicated directly to applicants or grantees, as applicable, by letter and/or e-mail. Also, MEA reserves the right to determine the final grant amount for each Grantee after review of all proposals received and consistent with funding availability for the Program at that time.

For more information or assistance, please visit www.energy.maryland.gov or contact:

David Comis, Energy Program Manager
David.Comis@Maryland.gov
410-537-4064

Last Modified: February 24, 2021

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