Grant Guidelines

DELAWARE EMPOWERMENT GRANT

We will prioritize applications that bolster community strength and long-term local resilience, including applications that address one or more of the following:

1. **Provide cost saving energy for low- and moderate-income communities.**
2. **Align energy efficient homes with healthy and safe homes.**
3. **Improve energy efficiency for small businesses, community-based organizations, and local non-profits in communities of need.**
4. **Create access to clean renewable energy for low- and moderate-income communities.**
5. **Build pathways for education and training of a diverse clean energy and energy efficiency workforce for underserved communities.**

It is the Empowerment Grant vision to implement impactful and innovative energy equity projects in underserved communities that include direct investment community outreach, education, and engagement.

Clean, efficient, affordable, sustainable energy as a tool for impact

Through aligned strategies and investments, we can positively impact the socioeconomic position of thousands of Delawareans and promote climate resilience. The Empowerment Grant supported by the Energy Equity Fund creates partnerships, collaboration, and dialogue to:

- **Ease the Energy Burden**
  - Provide energy savings for low-to-moderate income families

- **Create Healthy and Safe Homes**
  - Align energy efficiency with healthy and safe homes in underserved communities

- **Help Businesses and Organizations**
  - Improve energy efficiency for small businesses, community-based organizations, and local non-profits in communities of need

- **Access Clean and Renewable Energy**
  - Create access to clean renewable energy for underserved Delawareans, especially low-to-moderate income communities

- **Create Clean Energy Jobs**
  - Create, expand, and sustain clean and renewable jobs in underserved communities
Why is Energy Equity Important?

Low- and moderate-income communities have been historically underserved. The Empowerment Grant is focused on expanding the inclusion and participation of low- and moderate-income communities in the clean energy movement. In addition, energy equity is important based on the following:

- Efficiency programs can improve health, comfort, and create jobs for those underserved communities.

- Low-income families, renters, and people of color often pay more in energy costs than other households.

- Climate change will disproportionately affect low-income communities and energy efficiency can help alleviate these disparities.

- Energy efficiency, clean and renewable energy can improve productivity of small businesses and create good paying sustainable jobs across many economic sectors.

Multiple benefits of energy efficiency and renewable energy for low-income households

- **Lower monthly bills (residents)** - more disposable income, reduced stress, more money spent in local economy
- **Improved housing (residents)** - better health and safety, increased property value and housing satisfaction, lower maintenance costs
- **Local economic development (community)** - more local jobs, improved quality of life, increased property values
- **Less power used (utilities and community)** - reduced environmental pollutants, improved public health, avoided excess costs of increased generation, capacity, and transmission investments
ELIGIBILITY
The Empowerment Grant accepts grant requests to address energy efficiency, climate resiliency, and/or economic development in underserved communities. Applications can be submitted from nonprofit 501(c)(3) organizations, private businesses, municipalities, community organizations, schools, and/or faith-based organizations. Applicants should benefit the residents, community, and environment of the state of Delaware.

NOT ELIGIBLE
- Organizations that discriminate based on race, ethnicity, religion, gender, gender identity or expression, sexual orientation, presence of a disability, age, status as a veteran, national origin, or any other protected classes.
- Individuals who would directly benefit
- Partisan political activities
- Religious organizations when funds would be used in whole or in part to further the organization’s religious purposes
- National and statewide organizations that cannot demonstrate a strong, local, community-based presence in underserved communities.

INFORMATION SESSIONS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
The Empowerment Grant Program offers orientation sessions and educational forums prior to each application deadline. These will be offered in person and via Zoom. The orientation session provides an overview of the application, priorities for funding, best practices, and the review process used by the Empowerment Grant Program powered by the Energy Equity Fund. Participation is not required and does not reflect on the grant application award.

LETTER OF INTENT AND PRE-MEETING
Organizations requesting over $250,000 in grant funding must provide a Letter of Intent and schedule a pre-meeting to discuss the proposal prior to submission. To schedule a pre-meeting, contact Kassandra Rodriguez, Grant Administrator, at Kassandra.Rodriguez@EmpowerGrantDE.org.

GRANT APPLICATION SUBMISSION SCHEDULE
The Empowerment Grant operates two cycles per year and a rolling grant program:

1. **Empower Ecosystem Grant** (Over $250,000) – Spring and Fall
2. **Empower Neighborhood Grant** ($75,000 - $250,000) – Spring and Fall
3. **Empower Efficiency Grant** (Less than $75,000) – Applications accepted on an ongoing basis and awarded throughout the calendar year.
The Empowerment Grant application and interim reports will be submitted via the electronic [Grants Management System](#). When preparing for an application, please review the Empowerment Grant website to view the mission, focus and guidelines for the application cycle.

## GRANT LEVELS AND FUNDING AMOUNTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grant Levels</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Empower Ecosystem Grant</strong></td>
<td>$250,000 - $1,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Empower Neighborhood Grant</strong></td>
<td>$75,000-$250,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Empower Efficiency Grant</strong></td>
<td>Up to $75,000</td>
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The Empowerment Grant works to inspire and support creative problem solving - within and across sectors and stakeholders – to make our region better for everyone. We understand that effective problem solving is complex. Our Empower-Ecosystem Grant is designed to provide operating support to programs and organizations that are interested in working together to further support a sustainable environment and economic development. We are looking for grantees that support cross-sector collaboration that are sustainable, just, and inclusive to advance the goals of all our focus areas.

We will seek to fund organizations that are adapting, innovating, and responding to changes in our social and economic environment; working with other organizations to do more than they can do alone; or making other changes to better serve the long-term health, well-being, and resilience of our communities. Innovative, grass root and community-based approach designed to empower local energy efficient and resilient programs and services. (Neighborhoods, small municipalities, local community focused service organizations)

This grant is designed to support one-time projects and programs that encourage awareness of emerging technologies and innovative approaches to energy efficiency, renewable energy, clean transportation, climate resiliency, environmental justice, and community sustainability. These grants can be one-time costs and may include purchasing energy efficient products and services to improve sustainability of an organization serving low- and moderate-income communities.

## GRANT PROPOSAL EVALUATION

As a part of the proposal evaluation, every organization submitting a grant application will schedule a meeting, via Zoom or in person, to discuss their proposal. These meetings will provide the Empowerment Grant staff with a better understanding of your organization and its leadership structure, as well as its alignment with our mission and focus. During this initial meeting, the Empowerment staff will ask questions regarding your organization, the grant request, and the anticipated impact of the proposed project. If the application is approved and recommended for further consideration, it is forwarded.
to the Grant Review Committee. At this stage, your organization will be given an opportunity to present their proposed project to the Grant Review Committee prior to a final evaluation. A final evaluation will be conducted by a standard rubric scoring system.

GRANT DECISIONS

The Empowerment Grant Review Committee meets no later than four weeks after each grant submission to make grant decisions for the respective cycle.

Within four weeks of the Grant Review Meeting, every requesting organization will receive an e-mail in which the decision is shared. Within four weeks of the Grant Review Meeting, your organization will receive an email announcing the grant award decision. If a grant request is denied, suggestions will be provided to strengthen the proposal for the next grant request.

The Empowerment Grant staff and the Grant Review Committee reserves the right to:

- Select an awardee based on factors other than the lowest cost.
- Reject any and all grant applications or portions of grant applications received in response to this Guidance.
- To make no award or issue a new Guidance.
- Accept grant applications in-part.
- Request modification to grant applications from any grant applicant during the grant process.
- Negotiate any aspect of the grant application with any grant applicant and negotiate with more than one grant applicant at the same time.

AWARD NOTICES

Following the evaluation process, the Grant Review Committee will make its recommendation(s) for Approval, Conditional Approval, or Denial to the Empowerment staff. Applicants that receive an Approval will receive a written award notice, including via e-mail. Applicants that receive a Conditional Approval will receive conditional changes detailed in a written notice, including via email, for review. A written conditional approval contract confirming the conditional changes will be provided by the Empowerment Grant Program for the applicant to execute. After, the applicant will be notified once the conditional approval contract has been fully executed by the Empowerment Grant Program powered by the Energy Equity Fund. Proposals denied by the Grant Review Committee will receive a written notice, including via email, that the grant was not awarded.
STATUS REPORTING AND OVERSIGHT

One of the primary goals in administering this grant is to keep accurate records regarding the actual value and usage of the funds. A selected grant applicant will be required to participate in project status meetings, as needed, and submit monthly, quarterly, and yearly status reports regarding the progress of work being performed, milestones attained, resources expended, challenges encountered, and corrective action taken. Quality control data and reporting will be a part of this reporting. Arranged sight visits by Empowerment Grant staff will be required, as needed, at regular intervals.

GUIDANCE AND DESIGNATED CONTACT

We welcome and encourage questions and feedback regarding the Empowerment Grant and our funded programs. To discuss community needs and opportunities, ask questions about our mission and focus, confirm eligibility, get clarity on our priorities, or discuss the specifics of your proposal, please see contact information below.

CONTACTS AND REFERENCES

Empowerment Grant Office

Jim Purcell, Director of Development and Programs
302-724-7033 Office Number
302-229-1585 Cell
Jim.Purcell@empowergrantde.org

Kassandra Rodriguez, Grant Administrator
302-724-7033 Office
Kassandra.Rodriguez@empowergrantde.org

www.empowergrantde.org
www.energyequityfund.org
APPLICATION OUTLINE

The online grant application is located on our website at www.energyequityfund.org. Our website has a link to our online grant application portal. At this grant application portal link, you will be instructed to login or create a new account. Once you have created a new account you will be able to view the grants available. Select your preferred grant, each grant application will require the following components outlined below:

1. Organizational Summary, Background, and Capacity
2. Grant Proposal Executive Summary
3. Statement of Need
4. Areas of Focus and Work Plan
5. Partnerships and Community Engagement
6. Anticipated Results and Learning
7. Program Sustainability
8. Budget
9. Appendices

ORGANIZATIONAL SUMMARY, BACKGROUND, AND CAPACITY

Section includes information regarding the program primary contact, organization summary, and addressing any possible conflict of interest between the organization and Energize Delaware. Be prepared to describe the organization’s historical and current programs as it pertains to the new Empowerment Grant’s focus areas of:

- Providing clean, cost saving energy for low- and moderate- income communities.
- Aligning energy efficient homes with healthy and safe homes.
- Improving energy efficiency for small businesses, community-based organizations, and local non-profits in communities of need.
- Creating access to clean renewable energy for low- and moderate- income communities.
- Building pathways for education and training of a diverse clean energy and energy efficiency workforce for underserved communities.

GRANT PROPOSAL EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Please select one or more and describe in detail the organization’s intended use of the funds. Include how the organization’s approach would help support the Empowerment Grant’s vision of:

- Easing the Energy Burden
- Creating Healthy and Safe Homes
- Providing Access to Clean and Renewable Energy
- Creating and Sustaining Clean Energy Jobs
- Supporting Green and Sustainable Small Businesses and Community-Based Organizations
- Promoting Climate Resiliency

**STATEMENT OF NEED**
Be prepared to go into detail about the proposed program. Think about the size and severity of the problem based on the Empowerment Grant mission and vision.

**INCOME DATA VERIFICATION**
Income data verification is required to validate the low-income status of beneficiaries.

For proposals that will operate within specific target areas, provide the percentage of families in the Target Area(s) at or below **80% of the State Median Income (SMI)** level or at or below **300% of federal poverty** guidelines as evidenced by survey data or census data available. Include the source, date, and URL of your data if it is derived from a publicly accessible online source.

If your proposal is not based on a target area and will benefit individuals or families, describe how you will document that individuals or families are either at or below 80% of SMI or at or below 300% of the federal poverty guideline. The following documents and procedures may be used to validate incomes if the information is valid with the past twelve months.

**Income Data Verification:**

- Photo ID for the applicant
- At least (1) or more utility bills
- Proof of income (pay stub or W2) or proof of benefit (Social Security, SSI, TANF, GA, WIC, and/or food stamps award letter)

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<tr>
<th>Automatic Qualifier</th>
<th>OR</th>
<th>Proof of Income</th>
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| Client must provide a recent (within one year) award letter from (1) of the following:  
  - Food Stamps  
  - WIC  
  - LIHEAP  
  - TANF/GA  
  - Medicaid  
  - WAP | Client must provide a recent (within one year) copy of each applicable document:  
  - 2 pay stubs  
  - W2s  
  - Previous year’s tax return  
  - SSI/SS award letter  
  - Unemployment |
AREAS OF FOCUS AND WORK PLAN

In this section, you will describe how and why the proposed program is unique and innovative, and how it will provide opportunities not already available and funded in your communities.

The online grant application will ask you to complete a work plan that illustrates how the proposed project work will be accomplished. An example response includes the following:

**Phase 1**
**Referral and Identification**
Determine eligibility based on financial need, health, and other social factors. Review principles of program and what will occur during this program. Acquire all necessary permissions and authorizations from client.

**Phase 2**
**Assessment**
This represents meeting with a client at their home and gathering all pertinent data about the issue to be addressed. Tools of assessment are to be developed and used to gather data about the weatherization, energy efficiency, access to services and equity needed to create an implementation work plan. Informal education and information sharing is also happening during this interaction with the client about the process and things to be done.

**Phase 3**
**Work Plan Development**
In general, a work plan is developed in concert with collaborative partners based on the assessment phase. An individual budget, list of items to be addressed, and how to communicate and involve those who are the clients. The work plan should concentrate on one or more of the focus areas and thoroughly outline the scope and potential impact on the individual and community being served.

**Phase 4**
**Implementation of Work Plan**
The work plan is carried out to specifications created in the Work Plan Development Phase. Timetable, instructions, and information should be communicated to clients. It’s expected that the contractors are providing informal education and feedback to the clients on the repairs and changes being made to the home and why.
Phase 5
Final Inspection and Analysis Process
Inspection of the completed work is necessary and be done promptly after completion. This could be also considered the commissioning stage, and every effort should be made to educate partners on how well they did and what could use improvement. To track impact a data collection plan should be put in place to monitor energy savings and health improvements because of the improvements. This is also a time to go over any questions the client may have and recommend adjustments as necessary and deliver informal education.

Phase 6
Follow up and Education
After the project is finished, a detailed education package is delivered that promotes a partnership with the client. Preventative, maintenance, and observations to be made in helping to keep the home healthy and resilient. This may include literature, counseling, and other tools to spur conversation around change of behaviors and what can be done to maintain a healthy and energy efficient home environment

INNOVATION AND UNIQUENESS WITHIN THE APPLICATION
We will seek to fund organizations that are adapting, innovating, and responding to changes in our social and economic environment; working with other organizations to do more than they can do alone; or making other changes to better serve the long-term energy efficiency, health, well-being, and resilience of our communities.

A. Ensure that funds are invested as equitably as possible by identifying the needs of underserved populations, communities, and geographic areas.

B. Continue to fund organizations providing critical services to address energy efficiency, health, safety and economic development, grassroots organizations, and those serving particularly underserved and/or isolated populations.

C. Bridge public sector response and frontline needs, including general operating support, stopgap support, building local nonprofit capacity to identify and obtain funding beyond our own, and boosting the work of local government and cross-sector coalitions.

D. Seek innovative solutions, leverage points, and collaborations that will contribute to the long-term health and resilience of our communities. Support organizations that are adapting to the new environment or working together to better serve our communities.
E. Identify high-impact focus areas that allow us to support multiple, interconnected needs or a broader cross-section of the community (e.g., racial equity, capacity building, recovery for low-moderate income workers, small-business and community serving organizations) from disruptions caused by the Covid-19 Pandemic.

F. Commit to iterative development of priorities, incorporating continuous listening, learning, and responsiveness into the process. Looking at how we can help communities become and stay resilient given changes in our climate and social structure. Craft and implement follow-up and approaches to sustain priorities.

PARTNERSHIPS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

All key program partners and personnel will be listed in this section of the online application.

A signed Letter of Agreement and Memorandum of Agreement signed by a person of authority will be uploaded in this section.

ANTICIPATED RESULTS AND LEARNING

Be prepared to describe specific output and outcome measures, evaluation tools, and other reporting metrics that will show the success and impact of the proposed program.

The table below is a list of indicators and metrics used in the Interim Reports. Additional indicators and metrics can be listed in this section of the online application.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Indicator</th>
<th>Metrics</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Energy Efficiency Savings</td>
<td>Energy (Kwh, MWh, MCF, MMBtu) and cost savings for customers in aggregated or by LMI Served</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Low and Moderate Income (LMI) Parity or Disparity | • Savings across LMI and market rate programs (% of total savings)  
  • Market penetration rate by income band (%SMI, %AMI, %FPL) statewide and in each census |
| Participation                                   | • Number of households served (#) or percent of eligible households served (%)  
  • Percent of participants at various income levels (%SMI, %AMI, %FPL)  
  • Demographic breakdown, geographic breakdown (rural and urban) |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing Type</th>
<th>Participation by housing type (% or #s by single family, mobile and multi-family housing sizes and types e.g., restricted, naturally affordable and market rate multi-family)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Program Resources | • Total funding leveraged for energy efficiency, health and safety, renewable energy, and green jobs (Cost by source and purpose)  
• Amount of investment financed - housing tax credits, on-bill programs, grants, etc. Value added to the project. |
| Energy Burden | Amount the energy burden decreased (% reduction in % of income paid for energy bills) for participating LMI households |
| Health & Safety | • Number of homes not served due to health and safety issue and % that receive referrals and ultimately return for service (% homes and % frequency health and safety issues cited)  
• Health and safety issues abated referred (# homes with % frequency issues abated)  
• # visits to PCP or emergency room for environmental driven illness |
| Workforce Development | • Number of jobs created (# by job type)  
• Participation of LMI residents in energy efficiency and renewable energy workforce (# of local workers trained, # placed in energy efficiency and renewable jobs)  
• % increase in pay, % sustainable long term placement |

**THIRD-PARTY EM&V**

**Awarded grantees with budgets over $100,000** are required to budget for third party energy efficiency evaluation, measurement, and verification (EM&V) services. EM&V services must be made in accordance with all professional EM&V standards and regulations. Additional EM&V including social determinants, economic impact will also be required. When preparing the budget, you must document the total percentage of EM&V costs requested for the program. A list of recommend third party evaluators is available on the Energy Equity Fund website for energy related EM&V. Social, health and economic EM&V will be available through the Empowerment Grant approved EM&V consultant. Primary goals of the third-party EM&V services include:

- Provide verification of estimated energy program electric and gas savings through project documentation inspections, review, and verification of energy savings calculations, and/or project site inspections. Verification and tracking of key social, economic and health determinants.

- Recommend improvements to data collection, data storage, and energy savings calculation methods, as well as collection of social, health and economic data.

- Recommend improvements to the design and implementation of existing EM&V as it relates to the Empowerment grant mission.
• Provide guidance on best practices regarding energy savings estimates, as well as data reporting from social, health and economic data.

PROGRAM SUSTAINABILITY
Describe any plans for funding the organization, program, or project at the end of the grant period, and any long-lasting outcomes or mechanisms.

BUDGET
A blank excel Budget Spreadsheet will be provided in the online application. Here is a preview of it:

**Budget Narrative**

Information about the proposed project’s budget must be included in a budget narrative, which is separate from the application narrative. This section of the Guidance describes the information that should be addressed in the budget narrative. Your budget narrative
should be organized with a corresponding narrative for each line item in your proposed budget. Applications that do not follow this format will be considered incomplete.

All grant applications will be evaluated on the extent to which the budget narrative justifies the allocation of funds. The budget narrative should describe how costs will be managed.

Administrative costs must be reflected with the appropriate line items and a detailed cost breakdown in the budget narrative must be provided. Indirect costs should be included, as well as any administrative costs that are in the direct cost category.

If sub-recipient organizations are proposed, please describe their role in detail and describe where in the budget worksheet their expenses are allocated. See below regarding a budget worksheet.

**ADMINISTRATIVE COSTS**

Direct administrative costs are the reasonable, necessary, allocable, and otherwise allowable costs of general management, oversight, and coordination of the grant (i.e., program administration).

Administrative costs include, but are not necessarily limited to, expenditures for salaries, wages, fringe benefits, and related costs of the recipient's staff or consultants/subcontractors engaged in program administration or that can be specifically identified with the grant. In charging costs to this category, the recipient may either include the entire salary, wages, and related costs allocable to the program of each person whose primary program responsibilities involve program administration assignments, or the pro-rata share of the salary, wages, and related costs of each person whose job includes any program administration activities. The recipient may use only one of these methods during the grant period.

Program administration includes, but is not limited to, the following types of activities:

- Providing local officials and citizens with information about the program, except for targeted outreach, affirmative marketing, education, or outreach for energy efficiency programs.
- Preparing program budgets and schedules, and amendments thereto.
- Developing systems for assuring compliance with program requirements, or developing information systems to enhance the delivery, analysis, or conduct of energy efficiency activities.
- Developing interagency agreements and agreements with sub-recipients and contractors to carry out program activities.
- Monitoring program activities for progress and compliance with program requirements, except for on-site monitoring of energy efficiency measures.
- Preparing reports and other documents related to the program.
• Coordinating the resolution of audit and monitoring findings.
• Evaluating program results against stated objectives.
• Travel costs incurred for official business in general program administration that can be specifically identified with the grant program.
• Transportation costs incurred for general program administration that can be specifically identified with the grant program.
• Equipment (over $5,000), consumable supplies that are expected to be used within a year (ex: office supplies), and non-consumable supplies that are less than $5,000 that are expected to last more than a year (ex: cell phones) and materials used for program administration that can be specifically identified with the grant program.
• Marketing costs and material.
• Certification and licensing costs required for program administration responsibilities.

Indirect costs, also known as Facilities and Administrative (F&A) Costs or overhead costs, represent the expenses of conducting business that are not readily identified exclusively with a specific grant, contract, project function or activity, but are necessary for the general operation of the organization and the conduct of activities it performs.

PROGRAM COSTS

Program costs are those costs that are associated with the direct benefits received by the beneficiaries of the program. Program costs include rebate or incentives for installed energy efficiency measures, direct installation of energy efficiency measures, costs related to energy assessments, counseling, or other non-tangible activities that are not covered by staff administrative salaries. Employees or contractors dedicated primarily to direct program delivery to beneficiaries should be included in the program cost.

APPENDICES

Supplemental grant support material and pertinent research related to the proposal

• Organization Annual Report or case study
• Financial Audit Statement or Recent 990
• Board Member List
• Project Timeline
• Research and other support material (optional)