

**DOCKETED**

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# California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC)



## Equity Initiatives and Clean Energy Access Grant Program

### DACAG Meeting

February 17, 2023



California Public  
Utilities Commission

# Background

# Background

**AB 179 (Ting)** signed by Governor Gavin Newsom appropriates \$30,000,000 in funding to expand the scope of public participation to include ***community-based organizations and tribal organizations that have not historically engaged with matters before the California Public Utilities Commission.***

- The purpose of the funding is to increase the breadth and depth of voices providing input on issues affecting state residents, especially those in diverse and low-income communities, hard to reach customers, individuals with access and functional needs, and frontline communities experiencing the impact of climate change.
- The funds shall be available for encumbrance or expenditure until June 30, 2025, and shall be available for liquidation until June 30, 2027.

# Stakeholder Outreach to Date

The program has been developed with input from the following:

- State Agencies and Boards:
  - CA Energy Commission
  - CA State Water Resources Control Board
  - CA Public Utilities Commission
    - Industry Divisions, Commissioner Offices
  - CA Air Resources Board
  - CA Environmental Protection Agency
  - Strategic Growth Council
  
- Community Organizations:
  - A focus group consisting of 12 Community Based Organizations, including tribal organizations
  - Community Stakeholders:
    - Low Income Oversight Board, Disadvantaged Communities Advisory Group, TEAM/CHANGES
  - CBO Grant Webinar (2-15-23) 170 attendees
  
- Modifications have been made based on stakeholder feedback.

# Equity Initiatives and Clean Energy Access Grant Programs

The grant programs are:

1. Public Participation Grants
2. Equity, Engagement, and Education Grants
3. Clean Energy Access Grants

Summary of Proposed Funding		
Category	Maximum Award	Total Available
Public Participation Grants	\$15,000	\$2,500,000
Equity, Engagement, and Education Grants	\$100,000	\$8,000,000
Clean Energy Access Grants	\$1,250,000	\$17,000,000
Dedicated Tribal Funding*		\$1,000,000
Administration	N/A	\$1,500,000
<b>Total:</b>		<b>\$30,000,000</b>

\* applicable to California Native American Tribes

# Eligible Applicants

Applicants eligible to apply for the CPUC's Equity Initiatives and Clean Energy Grant Program include:

- A California community-based organization holding a current tax-exempt status under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code;
- A California Native American Tribe. For the purposes of this grant, this includes all Federally Recognized Tribes, and other California Native Americans, as defined by Public Resources Code Section 21073 "California Native American tribe" means a Native American tribe located in California that is on the contact list maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission for the purposes of Chapter 905 of the Statutes of 2004.
- Tribal entities organizations incorporated under tribal law and wholly owned by the tribe, Tribal Section 17 Corporations, Tribal utilities and authorities operated under tribal law.

# Public Participation Grant Program

# Public Participation Grant Program

## General Description

- The **Public Participation Grant** program is intended to remove financial and capacity-based barriers to participation while creating a flexible and accessible process to apply for and receive compensation.
- Compensates organizations for their time for participating in day-to-day Commission activities that drives and influences policy decisions.
- This program aligns with the CPUC's Environmental and Social Justice Action Plan's vision to create participation pathways and compensate CBOs and tribes for the time and effort spent contributing critical perspectives that assist the CPUC to make just and equitable decisions reflecting diverse viewpoints.

# Public Participation Grants

**Total proposed funding:** \$2,500,000

**Per-grant proposed funding:** Up to \$15,000

**Application and funding cycle:** Rolling

- Grants up to \$15,000 per activity for an eligible entity to participate in defined and discrete activities. e.g. speaking on a workshop panel, service on working group or participation in other decision-making processes.
- Provides prompt payment for these discrete engagements.
- Applications accepted on a rolling basis. Total funding for the Public Participation Grants portion of this program will be \$2.5 million. Payments dispersed after completion of activities identified in approved application.
- Annual program cap and cap per organization to ensure even distribution over time and fair distribution across many organizations.
- Awardees for these grants will not be eligible for Intervenor Compensation for the same activities.

# Proposed Eligible Activities

Activities below will be compensated at \$150/hr.  
Includes meeting prep, meeting, and post-meeting follow-up.

Activity	Description
Working Group Meeting	Working Groups are given a specific scope of work to discuss topics ranging from broad policy goals to details on program implementation. Usually part of a proceeding.
Focus Group	Focus Groups are used by CPUC staff to test proposed program implementation concepts, ideas, and rules.
Workshop/Event Panelist	CPUC staff form a panel on specific topics to receive feedback and educate other stakeholders on certain policies, programs, or service already in place.
Workshop/Event Featured Speaker	Featured speaker may be invited to speak to discuss their unique experience or offer best practices on programs/services.
Advisory Board/Committee Member	Appointed roles that advise on program development, implementation or administration.
En Banc Meeting Panelist	CPUC staff form a panel on specific topics to receive feedback and educate other stakeholders on certain policies, programs, or service already in place.

# Administration and Reporting

## Administration of funds:

Applicants apply for funds after each activity or series of activities.

Application must include proof of participation, which can include:

- Meeting minutes
- Attendance log
- Meeting agenda
- Written confirmation from meeting coordinator
- Screenshot of virtual meeting (with name on avatar)
- Link to a recording of the meeting (showing applicant participating)

Application will be streamlined in order to facilitate participation

# Equity, Engagement, and Education Grants

# Equity, Engagement, and Education Grants

## General Description

The **Equity, Engagement and Education Grant** program seeks to:

- Ensure the views of underrepresented communities are heard in the decision-making processes of CPUC and other state agencies by enabling the formal participation of tribes and CBO's.
- Increase participation and build the long-term capacity of tribes and CBOs so that they will have the ability to receive payment for ongoing work through the Intervenor Compensation program (IComp).

# Equity, Engagement and Education Grants

**Total proposed funding:** \$8,000,000

**Per-grant proposed funding:** Up to \$100,000

**Application and funding cycle:** Awards in Summers of 2023 and 2024

- This program will provide grants up to \$100,000 for the purposes of building CBO, Tribal, and community capacity to understand and engage with CPUC decision-making processes.
- Activities in this category may include hiring staff, engaging consultants or technical experts, community engagement and outreach related to CPUC proceedings, education, training and curriculum development, and partnership and coalition development.
- Method of distribution of grants to be determined (example payments dispersed by completion of project milestones identified in approved application).

## Examples of Eligible Activities

- Building the capacity of less engaged organizations representing disadvantaged communities and acting as a resource to these organizations. E.g. education on CPUC processes, preparation of document templates, assistance with filing a Notice of Intent to File Intervenor Compensation and changing bylaws.
- Hiring consultants and staff for activities necessary for active participation in decision-making processes at the CPUC, e.g. to gain party status and actively engage in a proceeding.
- Educating and/or organizing communities for participation in active matters before the CPUC.

# Grant Period

## Round one All

Grant Applications open May 22, 2023.  
All Applications closed June 23, 2023

## Round Two

Grant Applications open April 1, 2024  
All Applications closed June 1, 2024



Funds available for encumbrance or expenditure until June 30, 2025  
Funds available for liquidation until June 30, 2027

# Long-Term Vision

## Funding used to ensure long-term capacity and enhance future engagement

- Ability to utilize Intervenor Compensation
- Ongoing in-house staff and resources
- Peer-to-peer learning

# Clean Energy Access Grants

# Clean Energy Access Grants

**Total proposed funding:** \$17,000,000

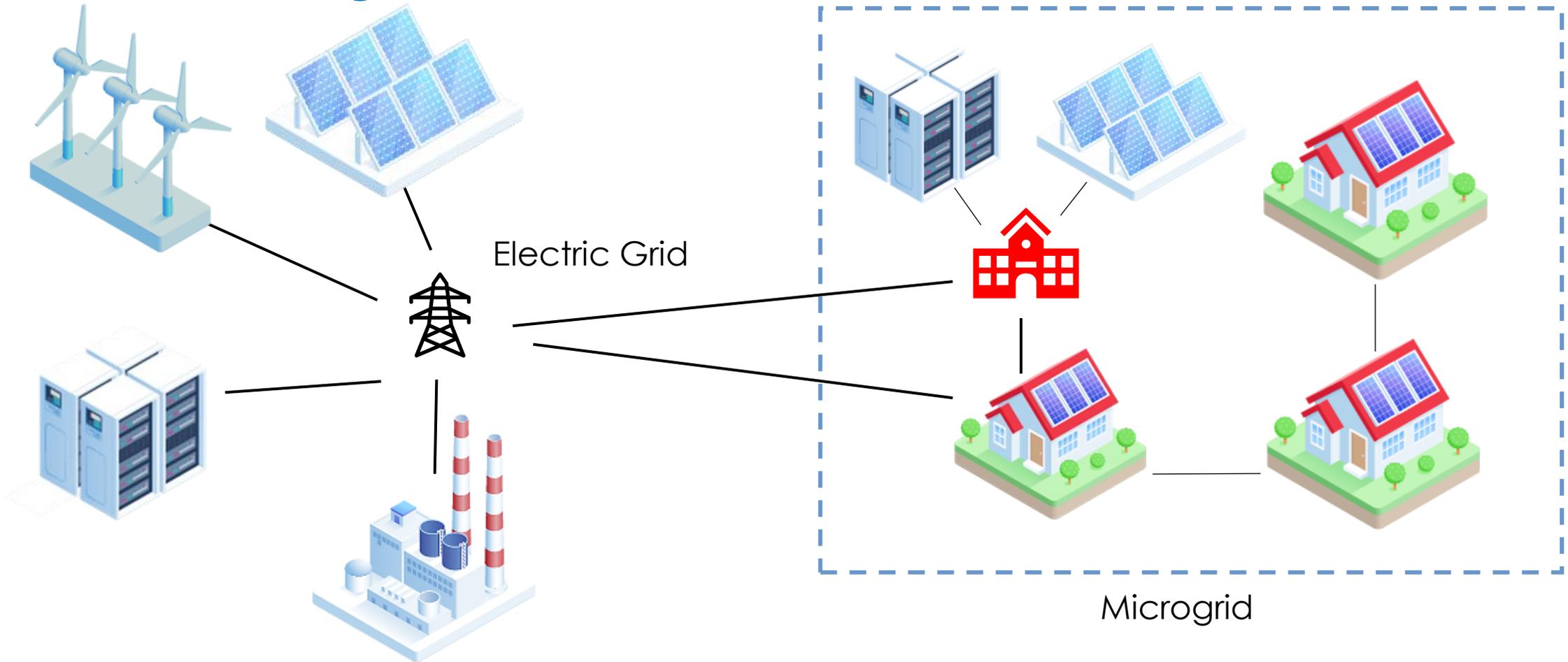
**Per-grant proposed funding:** \$100,000 to \$1,250,000

**Application and funding cycle:** Award Agreement with Technical Assistance Provider(s) in Early 2024, Awards to CBOs and Tribes through June 2027

- This program will provide grants up to \$1.25 million for the purpose of developing equity initiatives and clean energy access opportunities for eligible applicants.
- Provides funding to develop plans and bridge gaps in clean energy access programs at the community level.
- Program does NOT pay for infrastructure buildout. i.e. hardware or equipment.
- Grants to third party technical assistance provider or providers who will provide subgrants to CBOs and tribes
- Projects limited to activities:
  - supporting the Microgrid Incentive Program (MIP)
  - increasing subscriptions to income-qualified battery backup under the Self-Generation Incentive Program (SGIP)

# Understanding Supported Programs

## What is a Microgrid?



# Understanding Supported Programs

## Microgrid Incentive Program (MIP) Overview

- \$200 million to fund microgrids for communities at high risks of power outages.
- Will improve the reliability of electricity and reduce the impacts of outages.
- Critical infrastructure such as fire stations, community centers, and vulnerable households can be prioritized.
- Reduce greenhouse gas emissions by replacing diesel generation.
- Anticipated launch in 2023.

# Understanding Supported Programs

## How This Program Would Support MIP

- Provide resources for project development so bids are more likely to come to fruition.
- Provide resources for community outreach and planning to ensure community needs are accounted for in project design.
- Provide resources to ensure local clean energy access opportunities are considered in the scope of the microgrid project. These include planning to incorporate vehicle charging, local solar and storage, and building electrification and energy efficiency.

# Understanding Supported Programs

## Self-Generation Incentive Program (SGIP)

- SGIP offers rebates for installing energy storage technology in your home.
- Covers substantial portion of the cost of a battery system for income-qualified households.
- Reduces household's vulnerability to outages and can reduce electricity costs.

# Understanding Supported Programs

## How This Program Would Support the SGIP

- Fund outreach to hard-to reach households by trusted intermediaries (tribes and CBOs).
- Fund development of in-language outreach materials and communication campaigns.

# How Grant Funding Gets to CBOs and Tribes

- CPUC will award a master grant to technical assistance (TA) provider(s).
- Tribes or CBOs request assistance from TA provider(s) for microgrid or SGIP projects.
- Designated TA provider evaluates these requests and provides technical assistance and funding to conduct work.
- TA provider provides metrics and reports on work completed to the CPUC.
- Additional details will be developed with grant award to TA provider(s).

# Requirements for Technical Assistance Providers

- Awards will be to coalition of TA providers with diverse backgrounds and demonstrated expertise.
- Transparency, clear how much funding is available for tribes and CBOs.
- Ability to serve diverse areas of state.

# Tribal Funding Considerations

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Dedicated tribal funding of \$1 million

- Public Participation Grants: \$100,000
- Equity, Education, and Engagement Grants: \$250,000
- Clean Energy Access Grants: \$650,000

# Key Dates

Grant Program Public Webinar	February 15
Comments on Draft Program Due	February 27
Draft Resolution Available for Public Comment	Late March
Public Application Workshop	Mid-May (tentative)
Round One Applications Open	Late May (tentative)

# Closing

# We Want to Hear From You

Send written comments to [outreach@cpuc.ca.gov](mailto:outreach@cpuc.ca.gov)  
by 5 p.m. on February 27, 2023.

Thank You!



# California Public Utilities Commission