



Solar Now! Training & Funding Opportunity

Overview

The Northwest Solar Communities initiative is one of eight teams working under the US Department of Energy's Rooftop Solar Challenge II, a nationwide effort to drive down the "soft costs" of rooftop solar installations. Over the next 2.5 years, Northwest Solar Communities will:

- Bring streamlined permitting to at least 2 million residents,
- Encourage standard interconnection practices for 80% of residents, and
- Pave the way for a doubling of rooftop solar installations across Oregon and Washington.

Northwest Solar Communities intends to award training and seed funding to three Oregon communities in 2014 to support local efforts to increase rooftop solar installations.

Northwest Solar Communities is seeking to partner with local governments or community-based non-profits to increase the amount of rooftop solar in their community. Eligible projects include solar bulk purchase campaigns (Solarize campaigns), community solar projects, or other projects that will increase deployment of distributed solar electric systems. **The funds cannot be used for actual solar electric system acquisition or installation.**

Successful applicants will receive funding and training at Solar Now! University. In addition, Northwest Solar Communities will work with selected communities to share best practices for streamlined solar permitting, interconnection and/or codes.

Selected applicants are required to attend Solar Now! training on Friday, June 13 in Hillsboro, OR. Key project staff, partners, and community volunteers are invited to participate; at least one representative from each community must be in attendance. In addition, two complimentary tickets to the full Solar Now! University Conference, to be held June 12-14, will be reserved for each selected community.

Award Information

Three \$10,000 awards will be allocated in 2014 to three Oregon communities. Successful applicants will be required to execute a grant agreement with the Washington Department of Commerce, after which funding will be made available upon completion of deliverables agreed to with the Department of Commerce (e.g. completion of SolarNow! Training or selection of installation contractor for the campaign.) Applications are **due April 15, 2014.**

Northwest Solar Communities plans to offer two additional awards in 2015, contingent upon DOE approval of continued funding for the program.

Project Criteria

Eligible applicants include local governments or community-based non-profit organizations in the state of Oregon. Projects must be focused on increasing grid-tied solar electric systems within the applicant's



community, and may include residential, small commercial, agricultural or community scale systems. Preference will be given to projects that bring a solar campaign to a new geographic area or that initiate a new model for increasing distributed solar electric systems. Successful projects will be ready to launch in 2014 and be complete by the end March 2015.

Preference will be given to projects that:

- Demonstrate a strong base of community support;
- Use a grassroots volunteer base to support or lead the project outreach;
- Include active involvement of the local jurisdiction, with a primary point of contact identified;
- Include participation and support of local utility;
- Leverage other funds to support the project.

Award Administration

If approved, the applicant will work with the Washington Department of Commerce and Solar Oregon to execute a grant agreement and the necessary insurance documents within 30 days of award.

The applicant will submit a finalized work plan no later than 30 days after selection notification.

Reporting requirements and metrics will be determined based on goals outlined in the project narrative.

A final narrative report, including reporting on relevant metrics, will be required within 30 days of the end of the grant period, as determined in the grant agreement.

Application Requirements

Applications are due at **5 pm on April 15, 2014**. Applications shall be submitted by email as a PDF or Word file to Project Manager Emily Krafft: emily@solaroregon.org. Applications should not exceed 6 pages in total length, including the cover page, (not including any optional maps, graphs, or pictorial attachments.)

Each application will be evaluated by the Solar Now! selection committee in accordance with the project criteria listed above. Applicants may be contacted to provide additional information as needed.

The application should include the following parts:

Part 1: Cover Page

The cover page should provide the following information:

- Project Title
- Applicant Organization(s)
- Primary Contact Person
- Email
- Phone
- Project Area
- Project Summary



Part 2: Project Narrative

The applicant should compose a clear and concise description of the project objectives and activities that will take place during the grant period. In particular, please address the following:

a. Project Objectives

Provide a concise description of primary project objectives. Objectives should be measurable and describe the project's estimated impact on increasing rooftop solar installation rates.

b. Project Partners

List key partners and discuss partner participation roles, responsibilities, and contributions to the project. In particular, demonstrate relevant experience in community organizing, education, and outreach. Include experience on similar or related clean energy projects for key staff, volunteers, and partners. Discuss any local clean energy policies, plans, or other local sustainability initiatives that are relevant to the proposed project. Applications that demonstrate a collaborative effort from the local jurisdiction, utility, and community group(s) are encouraged.

c. Evaluation Plan

Describe how you will measure the success of your project. Include measurable metrics where appropriate.

d. Soft Cost Track Record

In accordance with the soft cost reduction goals of Northwest Solar Communities, a discussion of permitting or other soft costs for solar electric systems is strongly encouraged. Discuss the local jurisdiction track record of policies, plans, strategies, methods, or activities that have reduced the soft costs of grid-tied solar electric systems in the area.

e. Solar Now! Training

State your ability to participate in the Solar Now! Training on Friday, June 13th including key staff and partners who will attend the training.

Part 3: Project Timeline

The application shall include an anticipated timeline for completion of project activities. The timeline should align activities with action items, deliverables, and corresponding dates. See the sample campaign timeline attached.

Part 4: Project Budget

The application shall include the applicant's true estimated cost to perform the work based on the anticipated timeline, irrespective of Northwest Solar Communities grant funding. Please note that the true cost of a solar bulk purchase campaign or community solar project is expected to exceed the \$10,000 grant funding award. As such, the budget should include in-kind match, partner funding, or other leveraged resources that will support the additional costs of your project.

Sample Timeline



Northwest Solar
Communities

	Hours	M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6	M7	M8	M9
Task 1: Prep	80	25	25	30						
Solicit & select community partner		15								
Volunteer orientation & form committees		10								
Draft, finalize, & circulate RFP			25							
Evaluate proposals & collate scores				15						
Interview top-scoring firms and select installer				15						
Task 2: Launch	30			25	5					
Draft & finalize MOU				5						
Draft & finalize website, registration database				10						
Draft & finalize outreach materials				10						
Kickoff meeting					5					
Task 3: Saturation	125				55	35	35			
Draft & finalize workshop presentation					20					
Schedule & conduct community workshops					15	15	15			
Perform community outreach					10	10	10			
Manage database & lead communications					10	10	10			
Task 4: Wrap	50							30	20	
Conduct final community workshops								10		
Perform final outreach push								10		
Manage database & lead communications								10	10	
Set contracting deadline, monitor progress									10	
Task 5: Tail	35								15	20
Plan & execute celebration									5	10
Monitor final installations									5	5
Wrap up participant communications									5	5
TOTAL HOURS	320	25	25	55	60	35	35	30	35	20