

EMPOWER MASSACHUSETTS PROGRAM & CLEAN ENERGY OVERVIEW

PRESENTED BY:

Lisa Dobbs



BACKGROUND: INEQUITABLE ENERGY BURDEN & ACCESS TO CLEAN ENERGY

- Low-income homes have a disproportionate energy burden.
- Research shows that solar adoption lags for renters and minority communities.
- Mass Save's 2020 Non-Participant Study found renters, low-income households, and non-English speaking households more likely to not utilize energy efficiency incentives.

All residents of Massachusetts need and deserve to be part of our collective clean energy future.

Previous models Solarize & Heatsmart offer some lessons learned:

Barriers include limited time, upfront costs, landlord-tenant split incentives, and increased operational costs for some technologies

Not all communities are well served by a volunteer-led model

Communities/businesses have ideas for other models to expand clean energy

Leveraging relationships with trusted community partners is key to campaign success

EMPOWER PROGRAM GOALS & OPPORTUNITIES:

Provide access to the benefits of clean energy for previously underserved populations in Massachusetts.

And we hope to achieve this through investing directly in communities and community-based organizations and crowdsource solutions for program models or projects.

We believe that many of the solutions to clean energy access lie within the communities themselves

EMPOWER PROGRAM GOALS & OPPORTUNITIES:

Participant Workshops	2023 workshops: Aug 30 & Sept 6 2024 workshop(s): TBD
Innovation and Capacity Building Grants	\$5,000-\$25,000* (in some cases up to \$50,000)
Implementation Grants	\$50,000-\$150,000* (in some cases up to \$300,000)

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN EACH GRANT?

- **Innovation & Capacity Building Grant**

- This is a new and innovative idea for a program model or project that **you are exploring that still needs discovery, refinement, etc.** This funding opportunity is meant to provide “seed” funding to build toward future program models or projects, either with future EmPower Implementation Grant funding rounds or through other funding sources.

- **Implementation Grant**

- This is a program model or project that is relatively complete in terms of design, partners, etc., **and is ready to go**, but you need funding to make it happen.
- Note: if you do need to do some initial outreach for example, this could be considered capacity building, but would be built into your implementation grant application.

- **Reminders:**

- One applicant could apply for both grants for two separate ideas. Applicants cannot apply to both grants with the same idea.
- Previous awardees are eligible for new funding for new idea or follow-on funding for a previously awarded idea.

ACCESS TO THE BENEFITS OF CLEAN ENERGY

- MassCEC is taking a different approach to defining clean energy to go beyond direct installations on people's homes, although that kind of campaign could be funded under EmPower.
- Typical benefits of clean energy— cost savings (short and long term), clean air, health
- Non-traditional examples of clean energy benefits:
 - Insulation is important for energy efficiency, but also enhances quality of life by offering enhanced soundproofing
 - Well-designed, sustainable lighting enhances a neighborhood
 - Heat pumps for cooling

WHO ARE WE STRIVING TO INCREASE ACCESS FOR?

For the purposes of the program, population “Priority Groups” are defined as:

- Environmental Justice Populations (as defined by EEA Policy)
- Renters
- Communities disproportionately impacted by environmental hazards, such as air quality or heat

Notes:

- *Potential applicants may reach out to MassCEC if they have any question about the eligibility of their target community or would like to propose another Priority Group for consideration*

TARGET APPLICANTS

- **You!**
- **Anyone and everyone looking to increase equitable access to clean energy!**
- Especially community-based organizations with demonstrated history working with priority populations
- Also eligible:
 - Non-profits, individuals
 - Municipalities including MLP communities*
 - For-profit organizations such as clean energy installers, financial institutions*

*Must partner with a community-based organization to be eligible to apply

DO I NEED A PARTNER?

- **If you can say that you aren't a group with a demonstrated history of working with a priority population, it is likely that you need a community-based organization (CBO) partner.**
- **While non-profits and individuals are eligible without a partner, you should still consider a partner if the statement above applies to you**
- **Could a CBO or someone with strong history with a priority group be for-profit? This could be possible. Contact us to discuss.**
- **Bottom line – contact us to highlight your specific situation and we'll advise.**

ELIGIBLE USES OF FUNDING: INNOVATION & CAPACITY BUILDING GRANT

- Funds can be used for (but may not be limited to): staff time devoted to program concept development or refinement; technical studies needed to move projects forward; costs for a grant-writer, accountant, lawyer, or other professional services; and costs associated with ongoing community engagement
- Can be used towards future clean energy grants not through MassCEC, such as Community First Partnership Program, EPA or DOE Grants, etc.
- Funds should be used within two years and funds are *designed to be used relatively quickly*

ACTUAL EXAMPLES



Browning the Green Space

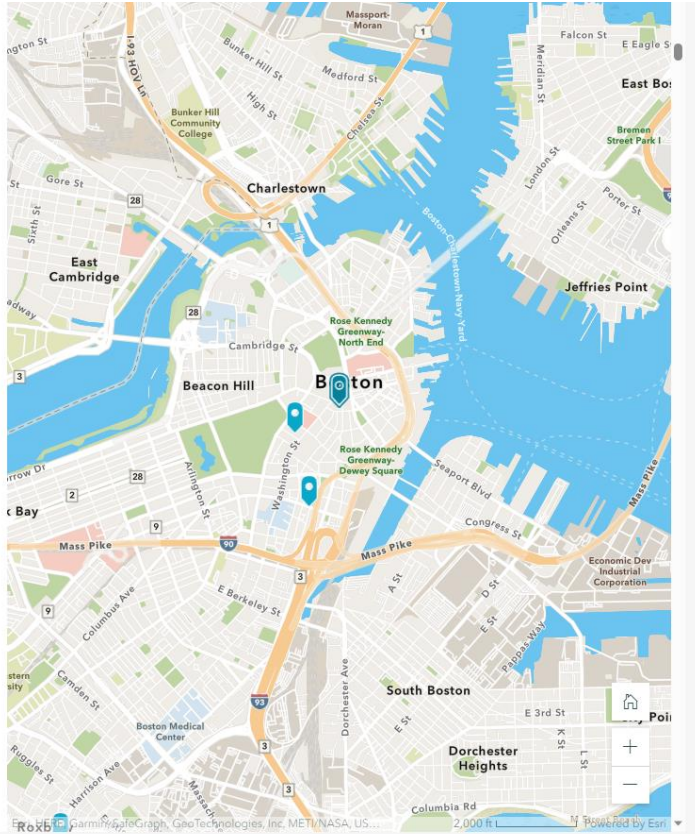
BGS & BFIT Student Outreach Initiative

Application Excerpt

Partners: Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology (BFIT)

Project location: Boston

Project description: Student outreach and recruitment efforts, training and professional development, and student stipends for BFIT's new (launched in fall 2022) [Renewable Energy Technology Associate's Degree](#) program. The Project objective is to develop partnerships essential to building and maintaining career pathways that engage students in clean energy topics and demonstrate high-paying career opportunities.



Codman Square Neighborhood Development Corporation (CSNDC)

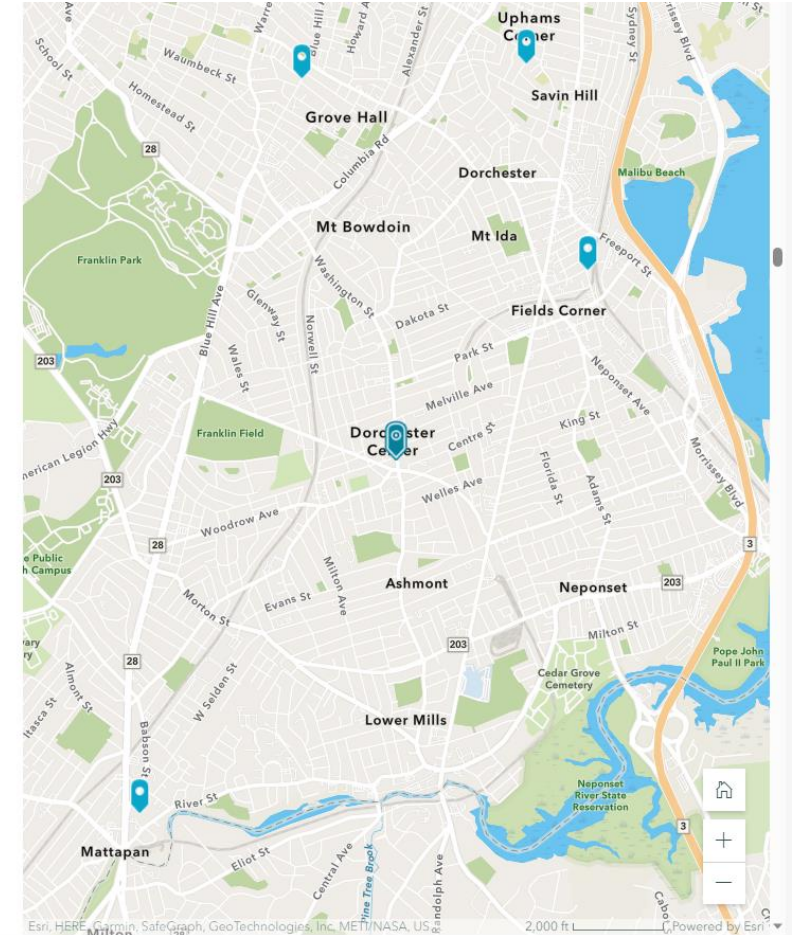
CSNDC Energy Ambassador Program: West of Washington Coalition Expansion Project

Application Excerpt

Partners: West of Washington (WOW) Coalition

Project location: South Dorchester

Project description: CSNDC will expand its innovative Energy Ambassador program with its new grassroots partner, WOW Coalition, an organization that serves the WOW neighborhood of Dorchester. The Project objective is to build organizational capacity for WOW, and to deepen advocacy work around energy efficiency activities and reach a broader population in target communities of Dorchester to result in greater environmental impact and benefit to residents.



ELIGIBLE USES OF FUNDING — IMPLEMENTATION GRANT

- Applications must present clear metrics for goals and outcomes, these are program models or projects that are ready for implementation (though elements like community outreach if built into program need not be completed prior)
- 25% cap on capital costs such as clean energy installation costs
- Funds should be used within three years

ACTUAL EXAMPLES



LISC BOSTON

Local Initiatives Support Coalition (LISC)

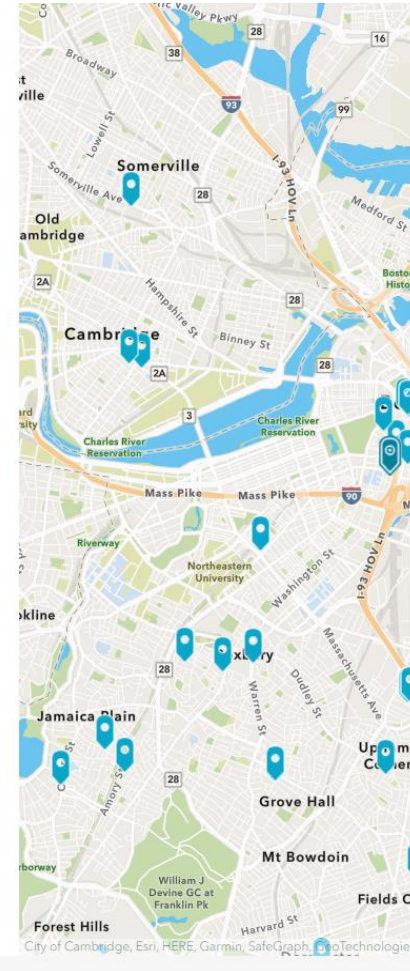
Solar Technical Assistance Retrofit (STAR) Program: Round 3

[Application Excerpt](#)

Partners: Massachusetts Associations of Community Development Corporations (MACDC), Resonant Energy

Project location: Massachusetts

Project description: Project team will launch and enhance the third phase of the Solar Technical Assistance Retrofit (STAR) Program, a program designed to remove barriers and dramatically increase the adoption of solar PV for affordable housing developments. The Program offers mini-grants for staff time and in-kind technical assistance to affordable housing organizations to conduct solar PV feasibility studies on their portfolios and develop pathways towards solar PV installation. STAR III will also re-evaluate past participants in light of new federal Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) Incentives and seek legal services to navigate the affordable housing provider and lender approval process.



ACTUAL EXAMPLES



Cooler Communities

Community Outreach and Carbon Savings Program

Application Excerpt

Fiscal Agent: Northeast Sustainable Energy Association (NESEA)

Project Location: Springfield + Pittsfield

Cooler Communities

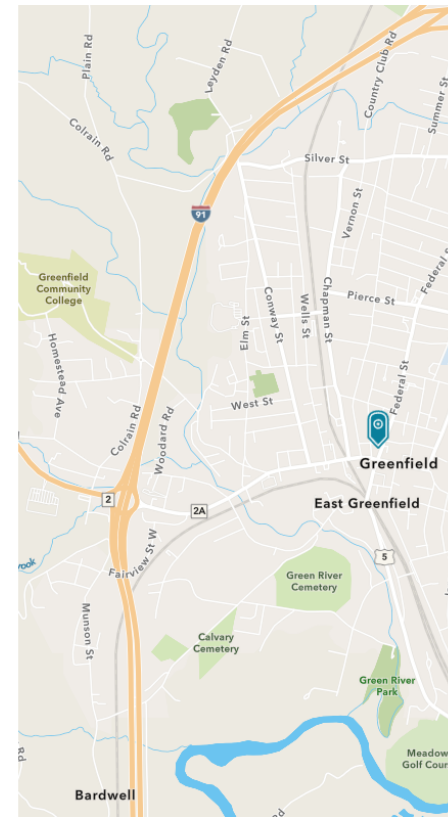
Community Outreach and Carbon Savings Program

Application Excerpt

Fiscal Agent: Northeast Sustainable Energy Association (NESEA)

Project Location: Springfield + Pittsfield

Project Description: The project will support the second year of Cooler Communities' three-year commitment to their participation in the Mass Save Community First Program, including funding their Energy Advocates in Pittsfield and Springfield who will perform community outreach to increase access to Mass Save offerings including energy efficiency and heat pumps.



IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS: UPDATES

Starting in FY24, MassCEC has identified two types of program models that have been successful in previous rounds of EmPower Massachusetts that MassCEC would like to see refined and amplified:

- **Energy Coach/Ambassador Track:** Community clean energy outreach, education, and adoption campaigns that use trusted individuals as coaches or ambassadors; and
- **Technical Assistance Provider Track:** Replicable technical assistance models that can serve several Community-Based Organizations (as defined in Section 6) by adopting a standardized approach or framework for providing technical assistance such as assessments, feasibility studies, legal support, grant writing, financial or business analysis/planning, etc.

ENERGY COACH/AMBASSADOR MODEL: TRACK GUIDELINES

- Program must operate for two years.
- Energy Coaches must be a representative of the Priority Group served or must have at least 2 years of successful experience working with Priority Group populations.
- Energy Ambassadors must be a member of the Priority Group served.

ENERGY COACH/AMBASSADOR MODEL: TRACK GUIDELINES

- Program proposal and design must reasonably demonstrate that Energy Coaches or Ambassadors are being appropriately compensated for their time and providing a pathway to grow professionally. To demonstrate appropriate compensation, Applicants should consider:
 - Offering Energy Coaches a full-time position;
 - Offering Energy Coaches an opportunity for career development and growth within the Applicant's organization or with other organizations;
 - Providing MassCEC an explanation of how the compensation levels were determined and why the Applicant believes that they are appropriate;
 - Offering Energy Coaches benefits and other reasonable compensation (see, e.g., MIT's Living Wage Calculator for calculating a living wage); or
 - Offering Energy Ambassadors reasonable compensation for their work including training time and outreach planning and conversations (see, e.g., MIT's Living Wage Calculator for calculating a living wage).

ENERGY COACH/AMBASSADOR MODEL: TRACK GUIDELINES

- Demonstration that Energy Coaches or Ambassadors will receive appropriate training. MassCEC will prioritize applications where the Energy Coaches or Ambassadors will receive training across a comprehensive suite of clean energy solutions.
 - Applicant will agree to share a detailed program plan to MassCEC prior to launching.
 - Campaigns may support any clean energy solution (as defined in Section 3). MassCEC will prioritize applications that focus on a comprehensive suite of clean energy solutions. The focus of the campaign may also expand over the duration of the campaign.
 - Co-participation in Mass Save's Community First Partnership is an eligible approach. MassCEC will prioritize applications that are promoting additional clean energy solutions in addition to the Mass Save supported solutions. The focus of the campaign may also expand over the duration of the campaign.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDER: TRACK GUIDELINES

- Technical Assistance must be offered to Community-Based Organizations, individual members of Priority Groups, Federally Recognized or State Acknowledged Tribes, and/or Municipalities;
- Technical assistance must aim to support multiple recipients, as defined above, with a suggested range of 5-15+ recipients;
- If appropriate, the technical assistance could be offered over a period of two to three years - the Applicant does not need to have the capacity to provide technical assistance to the entire group of recipients at once;
- Technical assistance should provide clear pathways (including an implementation strategy) towards accessing clean energy or reducing energy burden;

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDER: TRACK GUIDELINES

- As applicable, the Lead Applicant, as defined below, should have expertise in and/or include partners covering the following roles:
 - Clean energy technology and/or engineering expertise
 - Project or program management expertise
 - Demonstrated history of working with the targeted Priority Group/s
 - Implementation expertise (e.g., clean energy installer, partner with expertise in procurement processes)
- Must offer meaningful stipends to participants receiving the technical assistance for their participation, including time spent submitting data, attending meetings, etc.

EMPOWER: RESULTS TO DATE

- **FY22 - 32 awards made!**
- **FY23 – 51 awards made!**
- **Snapshot Awardee results to date:**
 - Solar PV: systems installed, contracted for, feasibility studies completed, potential site found for a community owned shared-solar system
 - Events, stakeholder conversations, team meetings
 - Program launches, including co-participation in MassSave Community First
 - Many new hires
- **Hosted 3-4 “cohort” calls for awardees**
- **5+ blogs including several project spotlights, more to come**



Our website for a story map which shares a full list of awardees, partners, project descriptions and even application excerpts.

EMPOWER AFTER TWO FUNDING CYCLES: SOME LESSONS LEARNED TO DATE

- **Things we've learned from Awardees are, but are certainly not limited to:**
 - When hiring, allot more time and budget
 - Networking and collaboration is important
 - Partnerships are essential, and ensure your plan dedicates time and resources to coordination of multiple partners
 - CBO's especially still need more support and bandwidth, more planning grants and support approaches might be needed
 - All organizations: need for more available education and training
- **Things for applicants to consider/prepare for and best practices:**
 - If you are going to do a low-income energy efficiency related outreach campaign, reach out to MassSave Program Administrators and the CAP Agencies:
 - Brian Beote bbeote@actioninc.org

RELATED PROGRAMMING FROM MASSCEC

- **MassCEC Equity Workforce Development Programming** <https://www.masscec.com/workforce/workforce-equity-programs>
 - Planning Grants
 - MWBE grants
- **MassCEC Internship program is open** <https://www.masscec.com/clean-energy-internships-students>
 - Opportunities for Students, Employers, Vocational Schools
- **Community Engagement Grants** <https://www.masscec.com/program/request-proposals-community-engagement-planning-grants>
 - The Community Engagement Planning Grants will provide direct support to community-based organizations, municipalities, or other entities that represent the community interest (“Communities”) to support meaningful community input in the development and deployment of solar energy projects owned by electric and gas distribution companies (“EDCs”).

2023 TIMELINE

Release Program Opportunity	August 10, 2023
Innovation and Capacity Building Application Deadline/Approach	Accepting applications on a rolling basis through April 4, 2024
Implementation Application Deadline/Approach	Deadline 1: October 18, 2023 Deadline 2: April 4, 2024
EmPower Workshops	2 initial workshops*: August 30, 2022 - 12:00-1:30pm September 6, 2022 – 5:30-7:00pm

*MassCEC intends to host additional workshops ahead of the Spring deadline

2023-4 TIMELINE — ONE-TIME APPLICATION REVIEW!

Deadline 1: October 18, 2023	<i>The review deadline for Round 1 Optional Pre-Application Review is <u>September 20, 20223</u></i> <i>Feedback will be returned by <u>October 4, 2023</u></i>
Deadline 2: April 4, 2024	<i>The review deadline for Round 2 Optional Pre-Application Review is <u>March 6, 2023</u></i> <i>Feedback will be returned by <u>March 20, 2023</u></i>

*These specific dates are for the implementation deadlines. Early review also available for Innovation & Capacity Building. Expect a 2-3 week turnaround.

UPCOMING OFFICE HOURS

- **Monday, September 18th, 2-3pm ([Registration link](#))**
- **Tuesday, September 19th, 2-3pm ([Registration link](#))**
- **Monday, September 25th, 2-3pm ([Registration link](#))**
- **Tuesday, September 26th, 2-3pm ([Registration link](#))**

SUPPORT

One-time
application
review

One on
one
feedback
sessions

Office
hours

**Ask
questions.**

Learn.

Clean
Energy
Education

Informational
videos

Facilitated
introductions

Slack
channel

**Network, meet
potential
partners!**

GROUP DISCUSSION PITCH SESSION— UP TO 45 MINUTES

Name and Organization (if applicable)

Pitch your potential EmPower Idea!

And/or answer one of the following questions:

- What do you see as the major clean energy/energy burden concerns and opportunities?
- What programs have you seen or are you aware of, that MassCEC or the broader group should be made aware of?
- What promising solutions do you see, or which clean energy solutions or programs do you think your community/priority group may most benefit from?
- What solutions may offer benefits that are less obvious, such as using energy efficiency to improve quality of life through reducing noise pollution?
- What is one thing you would like to have to move your work on energy access forward? An idea, partner, strategy, research/data, funding...

FINAL Q&A, WRAP UP & THANK YOU FOR JOINING!

For the remainder of time we're going open it up for questions, feedback, suggestions. Ahead of that we'll share the wrap up information:

What to expect next & reminders:

- We'll send notes from the session
- We'll be scheduling more open office hours
- Join the [conversation on slack!](#)
- Visit the website: www.masscec.com/program-empower-Massachusetts
- Reach out to us with questions empower@masscec.com
- **Final poll question:** How do you stay informed about developments in the clean energy?

THANK YOU!

Website:

www.masscec.com/program/empower-massachusetts

Email: empower@masscec.com

Upcoming office hours

- **Monday, September 18th, 2-3pm ([Registration link](#))**
- **Tuesday, September 19th, 2-3pm ([Registration link](#))**
- **Monday, September 25th, 2-3pm ([Registration link](#))**
- **Tuesday, September 26th, 2-3pm ([Registration link](#))**

QUESTIONS?



EmPower Massachusetts

Learn more & apply: www.masscec.com/program/empower-massachusetts



Seeking funding
to plan for or implement
clean energy solutions to empower
an underserved community?

**Apply to an
EmPower RFP**