



Funding Opportunity Announcement (“FOA”) FY26 Community Solar LMI-PPA Grant Program¹

- Program Description:** The Community Solar LMI-PPA Grant Program provides monetary incentives to ensure that the benefits of community solar are available to income qualified Maryland households. In fiscal year 2026 (FY26), the income requirements will focus on households that meet the definition of “Low-Income” only.
- Area of interest 1 (AOI-1) provides monetary incentives to Community Solar developers who subscribe Low-Income households of the state to a community solar project selected to participate in this Program
 - Area of interest 2 (AOI-2) provides monetary incentives to Community Solar developers for the development of solar projects on landfills and brownfields selected to participate in this Program that benefit low-income residents of the state.

Type of Grant Program: **Statewide Competitive**

Application Deadline: **3:00 P.M. ET, Tuesday, December 23, 2025.**

Anticipated Program Budget: **\$17,000,000** is available from the **Strategic Energy Investment Fund (“SEIF”) Solar Alternative Compliance Payments**, for grants under this Program. The total amount awarded may be more or less, depending on the quantity and quality of applications

¹ This program has historically been named the Low-to-Moderate Income Power Purchase Agreement (LMI-PPA) and targeted at providing incentives to encourage projects with the Public Service Commission (PSC) Community Solar carveout for projects benefitting both low-and-moderate income communities. While the program name (i.e. Community Solar LMI- PPA) is being maintained for continuity, in FY26 the Community Solar LMI - PPA program is ONLY incentivizing Community Solar projects targeting low-income, and not moderate-income households

received. If available, and at MEA's discretion, funding from other sources with varying restrictions may also be possible.

Initial funding shall be \$5,000,000 for AOI-1 and \$12,000,000 for AOI-2.

Areas of Interest:

The Program will provide grants under two (2) Areas of Interest (AOIs):

- **AOI 1: Project Granted Capacity Under the Community Solar Permanent Program**
 - The project must guarantee at least fifteen percent (15%) of the energy output from the community solar system is subscribed to Low Income subscribers, with minimum cost savings to those subscribers of twenty-five percent (25%) from the utility's CSEGS credit rate² or equivalent.
- **AOI 2: Project Granted Capacity Under the Community Solar Permanent Program (100% LMI and Brownfield-Sited)**
 - The project must provide at least fifty percent (50%) of the energy generated by the community solar system at no cost to designated Low Income subscribers³, and the remaining energy subscribed with a twenty-five percent (25%) cost savings from the CSEGS Credit Rate to Low Income subscribers. These subscribers may, but are not required to, include those receiving free energy from the same or another community solar array participating in this program.
 - Further, any AOI 2 project must be sited on a Maryland landfill, rubble-fill, or brownfield site

² Community Solar Energy Generating System rate.

³ The actual amount of a subscriber's 100-percent-discounted energy will be based on the recommendation of the OHEP Program or other relevant organization, as determined by MEA.

suitable for the community solar system installation.

Grant Amount: AOI-1 Incentive Calculation

The AOI 1 grant calculation includes the following variables: (1) size of Low Income portion of the array (to the nearest kW), (2) the estimated kWh-ac/kW-dc ratio for the array, (3) the cost of electricity for the utility service territory (\$/kWh), and (4) the percent savings for the subscriber below the Community Solar Energy Generating System (CSEGS) credit rate (or the utility Standard Offer Service retail rate for utilities that credit kWh directly).

The calculation is performed on the Application Worksheet.

AOI 2 Landfill Incentive Calculation

The AOI 2 grant calculation is based on a landfill incentive and an interconnection incentive for projects on designated landfills/brownfields/rubble fills. A list of desired landfill sites is identified in the Maryland Landfill Solar Assessment documents posted on the [MEA Solar on Maryland Landfills and Brownfields page](#)⁴; however, other landfills may be proposed.

AOI-2 projects are funded at **\$2,000/kW-dc**.

AOI-2 Interconnection Incentives: MEA will pay 75% of actual interconnection wiring costs after the first \$1,000,000, with a maximum interconnection incentive payment of \$3,000,000.

Maximum Individual Grant Amount

- **AOI-1 grants** shall be capped at **\$1,000,000**.
- Grants for **AOI-2 projects** shall be capped at **\$6,000,000** plus the project's interconnection incentives.

⁴ <https://energy.maryland.gov/business/Pages/Solar-Landfills.aspx>

Minimum Individual Grant Amount

- Grants for less than \$50,000 will not be considered.

While MEA anticipates using the full amount of allocated funds for this program, some, all, or none of the FY26 Community Solar LMI-PPA Grant Program budget will be used, based on the quality and eligibility of submitted applications.

Eligible Applicants: Applicants must be registered to do business in Maryland and must be in good standing. Applicants must be Community Solar Program Subscriber Organizations registered with the Maryland Public Service Commission (“PSC”).

Eligible Activities: Eligible activities are to install and operate solar photovoltaic (PV) arrays under the Maryland Community Solar Program and to subscribe at least the required amount of energy to Low-Income subscribers set forth in the relevant Area of Interest.

Ineligible Activities: Funds may not be used to verify income for a subscriber.

Minimum Eligibility Requirements: Each of the following requirements must be met **in order for an application to be considered “complete” and evaluated** under the Program. Complete applications will be evaluated as set forth in the “Evaluation Criteria” section of this FOA.

1. **Authority to Operate in Maryland:** The applicant, and any contractor that the applicant will work with on the proposed project, must be legally authorized to do business in the State of Maryland, and must have an established Employer Identification Number (“EIN”, sometimes referred to as a “taxpayer identification number,” or “TIN”) at the time they apply to the Program.
2. **Project Location:** The project site(s) where the proposed project will be located, as well as the location(s) that will benefit from the project, must be located within the State of Maryland.

3. **Good Standing with Maryland DAT:** The applicant, and any contractor that the applicant will work with on the proposed project, must be in Good Standing with the [Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation \("DAT"\)](#)⁵. The applicant, and any applicable contractor, must provide proof of Good Standing with the application. Should the applicant's contractor be selected after a grant is awarded by MEA to the applicant, that newly selected contractor must provide proof of Good Standing prior to starting any work on the project. Acceptable proof of Good Standing includes (1) a screenshot or PDF of the applicant or contractor's status in DAT's [Business Entity Search](#)⁶ that indicates a Good Standing status; OR (2) a copy of a Certificate of Good Standing from DAT. Instructions on how to obtain a Certificate of Good Standing are available on [DAT's website](#)⁷.
4. **Prior Recipients Restrictions:** If an applicant has previously participated in the Program and received funding for the proposed project, the applicant cannot receive another Program grant for the same project. If there is uncertainty regarding the proposed project under this restriction, please contact the MEA Program Manager named at the end of this FOA.
5. **Completion Deadline:** Any project funded under the Program must be able to complete the project, including all milestones and required reporting documents, by no later than May 30, 2030.
6. **NABCEP Certification Requirement:** At least one (1) North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners (NABCEP) PV Installation Professional (PVIP) or PV Design Specialist (PVDS) must be employed and involved in the electrical and mechanical design of the project.

⁵ <https://dat.maryland.gov/pages/default.aspx>

⁶ <https://egov.maryland.gov/businessexpress/entitysearch>

⁷ <https://dat.maryland.gov/businesses/Pages/Internet-Certificate-of-Status.aspx>

**Additional
Requirements:****7. Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) Model**

Requirement: The subscription must be structured in a PPA model with little to no up-front cost to the subscriber. The subscriber pays the subscriber organization for energy credited to his/her electric bill on a dollar per kilowatt-hour (\$/kWh) basis.

1. **Public Facilities:** If the Grantee is a unit of State or local government, the Grant must comply with State Finance and Procurement Article §§ 14-416 and 17-303, Annotated Code of Maryland.
2. **Contract Terms Guarantee:** The Grantee or Subscriber Organization must provide sufficient guarantees that the agreed upon terms of the Grant Agreement will not be changed in a manner that would disadvantage the Low-Income subscribers over the twenty (20) year period covered by this grant. These subscription limitations must be included as mandatory requirements in any future agreements of sale or change in control or ownership of the solar array to another subscriber organization.
3. **Project Operational Status Requirement:** The project must produce creditable power by the date specified in the grant. Creditable power is power provided to the electric utility that is used to compute the subscriber's monthly energy bill.
4. **Participation in Maryland PSC Community Solar Program:** The project must be part of the permanent Community Solar Program. Each grantee must have a subscriber number issued by the Maryland Public Service Commission and comply with the implementing Code of Maryland Regulations COMAR 20.62.
5. **Technical and National Testing Requirements:** Any community solar system funded by the Program must meet minimum system requirements

as specified in the Institute of Electrical and Electronics Engineers (“IEEE”) standard 1547 and the National Electric Code (“NEC”). Further, each community solar system must have all components listed or labeled by a recognized national testing laboratory.

6. Solar Renewable Energy Credits (SRECs):

Projects must register for and receive Solar Renewable Energy Certificates (SRECs). Grantees will be required to verify the successful registration of projects with the applicable Public Service Commission and with PJM Interconnection. For information concerning SREC registration, consult the PJM EIS website at <https://www.pjm-eis.com/>.

7. **Prior Expenses Restrictions:** Program funds **cannot** be used for project costs that are incurred prior to the execution of a grant agreement with MEA, unless MEA agrees otherwise in writing.
8. **Ability to Enter into a Grant Agreement:** Each applicant awarded a grant under the Program must enter into a formal grant agreement with MEA, before receiving any grant funds. MEA may ask the applicant to sign a commitment letter prior to the execution of the full grant agreement.
9. **Count of Subscribers Requirement:** The Grantee or the Subscriber Organization must provide a count of Low-Income subscribers to the Maryland Energy Administration with the submittal of the Completion Report and no later than the date specified in the grant. The count of Low-Income Subscribers must include a detailed explanation of how the Low-Income subscribers were certified to their income category. If a third party provided the certification, the grantee must provide a detailed explanation of how the third party conducted the verification. MEA may request a list of Low Income (or if appropriate LMI) subscribers, their income category, and the subscription capacity in terms of

kilowatts (kW).

10. **Maryland Historic Trust:** A Maryland Historic Trust review will be completed on the project prior to the awarding of a grant. The review must determine that there is not an “adverse impact” to the project site or historical district resulting from the installation of the project. MEA cannot pay grant funds to a project that results in an “adverse impact” to the project site or historical district.

Evaluation Criteria:

Each application that has met the Minimum Eligibility Requirements of this FOA will be competitively evaluated using the following criteria (“Evaluation Criteria”). Only the highest-scoring proposals will be selected for a grant, subject to Program funding availability. MEA will compete AOI-1 projects against other AOI-1 projects and AOI-2 projects against other AOI-2 projects. A sample checklist for AOI-1 and the AOI-2 applications can be found on the Program webpage.

AOI 1 Evaluation Criteria

The primary evaluation criterion is Greenhouse Gas reduction per dollar of grant funding. Points are calculated for this criterion as follows:

$$Points = \frac{Array\ size\ (Cell\ B4) \times Array\ efficiency\ (Cell\ A22)}{Total\ incentive\ (Cell\ B18)}$$

Cell values references (e.g., Cell B4) are from the Incentive Calculation Spreadsheet of the Application Workbook.

Additional favorable evaluation criteria include:

- “Total Benefit to Subscribers”⁸ = Cell B19 / 100,000
- Use of building rooftops in cities and towns (1.5 points)

⁸ “Total Benefit to Subscribers” is a calculated value from Cell B19 of the “Test Case” application Excel workbook.

- Pairing the community solar array with a storage device. Points = (number of hours of energy storage at full solar array rated output)
- Use of a waste landfill or land participating in the Maryland Department of the Environment (“MDE”) Voluntary Cleanup Program (“VCP”) (1 point)
- Education of the public concerning the benefits of the project to the general public through a sign at the project site with updated numbers (e.g., clean energy generated, greenhouse gas reductions display, dashboard or internet website, etc.). (1 point)

The Evaluation Team may adjust the ranking to ensure that at least one (1) project will be available to Low Income subscribers in each utility service territory.

AOI 2 Evaluation Criteria

The primary evaluation criterion is Greenhouse Gas reduction per dollar of grant funding. Points are calculated for this criterion as follows:

$$Points = \frac{Array\ size\ (Cell\ B4) \times Array\ efficiency\ (Cell\ A19)}{Total\ incentive\ (Cell\ B13)}$$

Cell values are from the AOI-2 Incentive Calculation Spreadsheet of the Application Workbook

Pairing the community solar array with a storage device.
Points = (number of hours of energy storage at full solar array rated output)

The Evaluation Team may adjust the ranking of AOI-2 applications to ensure that at least one (1) project will be available to Low Income subscribers in each utility service territory.

Evaluation Process: Each application package will be evaluated competitively by an Evaluation Team. The Evaluation Team will be made up of MEA staff, or a staff member with relevant experience from another State Agency. The evaluation

includes three (3) review steps that are described below.

1. Program Manager Eligibility Review: The 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 grant consideration and the applicant will be notified. A copy of the checklist is available on the Program website.
2. Evaluation Team Member Individual Review: Each member of the Evaluation Team reviews and scores each application according to the Evaluation Criteria established in this FOA. A copy of the Application Checklist is available on the Program website.
3. Evaluation Team Group Review and Grant Recommendations: The Evaluation Team convenes for a group review of their findings and scores. An Evaluation Team member is permitted to modify their score for an eligible 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 Evaluation Team member scores for that application. The Evaluation Team will finalize all scores and make grant recommendations. For each AOI, 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.
4. Despite the ranking, the Review Team members may still recommend against making an award. Any recommendation that an award shall not be provided will be discussed by all team members during an in-person (or virtual) meeting. A majority vote of the Review Team members will be required to recommend disqualification of an application for cause. The recommendation to disqualify for cause will be documented in the award recommendation

memo to the Director (MEA).

Partial Grants:

Partial grants are possible under this Program, depending on the number of complete and eligible applications received and associated grant funds requested. For each AOI, full grants will be made for approved projects, based on rankings of applications, in descending order from highest to lowest, until grant funds are exhausted. If sufficient grant funds are not available to fully fund a project, the applicant will be given an option to accept partial funding. If the applicant declines, MEA may offer partial grant funding under this same structure to the next qualified applicant until all funding has been expended or all remaining eligible projects have rejected the offer.

Program General Provisions:

MEA grant programs are covered by general requirements that will be made part of the grant agreement between MEA and a grantee. A copy of these provisions (“General Provisions”) is available on MEA’s website [here](#)⁹. This document will be incorporated into all MEA grant agreements.

Grant Funding and Payment:

The following requirements apply to each grantee:

- **Electronic Payments:** Participation in MEA grant programs is voluntary. To ensure the secure transmission of grant funds, each grantee receiving MEA grant funding is generally required to receive electronic payments from the State of Maryland. Electronic payments are set up through the State of Maryland’s Comptroller’s Office. Each grantee must fill out and submit the “ACH/Direct Deposit Authorization for Vendor Payments Form X-10” to the Comptroller’s Office via the submission methods outlined in the X-10 form. ACH/Direct Deposit Authorization for Vendor Payment Form X-10 **The**

⁹ <https://energy.maryland.gov/SiteAssets/Pages/all-incentives/General%20Provisions%20v3%202.11.22.pdf>

form cannot be sent to MEA. It must go to the appropriate location specified by the Comptroller's Office. Failure to submit ACH/Direct Deposit Authorization Form X-10 may result in grant reimbursement being delayed. If an applicant is unable to receive ACH/Direct Deposit payments, MEA may make an exception to this requirement on a case-by-case basis.

- **Reporting:** Each grantee must ensure timely and current compliance with the Program's reporting requirements. The Program reporting requirements will be specified in the grant agreement.
- **Encumbrance of Funds:** Upon receipt of a commitment letter (if applicable) or a grant agreement signed by both the grantee and MEA, MEA will encumber the grant funds.
- **Creditable Power for Grant Disbursement:** Milestone payments will be paid as authorized by the Grant Agreement. Remaining grant funds will be distributed after the project produces creditable power to subscribers. The Subscriber Organization will inform MEA when the project is complete (i.e., all zoning requirements met, all permit inspections passed and permits closed, all commissioning tests satisfactorily completed, and permission to operate received from the utility).
- **Final Grant Amount Recalculation:** Upon completion of the site visit or equivalent, MEA and the Subscriber Organization will recalculate the final grant amount to be disbursed based on the actual capacity of the project (kW-dc), and the actual percentage of energy provided to Low Income (AOI 1 only). The Grantee / Subscriber Organization will submit a Final Invoice and Completion Report using these updated numbers, but in no case will the total amount disbursed by MEA exceed the total amount authorized in the grant agreement). Upon receipt of a complete and accurate invoice and completion report, MEA will submit the request for payment of

grant funds.

Required Application Documents:

Each application to the Program must include the following:

1. **Application**: A complete, accurate, and signed application must be provided. The application must include all required information and must be signed by the applicant's authorized representative.
2. **IRS Form W9**: The applicant **must** provide a complete, accurate, and signed IRS Form W9. **The IRS Form W9 organization name, address, and employer identification number ("EIN", sometimes referred to as a "Taxpayer Identification Number," or "TIN")** will be used to execute a grant agreement, if the project is selected for a grant. A blank copy of the most recent IRS Form W9 can be found on the [IRS Form W9 webpage](#)¹⁰. **NOTE**: Once a grant agreement is executed with a grantee and the funds encumbered, MEA **cannot change** the grantee's EIN. No exceptions.
3. **Good Standing Documentation**: The applicant, and any contractor that the applicant will work with, must provide evidence of Good Standing with the Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation ("DAT"). Please see the Minimum Eligibility Requirements section, subsection 3, "Good Standing with Maryland DAT" for information on acceptable forms of Good Standing documentation and how to obtain them.
4. **Site Plan**: Must show the location of the community solar system on the site.
5. **Google Earth (or equivalent) Map**: Must show the location of the project site with respect to the

¹⁰ <https://www.irs.gov/forms-pubs/about-form-w-9>

surrounding communities.

6. **Energy Production Estimate:** Must be from PVWatts, PVSYST, or an equivalent solar energy production estimate software that is widely acceptable as a credible estimator.
7. **Proposed Project Timeline:** Must be in a clear and concise format and assumes that a grant agreement is executed by May 30, 2026.
8. **12 Months of CSEGS Rate History:** Documentation showing the last twelve (12) months of the Residential Community Solar Energy Generation (CSEG) Credit Rate for the utility service territory (or equivalent for Potomac-Edison service territory) (AOI-1 only).
9. **Evidence of Site Control:** Documentation that the applicant will have control of the proposed project site for at least twenty (20) years after the community solar system is expected to be built.
10. **Guarantee of Savings:** A cover letter must be provided indicating a guaranty of savings over twenty (20) years and the form of incentive (i.e., constant savings percentage below CSEGS credit rate) for Low Income subscribers.
11. **Program Manager Checklist and Application Checklist:** Submit the application checklists filled out by the applicant. Do not include a recommendation (last entry) on the Application checklists. This is being requested to ensure applications include all of the required documents when they are submitted.

**Application
Submission
Instructions:**

MEA encourages the use of electronic applications to streamline processing and reduce environmental impacts. If you cannot apply electronically, please contact MEA at least seven (7) business days prior to the application

deadline to identify an alternative method to submit the application.

The application workbook and required documents must be submitted electronically to MEA via email to:

**Solar.MEA@Maryland.gov, with copy to
David.Comis@maryland.gov**

Only if specifically authorized by MEA, an applicant should mail the application workbook and supporting documents to:

**Maryland Energy Administration
Attn: Community Solar LMI-PPA Grant Program
1800 Washington Blvd, Ste 755
Baltimore, MD 21230**

Regulations:

MEA grant programs are regulated by the Strategic Energy Investment Program regulations* (COMAR 14.26.02). All applicants and associated projects funded by MEA must meet all applicable regulations defined by COMAR 14.26.02.

**To access these regulations, click [here](#)¹¹ and use the sidebar "Regulations by Title" to navigate to: 14 - Independent Agencies → 26 - MARYLAND ENERGY ADMINISTRATION → 02 - Maryland Strategic Energy Investment Program.*

**MEA Program
Manager:**

The MEA Program Manager for this Program is:

**David Comis
David.Comis@Maryland.gov
410-537-4064**

Questions:

Questions not answered by this FOA can be directed to the MEA Community Solar LMI-PPA Grant Program Team by sending an email to Solar.MEA@Maryland.gov. You

¹¹ <https://dsd.maryland.gov/Pages/COMARSearch.aspx>

can also call MEA's main phone line at 410.537.4000.

**FY26 Community Solar LMI-PPA Grant Program
Funding Opportunity Announcement
Appendix 1: Glossary of Terms**

Applicant: An applicant to the FY26 Community Solar LMI-PPA Grant Program that meets the definition of “applicant” in the Code of Maryland Regulations, Title 14, Subtitle 26, Chapter 02, Section 02. Definitions ([COMAR 14.26.02.02](#)¹²).

Community Solar: A virtual net energy metering program authorized by §7-306.2 of the Public Utilities Article, Annotated Code of Maryland.

Low Income: A community solar subscriber whose gross annual household income is at or below 200 percent (200%) of the federal poverty level for the year of subscription or who is certified as eligible for any federal, state, or local assistance program that limits participation to households whose income is at or below 200% of the federal poverty limit.¹³

Maryland Energy Administration: An executive agency of the State of Maryland with a mission to promote clean, affordable, reliable energy and energy-related greenhouse gas emission reductions to benefit Marylanders in a just and equitable manner. MEA provides incentives to help Maryland residents, businesses, and other Maryland organizations to help pay for clean, efficient, and resilient energy technologies and upgrades. MEA also advises the Governor and Maryland General Assembly on all energy matters. **MEA is not a private entity. MEA is an official State of Maryland government agency.**

Moderate Income: A community solar subscriber whose gross annual household income is at-or-below eighty percent (80%) of the median income for Maryland for the year of subscription.

Project: A project that is proposed by an applicant to the FY26 Community Solar LMI-PPA Grant Program, in accordance with the “Eligible Activities” section of this FOA, and in accordance with [COMAR 14.26.02.02](#)¹⁴.

END OF FOA

¹² <https://dsd.maryland.gov/regulations/Pages/14.26.02.02.aspx>

¹³ Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) 20.62.01.02.B(12)

¹⁴ *Ibid.*