



## Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program FAQs

### How is eligibility determined?

For a detailed explanation about the formula design and funding allocations, please see the EECBG Program's [Application Instructions](#). There are over 2,700 States, territories, local governments, and Tribes eligible for EECBG Program funding.

- *State & Territory Eligibility:* There are 56 entities eligible for state formula grants. These are the 50 States, the District of Columbia, and the following five U.S. Territories: The Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the U.S. Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.
- *Local Government Eligibility Section:* 541(2) of EISA divides eligible units of local government into two categories, defined as “local government-alternative 1” and “local government-alternative 2.” DOE determined that 1,878 local governments are eligible for EECBG Program formula grants.
  - *Local Government – Alternative 1:* There are 1,878 local governments eligible under this category. These are the cities that are one of the top 10 most populous cities within their state or that have a population of at least 35,000; and counties that are one of the 10 most populous counties within their state or that have a population of more than 200,000.
  - *Local Government -- Alternative 2:* There are 1,032 local governments eligible under the definition of the Local Government - Alternative 2. These are the cities with populations of at least 50,000; or counties with populations of at least 200,000.
- *Indian Tribes:* There are 774 Indian tribes eligible for a formula grant through the EECBG Program. These include 574 federally recognized Indian tribes listed by the Bureau of Indian Affairs in the 2022 Federal Register Notice; 6 additional Indian tribes because 8 bands of Indian tribes comprise two of the federally recognized Indian tribes, 12 Alaska Native Regional Corporations (ANRC), and 182 Alaska Native Village Corporations (ANVC), group corporations, and urban corporations.

### How were allocations determined?

- The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) (Public Law 117-58), Sec. 40552 provides \$550 million for EECBG Program for fiscal year 2022, to remain available until expended. DOE will distribute \$440 million in formula and competitive EECBG Program funding to eligible units of local government, states, and Indian tribes.

- Of the amount appropriated by IIJA, DOE will allocate funds as prescribed in section 543 of EISA:
  - 34% to eligible units of local government-alternative 1 through formula grants
  - 34% to eligible units of local government-alternative 2 through formula grants
  - 28% to states through formula grants
  - 2% to Indian tribes through formula grants; and
  - 2% for competitive grants to ineligible local governments and Indian tribes.
- IIJA allocations for EECBG Program direct formula awards from the DOE, as adjusted, are based on the following funding amounts:
  - \$299,200,000 for formula awards to eligible units of local government
  - \$149,600,000 to eligible units of local government-alternative 1
  - \$149,600,000 to eligible units of local government-alternative 2
- \$123,200,000 for formula awards to states
  - Each state (except for those noted as exempt in section 6.3 E.) is required to pass not less than 60% of its allocation through to cities and counties within the state that are ineligible for direct formula grants from DOE
- \$8,800,00 for formula grants to eligible Indian tribes
- See the [Federal Register Notice 2022-13859](#)
- issued on June 29, 2022, for the allocation process.

#### **What should I do to access EECBG Program funding if I am not eligible?**

- Ineligible governments and Tribes may still be able to access funding through the EECBG Program. \$8.8 million is set aside for competitive grants to local governments, Indian tribes, and consortia of local governments that are not eligible for formula funding from DOE. The EECBG Program Team will release more information about the Competitive Program in the coming months.
- Each State is also required to distribute at least 60% of their formula allocation funds to local governments that are ineligible for formula funding. We encourage engagement between these jurisdictions at the state-level.

#### **How do I apply for EECBG formula funding?**

Eligible entities submit an application to DOE in order to receive funding. All application instructions and materials can be found on the [EECBG Program Formula Grant Application Hub](#).

#### **Where do I begin in the application process?**

- The first step is completing the Pre-Award Information Sheet by April 28, 2023.
- Before getting started on the PAGE system, grant applicants should also make sure that they are set up in the various online platforms that host the application steps. To summarize, they are listed below:
  - Register with the System for Award Management (SAM) at <https://www.sam.gov>

- Register in FedConnect to receive and acknowledge your award at <https://www.fedconnect.net/>
- Have a login for the Performance and Accountability for Grants in Energy (PAGE) System at <https://www.page.energy.gov/default.aspx> in order to submit your application.
- For more information, see the EECBG Program [Application Instructions](#).

### **How can I spend EECBG Program funds?**

- Communities can use this flexible source of funding to catalyze long-term, impactful, and self-sustaining plans, projects, and programs. Each eligible activity on this list, which can be found in the Section 2.2 of the Application Instructions, build a clean and equitable energy economy that prioritizes disadvantaged communities and promotes equity and inclusion in workforce opportunities and deployment activities.
- Further guidance on eligible activities is forthcoming and will be available on the EECBG Program website.

### **How long do I have to spend EECBG funds?**

- Grants will consist of a 3-year Project and Budget Period for States, and a 2-year Project and Budget Period for Local Governments and Indian tribes.
- Vouchers to Local Governments and Indian tribes will be for a 2-year Project and Budget Period.
- Recipients may request a no-cost time extension (or a modification to shorten the period of performance) of their grant or voucher.

### **Is there a benefit to applying earlier rather than later in the application window?**

- We encourage applicants to take their time developing robust, thoughtful strategies that inform detailed applications. Because this is not a competitive grant, all eligible governments and Tribes are entitled to the full allocation indicated in the allocation tables available on the EECBG Program website. However, the sooner that you submit your application, the sooner you will have access to your funding.

### **Do eligible entities need a fully developed plan for their projects before submitting their applications?**

- States, local governments, and Tribes must submit an Energy Efficiency and Conservation Strategy (EECS) to DOE for approval. The requirements for the proposed strategy is outlined in Section 6.3 C. of the Application Instructions. DOE has provided streamlined [EECS Templates](#) that state, local, and Tribal governments may use when submitting their EECS, but the template is not required. More information on the EECS requirements can be found in Section 6.3.C. of the [EECBG Application Instructions](#).
- The EECS can be submitted through one of two methods:

- Submit the EECS with the application through the PAGE application system, utilizing the suggested format
- Submit the EECS not later than 120 days after the effective date of the award. If the latter option is chosen, the EECS shall be a comprehensive strategy that uses the suggested EECS format, featured here on the [EECBG Program Formula Grant Application Hub](#).
- DOE has determined that states and territories are already meeting these requirements through their annual reporting for the State Energy Program. However, states and territories must submit to DOE a proposed EECS that:
  - Establishes a process for providing subgrants to units of local government that are not eligible for direct formula grants from DOE.
  - Includes a plan of the state for the use of funds received under the EECBG Program to assist the state in achieving the goals established in EISA, in accordance with Subtitle E, section 545(c)(2)(B).

**When are applications due?**

- States and territories can apply through July 31, 2023.
- Local governments and Tribes can apply through January 31, 2024.
- However, it is important to note that all eligible entities that intend to apply ***must submit their Pre-Award Information Sheet by April 28, 2023.***

**What is the turnaround time on applications/when can I expect to receive my award?**

- To assist applicants with planning, DOE is providing estimated award processing timeframes for each financial instrument below. Note that these timeframes are estimates and are subject to change based on total volume of applications received, completeness of submitted applications, and award negotiation requirements. Applications may be subject to additional review prior to award or release of funds, including financial, legal, programmatic, or NEPA review.

Award Instrument	Vouchers	Grants Following Blueprints	Grants Not Following Blueprints
Typical award processing timeframe*	30-60 days	Up to 60 days	Minimum of 90 days
Additional application requirements or award conditions	Comply with Voucher Terms and Conditions	May be subject to additional review (e.g., indirect cost rates, sub-grants, accounting)	May be subject to additional review and award conditions (e.g., NEPA)**

		system and financial controls)	
Application method	Submit voucher application by January 31, 2024***	Submit grant application in Period 1 or 2 (select one or more blueprints)	Submit grant application in Period 3 or 4.

Table notes:

\*Award processing times shown are estimates, based on submission of a complete application that is responsive to all required application materials and system registration requirements. Award processing times may vary depending on multiple factors, including the number of applications submitted, complexity of award applications, and additional review required to process applications (such as NEPA review and approval of proposed projects). The above timeframes do not include the time required for applicants to prepare and submit an application to DOE.

\*\*Awards requiring NEPA review will require extended time to review applications, including completion of environmental assessment or an EIS, depending on the scope of the proposed activity. Awards may be partially or fully conditioned (funds restricted from expenditure) until completion of required NEPA reviews.

\*\*\* Additional information on the Voucher application process will be forthcoming.

- **How do the vouchers work?**

- Local and Tribal entities will have the choice between a grant OR a voucher. The financial value of the voucher is expected to be equivalent to the formula award allocated to the eligible entity. Vouchers are subject to the same legislation and guidance that applies to EECBG Program formula grants, including Voucher Terms and Conditions. Vouchers will be available to formula-eligible local governments and Indian tribes for technical assistance or equipment rebates.
- DOE has sought to simplify and streamline the process for local governments and Tribes that choose a voucher in lieu of a grant. Entities that opt into a voucher are not required to apply for and administer a direct federal grant. Entities choosing vouchers will instead submit a separate application using a streamlined process with reduced documentation, monitoring, and reporting requirements compared to the process of applying for and administering a federal grant. For example, if an entity opts in for a voucher, entities that have never managed a federal grant before will not be required to establish the necessary financial management systems, including accounting for federal funds, invoicing, and internal audits typically needed to comply with federal grant management requirements as described in the regulations.

- Vouchers for **technical assistance** will be used to access support from experts, across a wide array of high-value opportunities in energy efficiency, renewable energy, transportation, and related areas.
- Vouchers for **equipment purchase and installation rebates** will be used to reimburse entities for the purchase of energy-related equipment used to meet the program goals. Equipment eligible for rebates will span a wide range of technologies that are deployed to lower fossil fuel use or increase energy efficiency.
- **How do the blueprints work?**
  - Blueprints are step-by-step roadmaps of energy projects and programs that guide EECBG Program entities to success. By no means an exclusive list, the blueprints are a selection of high-impact projects and programs based on proven practices that entities can choose to follow (e.g., energy planning, transportation infrastructure, workforce and economic development, and financing). DOE will provide resources such as webinars, trainings, tools, and additional support along these topic areas. Entities pursuing blueprints can expect expedited application review periods.
    - The blueprints are designed to achieve several goals:
    - Guide grantees towards high-impact and effective projects and programs
    - Focus DOE's technical assistance and support in key areas
    - Support grantees as they leverage other BIL and Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) investments
    - Streamline and expedite application review and approval process for eligible entities.
  - For more information on Blueprints, see Appendix 2 of the EECBG [Application Instructions](#).