

Community Energy Plan Grant Program

Community Energy Plan Implementation Grant Program

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Municipal Vendor ID?

The Municipal Vendor ID is the township's NJStart Vendor number or the Employer Identification Number (EIN) (also known as a Federal Tax Identification Number).

Municipal Resolution Supporting Application Timing

If the municipal resolution won't be fully executed until after the application closing date, the applicant must indicate the date of the public meeting in the email submission with the application and submit the resolution within 60 days.

When will the CEPG PY3 and CEPI PY1 awardees be announced?

CEPG PY3 and CEPI PY1 awardees will be announced towards the end of July 2024. BPU will be mailing letters to the mayors and concerned staff.

What are the project work periods for CEPG and CEPI grant projects?

The tentative project work periods for CEPG (12 months) and CEPI (24 months) are as follows:

- CEPG Project Start/End Date: 10/1/24 - 10/1/25 (12-month project work period)
- CEPI Project Start/End Date: 10/1/24 - 10/1/26 (24-month project work period)

Do the municipalities that have submitted their completed and adopted CEPs to BPU resubmit the CEP with the CEPI application?

Yes, it is preferred that the CEP and supporting resolution be resubmitted with the CEPI application.

Does the Build America Buy America Act apply to CEPI program?

Yes, the Build America Buy America Act (BABA) applies to the CEPI grant program. The CEPI project types most likely to qualify for BABA requirements include EV charging infrastructure and solar panels.

What is the equivalent plan approval process?

Equivalent plans can first be sent to Sustainable Jersey who will then forward them to Board staff with a recommendation for BPU to accept or reject. Plans can also be submitted at the time of application if they are not shared with Sustainable Jersey ahead of the deadline.

How should applicants handle large file sharing?

Applicants should submit documentation via zipped files or send multiple emails with email nomenclature of "(Town) CEPI Application – Email 1 of 3" (for example).

How should applicants approach multiple project proposals when one is contingent on the other? Applicants should indicate if one project proposal is contingent upon approval of another or consider combining them into one project.

Should applicants group costs together for the purchase of duplicate items?

Partial awards can be made for grouped costs.

When is a project considered complete? Are extensions available if needed?

Projects cannot be considered complete on BPU's end until all deliverables are in hand and all final reporting has been submitted. Being said, project extensions may be considered upon submission of justification, on a case-by-case basis, and through project agreement modification process, **in advance of the original project end date.**

Can a municipality leverage multiple funding sources to implement a project?

Leveraging multiple funding sources is encouraged as allowed by other programs; however, all non-competitive funding through federal, state (such as Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant funding ("EECBG" Formula Funding)), or public utility sources or must be pursued before an application is submitted for CEPI funding. CEPI funds must only be used as a supplement to, and not in place of, non-competitive funding opportunities.

If a municipality is receiving EECBG formula funds, can they apply for CEPI funding?

If an applicant can submit written assurances that they have earmarked or otherwise planned use of the non-competitive EECBG funding, and that they have exhausted all other incentive or otherwise non-competitive funding sources, they are eligible for up to \$250,000 in funding to support projects in their Community Energy Plan or equivalent plan, as well as funding above \$250,000, if available, for one (1) additional project that is not included in their Community Energy Plan or equivalent plan.

Can municipal CEPI projects be located on privately owned sites?

Municipally led projects that are located on private property must have a public benefit (EV Car Share, Community Solar, etc.). In addition, project sites and/or funded equipment should have assurances of permanence by way of easement/MOU/agreement between the private entity and the local government. **If project benefits are exclusive to the private entity and/or no documented agreement exists between the local government and private entity to secure grant investments and ensure compliance with all federal regulations, then the project is ineligible.**

Can CEPI funds be used for private sector fleet electrification?

Private sector fleet electrification is an ineligible cost for CEPI. Private entities should be able to receive federal tax credits like the Commercial Clean Vehicle Credit for EV purchases.

Is there a maximum funding per vehicle or EV charger?

There is no per unit cost ceiling for eligible expenses; however, the maximum grant amount is \$250,000.

What are the operational requirements for vehicles or chargers acquired through the program? Do they have to be operated for a minimum number of years?

Grantees must comply with 2 CFR 200.313 for use, management, and disposition of all federally funded equipment purchases: <https://www.ecfr.gov/current/title-2/section-200.313>

Must a vehicle/charger be purchased after the grant is awarded?

No purchases made prior to an official notice to proceed (NTP) will be eligible for reimbursement using grant funds. The NTP will come once the grant agreement is fully executed.