

Illinois CEJA Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program Manual

Contents

Key Contacts 5

CEJA Overview 6

Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity ("DCEO") 8

Office of Entrepreneurship, Innovation, and Technology ("EIT") 8

DCEO CEJA Programs Overview 9

CEJA Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program Overview 12

Recruitment 14

Participant Eligibility Requirements 14

Participant Selection Process 16

Program Enrollment Agreement 17

Participant Intake Forms 23

Funding Information 25

Staffing Requirements 27

Curriculum Requirements 31

Mentorship Requirements 34

Program Graduation 36

Operational Grants Process 37

Illinois Finance Authority Loan Opportunity 42

Marketing Requirements 42

Facilities Requirements 44

Advisory Board 44

Out of Office Procedures 46

Confidentiality and Information Security 47

Budget Information 48

Property Control 51

Procurement Requirements 53

Contractor/Consultant Requirements 53

Funding Extensions 56

Travel Guidelines 57

Reporting 57
WorkNet 67
Monthly Narrative Guidance 68
Time and Effort Forms Reporting Guidance 69
Fiscal and Programmatic Monitoring 70
Referrals 71
Audit Requirements and Reporting Guidance 72
File Retention 76
Risk Mitigation 76
General Information 78
Grant Extensions 78
Offboarding Plan 79
Forms to Be Completed 79
Definitions 80
Acronyms 83
APPENDIX A: Branding & Communications 84
APPENDIX C: Project Dashboard Definitions 93
APPENDIX D: Resources 100
APPENDIX F: Document Change Log 130

Key Contacts

Noah Bond

CEJA Small Business Manager

Noah.Bond@illinois.gov

Alex Rounds

CEJA Primes Program Administrator
Alex.Rounds@Illinois.gov

Jeremy Nunes

CEJA Network Coordinator

Jeremy.R.Nunes@illinois.gov

General Email Inbox

ceo.ceja.inc-accel@illinois.gov

CEJA Overview

Illinois is leading the Midwest with bold and comprehensive legislation to combat the climate crisis and build a sustainable, inclusive economy. The Climate and Equitable Jobs Act ("CEJA"), signed into law by Governor Pritzker on September 15, 2021, commits the state to:

- Achieving 100% carbon-free power by 2045
- Reaching 50% renewable energy by 2040
- Electrifying the transportation sector
- Reducing energy use through enhanced efficiency

Equity-Driven Investments

To meet these ambitious goals equitably, CEJA invests in:

- Workforce development
- Capacity-building for clean energy businesses and non-profits

CEJA programs will help create a diverse pipeline of workers prepared for careers in construction, the building trades, and clean energy job opportunities. At the heart of this effort are the CEJA Contractor Incubator and Accelerator Programs, designed to support the long-term success of contractors from historically underserved communities.

Program Objectives

These programs aim to:

- Create and scale a diverse ecosystem of clean energy contractors
- Equip small businesses to leverage state and federal investments in:
    - Solar
    - Wind
    - Energy efficiency
    - Electrification
    - Electric Vehicle Infrastructure

    - Other decarbonization efforts
- Support minority, women, and veteran-owned businesses

By doing so, CEJA ensures that the economic benefits of the energy transition are shared equitably across Illinois.

Market Demand & Workforce Gaps

According to the Illinois Department of Employment Security and the U.S. Department of Energy:

- 126,000+ clean energy jobs existed in Illinois as of 2022
- Jobs are projected to grow 6–8% annually
- Rising demand exists for:
    - Solar installers
    - Energy efficiency specialists
    - Electrification professionals
- 50% of employers report hiring difficulties, particularly among small and minority-owned firms

Prioritizing Equity

Historically, Illinois' workforce and business development programs have not reached all communities equally. CEJA's Contractor Programs seek to reverse this trend by prioritizing:

- Justice-impacted individuals
- People of color
- Residents of equity investment eligible communities

Key Outcomes

The Incubator and Accelerator Programs will:

- Increase access to clean energy contracting opportunities
- Strengthen community-based economic development
- Empower small businesses to build intergenerational wealth

- Ensure lasting benefits from clean energy investments across Illinois

A National Model

CEJA provides Illinois with the flexibility and authority to lead with equity-first, state-driven solutions—unburdened by many federal constraints.

With the Contractor Incubator and Accelerator Programs, Illinois is setting a national example for advancing equity in the clean energy economy.

Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity ("DCEO")

The mission of the **Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity ("DCEO")** is to create equitable economic opportunities across the State of Illinois. By attracting and supporting major job creators, investing in communities, strengthening Illinois' world-class workforce, fostering innovation, and ushering in the new clean energy economy, DCEO works to fortify Illinois' reputation as a global economic powerhouse while ensuring Illinois is the best state to live, work, and do business. The CEJA legislation charged DCEO with administering the CEJA Programs.

Office of Entrepreneurship, Innovation, and Technology ("EIT")

The CEJA Contractor Development Programs are administered by DCEO's **Office of Entrepreneurship, Innovation, and Technology ("EIT")**. This Office is responsible for providing concierge services, information, and technical support. EIT programs include:

- **Small Business Development Centers ("SBDC")** provide individual business advice and management assistance, business planning and financial analysis consulting, access to business capital, market research assistance, development of business growth strategies, and assistance with expanding into new markets at no cost to the clients.
- The **SBDC International Trade Centers** provides advice and resources for existing and new-to-export companies, access to foreign market information, documentation assistance, automated trade leads, and linkages with trade representatives.
- **APEX Accelerators** provide individual assistance and advice about doing business with government.
- **Small Business Environmental Assistance Program** provides confidential technical assistance with environmental regulations to aid small businesses in understanding and meeting their compliance requirements.
- **Regulatory Flexibility Program** works with the small business community to determine the impact of new rules on small entities and to consider alternatives to minimize that impact.

Note: To learn more about EIT, visit their website at
https://dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/entrepreneurshipinnovationtechnology.html

DCEO CEJA Programs Overview

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity ("DCEO") plays a central role in implementing several cornerstone programs under the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act ("CEJA")—a landmark state policy focused on enabling a just transition to a clean energy economy.

DCEO CEJA Mission

To create an equitable clean energy future for Illinois.

DCEO CEJA Vision

A carbon neutral Illinois by 2050 where clean energy powers strong communities, creating good paying, skilled jobs, and protects the health of people and the planet for generations to come.

Program Purpose

These CEJA programs are designed to:

- Foster economic equity
- Expand access to clean energy careers
- Build community resilience through targeted investments

The emphasis is on historically underserved communities, ensuring that the energy transition is inclusive and just.

Your Role as a Grantee

As a CEJA grantee, you are part of a statewide effort to advance:

- Climate justice
- Workforce innovation
- Clean energy business creation and expansion

Your participation directly supports Illinois' mission to embed equity and opportunity into the clean energy economy.

What Follows

Below is a high-level summary of the CEJA programs administered by DCEO.

1. Clean Energy Contractor Incubator Program

The Clean Energy Contractor Incubator Program supports organizations that provide wraparound services to small and emerging clean energy businesses and entrepreneurs. Each incubator acts as a launchpad, offering:

- Training
- Access to mentorship
- Access to capital
- Licensing assistance
- Operational support

This program focuses on clean energy contractors in historically underserved areas facing environmental, economic, and social inequities, prioritized through Environmental Justice ("EJ") and Restore, Reinvest, Renew ("R3") initiatives.

More Info

2. Clean Energy Contractor Accelerator Program *(20 ILCS 730/5-55)*

The Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program is a structured five-year program that supports established contractors in expanding capacity to serve as prime contractors. Services include:

- Mentorship
- Operational grants
- Business coaching
- Certification assistance
- Procurement support

More Info

3. Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program *(20 ILCS 730/5-20)*

This program funds 14 regional hubs operated by community-based organizations. Hubs provide:

- Clean energy training
- Career counseling
- Job placement services
- Outreach to historically marginalized communities, including:
    - Returning residents

- Low-income individuals
- Youth
- Environmental justice area residents

Wraparound support includes case management and social services.
More Info

4. Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program *(20 ILCS 730/5-50)*

Provides pre-release and post-release job training for incarcerated individuals within 36 months of release. Delivered in partnership with correctional facilities and Community Based Organizations ("CBO"), training prepares participants for careers in:

- Solar
- Energy efficiency
- Electric vehicle infrastructure
- Related industries

The program helps ensure successful reentry and reduces recidivism by building clear career pathways.
More Info

5. Energy Transition Barrier Reduction Program

This program eliminates non-instructional barriers to participation in clean energy training programs. Supports may include:

- Transportation
- Childcare
- Work equipment
- Digital access
- Certification or licensing fees

These services are critical for ensuring equitable access to clean energy opportunities.

6. Energy Transition Navigator Program *(20 ILCS 730/5-35)*

Community-based organizations serve as Energy Transition Navigators, responsible for:

- Outreach and education
- Recruitment

- Guiding individuals to the appropriate CEJA workforce programs and job placements

They are the connective tissue between residents and the CEJA program infrastructure.

7. Illinois Climate Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program *(20 ILCS 730/5-40)*

Trains equity-eligible individuals for entry into union-affiliated apprenticeship programs in clean energy construction and building trades.
More Info

8. Jobs and Environmental Justice Grant Program *(20 ILCS 730/5-60)*

Provides upfront capital to:

- Develop clean energy projects
- Support job creation
- Fund community-owned renewable energy projects (e.g., community solar)

The program promotes economic opportunity and community ownership in historically disadvantaged areas.

CEJA Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program Overview

The Illinois Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program, authorized under 20 ILCS 730/5-55 and funded by CEJA, supports the growth of contractor businesses and nonprofits that serve or operate within the clean energy sector. These entities are typically located in and owned by individuals from communities impacted by economic and environmental hardship.

Targeted Communities

The CEJA Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program is organized into three regions: Northern, Central, and Southern. Please see the county listing below and Figure 1 for additional details.

Northern – Cook, DuPage, Kane, Lake, McHenry, Will

Central – Boone, Bureau, Carroll, Champaign, Dekalb, DeWitt, Douglas, Edgar, Ford, Fulton, Grundy, Henderson, Henry, Iroquois, Jo Daviess, Kankakee, Kendall, Knox, Lasalle, Lee, Livingston, Marshall, McDonough, McLean, Mercer, Ogle, Peoria, Piatt, Putnam, Rock Island, Stark, Stephenson, Tazewell, Vermillion, Warren, Whiteside, Winnebago, Woodford.

Southern – Adams, Alexander, Bond, Brown, Calhoun, Cass, Christian, Clark, Clay, Clinton, Coles, Crawford, Cumberland, Edwards, Effingham, Fayette, Franklin, Gallatin, Greene, Hamilton, Hancock, Hardin, Jackson, Jasper, Jefferson, Jersey, Johnson, Lawrence, Logan, Macon, Macoupin, Madison,

Marion, Mason, Massac, Menard, Monroe, Montgomery, Morgan, Moultrie, Perry, Pike, Pope, Pulaski, Randolph, Richland, Saline, Sangamon, Schuyler, Scott, Shelby, St. Clair, Union, Wabash, Washington, Wayne, White, Williamson.

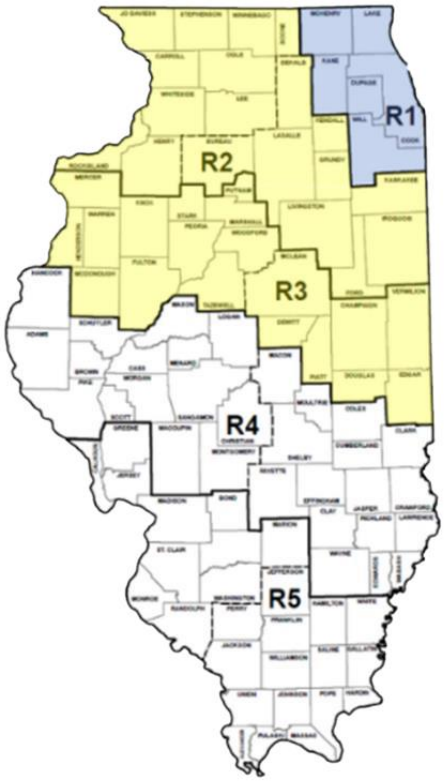


Figure 1. CEJA Map

https://r3.illinois.gov/eligibility**CEJA Map**

The CEJA Illinois Map is an interactive map for CEJA grantees and other organizations seeking to grow the clean energy workforce in Illinois. This interactive map showcases clean energy workforce programs, employers, target communities, training, and investments.

The map can be used to:

- Identify equity eligible investment communities (the target communities for the CEJA workforce programs)
- Connect to clean energy education and training programs
- Identify clean energy employers
- Identify clean energy investments and opportunities

If you identify any errors in the CEJA map while using, contact your Network Coordinator to have it resolved.

Equity Focus

The program is rooted in equity, with an explicit goal of:

- Addressing disparities based on race, gender, and geography
- Overcoming barriers to entry (lack of training, exclusion from networks, hostile environments)
- Promoting a culture of:
    - Diversity
    - Inclusion
    - Accessibility
    - Belonging

By going beyond "equal treatment" to offer individualized support, the program:

- Levels the playing field
- Improves contractor outcomes
- Builds a more inclusive and resilient clean energy workforce

Recruitment

Accelerators are permitted to assist contractors with completing the initial application to become participants in the program, ensuring that applicants have the guidance needed to successfully navigate the process. In addition, Accelerators are encouraged to actively collaborate with CEJA Energy Transition Navigators operating within their respective regions to strengthen outreach and recruitment efforts, broaden awareness of the program, and ensure that eligible contractors are effectively connected to available resources.

Participant Eligibility Requirements

In each **Hub Site**, a cohort of 5 participant contractors every 18 months using selection criteria developed by the Department. The Primes Program Leads will assist the Department in selecting contractors that best meet the following criteria:

- Has the applicant earned at least $5,000 in gross revenue in the previous calendar year?

- Does the applicant have at least 2 years of experience working in the clean energy or related field?
- Does the applicant demonstrate a substantial commitment to investing in and partnering with individuals and institutions in Equity Investment Eligible Communities?
- Has the business or any of its principals, ever been debarred, suspended, proposed for debarment, declared ineligible, or voluntarily excluded from participating in any federal, state, or local government contracts or programs?
- Prior involvement in the Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program, Illinois Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program, Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program, Clean Energy Contractor Incubator Program.
- Resides in an Restore, Reinvest, Renew (R3), Environmental justice (EJ) community, or both.

Additional criteria developed by the Department will include:

1. **Business Viability and Operational Capacity**
   The business's ability to demonstrate a stable and operational business including:
   - Registered business entity
   - Insurance
   - Licenses
   - Active revenue streams
   - Other information the applicant would like to share as support for their application.
2. **Quality of Past Projects**
   Evidence of prior work that meets/exceeds industry standards including:
   - Photos
   - Client Testimonials
   - Safety Record
   - Project Specs
3. **Maturity of Strategic Growth Plan**
   Detailed growth plan including:
   - Staffing
   - Service Area Expansion
   - Certifications
   - Financing
   - Marketing
4. **Future Revenue Potential**
   Demonstrates pipeline of:
   - Upcoming projects
   - Client acquisition strategy
   - Potential for scaling

5. **Job Creation and Wage Quality**
   Demonstrates a plan to:
   - Hire and retain local staff
   - Evidence of strong wage and benefit packages
   - Evidence of past or future employment impact
6. **Contractor Capacity**
   Demonstrates ability to manage:
   - Project timelines
   - Budgeting
   - Subcontractor coordination
   - Team structure
7. **Commitment to Advancing Equity**
   Demonstrates long-term, intentional commitment to equity through business practices including:
   - Inclusive hiring
   - Partnerships
   - Outreach strategies
8. **Community Wealth Building**
   Business model that centers:
   - Local hiring
   - Subcontracting within underserved communities
   - Other ideas that promote economic opportunity
9. **Willingness to Assume Risk**
   Demonstrates willingness to take calculated business and financial risks to support growth:
   - Applying for loans
   - Leveraging Capital
   - Expanding into new markets
10. **Participant Readiness and Commitment to the Program**
    Demonstrates a strong commitment to fully participating in the Accelerator:
    - Attending regular trainings
    - Engaging in coaching and mentorships
    - Meeting Milestones

The program shall cap contractors in the energy efficiency sector at 50% of available cohort spots as well as 50% of the available grants and loans.

Participant Selection Process

The Department will develop additional scoring criteria and a formal selection process for contractors looking to in this program. Each hub will receive a form created by the Department, which participant

contractors will use to submit their applications. The form will allow applicants to upload required documents and respond to short-answer questions.

Each application must be reviewed and scored using the Department-approved scoresheet by a minimum of three individuals, including at least one representative from the Department. Reviewers will select applicants who best demonstrate the ability to meet all program requirements.

All reviewers must complete and submit a Department-approved conflict of interest form prior to scoring. Once reviews are complete, the reviewers will convene to discuss the applications and select up to five participants per cohort.

The Accelerator shall maintain a local resource listing and provide referrals to other programs, services or opportunities for applicants not selected for the program, ensuring all applicants have access to guidance and support to advance their business goals.

Program Enrollment Agreement

The following agreement language is still under review, and a formal application will be disseminated to Prime Contractor Accelerators once it is finalized. Accelerators may amend current participant agreements to include the following language.

This Participant Agreement ("Agreement") is entered into between the CEJA Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator at [Host Organization Name] and the undersigned participant ("Participant") for participation in the CEJA Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program ("Program"). By signing this Agreement, the Participant agrees to the following terms and conditions:

1. **Program Participation Requirements**
   The Participant agrees to:
   - Attend at least 80% of all assigned trainings;
   - Meet with an assigned advisor at least once per month;
   - Engage with an assigned mentor as part of the Program;
   - Collaborate with the Accelerator to develop and report trackable metrics based on the Participant's operational grant application, which may include jobs created, projects completed, contracts secured, revenue generated, energy savings achieved, number of workers trained or certified, customer satisfaction, and community engagement (if applicable);
   - Report milestones and significant achievements during their time in the Program including but not limited to: jobs created, contracts secured, debt and non-debt financing secured; and

- Report on the following required metrics for the statutory ten (10) years following admittance into the Program:

  - Adjustable Block Program (Illinois Shines)
    - Are you an approved vendor?
    - Are you an EEC?
    - Number of Illinois Shines Projects Completed (by contractor)
    - Dollar Value of Contract (s)
    - Total kW Capacity Installed
  - Illinois Solar for All
    - Number of Illinois Solar for All Projects completed
    - Dollar value of contract(s)
    - Total kW Capacity Installed
  - Utility Programs
    - Are you an approved vendor of an Illinois-serving utility Company?
      - Nicor
      - Ameren
      - ComEd
      - Peoples
      - North Shore
      - Municipal/Co-Op
      - Other
    - Name of Program
    - Number of Projects completed
    - Total kWh saved/generated
    - Dollar Value of Contract(s)
  - State/Utility Electric Vehicle Programs
    - Are you an approved vendor of a State-run or Utility-run EV program?
    - Name of Program
    - Number of Projects completed
    - Number of Charging Stations installed

        - Charging capacity installed (kW)
        - Dollar value of contract(s)
- DCEO CEJA/FEJA Programs
    - Has hired an alumni of the Clean Jobs Workforce Program
        - How many hires?
        - Names
        - Demographics of those hires
        - Salary Range
        - Length of Service
        - Home Zip Code
        - R3 Residence
        - EJ Residence
        - Hub location
- Has hired an alumni of the Climate Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program
        - How many hires?
        - Names
        - Demographics of those hires
        - Salary Range
        - Length of Service
        - Home Zip Code
        - R3 Residence
        - EJ Residence
        - Hub location
- Has hired an alumni of the Returning Resident Clean Jobs Training Program
        - How many hires?
        - Names
        - Demographics of those hires
        - Salary Range
        - Length of Service
        - Home Zip Code
        - R3 Residence

    - EJ Residence
    - Hub location
- Has hired an alumni of the Solar Training Pipeline Program
    - How many hires?
    - Names
    - Demographics of those hires
    - Salary Range
    - Length of Service
    - Home Zip Code
    - R3 Residence
    - EJ Residence
    - Hub location
- Has hired an alumni of the Multi-Cultural Jobs Program
    - How many hires?
    - Names
    - Demographics of those hires
    - Salary Range
    - Length of Service
    - Home Zip Code
    - R3 Residence
    - EJ Residence
    - Hub location
- Has hired an alumni of the Craft Apprenticeship Program
    - How many hires?
    - Names
    - Demographics of those hires
    - Salary Range
    - Length of Service
    - Home Zip Code
    - R3 Residence
    - EJ Residence

- Hub location

Contracts/Subcontract Information

- Number of contracts secured by participant contractors, alone or in partnership
- Anticipated total dollar value of contracts secured
- Number of bids submitted by participant contractors
- Number of Subcontractors Used
    - Number of MBE/WBE/VBE/DBE
    - Were any subcontractors an alumnus of the Clean Energy Contractor Incubator or Clean Energy Primes Accelerator Program?
    - Were any subcontractors mentors of the Prime?
    - Subcontractor Zip Code
    - Trades/roles performed
        - HVAC
        - Solar Install
        - Roofing
        - Concrete
        - Electrical
        - Plumbing
        - Energy Audits
        - Other
    - Number of jobs created by subcontractors
    - Total dollar value of subcontracted work

Employment Data

- Jobs Created
- Jobs Retained
- Employee Name
    - Racial Demographic
    - Gender
    - Zip Code

- Salary Data (hourly wage)
    - $15–$24
    - $25–$34
    - $35–$44
    - $45–$54
    - $55–$64
    - $65–$70
    - $70+
- Does the Contractor offer benefits?
    - Health
    - Dental
    - Vision
    - Pension
    - 401k (or equivalent)
    - PTO
    - Profit-Sharing
    - Life

- Allow the Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity ("DCEO") and [Host Organization] to publish success stories and publish aggregated data relating to your business or person during your time in the Accelerator program. Photos or videos featuring your picture or your businesses picture will require an additional confidentiality form if applicable.

2. **Program Benefits**
   Upon successful completion of all program requirements, the Participant will:
    - Receive a certificate commemorating graduation from the Program;
    - Be eligible to use this certificate to support applications to become an EEC or EEP under Illinois Shines and Illinois Solar for All;
    - Access to mentorship opportunities with partner businesses in similar fields;
    - Access to below market interest loans in collaboration with the Illinois Finance Authority ("Illinois Climate Bank")
    - Access to operational grants

3. **Commitment to Equity**
   The Participant acknowledges that the Program is committed to equity and diversity and agrees to actively participate in a manner that supports the inclusion and success of all contractors.
4. **Program Compliance**
   The Participant agrees to comply with all Program rules, policies, and reporting requirements. Failure to meet participation or reporting requirements may result in removal from the Program and forfeiture of Program benefits.
5. **Acknowledgment of Program Status**
   The Participant acknowledges that certain Program components, including funding or loan programs, may still be under development and that benefits or opportunities related to these components may be contingent upon future availability.

Participant Intake Forms

The Department is working to identify whether the intake form and participant application can be done simultaneously through the WorkNet system.

Accelerators are required to collect the following, at minimum, to ensure the consistent collection of relevant data in the Department-approved WorkNet system:

Basic Information

- Do you need any accommodations to complete this prescreening?
- Full Name
- Date of Birth
- Email
- Legal Business Name
- DBA (if applicable)
- Are you in good standing to conduct business in Illinois?
- Are you interested in pursuing government contracts?
- Type of Business (e.g., HVAC, Solar, Wind, EV, etc.)
- Business Structure (e.g., LLC, Sole Proprietorship, S-Corporation, Non-Profit)
- Year Established
- UEI (if applicable)
- GATA ID (if applicable)

- Previous Calendar Year Revenue (must be at least $5,000)

Workforce & Licensing

- Current Number of Employees
- Contractor License Types (if any)
- Are you seeking residential or commercial work? Both?
- Current Certifications (if any)
- Certifications of Interest

Demographic Information

- Gender
- Race
- Ethnicity
- Preferred Language
- Veteran Status
- Is the owner an alumni of the foster care system?
- Is the owner a formerly convicted person?
- Is the owner a displaced energy worker?
- Does the owner face language barriers?
- Does the owner have a High School Diploma, GED, or HiSED?

Geographic Information

- Business Address
- Residence Address
- Does the owner reside in an R3 Community?
- Does the owner reside in an EJ Community?
- Congressional District
- State House District
- State Senate District

CEJA Ecosystem

- Are you a graduate of the CEJA Contractor Incubator Program?
- Are you a graduate of a CEJA Workforce Program?

Additional Information

- How did you hear about the program? *(Referral source)*
- What topics are you most interested in exploring?

Funding Information

Funding for the Illinois Clean Energy Contractor Accelerator Program is authorized under the Energy Transition Act (also known as the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act, or CEJA), 20 ILCS 730/5-55.

Funding Structure

- DCEO may authorize an initial disbursement of funds in an amount to address the Grantee's immediate cash needs.
- An Accelerator is not required to receive upfront funding and may rather opt to receive funding on a 100% reimbursement basis.
- Pre-award costs are not eligible for reimbursement under this program.
- The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity ("DCEO") retains the discretion to modify the disbursement structure if needed to meet program goals or administrative requirements.

Match Requirement

- Match funding is not required for this program.

Cash Advance Guidance

- Prior to submitting any formal request, you must notify both your Network Coordinator and Grant Manager of your intent to request an advance on funds.

- A letter from the grantee organization must be submitted to the Grant Manager. This letter must include the following language (with appropriate modifications to fill in specific details):

  To [Grant Manager Name],

  We are writing to request a working capital advance of $[Amount] under the [Program Name] Grant number PY-PCS###. This amount is required to assure adequate cash needs for a period

not exceeding 2 months; it will be utilized for [insert description of activities] for the project. If applicable under 2 CFR 200.305(b)(8), funds received will be deposited into an interest-bearing account and we will be able to report on the interest accrued. We understand that after the working capital advance, the remainder of the project will be reimbursed based on DCEO's review and approval of our regularly submitted financial reports.

Sincerely,

[Grantee Organization Name]

- If applicable under 2 CFR 200.305(b)(8), advances over $250,000 must be held in an interest-bearing account, and grantees must report any interest accrued in accordance with federal requirements.

- Additional requirements as directed by your Grants Manager.

Budget Modifications

- If you anticipate exceeding the 10% variance threshold between budget categories or need to expend funds in a category that was not included in your approved budget, you must immediately notify your Network Coordinator and Grant Manager.

- Once the Department is informed, additional instructions and required forms will be provided. Do not spend funds that are spent outside of your approved budget until the modification has been formally approved.

- Indirect costs cannot exceed the budgeted amount and are not eligible for a budget modification.

Authorized Signatory

- To process this Award and any related documentation, DCEO will only accept materials signed by the Authorized Signatory or a Designee of this Agreement, as designated in the Grantee's signature block or on Exhibit C of your grant agreement**.** If the Authorized Signatory wishes to assign a designee to sign or submit required materials, they must provide written notice to your Grants Manager identifying the designee or follow the process outlined in Exhibit C. Without this notice, the Grantor will reject any materials signed or submitted on the Grantee's behalf by anyone other than the Authorized Signatory.

- Each Designee must be approved by the Authorized Signatory through a signed submission on Exhibit C of your grant agreement or another form provided by the Grantor. If a Designee is already listed on Exhibit C**,** the Grantee should verify the information and make updates if

needed. Signatures from both the Authorized Signatory and the Designee are required for the Designee to have valid signing authority under this Agreement.

Staffing Requirements

Capacity

Each Accelerator is required to designate a Program Lead who will:

- Devote at least **one 100% FTE** (Full-Time Equivalent) to managing the program
- Be responsible for:
    - Program compliance
    - Ensuring that performance metrics are met and documented
    - Overseeing program operations
    - Onboarding staff
    - Monitoring the performance of other program roles

The Accelerator must also maintain multiple staff members, either full-time, part-time, contractual, or sub-contractual, to support delivery of the following program elements, including but not limited to:

- Program administration
- Outreach, recruitment, and participant intake
- Business coaching services
- Business technical assistance and training
- Mentorship coordination
- Grants management assistance
- Business development advising
- Business professional networking support
- Clean energy technical assistance and training

Professional Development

- Applicants are expected to participate in regular meetings with:
    - Other CEJA Hubs
    - The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO)
- The purpose of these meetings is to support collaboration, information sharing, and program alignment.
- Participation in networking activities is also strongly encouraged.

If an Accelerator plans to directly finance a professional development opportunity for a staff member using grant dollars, outside of regular meetings with other CEJA hubs and DCEO, a detailed justification must be submitted to their designated Network Coordinator.

Hiring Requirements

Administrator Approval

- All job descriptions for positions involving direct service delivery must be submitted to the Program Administrator for approval prior to posting.
- Before interviews are scheduled:
    - Copies of resumes or applications for top candidates must be forwarded to the Program Administrator for review.
- The Program Administrator or designee must:
    - Attend interviews for approved candidates
    - Provide written approval for all hires charged to the project

Program Roles

Program Lead

The Program Lead is **100% dedicated to the CEJA Clean Energy Accelerator Program** and serves as the primary point of contact for the Accelerator. The Program Lead is the only required staff member for the Accelerator. However, the responsibilities typically associated with the following positions should still be carried out for a successful Accelerator and may be fulfilled by other staff, consultants, or

contractors. They are responsible for overall program coordination, compliance, and performance tracking.

Key Duties:

- Manage day-to-day operations and strategic planning
- Ensure alignment with CEJA goals and contractual requirements
- Provide business advising and training guidance to Accelerator staff and clients
- Meet with participant contractors at least monthly to discuss progress towards goals and track metrics.
- Facilitate partnerships with stakeholders and service providers
- Submit quarterly and final reports (PFR & PPR)
- Lead team meetings and performance evaluations
- Coordinate and lead Advisory Board meetings at least once annually
- Monitor program metrics, surveys, and industry trends, and adjust implementation strategies as needed
- Oversee intake, eligibility verification, and client tracking
- Attend all Monthly Network Calls and participate in regular check-ins with the Network Coordinator (or assign a qualified designee)
- Monitor upcoming due dates in their Project Dashboard and ensure timely submission of all required materials
- Proactively identify and mitigate potential risks using their assigned risk register
- Oversee and coordinate with the Network Coordinator for operational grant review, selection, and ongoing administration, including monitoring performance and ensuring compliance with program requirements.
- Ensure timely communication with the Grants Manager and OEIT staff

Fiscal/Finance Manager

The Fiscal Manager ensures compliance with financial and grant management rules, including Grant Accountability and Transparency Act ("GATA") and Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) rules.

Key Duties:

- Prepare and submit timely reimbursement requests at least within 15 days after the end of the quarter
- Track all expenditures and maintain documentation
- Ensure budget adherence and notify Program Lead of variances
- Manage subcontractor invoicing and reporting
- Support audit readiness and internal financial reviews
- Prepare and submit quarterly fiscal reports and year-end closeouts
- Ensure timely communication with the Grants Manager and OEIT staff

Marketing & Outreach Coordinator

The Marketing and Outreach Coordinator is responsible for promoting the program and ensuring community awareness and engagement.

Key Duties:

- Develop marketing strategies and outreach materials
- Engage with community organizations, media, and local partners
- Recruit contractors that are currently working in the participant's field, or similar field
- Coordinate social media, email, and print campaigns
- Track outreach efforts and participation metrics
- Facilitate recruitment events and public presentations
- Ensure materials are culturally appropriate and translated as needed
- Follow branding and messaging guidelines as outlined in Appendix A
- Submit all marketing materials to the Network Coordinator and/or Program Manager for review and approval prior to publication or distribution

Training Coordinator

The Training Coordinator is responsible for managing the design, delivery, and continuous improvement of training and technical assistance for Accelerator clients.

Key Duties:

- Assess participant needs and tailor training plans
- Coordinate curriculum development and training schedules
- Liaise with instructors, mentors, and technical experts
- Ensure training addresses business development, clean energy technologies, certifications, and contractor readiness
- Monitor training outcomes and collect participant feedback
- Report on training deliverables and participant progress
- Work with the Program Lead to complete Program Performance Report ("PPR") submissions
- Provide clients with referrals to other CEJA programs and community resources for additional support
- Collect and maintain conflict of interest and confidentiality agreements from all subgrantees or contractors providing training and advising services
- Ensure equitable access to training opportunities, including scheduling options for working participants and language accessibility
- Maintain documentation of attendance, curriculum, and outcomes for audit and reporting purposes

Curriculum Requirements

Upon acceptance and entry into the CEJA Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program, a participant needs assessment shall be conducted using criteria developed by the Primes Program Leads. This assessment will inform the development of an individualized training and coaching curriculum tailored to the participant's specific goals, capabilities, and business objectives, ensuring the support provided aligns with their growth trajectory.

Individualized training and coaching curriculum shall be reviewed following the development of the participant's business plan to ensure alignment with evolving goals and needs.

Each Contractor Accelerator must deliver the following program elements:

1. Outreach and Recruitment
    a. Primes Program Leads will publicize the program and recruit a cohort of 3-5 applicants every 18 months.

    b. Participants shall be required to fill out an application with the required fields developed by the Department found in this Manual.

    c. Primes Program Leads shall do outreach to stakeholder organizations to assist with recruitment, outreach, and service delivery.

2. Application Assistance and Participant Selection

    a. Primes Program Leads are required to assist applicant program participants with the application process.

    b. Primes Program Leads will assist the Department in the recruitment and selection of participants for each cohort.

3. Assessments and Goal Setting

    a. Upon acceptance and entry into the CEJA Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program, a participant needs assessment shall be conducted using criteria developed by the Primes Program Leads. This assessment will inform the development of an individualized training and coaching curriculum tailored to the participant's specific goals, capabilities, and business objectives, ensuring the support provided aligns with their growth trajectory.

    b. Individualized training and coaching curriculum shall be reviewed following the development of the participant's business plan, and then annually, to ensure alignment with evolving goals and needs.

4. Business Coaching

    a. Primes Program Leads will provide a progressive course of one-on-one coaching. Participants are required to meet with the Primes Program Leads at least once (1) per month.

    b. Primes Program Leads will assist in developing an achievable 5-year business plan and provide advice on achieving participant goals.

    c. Assist participants in completing applications for operational grants and financing opportunities through the CEJA-sponsored loan program by the Illinois Finance Authority.

5. Expert Coaching Referrals:

    a. Primes Program Leads will match participants with individualized expert coaching as needed.

        i. Expert coaching may include training on working with returning residents and companies that employ them.

6. Participant Progress Tracking

    a. Primes Program Leads will utilize the Department-approved WorkNet system to track participant's progress towards meeting their own goals and Program goals.

    b. Primes Program Leads will meet at least monthly with participants to review progress and track metrics in the CEJA Tracking System

    c. Annually and towards the end of each cohort, Primes Program Leads will review participant metrics, files, and review client progress.

        i. The Primes Program Leads shall develop annual and end-of-cohort criteria to determine whether a participant should continue in the Program, be considered a graduate, and whether adjustments should be made to a participant's operational grant funding, loans that were established through the loan loss reserve fund identified in (*20 ILCS 730/5-55),* or other related services.

7. Training and Technical Assistance

    a. Primes Program Leads will provide training and technical assistance to assist participant contractors, at a minimum:

        i. Apply for appropriate government and private business opportunities.

        ii. Apply for Minority Business Enterprise certification and other relevant certifications and approved vendor statuses.

        iii. Prepare bids and responses to Request for Proposals (RFPs)

    b. Become listed in any relevant directories and databases organized by the Department of Central Management Services (CMS) and other applicable listings, to support the growth

of participant contractors with access to capital for upfront project costs and pre-development funding,

c. The amount of grant funding shall be based on the anticipated project size and scope.

Mentorship Requirements

The Primes Program Leads shall recruit mentor companies within the participant contractors' respective fields (or similar fields) to provide ongoing mentorship services. These mentor companies must meet the following qualifications:

- Demonstrated experience working with state clean energy programs (DCEO CEJA Programs, Illinois Solar for All, Illinois Shines, Utilities;
- Excellent standing with state clean energy programs, including no program violations, suspensions, or disqualifications in the past three years
- Proven experience serving equity investment eligible communities;
- A minimum of four years' experience in their field;
- Business has active insurance coverage and can provide proof of that coverage
- A proven track record of success; and
- Demonstrated capacity to provide effective mentorship, including knowledge of industry best practices and business development.

The Primes Program Leads will collaborate with selected mentor companies to develop a mentorship plan that spans at least two years. The Leads will recommend mentor-mentee pairings and propose stipend levels for mentor companies, subject to approval by the Department. Stipends, which may be requested at varying levels by mentor companies, will be funded by the Primes Program Leads and included in their annual budgets. All stipends must be reasonable and comply with applicable requirements of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), specifically 2 CFR §§ 200.403 and 200.404, which govern the allowability and reasonableness of costs.

What is Expected of Mentor-Mentee Relationship

The plan developed by the Primes Program leads, in collaboration with the mentor companies, shall provide two years of ongoing contact and mentorship. This support may include:

- On-the-job training
- Site walkthroughs

- Business process and organizational structure reviews
- Quality assurance and quality control evaluations
- Technical skill-building sessions
- Networking and partnership introductions
- Market strategy development
- Assistance with compliance and permitting
- Other relevant activities that strengthen contractor capacity

Mentorship Reviews

An annual review will be conducted to evaluate the effectiveness of each pairing, determine continuation for the second year, and adjust stipend levels accordingly. This review will also ensure compliance with any profit-sharing and purchased services agreements in accordance with guidelines set by the Primes Program Administrator.

Primes Program Leads shall develop surveys and collect additional evidence to evaluate mentorship effectiveness, determine continuation for a second year, and inform any adjustments to stipend levels in accordance with program guidelines and applicable agreements.

The Department reserves the right to assign partners, mentors, and training to awarded grantees as needed to enhance the Department's capacity to successfully deliver the Program.

The Primes Program Administrator retains the authority to terminate any mentorship agreement if deemed necessary to maintain program integrity or participant success. If a mentor-mentee relationship is ended, the Primes Program Lead shall notify the Program Administrator and is responsible for establishing a new mentor relationship for the participant contractor within 90 days of the termination.

Each cohort of five program participants will be assigned a mentor(s) to ensure individualized support and effective guidance. When developing the local resource listing, the program shall also identify additional potential mentors to serve as backups in the event that a company withdraws, the needs of a participant change, or a mentor must otherwise be removed from the mentorship.

Stipend Disbursement and Reimbursement

The Primes Program Lead will propose the method and schedule for stipend payments to mentor companies, subject to pre-approval by the Primes Program Administrator and in accordance with State disbursement procedures. Mentor costs must be documented on mentor-company timesheets, signed by both the mentor and the Primes Program Lead, and submitted each quarter alongside a completed Cash Request Workbook entry. All submissions must include the supporting invoice, proof of payment (e.g., canceled check or ACH remittance advice), and any other documentation required by the Department's fiscal and audit guidelines.

Mentorship Agreement Metrics

Each mentorship agreement shall include clearly defined, trackable metrics tailored to the specific scope of work and goals established for the mentor-mentee relationship. Program Leads will collaborate with the mentor to develop these metrics, which must receive approval from the Program Administrator. Example metrics could include: number of mentorship hours, number of bids submitted with assistance from Mentor, improved compliance with state energy program requirements (Illinois Solar for All, CMS Vendor Requirements, Utility Vendor Requirements.) Mentors are required to submit progress reports, including these metrics, at least on a quarterly basis to the Program Lead. All reports shall be entered into the department-approved CRM system to facilitate tracking of progress and monitoring the success of the mentor-mentee relationship. These metrics may include, but are not limited to, measurable activities, skill development milestones, business performance indicators, and engagement benchmarks relevant to the mentorship plan.

Confidentiality Clause for Mentorship Agreements

Mentors shall maintain strict confidentiality regarding all proprietary, sensitive, or business information disclosed by the mentee during the course of the mentorship. Such information shall not be shared with any individuals or entities not directly involved in the mentorship relationship without prior written consent from the mentee and the Program Administrator. This includes, but is not limited to, financial data, business strategies, client lists, trade secrets, and any other non-public information. Breach of confidentiality may result in termination of the mentorship agreement and potential exclusion from future program participation.

Sample language for profit sharing and purchase services agreements:

“Profit-sharing and purchased services agreements must not duplicate any stipends provided through this program. Compensation under these agreements shall be made solely from non-grant funds, such as unrestricted earned income or private revenue. Under no circumstances may state grant funds be used for profit-sharing distributions or purchased service payments.

To ensure compliance, it is strongly recommended that organizations deposit all operational grant funds into a separate account dedicated exclusively to grant-related activities. This segregation of funds will help prevent inadvertent mixing of grant and non-grant dollars and support clean audit trails.”

Program Graduation

To graduate from the CEJA Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program, participants must:

- Attend at least 80% of all assigned trainings;
- Meet with an advisor at least once per month;
- Be assigned and actively engage with a mentor;

- Commit to continuing to report on required metrics for the statutory ten (10) years following their admittance into the program; and
- Additional criteria as necessary developed by the Accelerator.

Additional criteria for graduation set by the Accelerator must be sent to your Network Coordinator for approval prior to implementation.

Upon graduation, participants will receive a certificate to commemorate their achievement. This certificate may also be used to support their applications to become an EEC or EEP under Illinois Shines and Illinois Solar for All.

Operational Grants Process

Primes Program leads are eligible to budget in for and disburse up to $250,000 annually to program participants. These grants are made to support the growth of participant contractors with access to capital for upfront project costs and pre-development funding. The amount of the grant shall be based on anticipated project size and scope.

Below is a sample application to be issued by the Primes Program Leads. This draft is still in progress and may change before being released to clients. The Department shall provide additional clarifications prior to release to clients. The Accelerator should assist clients in completing the application, and additional documents, including templates, may also be required.

Note: This application is still under review by the Department and could be subject to change.

Application

The CEJA Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator at _____is issuing this application to support pre-development activities for clean energy projects led by eligible contractors participating in the CEJA Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program (the "Accelerator"). Funding is intended to help remove capital access barriers that inhibit clean energy contractors from launching or expanding renewable energy and energy efficiency projects in underserved Illinois communities.

Program Overview

This grant opportunity supports renewable energy and energy efficiency projects that align with the goals of the CEJA Contractor Accelerator. Applicants may receive up to **$X** for eligible upfront project costs and pre-development activities.

Eligible applicants include any current participant of the Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program that have attended at least 80% of training sessions. This includes both individual contractors, business, and non-profit entities that have been formally accepted into the Accelerator Program through DCEO's selection process. Applicants must be actively engaged in advancing renewable energy or energy efficiency projects in Illinois and demonstrate alignment with the goals of the Accelerator,

including workforce development, community engagement, and participation in equity-focused clean energy initiatives.

Program Goals

The Accelerator Operational Grants aim to:

- Reduce barriers to project readiness and business development in historically disadvantaged communities
- Support equity-eligible contractors in becoming market-ready and competitive
- Prepare projects for financing, construction, or implementation phases
- Leverage CEJA and FEJA workforce pipelines and partnerships
- Advance renewable energy or energy efficiency efforts in communities most impacted by environmental injustice and economic disinvestment

Eligible Activities

Funding under this program may be used to support a wide array of non-construction pre-development activities, including but not limited to:

- Planning and Pre-Development
    - Site planning
    - Engineering
    - Architectural design (non-installation)
    - Energy audits
    - Feasibility studies
    - GIS mapping and data analysis
- Professional and Technical Services
    - Legal guidance
    - Zoning and permitting services
    - Accounting, bookkeeping, financial planning, tax support
    - Grant or loan application support
    - Consultants for project management, interconnection, or design (non-installation)
- Administration and Staffing
    - Salaries for employees (non-installation)
    - Office software and subscriptions (project management, CRMs, etc.)
- Outreach and Marketing
    - Educational brochures, flyers and videos
    - Social Media and Digital Marketing Campaigns
- Technology and Tools
    - Laptops, Tablets, and other applicable office equipment for staff

    - Software tools for energy audits, planning, or project management
    - Equipment and supplies for planning and development
- Education and Workforce Development
    - Employee or business certifications (BPI, NABCEP, Energy Auditing, etc.)
    - Safety and compliance certifications or workshops
    - Training on business management, sales, client service, etc.
- Networking and Industry Participation
    - Conference or Networking event registration and travel
    - Membership dues for professional associations
- Financial and Risk Management
    - Business planning and strategic planning support
    - Insurance or bonding costs
- Miscellaneous Support
    - Translation of marketing materials
    - Accessibility modifications for client engagement (ADA compliance)
    - Travel for Employees
    - Support services such as childcare, legal fees etc.

Applicants must submit a clear budget and project timeline that outlines all anticipated activities and outcomes. Any changes to the approved grant budget requires approval from the Primes Program Administrator.

It is highly recommended that participants budget for tax guidance when applying for an operational grant. Grant funding is generally considered taxable income by the Internal Revenue Service unless a specific exemption applies. However, many program-related and allowable expenses may be eligible as deductions, which can offset taxable income. Participants are encouraged to consult with a qualified tax professional to ensure proper reporting and to understand the full tax implications of grant funds received.

Eligibility Criteria

Applicants must:

Eligible applicants include any current participant of the Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program. This includes both individual contractors, business, and non-profit entities that have been formally accepted into the Accelerator Program through DCEO's selection process. Applicants must be actively engaged in advancing renewable energy or energy efficiency projects in Illinois and demonstrate alignment with the goals of the Accelerator, including workforce development, community engagement, and participation in equity-focused clean energy initiatives.

Eligible contractors should also demonstrate:

- A commitment to hiring from CEJA/FEJA workforce pipelines (e.g., Incubator Program, Climate Works, Returning Residents Program, Solar Training Pipeline)
- Community partnerships or support, especially with EJ and R3 community stakeholders
- A project pipeline that will lead to construction or implementation, even if these phases are not funded under this NOFO

Funding Details

- **Total Available**: $X
- **Award Range**: $X to $X
- **Grant Term**:
- **Pre-Award Costs**: Not allowed

This NOFO only funds non-construction activities. Construction and implementation costs are not eligible.

Reimbursement

A. General Requirements

All grant disbursements shall be made on an *invoice reimbursement basis*. Grantees may either:

1. Pay for eligible goods or services directly and request reimbursement; or
2. Submit an unpaid invoice for payment by the Grantor.

Reimbursement will only be made for allowable costs incurred within the grant period and in accordance with the approved budget. Any variance from the approved grant budget requires approval from the Primes Program Lead.

B. Documentation Standards

1. **Paid Invoices** – The following documentation shall be submitted:
    a. Copy of the vendor/contractor invoice; and
    b. Proof of payment, such as a canceled check, bank statement, or official payment confirmation.
2. **Unpaid Invoices** – The following documentation shall be submitted:
    a. Copy of the vendor/contractor invoice;
    b. Post-Payment Requirement: Within 15 business days of payment received, the Grantee shall submit to the Grantor a paid receipt or other verifiable proof of payment for inclusion in the official grant file. Failure to submit post-payment documentation may result in repayment of grant funds and/or suspension of future disbursements.

C. Review and Approval

- All reimbursement requests are subject to review by the Grantor for allowability, allocability, and compliance with the Uniform Grant Agreement and applicable federal and State cost principles.
- Incomplete or non-compliant requests will be returned to the Grantee for correction.

Application Requirements

Applicants must submit a full application package including:

- Application
- Uniform Budget utilizing the template provided by DCEO for this project. The entire budget with all worksheets included even if the worksheets are not relevant to the grant opportunity must be submitted with the application materials.
- Project Timeline
- Documentation of IRS declaration
- Letters of Support from partners/community stakeholders (if applicable)
- MOUs or contracts with service providers (if applicable)
- Evidence of partnerships with workforce training programs (if applicable)

Selection Criteria

Applications will be evaluated based on:

- Funding need and project feasibility
- Community impact and benefit
- Alignment with CEJA goals
- Financial and technical capacity

Strong applications will demonstrate a clear path from pre-development to implementation and articulate how this funding will reduce structural barriers to entry in the clean energy market for equity-eligible contractors.

Grant Selection and Finalization

Grant selection must include at least three reviewers, with at least one reviewer representing the Department, and all reviewers must use the Department-approved scoring template. After the reviews are completed, funding decisions will be made in a meeting between the three scorers. Advisors are required to review the grant application and the reviewers' notes with the participant when explaining the determination. Once grant awards are decided, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be drafted between the Accelerator and the Participant company outlining defined outcomes. The MOU

must be submitted to the Department for approval prior to signature, and both the Department and the Accelerator reserve the authority to cancel an MOU at any time.

Participant Operational Grants are provided solely to support the participant company's internal business development consistent with approved allowable uses. Funds shall not be used to administer or implement the Accelerator Program itself.

Each award shall be governed by an Operational Grant Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) outlining:

- The approved grant amount
- Allowable operational uses of funds
- Documentation and reimbursement requirements
- Reporting expectations related to business development progress
- Payment terms
- Monitoring provisions
- Termination rights

The MOU does not constitute a subaward agreement and does not establish a subrecipient relationship.

Grant Selection Alternatives

Grant selection outside of the application process may be permitted; however, any alternative approach must be submitted with a detailed written justification and is subject to prior approval by the Department.

Illinois Finance Authority Loan Opportunity

The Illinois Finance Authority (IFA) will connect participants in the Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program to low-interest loans made available through the Program. IFA will serve as the lending entity responsible for underwriting, executing loan agreements, establishing repayment terms, and servicing loans in accordance with applicable law and program requirements.

More information regarding loan terms is being developed by IFA and the Department and will be shared with the Primes Program Leads once available.

Marketing Requirements

To ensure consistency in messaging, branding, and compliance with program guidelines, all marketing, outreach, and promotional materials developed by Accelerator grantees must be:

- Submitted to the Program Administrator for review, and
- Approved in writing before being:
    - Printed
    - Published
    - Distributed
    - Disseminated to the public or program stakeholders

Materials Requiring Approval

This requirement applies to, but is not limited to:

- Flyers, brochures, and posters
- Digital advertisements and social media content
- Website content referencing the CEJA Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program
- Event invitations, press releases, and signage
- Participant recruitment materials
- Video or multimedia content

Administrator Review Rights

The Program Administrator reserves the right to:

- Require edits to ensure:
    - Accuracy
    - Alignment with CEJA messaging and equity goals
    - Proper attribution of state funding sources

Failure to obtain prior approval may result in corrective action.

See appendix A for additional marketing requirements

Facilities Requirements

Each Contractor Accelerator must maintain a professional, fully equipped, and ADA-compliant office location that is:

- Easily accessible and visible to small business clients
- Equipped with adequate parking. ADA-compliant parking requires at least one accessible space for every 25 parking spaces. Smaller lots are still required to have a minimum of one accessible space.
- Clearly marked with external signage identifying the Contractor Accelerator location

Location Guidelines

- The facility should be conveniently located for the Accelerator's constituent base
- Co-location of multiple CEJA-related programs in one facility is strongly encouraged

Accessibility

- A dedicated and secure area must be provided for client meetings and training sessions

Training and Communication Requirements

- Each facility must include access to a conference room suitable for group training sessions
- Each Contractor Accelerator must:
    - Maintain a separate and publicly listed phone number
    - Provide high-speed internet access for staff and clients on-site
    - Offer internet hotspots for staff providing off-site client services

Advisory Board

All Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerators must establish an Advisory Board that meets the following requirements:

- The Advisory Board must include at least 7 members.

- Advisory Board's with a co-hosted CEJA Clean Energy Contractor Incubator may utilize 1 board.
- All members should reflect on the need of participants and the Accelerator's service territory. The board must include a diverse mix of stakeholders, such as but is not limited to:

Clean Energy & Workforce Development

- Clean energy technicians and tradespeople
- Union representatives
- Non-union workforce development leaders or contractors
- HVAC, solar, and energy efficiency professionals

Public Sector & CEJA Program Partners

- Local or state government representatives
- CEJA program hub leads (e.g., Workforce Hubs, Navigators)
- Housing authority or regional planning agency staff

Business & Economic Development

- Local chambers of commerce
- Minority business associations
- Clean energy business owners
- Financing representatives

Community & Equity-Focused Leaders

- Environmental justice advocates
- Faith-based organization representatives
- Community-based organization ("CBO") leaders

All Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerators must submit their proposed Advisory Board membership list to the State Energy Office for review and approval prior to finalizing the board.

Advisory Board Meetings

- Advisory Boards are required to meet at least once per calendar year, though more frequent meetings are strongly encouraged to support ongoing program alignment and responsiveness to community and industry needs.

- All Advisory Board meetings must comply with the Illinois Open Meetings Act (5 ILCS 120/2), including provisions for public notice, accessibility, and transparency. To remain compliant:

  The meeting agenda must be posted publicly at least 48 hours prior to the meeting:

    - Physically in a public location
    - On the organization's website
  - If the agenda includes action items (which should be rare for these meetings), those items must be clearly listed in the agenda.
  - During the meeting, written minutes must be taken that include:
    - Date, time, and location of the meeting
    - Names of members present and absent
    - A summary of discussions
    - Any votes taken (if applicable)

- Accelerators are required to notify their CEJA Network Coordinator in advance of any scheduled Advisory Board meetings, and to share meeting agendas and minutes upon request.

Out of Office Procedures

Standard Operating Hours

All Contractor Accelerators must be open for service and operate on a full-time, 5-day per week basis

- Weekends and holidays are excluded from this requirement

Planned Closures

Contractor Accelerators must submit a list of all planned building closures (by the host organization) at the beginning of each calendar year

Unplanned Closures

Any unplanned closure exceeding one working day must be:

- Formally reported to the Department
- Accompanied by a description of the process for managing client calls and inquiries during the closure

Staff Absences

The Primes Program Lead shall notify the Primes Program Administrator of any interruption in Accelerator services due to staff absences exceeding three (3) consecutive days.

Website

Grantees are required to have a dedicated landing page on their organization's website for the Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program. This page should contain at least the following information:

- Goals of the Program
- General Participant Requirements
- Application Process
    - Could be contact information depending on the Accelerator's sign-up process
- Hours of operation
- Location
- Contact Information
- CEJA Logo & Partnership Messaging

Confidentiality and Information Security

Confidential Participant Information

Contractor Accelerators, the Department, and Regional Administrators must protect the confidentiality of any personal information provided by program participants, including:

- Status as a formerly incarcerated individual
- Status as a graduate of or current enrollee in the foster care system

If the Accelerator plans to use a unique client story that includes either or both of these types of personal information a signed client release form must be obtained from the participating contractor. This release form should then be submitted to your Network Coordinator prior to using the story in any publications, presentations, or promotional materials.

Participant Choice

- Any person applying to the program may elect not to disclose:
    - Whether they are a foster care graduate or enrollee
    - Whether they have been formerly convicted

Aggregated Data Use

- The Department or Regional Administrators may publish aggregated data regarding participants who:
    - Were formerly incarcerated
    - Are foster care recipients

Such publication must be done in a manner that protects the identities of those individuals.

Budget Information

Budget Submission Requirements

- Grantees must use the Uniform Budget Templates provided by DCEO.
- The entire budget, including all worksheets (even if not applicable), must be submitted with:
    - The initial application, and
    - Any extension requests
- The signature page must be:
    - Printed
    - Signed
    - Scanned
    - Submitted with the application

GATA Requirements

The Grant Accountability and Transparency Act ("GATA") (30 ILCS 708/1 et seq.) and related administrative rules (44 Ill. Admin. Code Part 7000) apply to all grant funds. These rules:

- Increase accountability and transparency
- Reduce administrative burdens on both state agencies and grantees
- Adopt federal guidance per 2 CFR 200 (Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards)

10% Budget Variance Allowance

- Grantees may reallocate up to 10% between approved budget categories without formal modification.
- If the 10% variance in any category is expected to be exceeded:

- Notify your Network Coordinator and Grant Manager immediately to initiate the budget modification process.

Allowable and Disallowed Costs

Generally Allowable Costs

- Personnel salaries and wages – For staff working directly on the program
- Fringe benefits – Proportional to program work (e.g., health insurance, retirement)
- Travel – Must follow GSA per diem rates and be directly related to program activities
- Supplies and materials – Office and program-specific needs
- Training and professional development – Relevant to program goals
- Consultant and contractor services – If essential and properly procured
- Equipment – Must be approved and benefit the program directly
- Indirect costs – If the grantee has a negotiated rate or elects the 15% De Minimis Rate
- Outreach and marketing – Focused on participant recruitment or program visibility
- Mentorship Stipends – Within a reasonable cost in regard to the services provided
- Operational Grants – Required by the program up to $250,000 annually, not to exceed 11.1% of the Lead's total budget per award annually.

All costs must be reasonable, necessary, properly documented, and tied to approved activities. Expenses must comply with 2 CFR Part 200 and the program's specific requirements.

Generally Disallowed Costs

- Entertainment – Including meals or activities unrelated to the program
- Alcohol – Not reimbursable
- Lobbying – Prohibited under all state and federal programs
- Fines and penalties – Including late fees and legal judgments
- Fundraising activities – Not eligible
- Gifts and incentives – Unless explicitly approved
- Bad debts – Uncollectible accounts and related legal expenses
- Personal use items – Items not primarily for program use
- Pre-award costs – Unless explicitly pre-approved in writing

If you're unsure whether a cost is allowable, contact your Network Coordinator and Grants Manager before committing funds. Unallowable costs will not be reimbursed and must be covered by the grantee.

Indirect Costs

To claim indirect costs, grantees must have a valid Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement ("NICRA") on file.

Types of NICRAs

1. **Federally Negotiated Rate**
    - Negotiated with the federal cognizant agency
    - Accepted by the State of Illinois
    - Must submit a copy of the NICRA to the State
2. **State Negotiated Rate**
    - Available to organizations without a federal rate
    - Submit an indirect cost proposal through the State of Illinois' centralized system:
        - Within 3 months of receiving a Notice of State Award ("NOSA") for new rates
        - Within 6–9 months after fiscal year-end for renewing rates (depending on audit requirements)
3. **De Minimis Rate**
    - Organizations may elect a 15% rate of Modified Total Direct Costs ("MTDC")
    - May be used indefinitely once established
    - The State must verify the MTDC calculation annually

Additional Notes on Indirect Costs

- All grantees must either:
    - Negotiate an indirect cost rate, or
    - Elect the De Minimis Rate
- Indirect costs claimed without a valid rate or election on file may be disallowed.
- Grantees may waive indirect cost reimbursement, but this decision must be:
    - Recorded in the State's centralized indirect cost rate system
    - Irrevocable for that grant year

The following State University Facilities & Administration Rate and Base will apply to all State issued awards that contain either Federal pass-through funding or State funding.

RATE:

- 20% Rate for awards or programs administered On-Campus*
- 10% Rate for awards or programs administered Off-Campus*

BASE: Base approved in the State Universities' current Federally Negotiated Indirect Cost Rate Agreement ("NICRA")

*Criteria for utilization of the On/Off campus rate is located within the general terms and conditions of Federal NICRA for each State University. If not clearly defined, State awarding agencies and officers will make final determination based upon the purposes of the grant scope.

Property Control

All equipment purchased with grant funds shall be maintained and managed following the property standards in the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR 200.310-316, the terms of the grant agreement, the requirements outlined in the grant manual and other guidance issued by the Department as applicable.

1. Acquisition of Equipment

a. Equipment is defined as an article of tangible personal property with a useful life of more than one (1) year and a per-unit acquisition cost that equals or exceeds $10,000.

b. Equipment acquired through purchase or lease-purchase with a unit purchase price of $10,000 or more shall require prior approval from the Office of Entrepreneurship, Innovation and Technology (OEIT).

1) The grantee must request approval and documentation of the results of the procurement action for OEIT.

2) Approval of the budget as awarded does not constitute approval; items will still need authorization.

c. Standards used in determining whether to approve purchases include the necessity of such purchases to achieve program goals, the planned expenditure for such purposes compared to other available prices and funding availability

2. Inventory Control

a. Grantees shall comply with the property standards in the Uniform Guidance for all inventory units of equipment with an acquisition cost that equals or exceeds the lesser of the capitalization level established by the subrecipient for financial statement purposes or $10,000.

1) These property standards require, among other things, property records that include all the items in 2 CFR 200.313(d)(1); a physical inventory taken, and results reconciled with the property records every two (2) years; a control system to ensure adequate safeguards to prevent loss, damage, or theft; and proper maintenance procedures to keep the property in good condition.

b. Grantee shall inform the Department of any property location changes for all equipment with an acquisition cost of $10,000 or more.

c. Per the grantee's fiscal policy and procedures, grantees shall also be responsible for inventory units of other tangible assets with an acquisition cost of up to $9,999.

d. Records shall be maintained per the federal property standards in the Uniform Guidance at 2 CFR 200.310-316.

3. Lost, Damaged or Stolen Equipment

a. When loss, damage, or theft to grant property occurs, the Grantee shall forward a Report of Lost, Damaged or Stolen Equipment Form to the Department within ten (10) days of discovering the loss, damage, or theft. Request this form from your Network Coordinator when applicable.

b. In the case of stolen property, a police report must accompany the report to OEIT or a fire department report for fire-damaged property.

4. Disposition of Equipment a. Equipment Equal to or Greater Than $10,000

1) OEIT must be contacted for disposition instructions for equipment with an acquisition cost of $10,000 or more when the grant relationship ends, or the grantee no longer needs the property.

2) This notification shall be given via the Report of Excess/Unserviceable Equipment Form. Request this form from your Network Coordinator when applicable.

3) Equipment with an acquisition cost of $10,000 or more may not be transferred from the control of the subrecipient without written approval from the Department.

4) If authorized or required to sell the equipment, proper sales procedures must be established to ensure the highest possible return.

b. Supplies and other tangible assets with an acquisition cost of less than $10,000 may be acquired and disposed of at the grantee's discretion per its fiscal policy and procedures

Procurement Requirements

Grantees are required to adhere to federal procurement standards as outlined in:

2 CFR 200.317 – 2 CFR 200.327
Procurement Standards under the Uniform Guidance

These standards govern the methods, documentation, and oversight of all procurement activities using grant funds.

Contractor/Consultant Requirements

Strategic Partnerships & Roles

While Grantees may possess expertise in one or more program areas, strategic partnerships are often essential for comprehensive implementation and long-term success. The following are the main types of partners involved:

Grantees / Recipients

A non-state entity that receives a grant directly from DCEO.

Key Responsibilities:

- Execute a formal award agreement with DCEO
- Officially accountable for program outcomes and fiscal oversight
- Execute MOUs with subgrantees
- Submit Periodic Performance Reports ("PPR"), Periodic Financial Reports ("PFR"), and reporting through the CEJA Reporting System
- Maintain all program documentation for **three (3) years**
- Monitor and oversee subgrantee and contractor activity
- Ensure compliance with 2 CFR 200, GATA, and applicable federal/state rules.

Subgrantees / Subrecipients

A non-state entity that receives a **sub-award** from a grantee to implement part of the program.

Key Responsibilities:

- Execute an MOU with the grantee
- Provide services and collect required program data
- Maintain documentation for **three (3) years**, based on funding source
- Submit program data and deliverables to the grantee
- Use standardized budget templates
- Be monitored by the grantee for performance and compliance

Contractors / Vendors

A non-state entity that provides goods or services in exchange for compensation. This is a procurement relationship, whether or not a formal contract exists

Key Responsibilities:

- May or may not require an MOU (recommended)
- Must report on services delivered
- Be supervised and monitored by the grantee or subgrantee

Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") Guidelines

Every partner relationship must be clearly defined through an MOU that outlines:

- Names, UEI, and Contact Info of Subrecipient
- Purpose and scope of work
- Roles and responsibilities
- Communication and reporting expectations
- Recordkeeping, retention, and audit access
- Agreement duration and mutual understandings

- Federal and state award identifiers and dates
- Budget period and performance period
- Funding amounts obligated and committed
- Federal/State assistance listings and agencies involved
- Terms on eligible costs, audit, record access, retention, and termination
- Federal Funding Accountability and Transparency Act ("FFATA") compliance (if award > $30,000)

Compliance for Subrecipients

Prior to issuing a subaward, Grantees must:

Confirm subrecipient eligibility using the following lists:

- **Illinois Debarred and Suspended List:** CPO Lists
- **Federal Excluded Parties List (SAM):** SAM.gov
- **Sanctioned Parties List (Illinois HFS):** HFS Sanctions

Documentation of this review must be maintained in the grant file.

Assess Subrecipient Risk, including:

- Review of prior audit findings or subaward performance
- Evaluation of internal controls, staff, and systems
- Impose conditions if necessary (e.g., training, on-site monitoring)

All risk assessments must be documented.

Communicate Expectations in Writing

- Establish a clear **reporting schedule**
- Use a standardized reporting format including the required PPR and PFR forms

Ongoing Monitoring Must Include:

- Review of financial and performance reports
- Tracking and resolution of deficiencies
- Issuing decisions for audit findings (per 2 CFR 200.521)
- Enforcing corrective actions and compelling compliance
- Confirming Single Audit submissions for entities expending $750,000+ in federal funds

Consultant/Contractor Conflict of Interest & Confidentiality

- All contractors and consultants who provide direct client services, access participant data, or participate in participant-facing roles must comply with the following:

  Prohibited Conduct

  - Soliciting, offering, or accepting personal gifts, services, or compensation from clients or vendors
  - Promoting their own services or those of affiliates for personal gain

  Confidentiality Standards

  - Treat all client information as strictly confidential
  - Share only via approved program channels
  - Use information only for authorized program purposes

Required Documentation

All applicable contractors and consultants must:

- Complete and sign a Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Form and upload to the "Files Uploads" section of your organization's WorkNetaccount.

Funding Extensions

- The Department may authorize extensions for projects awarded under this Notice of Funding Opportunity ("NOFO").
- The initial period of performance is 12 months.

- The Department intends to offer up to two (2) additional 12-month extensions for each award, based on:
    - The performance of the grantee
    - The availability of funds under the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act ("CEJA"). Additional funds of up to $9,000,000 will be made available for each twelve (12) month extension period.
- Extensions, if granted, will follow:
    - A formal review of programmatic performance
    - An evaluation of services and outcomes

Travel Guidelines

- **Advance Notification:**
    - If you plan to travel outside your service territory using program funds, notify your Network Coordinator at least 14 days in advance.
- **Request Details:**
    - Your travel request should be submitted in writing and must include:
        - The estimated cost of the trip, calculated using GSA rates for lodging, meals, and incidental expenses.
        - Trip details outlining:
            - The purpose of the travel.
            - An explanation of how the trip supports the goals of the Clean Energy Program.
- **Approval Requirement:**
    - Travel must be approved prior to departure to ensure reimbursement of costs.
    - If a meal is provided during the travel, the GSA per diem rate must be decreased by that amount for reimbursement.
    - Keep all receipts from travel as supporting documentation for reimbursement.

Reporting

General Reporting Requirements

Grantees are required to submit the following on at least a quarterly basis:

- Periodic Performance Report ("PPR")
- Periodic Financial Report ("PFR")
- The first report must cover the first three (3) months following the award start date.
- Pursuant to 2 CFR 200.328–329, all reports must be submitted no later than 30 calendar days after the period covered.
- Final PPR and PFR must be submitted within 45 calendar days following the end of the period of performance.

Financial Reporting

Grantees must also submit a Cash Reimbursement Ledger on at least a quarterly basis to remain in fiscal compliance. These will be distributed by your grants manager with your grant agreement.

All financial reporting documents must be submitted to your Network Coordinator first for review prior to being forwarded on to the Office of Grants Management for reimbursement.

Monthly submissions are strongly encouraged to maintain consistent cash flow.

Cash Request Workbook Documentation

Each submission must include supporting documentation for all costs incurred. Failure to include documentation may delay or prevent reimbursement.

Required documentation may include:

- Proof of purchase (receipts, invoices)
- Time and effort documentation
- Proof of payment (cleared checks, ACH confirmations, bank statements)

Documentation must clearly align with the costs being claimed. Incomplete or inaccurate submissions may be returned.

The Program Administrator reserves the right to request additional documentation for compliance verification.

Reimbursement Submission

When submitting for reimbursement, a Smartsheet form will be sent to your Program Manager containing instructions for document submission. Your Network Coordinator will collaborate with the

individual submitting the documents to resolve any issues related to the reimbursement workbook or supporting documentation. After the review process is complete, your Network Coordinator will provide you with a receipt confirming the upcoming payment.

Reimbursement reminders will be sent monthly; however, organizations may choose to submit on a quarterly basis. If opting for quarterly submissions, reimbursement documentation must be submitted within 30 days following the end of the previous quarter.

If a receipt has been sent and you would like to track your payments, please visit https://illinoiscomptroller.gov/vendor-services/vendor-payments-new and use your organization's TIN and name to access the information.

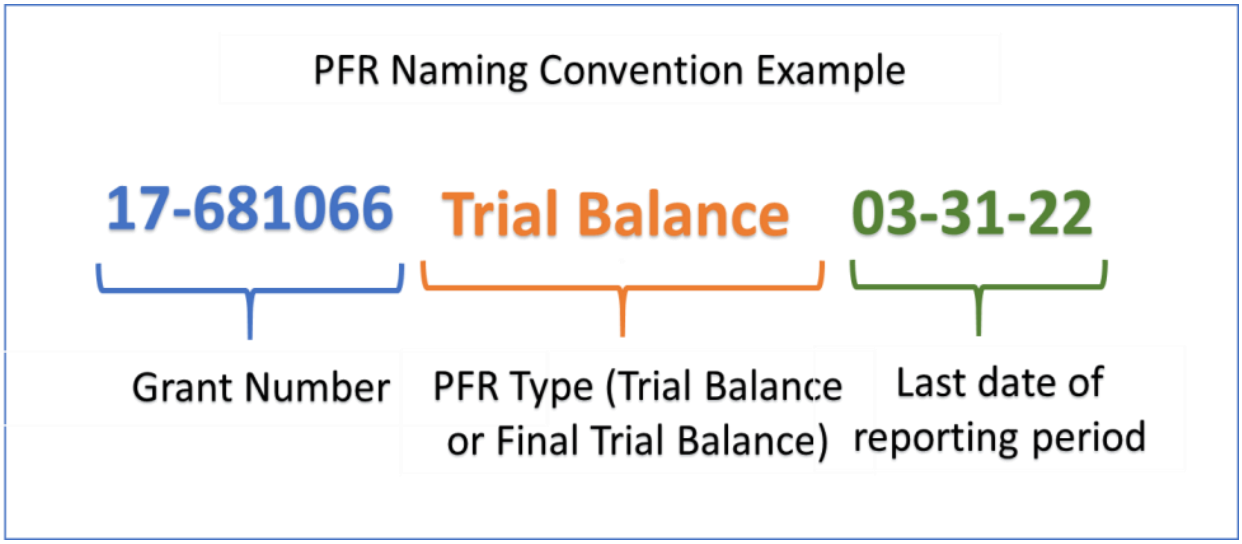
Periodic Financial Report ("PFR")

The PFR is the standard statewide financial reporting format used for all state grants.

- All grants (unless exempted) must submit periodic financial reports as outlined in the Catalog of State Financial Assistance and Uniform Grant Agreement ("UGA").
- Instructions can be found on the DCEO Grantee Resources – Periodic Financial Report page.

Monthly Reimbursement Reporting

- Due no later than 30 days after the close of each month.



1. **Cover Page**
    - Must include:
        - Grant Number

- Grantee Organization
- UEI Number
- FEIN
- Period covered

All documents must be submitted as a single PDF.

Final PFR

- A final report is required after the grant ends.
- The reporting period end date must match the end of the grant period.
- This final report does not need to be signed.

Financial System Requirements

Grantee financial systems must:

- Provide accurate, current, and complete financial disclosure
- Ensure the general ledger can trace funds to a detailed level of expenditure to verify proper use

For assistance with PFRs, contact your Grants Manager.

Programmatic Reporting

The core goal of the program is to increase participation and economic success of equity-eligible contractors in Illinois' clean energy sector—especially individuals from:

- **Equity Investment Eligible Communities**
- **Individuals facing:**
  - Low educational attainment
  - Criminal legal system involvement
  - Language barriers
  - Foster care system enrollment or graduation

Performance Metrics & Quarterly Reports

Each Contractor Accelerator must submit monthly reports with the following performance data:

- Total number of participant contractors accepted into the program (must be 3-5 contractor businesses)
- Number of 5-year business plans submitted
- Number of bids and RFPs submitted by participant contractors
- Number of contracts secured, alone or in partnership
- Total dollar value of contracts (projects) secured
- Number of projects completed by participant contractors, alone or in partnership
- Annual revenue increase by dollar amount
- Number of jobs created by participant contractors
- Number of jobs retained by participant contractors
- Total subcontractors hired for any projects of participant contractors
- Number of certification applications submitted by participant contractors
- Number of certifications received by participant contractors
- Number of operational grants received by participant contractors through the CEJA-sponsored grant program
- Number of low-interest loans received by participant contractors through the CEJA-sponsored IFA loan program
- Number of participant contractors receiving services to acquire financial assurance (e.g. bonding)
- Total dollar amount of operational grants received by participant contractors through the CEJA-sponsored operational grant program
- Total dollar amount of low-interest loans received by participant contractors through the CEJA-sponsored IFA loan program
- Other dollar value of debt financing secured
- Other dollar value of non-debt financing secured
- Number of mentorship hours provided by mentors selected through the program
- Number of training sessions provided
- Number of participants that attended training sessions
- Number of one-on-one consultation/coaching hours

- Number of mentorships assigned
- Number of program graduates who have received approval as Approved Vendors (e.g. CMS, IPA Solar for All and Illinois Shines, Utilities, etc.)
- Number of networking events or similar activities that create connections for participants with potential partners, subcontractors, and employees (minimum 2 annually)
- Number of success stories (minimum 2 annually)

Other Required Tracking Metrics (At least annually for 10 years)

Participant contractor engagement in other Illinois clean energy programs such as the Adjustable Block (Illinois Shines) Program, Illinois Solar for All, and the utility-run energy efficiency, electric vehicle programs, and other DCEO CEJA programs.

Adjustable Block Program (Illinois Shines)

- Approved Vendors
- Number of EECs
- Number of Illinois Shines Projects Completed (by contractor)
- Dollar Value of Contract

Illinois Solar for All

- Number of Illinois Solar for All Projects completed
- Dollar value of contract(s)

Utility-run Energy Efficiency Program

- Utility Company
  - Nicor
  - Ameren
  - ComEd
  - Peoples
  - North Shore
  - Municipal/Co-Op
- Number of Projects completed
- Dollar Value of Contract(s)

DCEO CEJA/FEJA Programs

- Has hired an alumni of the Clean Jobs Workforce Program
  - How many hires?

        - Names
        - Demographics of those hires
        - Salary Range
        - Length of Service
        - Home Zip Code
        - R3 Residence
        - EJ Residence
        - EEP/EEC Status
        - Hub location they received services from
    - Has hired an alumni of the Climate Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program
        - How many hires?
        - Names
        - Demographics of those hires
        - Salary Range
        - Length of Service
        - Home Zip Code
        - R3 Residence
        - EJ Residence
        - EEP/EEC Status
        - Hub location they received services from
    - Has hired an alumni of the Returning Resident Clean Jobs Training Program
        - How many hires?
        - Names
        - Demographics of those hires
        - Salary Range
        - Length of Service
        - Home Zip Code
        - R3 Residence
        - EJ Residence
        - EEP/EEC Status
        - Hub location they received services from
    - Has hired an alumni of the Solar Training Pipeline Program
        - How many hires?
        - Names
        - Demographics of those hires
        - Salary Range
        - Length of Service
        - Home Zip Code
        - R3 Residence
        - EJ Residence

        - EEP/EEC Status
        - Hub location they received services from
    - Has hired an alumni of the Multi-Cultural Jobs Program
        - How many hires?
        - Names
        - Demographics of those hires
        - Salary Range
        - Length of Service
        - Home Zip Code
        - R3 Residence
        - EJ Residence
        - EEP/EEC Status
        - Hub location they received services from
    - Has hired an alumni of the Craft Apprenticeship Program
        - How many hires?
        - Names
        - Demographics of those hires
        - Salary Range
        - Length of Service
        - Home Zip Code
        - R3 Residence
        - EJ Residence
        - EEP/EEC Status
        - Hub location they received services from
- Number of Subcontractors Used
    - Number of MBE/WBE/VBE/DBE
    - Were any subcontractors an alumnus of the Clean Energy Contractor Incubator or Clean Energy Primes Accelerator Program?
    - EEP/EEC Status
    - Were any subcontractors mentors of the Prime?
    - Subcontractor Zip Code
    - Trades/roles performed
    - Number of jobs created by subcontractors
    - Total dollar value of subcontracted work

- Employment Data
    - Jobs Created
    - Jobs Retained
    - Name
    - Racial Demographic

        - Gender
        - Zip Code
        - Salary Data (hourly wage)
        - Does the Contractor offer benefits?
- Participant satisfaction with the program
    - At a minimum, a survey containing the following information should be administered to program participants during the final quarter of the cohort to assess overall program impact.
    - Additional surveys may also be conducted in WorkNet to gather feedback on specific trainings, workshops, or events throughout the program.
        - How satisfied are you with your experience in the program? (1-5)
        - How helpful did you find your mentorship? (1-5)
        - How helpful did you find program staff? (1-5)
        - How did you find the quality of training and technical assistance? (1-5)
        - How likely are you to recommend the Accelerator to others? (1-5)
        - How would you improve the program? (open-ended)

Success Stories

A success story should demonstrate a measurable or meaningful outcome that was made possible fully or in part due to support from the program. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Business growth: measurable increases in revenue, market share, or clientele
- Contract acquisition: winning a significant contract
- Workforce impact: hiring new staff, creating apprenticeships, or upskilling current employees
- Capacity building: gaining certifications, licenses, or equipment that expand service offerings
- Community impact: delivering clean energy solutions to underserved populations or neighborhoods
- Personal growth: founders or contractors overcoming barriers (e.g., access to capital, discrimination) and achieving milestones

Required Elements

Each success story should include:

- Business Name
- Individual Name (preferred)
- Background: Brief description of the entity (e.g. business type, location, etc.)
- Program Involvement: How they engaged with the program (e.g., training received, funding awarded)
- Outcomes Achieved: Specific and measurable results, such as:

    - Revenue growth
    - Jobs created or retained
    - Contracts won
    - New services launched
- Quote/Testimonial (Preferred): A direct quote from the business or individual
- Photos (Preferred): High-resolution photo of the business, project site, or team

***Note: A client release form is required if using participant's status as a formerly incarcerated person or foster care recipient* See Landing Page for form.**

Formatting & Submission Guidelines

- Word Count: 250–500 words
- File Format: Submit as a Word document or through the designated reporting form
- Photo Release Form: Required for all photos with identifiable people
- Due Date: Stories should be submitted with their monthly reporting sheet. At least six (6) are required annually.
- Approval: All stories are subject to review and editing before public use

Optional Enhancements

- Before/after photos of job sites or equipment
- Video testimonials

Periodic Performance Report (PPR)

The PPR is the uniform statewide performance reporting format for all Illinois state grants.

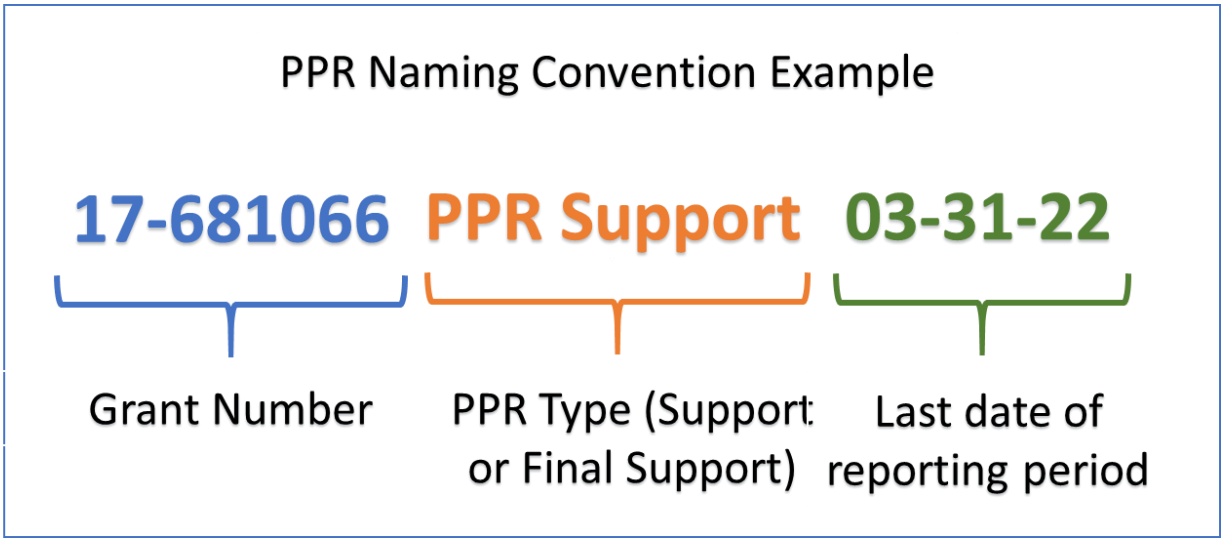
- Required quarterly (within 30 days of quarter end)
- Provided by your Grants Manager
- Grantee performance data is tracked in WorkNet, so no additional documentation is required with the PPR.

PPR Submission Requirements

- Cover Page including:
    - Grant Number
    - Grantee Organization
    - UEI Number
    - FEIN

- Period covered

- File Naming Convention:
  Grant#_PPR Support_MM-DD-YY



Final PPR

- Required at the end of the grant
- Final reporting period end date must reflect the grant's official end date

For specific questions, please contact your assigned CEJA Network Coordinator.

WorkNet

Primary Function

WorkNet will serve as the centralized metrics reporting portal for CEJA Accelerator grantees. All participating organizations will be required to log program metrics such as (but not limited to):

- Participant outcomes
- Outreach activities
- Jobs Created
- Training completions
- Financial Milestones
- Contracts Bid/Contracts Won

- Demographic Information
- Success stories
- Engagement milestones
- Monthly Narratives

These metrics must be submitted directly through the WorkNet platform to ensure DCEO receives real-time, standardized, and validated data for monitoring, compliance, and program evaluation.

Reporting to DCEO – CEJA

Standardized Metric Dashboard

- Grantees will input KPIs and narrative updates into a structured reporting system

Direct Line to DCEO

- Eliminates fragmented reporting via email or spreadsheets
- Establishes a central source of truth for CEJA performance data

Exportable Reports

- Enables DCEO and Accelerator staff to generate real-time analytics
- Supports preparation of monthly, quarterly, and annual summaries for internal and public reporting

Monthly Narrative Guidance

Program Leads are required to submit a monthly narrative using the designated template provided by your Network Coordinator. This narrative is due within 5 days following the end of each month. The template includes sections to report on upcoming events at the Accelerator, highlight successes achieved by the center during the previous month, and provide updates on participant engagement.

Additionally, please include the following:

- Challenges encountered and how they were addressed
- Key lessons learned or best practices developed
- Planned outreach or marketing efforts for the coming month
- Any partnerships or collaborations initiated or strengthened
- Requests for support or resources needed

Time and Effort Forms Reporting Guidance

What is a Time and Effort Form?

As a recipient of CEJA grant funding, your organization is required to accurately document how staff time is allocated across grant-related activities. A Time and Effort Form is a standardized document that fulfills this requirement by tracking the amount of time employees spend working on CEJA-funded tasks. Time and Effort forms are required with submission of cash reimbursement requests.

Why It Matters for CEJA

Time and Effort Forms are essential to:

- Demonstrate that salaries paid with CEJA funds are justified
- Ensure that staff are engaged in allowable CEJA-related work
- Support payroll costs charged to the CEJA grant
- Provide documentation for audits, desk reviews, and monitoring visits by DCEO

When is Time and Effort Reporting Required?

CEJA Accelerator staff must complete Time and Effort reporting when:

- Staff are paid in full or in part with CEJA funds
- Staff split time between CEJA and other programs (e.g., WIOA, private contracts)
- Staff engage in multiple functions, such as outreach, training, reporting, and program administration

What Should a CEJA Time and Effort Form Include?

A compliant Time and Effort Form must capture the following information:

- Employee Name: Full name of the staff member whose time is being documented
- Position Title: Job role or function within the organization
- Reporting Period: Weeks covered
- Funding Allocation: Hours worked on CEJA
- Hourly Wage

A separate sheet must be created for each individual dedicating time to the CEJA Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program.

Example Activities That Count as CEJA Work

- Hosting or attending CEJA outreach events
- Conducting Accelerator training
- Logging metrics in WorkNet
- Developing CEJA-specific toolkits, reports, or communications
- Providing TA or Training to CEJA participants

Fiscal and Programmatic Monitoring

To ensure accountability and successful implementation of the Clean Energy Contractor Accelerator Program, all participating Accelerators will be subject to ongoing fiscal and programmatic monitoring.

Regular Coordination and Check-In Calls

Accelerator personnel are expected to participate in regular check-in calls with their assigned Network Coordinator. These meetings are a key component of both fiscal and programmatic oversight.

Accelerator staff should come prepared to discuss:

- Status and submission of financial and programmatic reports
- Progress updates on their Work Breakdown Structure ("WBS")
- Items flagged in the Risk Register that require attention
- WorkNet reporting
- Upcoming events and milestones
- Any issues, concerns, or successes related to program implementation

Note: Prior to each meeting, Network Coordinators will distribute an agenda outlining some of the specific topics to be covered.

On-Site Reviews

Accelerators will also be subject to on-site reviews conducted by members of the Department. These reviews may include, but are not limited to, evaluations of:

- Facility requirements
- Out-of-office policies and procedures
- Curriculum

- Marketing and branding procedures
- Client data collection and retention processes
- Financial recordkeeping and documentation
- Programmatic workflows and operational procedures

  These reviews are designed to:

  - Ensure compliance
  - Provide technical assistance
  - Support continuous improvement across the program

Approximate dates for on-site reviews are listed in the Work Breakdown Structure ("WBS"). Department staff will contact Accelerator personnel at least two weeks in advance to coordinate and confirm review logistics.

Referrals

Resource Directory Development

Each Accelerator must develop a comprehensive directory of resources to support participant needs. This directory should include local, state, federal, and private resources related to:

- Workforce training
- Back-office services
- Financing opportunities
- Business support services
- Other relevant entrepreneurial tools

** The State Office is also working to develop a directory of resources for the Accelerators. If you believe a particular resource should be included for use across other Accelerators, please contact your Network Coordinator with that information.**

Referral Requirements

When providing referrals to program participants, Accelerators must:

- Offer a minimum of three options for each service or resource,
  - *Unless only one qualified option exists*

- Ensure that referrals are relevant, up-to-date, and actionable

Program Collaboration

Contractor Accelerators are required to:

- Collaborate and coordinate with other CEJA workforce and economic development programs as they become available
- Ensure alignment with statewide clean energy initiatives

Recommended Partners and Networks

Contractor Accelerators are strongly encouraged to partner with:

CEJA Clean Energy Contractor Incubators

- Provides support to small and emerging contractors in clean energy and related fields.

Illinois Small Business Development Center ("SBDC") Network

- Supports pre-venture entrepreneurs
- Offers guidance to help existing businesses grow and expand

APEX Accelerator Network

(Formerly Procurement Technical Assistance Centers – PTACs)

- Provides specialized guidance for government contracting success

Audit Requirements and Reporting Guidance

Overview

Not all grantees are required to submit an audit. Audit requirements depend on:

- The amount and type of funding (State, Federal Direct, or Federal Pass-Through)
- Federal and State audit thresholds
- Other regulatory requirements

Federal Audit Thresholds

- Grantees expending $750,000 or more in federal awards (direct and pass-through) during their fiscal year must have a Single Audit in accordance with 2 CFR 200.514
- Grantees below $750,000 in total federal awards are not subject to Single Audit requirements

Grantees meeting specific criteria may elect a program-specific audit in accordance with **2 CFR 200.507**, with DCEO approval.

State Audit Requirements for Non-Single Audit Grantees

Grantees Expending $500,000 or More

- Across State, Federal Direct, and Federal Pass-Through funds
- Must complete a financial statement audit under Generally Accepted Government Auditing Standards ("GAGAS")

Grantees Expending $300,000 – $499,999

- Across State, Federal Direct, and Federal Pass-Through funds
- Must complete a financial statement audit under Generally Accepted Auditing Standards ("GAAS")

Grantees Expending Less Than $300,000

- Not subject to audit but must submit voluntary or regulatory audits (e.g., Illinois Attorney General requirements for nonprofits earning $300,000+)
- These audits must be submitted through the GATA Audit Report Review process

Reference: Uniform Guidance – **2 CFR 200.501** (Audit Requirements)

Audit Reporting and Documentation

If No Audit is Conducted

Grantees below audit thresholds must still complete and submit:

- Audit Certification
- Consolidated Year-End Financial Report ("CYEFR"**)**

These must be submitted via the GATA Grantee Portal within 60 days of the fiscal year-end.

The audit certification helps determine the appropriate audit type based on grantee responses. Upon completion, the portal will generate:

- Audit determination
- List of required documents
- Submission timeline

Single Audit Reporting Package

Required for grantees expending $750,000+ in federal funds

Due Date:

- 30 days after audit report completion, or
- No later than 9 months after fiscal year-end

Submit to Federal Audit Clearinghouse ("FAC"):

- Financial Statements (200.510(a))
- Schedule of Expenditures of Federal Awards ("SEFA") (200.510(b))
- Summary Schedule of Prior Audit Findings (200.511(b))
- Auditor's Report (200.515)
- Corrective Action Plan (200.511(c))

Submit to GATA Grantee Portal:

- Management Letters (AU325), if applicable
- Consolidated Year-End Financial Report with 'In Relation To' Opinion
- Auditor's Peer Review Letter

Financial Statement Audit Reporting Package

For grantees expending $300,000+ in State/Federal funds but not meeting the Single Audit threshold.

Due Date:

- 30 days after audit report completion, or
- No later than 6 months after fiscal year-end

Documents Required:

- Financial Statements (200.510(a))
- Summary Schedule of Prior Audit Findings (200.511(b))
- Auditor's Report (200.515)
- Report on Internal Control & Compliance (GAGAS, for 12/31/18 or later)
- Corrective Action Plan (200.511(c))
- Management Letters (AU325)

- CYEFR with 'In Relation To' Opinion
- State Data Collection Form
- Auditor's Peer Review Letter

Audit Not Required & No Audit Conducted

Still Required to Submit:

- Consolidated Year-End Financial Report ("CYEFR")
    - Due: 30 days after completion, no later than 6 months after fiscal year-end

Audit Submission Timeline Summary

Single Audit Grantees:

- Submit to FAC: 30 days after auditor's report OR 9 months after fiscal year-end, whichever is sooner
- Submit State compliance documents to GATA Portal within 30 days of FAC submission

State Compliance Documents:

- Management Letters (AU325), if applicable
- CYEFR with 'In Relation To' Opinion
- Auditor's Peer Review Letter

Other Audit Packages:

- Submit to GATA Grantee Portal within 60 days of fiscal year-end

Instructions for using the portal are available in the GATA Resource Library

Need Help?

For questions or clarification, email:
ceo.externalauditunit@illinois.gov

Important Reminder

Failure to comply with audit requirements may result in enforcement action under the Grantee Compliance Enforcement System (GCES) and can jeopardize future grant funding.

File Retention

To ensure compliance with CEJA Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program requirements, all grantees must adhere to the following file retention policy:

Participant File Requirements

- Collection: Grantees must collect and maintain participant files to support program documentation and monitoring.
- Retention Period: All participant records must be retained for a minimum of three (3) years following:
    - Program completion
    - Participant exit, withdrawal, or dismissal from the Contractor Accelerator
- Security: Participant files must be stored in a secure and confidential location to protect sensitive information.

Failure to comply with file retention and security protocols may result in non-compliance findings during audits or monitoring visits.

Risk Mitigation

Risk Register

The Risk Register serves as both an internal and external monitoring tool, designed to identify, assess, and manage potential programmatic issues throughout the grant lifecycle.



This tool is integrated into each applicant's SmartSheet dashboard, where DCEO-CEJA staff actively monitor for:

- Missed deadlines
- Applicant-reported concerns
- Issues observed by program staff

Risk Identification and Scoring

When a risk is identified:

- CEJA staff assess the severity, likelihood, and urgency
- An overall risk score is generated
- A mitigation strategy must be created and documented directly in SmartSheet

Collaboration Required: CEJA staff and the applicant must work together to:

- Address the risk

- Develop appropriate mitigation strategies
- Record the resolution or outcome

Risk Status Categories

Each risk will be assigned one of the following statuses:

- Open – Active issue requiring mitigation
- Closed – Resolved and no longer a threat
- Monitoring – Under observation but not actively impacting the program
- Accepted – Not fully mitigated but documented with justification

Status updates are reviewed during each scheduled status call between CEJA staff and the applicant.

Purpose and Value

The integrated Risk Register is a central reference point that helps ensure:

- Programs remain on track
- Budgets are maintained
- Long-term success and sustainability are achievable across the grant lifecycle

General Information

LEFT BLANK INTENTIONALLY

Grant Extensions

Grantees will receive one (1) year of initial grant funding, followed by up to two (2) additional twelve (12) month extension periods, subject to performance, availability of funds, and program approval. For each extension period, the Primes Program Administrator and/or Grant Manager will issue updated grant budget templates and scope of work documents for grantee completion. Rather than executing a new grant agreement, each extension will be processed as a twelve (12) month continuation through a modification to the existing agreement, incorporating an updated scope of work and revised budget.

Upon submission of the required budget and scope of work materials, the Primes Program Administrator will review the documentation and schedule a meeting with the grantee to discuss program plans, deliverables, and expectations for the upcoming twelve (12) month period. This discussion will serve as an opportunity to align on priorities, clarify any questions regarding the proposed scope and budget, and

ensure that the extension period is structured to support successful program implementation and compliance with grant requirements

Offboarding Plan

If any key personnel, staff, contractors, or consultants supporting the program plan to leave their role or transition off the project, the grantee must notify the Program Administrator as soon as possible.

Early notification is critical to:

- Ensure a smooth transition
- Maintain program continuity
- Prevent disruptions in service delivery or reporting

Required Elements of an Offboarding Plan

An effective offboarding plan should include the following components:

- Overview of Duties and Responsibilities
- Status of Current Projects
- Key Contacts and Stakeholders (if applicable)
- Logins and Access Details (if applicable)
- Client Notes entered in a Department-approved system
- Submission of Any Unpaid Expenses to the fiscal agent
- Upcoming Deadlines to be monitored or met
- Designation of a Replacement or Interim Point of Contact for coverage during the vacancy

Exit Form Requirement

Individuals that deliver client services and/or have access to WorkNet that exit the Accelerator Program must complete an Exit Form, which includes:

- Certification that all client notes and financial expenses have been submitted
- Opportunity to provide feedback on their experience in the program

Forms to Be Completed

All required forms related to the Illinois Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program will be made available on the Illinois WorkNet landing page.

- Grantees are responsible for accessing and completing the most up-to-date forms.
- If any forms are added or revised, the Department will notify the Accelerator network to ensure timely updates and continued compliance.

Regularly reviewing the Illinois WorkNet page is encouraged to stay informed of any changes or new form requirements.

Definitions

Client or Participant

A business/individual that has been accepted as a member of the CEJA Clean Energy Contractor Accelerator Program.

Equity Eligible Contractor

An *Equity Eligible Contractor* is defined as:

- A business that is majority-owned by Equity Investment Eligible Persons or individuals who are or have been participants in one or more of the following programs:
    - Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program
    - Clean Energy Contractor Incubator Program
    - Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program
    - Illinois Climate Works Pre-Apprenticeship Program
    - Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program
- A nonprofit or cooperative that is majority-governed by individuals meeting the same eligibility criteria as above.
- An individual contractor who is or has been a participant in one of the above programs and is offering personal services as an independent contractor.

Equity Investment Eligible Persons

An *Equity Investment Eligible Person* refers to individuals who would most benefit from equitable investments by the State and includes:

- Persons whose primary residence is in an Equity Investment Eligible Community

- Graduates of or current enrollees in the foster care system
- Persons who were formerly incarcerated

Equity Investment Eligible Community

Defined as geographic areas throughout Illinois that would most benefit from equitable investment due to historic discrimination or disinvestment, including:

- R3 Areas as established under Section 10-40 of the *Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act*, which are identified using data related to:
    - Gun injury rates
    - Unemployment
    - Child poverty
    - Incarceration rates
    - Historic disinvestment
- Environmental Justice Communities as defined by the Illinois Power Agency under the *Illinois Power Agency Act*, excluding racial/ethnic indicators, where residents have faced disproportionate pollution burdens.

For maps and criteria, refer to the *Illinois Solar for All* website on Environmental Justice Communities.

Equity-Focused Populations

These populations are prioritized for CEJA wraparound services and include:

- Low-income persons
- Individuals/households earning below 200% of the federal poverty level
- Residents of Equity Investment Eligible Communities
- Black, Indigenous, and People of Color ("BIPOC")
- Formerly convicted persons
- Persons who are or were in the child welfare system
- Energy workers in the fossil fuel sector
- Dependents of displaced energy workers

- Women, particularly underrepresented in trades
- LGBTQ+, transgender, or gender nonconforming persons
- Persons with disabilities
- Youth (ages 16–24) who fall into any of the above categories

Each group faces unique systemic barriers. CEJA targets these populations through specialized support, workforce development, and inclusive programming.

Primes Program Leads

Grantees that responded to a Notice of Funding Opportunity to carry out the CEJA Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program

Department

Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity

Primes Administrator

Refers to the person(s) carrying out the program for IL DCEO.

Community-Based Organizations ("CBO")

A *Community-Based Organization* is a mission-driven nonprofit entity that:

- Has a track record of supporting entrepreneurs and small businesses
- Possesses knowledge of clean energy and construction trades
- Maintains strong community ties
- Demonstrates the ability to serve diverse and underrepresented populations

Core Equity Values

Diversity

The representation of individuals from a wide range of backgrounds and lived experiences.

Inclusion

The action or state of ensuring individuals feel included, empowered, and a sense of belonging within a group or organization.

Accessibility

According to the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights:

"Accessibility means that a person with a disability is afforded the opportunity to acquire the same information, engage in the same interactions, and enjoy the same services as a person without a disability in an equally effective and equally integrated manner."

CEJA extends this to include financial, technological, and linguistic accessibility so that all can thrive.

Equity

The state of being just, impartial, and fair. CEJA emphasizes that equity must be:

- Structural and systemic
- Backed by robust infrastructure
- A dynamic process that produces equitable ideas, power, and resources

Sources

- CEJA Ecosystem Presentation
- CEJA Policy 01-PL-24: Participant Enrollment
- CEJA Program Announcements and Updates
- Climate and Equitable Jobs Act – *Illinois.gov*
- *Equity Provisions in Illinois' CEJA*

Acronyms

CFR	Code of Federal Regulations – Federal rules governing grant compliance.
FTE	Full-Time Equivalent – A unit that indicates the workload of an employed person in a way that makes workloads comparable across various contexts.
CEJA	Climate and Equitable Jobs Act, or otherwise known as the Energy Transition Act 20 ILCS 730
IFA	Illinois Finance Authority “Climate Bank”
R3	Restore, Reinvest, Renew community established in Section 10-40 of the Cannabis Regulation and Tax Act.
EJ	Environmental justice communities as defined by the Illinois Power Agency
GATA	Grant Accountability and Transparency Act – Illinois law ensuring proper grant management and fiscal transparency.

MTDC	Modified Total Direct Cost – A method for calculating allowable costs by excluding certain items like equipment and subawards.
PFR	Periodic Financial Report – A regularly submitted report documenting financial expenditures and compliance with budget guidelines.
PPR	Periodic Performance Report – A regularly submitted report documenting program activities, deliverables, and progress toward performance metrics.
WBS	Work Breakdown Structure – A project management tool that breaks a project into smaller, manageable components or deliverables.

APPENDIX A: Branding & Communications

Guidelines for Use of CEJA, DCEO, and Partner Logos

Purpose

This section outlines the official standards and approval requirements for using the DCEO, CEJA, and partner organization logos in any materials developed under the CEJA program. Consistent branding ensures clarity, professionalism, and alignment with state messaging.

Messaging

In the text of custom-designed materials, Accelerators may choose from the following phrases or similar language when assigning attribution to the Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program.

- "A Partner of the CEJA Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program"
- "Funded by the CEJA Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program"
- "[Organization Name] is a Partner of the CEJA Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program"

Accelerators shall not describe services as "free." **All references should instead use the term "no-cost"** to accurately reflect that services are provided without charge to participants but are supported by public funding.

1. CEJA Logo Usage

- Use for communications directly tied to CEJA initiatives.
- Maintain brand consistency, including spacing and visual clarity.
    - The CEJA logo should come before the organization logo and be as large or larger than the organization logo (except on organizational webpages and business cards).

    - Clear Space: Leave a minimum amount of clear space around the perimeter of the approved graphic equivalent to the height of the letter “C” in CEJA.
    - Background: The approved graphic should always stand out clearly from the background.
    - Adjustments: Do not redraw, alter, strengthen, tilt, rotate, or distort the approved graphic. Do not modify the colors of the approved graphic.
- Grantees may only use the approved CEJA logo to represent their involvement in the CEJA Illinois programs. Use of any other CEJA or DCEO logo is strictly prohibited.
- The approved CEJA logo is available in English and Spanish and can be found on the WorkNet landing page, or by contacting your Network Coordinator.
- To ensure a high-quality appearance, please adhere to the following resolution guidelines for the approved graphic:
    - Print: 300 dpi at the size that it will be used
    - Web: 72 dpi at the size that it will be used
    - In presentations: 150 dpi at the size that it will be used.

  Other Branding
    - CEJA logo HEX codes:
        - Light Green: #ADE199
        - Dark Blue: #1564C1
        - Dark Green: #3DA52C

3. Partner and Subgrantee Logos

- May be used only with prior DCEO approval.
- Logos allowed when:
    - Co-branded materials are approved
    - A clear CEJA-funded relationship is established
- Include phrases such as "In partnership with" or "This program is funded in part by the CEJA Clean Energy Contractor Accelerator Program"

4. Logo Hierarchy and Placement

- Place logos in top banner or footer row.
- Order: CEJA, then approved partner logos.

5. Approval and Review Process

- All public-facing materials must be submitted for approval (e.g., social media, websites, signage, print, presentations).
- Submit to the Primes Program Administrator or Network Coordinator. Allow 3-5 business days for review.

6. Prohibited Uses

- Do not use logos for unrelated/personal projects.
- Do not imply DCEO endorsement outside of approved programming.
- Do not alter or recreate logo elements.
- Do not use logos without approval.

Appendix: Requesting Logo Files

Links to the approved CEJA logos can be found on the WorkNet landing page or by contacting the individuals below:

- noah.bond@illinois.gov
- brooks.crawford@illinois.gov
- jeremy.r.nunes@illinois.gov

Public-Facing Materials Review & Approval Process

Purpose

Ensure alignment with CEJA's mission, DCEO branding, and program integrity for all public-facing materials.

1. Materials Subject to Review

Submit materials referencing DCEO, CEJA, or CEJA-funded programming, including:

- Flyers, brochures, social media, digital ads
- Website pages, press releases, event signage
- Recruitment materials, email campaigns
- Videos, webinars, presentations

Note: Internal-only materials do not require review unless reused publicly.

2. Submission Requirements

- Include draft file (PDF, PNG/JPG, or editable format)
- Indicate target audience, platform, release date
- Highlight any urgent deadlines
- Include all logos and branding

3. Review Timeline

- Standard: 3–5 business days
- Longer for materials requiring translation, media coordination

4. Review Process Overview

1. Partner submits draft to CEJA Network Coordinator and/or Program Manager
2. Program Manager forwards to Communications Team (if needed)
3. Communications reviews branding, accuracy, tone, legal alignment
4. Feedback provided
5. Partner revises, resubmits
6. Final approval granted via email

5. Approval Confirmation

- Approval confirmed in writing (email) by your Network Coordinator or Program Manager. Save confirmation for audit/recordkeeping.

6. Revisions After Approval

Resubmission required unless changes are strictly grammatical/formatting

7. Best Practices

- Build review time into timelines
- Use Department-provided templates
- Confirm if materials require review
- Plan early for major events and campaigns

Appendix: Submission Email Template

To: [Program Manager Email] Subject: Public-Facing Material – Review Request

Hi [Program Manager Name],

Please find attached [material type] for [audience/use]. Target release: [insert date]. Let us know if revisions are needed.

Thank you, [Your Name] [Organization Name]

Press/Media Coordination & Social Media Standards

Purpose

Guide consistent, professional, equity-aligned CEJA messaging in media and social platforms.

A. Press & Media Coordination

1. Press Releases and Media Advisories

- Submit to DCEO Communications Team in advance
- Review for accuracy, tone, alignment
- Leadership quotes: request 10 business days ahead; require DCEO and Governor's Office approval

2. Media Outreach and Events

- Notify Program Manager before inviting media
- Provide event details: date, time, location, purpose, speakers
- DCEO may issue state-level advisory if needed

3. Media Inquiries

- Redirect inquiries referencing CEJA/DCEO/state funding to Communications Team
- Avoid unofficial statements or "off the record" comments
- Contact: Noah.Bond@illinois.gov

B. Website

- A dedicated landing page for the Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program must outline:
    - Program Goals
    - General Participant Requirements
    - Application Process

        - Contact Information may be necessary here contingent on Accelerator's unique application process.
    - Hours of Operation
    - Contact Information
    - CEJA Logo and Partnership Messaging

C. Social Media Standards

1. General Guidelines

- Acknowledge CEJA Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator funding
- Use accurate branding and logos
- Maintain professional, equity-centered tone
- Avoid partisan, religious, or inappropriate content

2. Tagging and Attribution

- Use hashtag #CEJAIllinois
- Tag official accounts (Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn)

3. Pre-Approval for Campaigns or Paid Media

- Submit copy, graphics, and strategy for review

4. Graphics and Templates

- Use only DCEO-approved visuals

5. Misuse

- Do not:
    - Misrepresent programs
    - Use logos politically
    - Share participant data without consent

6. Monitoring

- DCEO may request removal or correction of posts

Sample Messaging & Hashtags

Situation	Example Message	Hashtag(s)

Program Launch	"We're proud to be selected for the CEJA Accelerator Program through @IllinoisDCEO."	#CEJAIllinois #CleanEnergyEquity
Event Invite	"Join us this Friday for a contractor info session—powered by @IllinoisDCEO and CEJA!"	#CEJAJobs #EquityInEnergy
Program Impact	"Through CEJA, we helped 15 new contractors get licensed and insured. Thank you @IllinoisDCEO!"	#CleanEnergyWorks #CEJAImpact

Language Accessibility & Translation Guidance

Purpose

Ensure CEJA materials and services are accessible to Limited English Proficiency ("LEP") populations and Equity Investment Eligible Communities.

1. Legal Requirements

- Title VI of Civil Rights Act of 1964
- Executive Order 13166
- DCEO Language Access Policy

2. Translation Requirements

Translate public-facing materials when:

- Audience includes Limited English Proficiency populations
- Used in Equity Investment Eligible Communities
- Providing essential services (job placement, legal info)

Vital documents (e.g., applications, waivers, notices) must always be translated.

3. Materials to Translate

Material Type	Required?	Notes
Flyers & Brochures	Yes	Include Spanish + top LEP languages
Applications & Intake Forms	Yes	Based on audience served
Social Media Posts	Recommended	If targeting LEP communities

Videos/Webinars	Yes	Include captions/subtitles in other languages
Surveys/Feedback Forms	Yes	Must allow LEP response

4. Translation & Interpretation Services

- Professional Translation Services (preferred)
- Ensure tone, accuracy, legal integrity
- Coordinate with DCEO for vendor referrals
- Provide interpretation at events as needed

5. Approval Process

- Submit English version first for approval
- Submit translated version for compliance check

6. Best Practices

- Use plain language pre-translation
- Include: “This information is available in other languages upon request.”
- Use culturally inclusive graphics
- Collect language preference at intake

7. Equity-First Lens

Language access is an equity priority. Providing understanding builds trust and improves outcomes.

Community Outreach Messaging & Media Engagement Tips

Purpose

Support inclusive, community-centered messaging aligned with CEJA’s equity goals.

1. Core Messaging Principles

A. Lead with Equity & Opportunity

Use inclusive language such as:

- “Serving communities historically left out of clean energy jobs”
- “Equity in action through CEJA programming”

- "No-cost support available for small businesses and contractors"

B. Keep Language Plain

- Avoid jargon and legal terms
- Highlight participant benefits (e.g., free training, licensing help)

C. Build Trust with Localized Language

- Reference local roots and community partnerships

2. Media Engagement Best Practices

A. Prepare Talking Points

- Create 30-second elevator pitch
- Avoid unexplained acronyms

B. Highlight Stories

- Use participant quotes/testimonials (with consent)

C. Position as Equity Partner

- Acknowledge CEJA Support
- Show alignment with CEJA vision

3. Engaging Community Stakeholders

A. Partner with Trusted Messengers

- Collaborate with churches, schools, nonprofits

B. Meet People Where They Are

- Prioritize in-person events
- Offer flexible timing and accessible locations

C. Incentivize Participation

- Provide food, childcare, stipends when possible
- Make events interactive and engaging

4. Sample Messaging Templates

Recruitment Flyer Tagline: "Looking to build your business in clean energy? We're here to help—no-cost training and one-on-one business support, funded by the CEJA Illinois Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program."

Social Media Example: "Looking to grow your contracting business? The CEJA Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator at [Host Organization] can help you get licensed, insured, and connected to clean energy projects. No cost to join. Apply now. #CEJAIllinois #CleanEnergyJobs"

Spoken Event Intro: "Thanks for joining us! This is part of the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act, which is helping create clean energy jobs and support small businesses across Illinois. We're proud to be a Partner of the CEJA Illinois Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program"

APPENDIX C: Project Dashboard Definitions

Programs Infrastructure and Operational Setup

1.0 Program Administration: Ensure a signed grant agreement is in place and initiate program administration, including the management of overall operations, timelines, and deliverables.

1.1 Program Launch: Execute initial setup to prepare for delivering program services.

1.2 Staffing and Hiring: Recruit and hire qualified staff. Send all job descriptions of positions and resumes of staff being charged to the grant to your Network Coordinator. For those being charged at 100% and/or providing direct services to clients send resumes prior to final interview. Network Coordinators or another member of the Department may ask to be a part of the final interview panel.

1.3 Facility Set Up: Secure and prepare accessible program space to host activities and services. Spaces should be ADA compliant and should be adequate to provide one-on-one assistance and cohort training sessions.

1.4 Onboarding of Staff and Consultants: Train new staff and consultants on program goals, processes, and compliance. Meet with DCEO staff for additional grant and program onboarding.

1.5 Establish Partnerships and MOUs: Meet with resource partners and formalize agreements with consultants/contractual to support program delivery (if necessary).

1.6 Program Governance: Identify key decision-makers and establish roles and responsibilities of staff through the program lifecycle.

1.7 Oversight Procedures: Set up processes for internal review, accountability, and quality assurance. This can include procedures for reporting, fiscal and forms of QA/QC such as surveys.

Outreach, Compliance and Community Engagement

2.0 Policies and Procedures Manual: Develop written guidelines for all program operations. This could include an addendum to the program manual provided by DCEO that includes specifics to the host organization.

2.1 Compliance Tracking System: Implement tools to monitor regulatory and program compliance.

2.2 Outreach Strategy: Design a plan to promote the program and attract participants, community based organizations, chambers of commerce, clean energy organizations, etc., including hosting at least two (2) events each year for networking with participants and potential partners, subcontractors and employees.

2.3 Equity-Centered Marketing Plan: Ensure that your outreach plan consistently applies an equity-focused approach.

2.4 Partner with CEJA Navigators, Workforce Network, and Incubators: Leverage existing CEJA partnerships to enhance outreach, recruitment, and additional engagement efforts.

2.5 Develop Promotional Materials: Create brochures, flyers, digital content, website/landing page to market the program.

2.6 Recruitment Activities: Engage communities and networks to attract participants and contractors.

2.7 Outreach Events in Equity Eligible Communities: Host in-person or virtual events in priority areas.

2.8 Develop Plain-Language FAQ for Participants and Community Partners: Provide accessible program information that can be provided to potential participants and other community partners.

2.9 Advisory Board Development: Develop an advisory board that consists of at least 7 individuals serving the region. This advisory board must meet at least once per year and provide feedback on the Incubator and needs of the region. It is suggested including a member of your local CEJA Incubator, CEJA Navigator and CEJA Workforce Hub to the advisory board. A hub that is currently both an Incubator and Accelerator may create one Advisory Board for both.

2.10 Develop Resource and Referral Listing: Develop a listing of federal, state and local resources to assist with capital infusion, workforce development, wraparound services, etc. During the intake process, applicant businesses that are not selected should be provided a referral to a program that may be better suited to their needs e.g. SBDC, APEX Accelerator, internal business development services, other CEJA programs, etc. The resource listing shall additionally feature potential mentor companies that can be used in case of current mentor withdraw from the program, change in client need, or mentor removal.

<u>Participant Recruitment, Intake and Training Services</u>

3.0 Recruitment of Contractors: Actively recruit small and diverse contractors that meet program qualifications for participation.

3.1 Application Posted: Post the Department-approved participation application. Work with CEJA Energy Transition Navigators, other external partners and internal staff to provide technical assistance with completing the application where necessary.

3.2 Participant Selection: Identify 2 reviewers and a member of DCEO staff for the participant selection process. Use the Department-approved merit review scoring sheet to evaluate participants. Schedule meeting with reviewers to pick 3-5 participants for the cohort.

3.3 Pre-Screening: Schedule and meet with selected cohort participants to conduct a needs assessment. Develop a curriculum tailored to the participant's application, intake, and pre-screening information. Identify any barriers to program success and provide referrals to wraparound services as needed.

3.4 Intake Form Processing: Collect, review, and input intake metrics into WorkNet.

3.5 Assign Advisors: Match participants with program advisors for ongoing support.

3.6 Training and Support Services: Provide targeted training, develop relationships with potential mentor companies, and wraparound support services tailored to individual and regional needs and may include business coaching, peer learning, and access to industry-specific resources.

3.7 Curriculum Development: Create a structured workplan with goals for contractors tailored to the needs of the participants. Send curriculum to Network Coordinator prior to implementation.

3.8 Updating WorkNet for Participant Tracking: Maintain accurate participant data in WorkNet.

Business Development, Mentorship, and Technical Assistance

4.0 Business Planning and Financial Literacy: Train and coach participants to develop an achievable 5-year business plan.

4.1 Contracting and Bidding Process: Teach participants how to prepare bids for government and private business opportunities and respond to Request for Proposals (RFPs).

4.2 Certification Assistance: Assist participants with applying for Minority Business Enterprise certifications and other relevant certifications and approved vendor statuses.

4.3 Vendor Listing(s): Assist participants become listed in any relevant directories and databases organized by the Department of Central Management Services (CMS) and other applicable listings including Utility programs, Illinois Solar for All and Illinois Shines.

4.4 Other Applicable Programs: Assist participants in connecting with and participating in the Illinois Power Agency's Illinois Solar for All, Illinois Shines and Utility programs. The Accelerator should use the Energy Workforce Equity Portal to connect participating contractors with IPA resources.

4.5 Service Delivery: Provide participants with tailored training and individualized business advising in the clean energy and small business spaces.

4.6 One-on-One Business Advising: Provide personalized one-on-one coaching to contractors. Accelerators are required to meet with each participant at least once (1) monthly.

4.7 Networking & Matchmaking Events: Facilitate connections between participant contractors and potential partners, subcontractors and employees.

4.8 Access to Professional Services (Legal, Finance, Insurance): Accelerators should develop a local resource listing and connect participants to expert service providers, a minimum of 3 referral options must be provided (where necessary).

4.9 Mentor Recruitment: Recruit mentors that meet the requirements seen in this manual for participant pairings.

4.10 Mentor Stipend and MOU: Sign MOU with mentor companies featuring goals, metrics and outcomes to track effectiveness of mentorships.

4.11 Ongoing Technical Assistance: Develop plan for ongoing support past the scheduled cohort.

4.12 Office Hours or Drop-In TA Sessions for Contractors: Offer open, flexible support times (where necessary).

<u>Access to Capital</u>

5.0 Operational Grants NOFO: Post Department-approved NOFO template for responses from participant contractors. If Accelerator would like to disburse grants in another manner, submit proposal to Department contact for review.

5.1 Operational Grants Technical Assistance: The Accelerator must assist participants through the NOFO application process where needed.

5.2 Operational Grants Review: Coordinate with the Department to start the grant application review process. At least one (1) member of the Department must be a grant reviewer. Provide decision explanation to participant contractor and if applicable sign an MOU with defined outcomes.

5.3 Grant Funds: Develop internal system for managing operational grant funding requests from participants.

5.4 IFA – CEJA Loan Program:

<u>Equity, Accessibility, and Supportive Services</u>

6.0 Preparation for Union Signatory & Certifications: Develop relationships with local unions and workforce programs and assist contractors in meeting union and certification requirements.

6.1 **Language Access (Materials & Interpretation):** Offer multilingual resources and interpretation services where needed.

6.2 **ADA Compliant Facility and Services:** Ensure all facilities and materials are accessible to people with disabilities.

6.3 **Transportation, Childcare, and Support Referrals:** Create a referral listing to connect participants to supportive services where necessary for program accessibility.

6.4 **Cultural Competency:** Deliver culturally responsive services and materials.

6.5 **Equity Lens in Curriculum and Delivery:** Integrate equity principles into all training and services.

6.6 **Identify Barriers:** Identify barriers to participants and develop strategies to overcome those barriers.

6.7 **Track and Report Support Services Usage:** Monitor and document participant use of support services if a referral is provided.

Data Management, Evaluation and Impact Reporting

7.0 Collaboration with DEI-Focused Organizations: Perform outreach to and partner with organizations that prioritize diversity, equity, and inclusion in their service delivery.

7.1 Data Collection, Reporting, and Evaluation: Assign staff to manage data reporting within the CEJA Reporting System and develop methods to collect and evaluate participant feedback effectively.

7.2 Establish Data Collection Tools: Develop surveys, forms, and trackers for data gathering.

7.3 Staff Training on Data Management: Train staff to input and manage data accurately.

7.4 Participant Baseline Assessment: This assessment is to gain a comprehensive understanding of the participant's unique needs, goals, and challenges.

7.5 Program Reporting: Submit regular reports using WorkNet on progress and outcomes

7.6 Quarterly & Annual Reports to DCEO: Submit Quarterly & Annual PFR & PPR reports to your Grants Manager. Submit cash reimbursement requests at least Quarterly to your Grants Manager.

7.7 Equity Impact Reports: Track and report program reach and outcomes for priority populations.

7.8 Success Stories Compilation: Collect and document program success stories. Have participants sign the client release form where necessary.

7.9 Monthly Narrative Reporting: Program Lead must complete a monthly narrative report following the template in the CEJA Reporting System. Contact your Network Coordinator for more guidance.

Program Evaluation and Fiscal Management

8.0 Program Evaluation: A structure is in place to routinely assess the program's effectiveness and impact using feedback from participants, external stakeholders, your Advisory Board, DCEO, etc.
8.1 Participant Outcome Analysis: Measure participant progress and success.
8.2 Continuous Improvement Plan: Regularly refine the program based on evaluation and feedback.
8.3 Stakeholder Feedback Sessions: Gather input from participants, partners, and other stakeholders.
8.4 Fiscal Management: Identify individual in charge of financial reporting for the Program and provide this information to your Grants Manager and Network Coordinator.
8.5 Grant Budget Management: Monitor and manage program spending. See program manual for more details.
8.6 Establish Grant Accounting Procedures: Set up or identify existing financial systems specific to grant management.
8.7 Expense Tracking: Document and categorize all program expenses.
8.8 Invoice and Reimbursement: Submit timely invoices and reimbursement requests to your grants manager.
8.9 Internal Financial Controls Review: Ensure strong financial management practices are in place.

Financial Reporting and Audit Readiness

9.0 Monthly Financial Reports: Prepare detailed spending summaries with supporting documentation and time and effort forms and send to Grants Manager for reimbursement.
9.1 Quarterly Financial Statements: Submit comprehensive quarterly performance financial reports (PFR).
9.2 Annual Audit Preparation: Get financial records ready for annual audits.
9.3 Document Retention Plan (Digital and Physical): Maintain proper records for required periods.

Close-out and Sustainability

10.0 Develop Grant Closeout Plan: Prepare for the orderly shutdown of the grant if needed.

10.1 **Final Report to DCEO:** Submit a complete summary of activities and financials at the end of the grant period. **Retention of Final Financial Records and Documentation:** Safely store records for at least 3 years for audit and compliance purposes.

10.2 **Sustainability Strategy or Transition Plan:** Plan for ongoing program delivery or closure after grant funding ends.

10.3 **Partnership Continuation or Transition Strategy:** Plan for continued or adjusted partnerships.

10.4 **Debrief with Staff, Partners, and Participants:** Conduct formal performance reviews to identify successes and challenges.

Year 2 Readiness and Reapplication

11.0 Conduct Year 1 Program Self-Assessment (Performance and Fiscal): Evaluate and document internal performance and financial management.

11.1 Identify Lessons Learned and Program Adjustments for Year 2: Document insights and proposed improvements.

11.2 Draft Year 2 Scope of Work and Deliverables: Outline updated activities and goals for Year 2.

11.3 Update Budget and Staffing Plan Based on Year 1 Experience: Adjust resource plans based on lessons learned.

11.4 Submit Required Data and Performance Metrics to DCEO: Input any outstanding reporting to the CEJA Reporting System.

11.5 Engage Participants and Stakeholders for Feedback/Input: Include community and participant voices in planning.

11.6 Finalize Year 2 Application Narrative and Attachments: Complete the application and required documents for continued funding.

11.7 Submit Year 2 Application to DCEO: Deliver the application on time.

11.8 Prepare for Follow-Up Questions and Clarifications from DCEO: Be ready to respond to DCEO inquiries.

11.9 Transition Plan if Not Funded for Year 2: Develop a plan to wind down or sustain program without additional funding.

APPENDIX D: Resources

Below are potential resources available for use by Accelerators and their clients. Accelerators are encouraged to share any additional tools or materials they believe would be valuable to their own programs or to the broader network. This section will be updated regularly as new resources become available.

I. Illinois DCEO CEJA & FEJA Programs

- **Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program**
  - Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership – Chicago South
  - Joliet Junior College – Joliet
  - College of Lake County – Waukegan
  - Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership – Chicago West/Southwest
  - Safer Foundation – Chicago South
  - The Workforce Connection – Rockford
  - Parkland College – Champaign
  - Community College District 536 (Lewis & Clark) – Alton

- 548 Foundation – Chicago West/Southwest
- College of DuPage – Aurora
- Richland Community College – Decatur
- Macedonia Development Corp. – East St. Louis

- **Energy Transition Navigators**
  - Chicago Urban League – Chicago South
  - Community Assistance Program – Chicago South
  - Goodwill Industries of Northern IL – Rockford
  - North Lawndale Employment Network – Chicago West/Southwest
  - Central States SER – Chicago West/Southwest
  - The Community Works Inc. – Waukegan
  - Goodwill Industries of Metropolitan Chicago – Aurora
  - Heaven's View CDC – Peoria

- Vermilion Advantage – Danville
- Carbondale Branch NAACP – Carbondale
- Community Foundation of Macon County – Decatur
- Senior Services Plus – Alton
- United Congregations of Metro East – East St. Louis
- Lewis University - Joliet

- **Illinois Climate Works Pre-apprenticeship Program**
- **Returning Residents Clean Jobs Training Program**
  - Imani Works Inc.
  - Safer Foundation
  - Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership
- **Clean Energy Primes Contractor Accelerator Program**
  - Northern

- Central
- Southern

- **Clean Energy Contractor Incubator Program**
  - Elevate Energy – Chicago South
  - Hispanic American Construction Industry Association – Chicago West/Southwest
  - Joliet Junior College – Joliet
  - College of DuPage – Aurora
  - The Workforce Connection - Rockford

- **Craft Apprenticeship Program**
  - Illinois IBEW Renewable Energy Fund

- **Solar Training Pipeline Program (FEJA)**
- **Multi-cultural Jobs Program (FEJA)**
- **Energy Transition Community Grants**

- **Coal-to-Solar Energy Storage Grant**
- **Displaced Energy Worker Dependent Transition Scholarship**
- **Community Solar Energy Sovereignty Grant**
- **Equitable Energy Future Grant Program**

II. Illinois DCEO Small Business & Entrepreneurship Support

- **Illinois SBDC Program**
  - Resources
  - Find a Center
- **Illinois APEX Accelerator Program**
  - Find a Center
- **Illinois International Trade Center (ITC)**
  - Find a Center

- **Business Information Center**
- **Small Business Environmental Assistance Program**
- **Regulatory Flexibility Program**

III. Energy, Weatherization & Building Support

- **LIHEAP – Utility Bill Assistance**
- **IHWAP – Illinois Home Weatherization Assistance Program**
- **Building Energy Resource Hub**
    - Contractor's Playbook
    - Funding and Financing
    - Webinars
- **Smart Energy Design Assistance Center (SEDAC)**
    - Energy Code Training

    - Public Water Infrastructure Energy Assessments
    - EnergySense Assessments
    - Energy Efficiency Technical Question Assistance
    - Retro-Commissioning (RCx)
    - Energy Planning
    - Benchmarking Assistance
    - New Construction Design Assistance

- **Illinois Stretch Energy Code**
    - SEDAC Stretch Code Training

- **Illinois Energy Conservation Code**
    - REScheck – Residential Building Compliance
    - COMcheck – Commercial Building Compliance
    - DOE Help Desk

- **Embodied Carbon in Construction Calculator**

IV. Workforce Development & Apprenticeships

- **Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership**
- **Chicago Women in Trades**
- **Blacks in Green**
- **Illinois Building & Construction Trades Councils**
- **YouthBuild Chicago**
- **Women in Energy**
- **Midwest Renewable Energy Association**
    - Solar Corps
    - Grow Solar
    - Training

- **National Association of State Energy Officials (NASEO)**

V. Financing, Grants & Tax Incentives

- **DCEO CEJA & FEJA Funding Opportunities**
- **DCEO Incentives and Tax Credit Programs**
- **Illinois Works Programs**
- **Advantage Illinois**
- **Illinois BidBuy**
- **Illinois INVENT**
- **Illinois Angel Investment Tax Credit Program**
- **Illinois Finance Authority / Illinois Green Bank**
    - Building Electrification Bridge Loans
    - Enabling Upgrades Loans (PAUSED)

- Energy Storage Loans (PAUSED)
- Residential Low-Income Solar Expansion (PAUSED)
- Private Activity Bonds
- PACE Bonds
    - Capital Providers for PACE Projects
- Energy Efficiency Revolving Loan Fund (EERLF)
- State Small Business Credit Initiative 2.0 (SSBCI)
- 40101 Grid Resilience
- SOLARAPP+ Adoption Grants
- Residential Solar Outreach Grants (PAUSED)
- Fleet Electrification
- Heavy Duty Charging Loan Program
- Small Utility Clean Energy Planning Grant Program

- Community Charging
- Community-Driven Community Solar Financing (PAUSED)
- Community Geothermal Planning + Pilots
- Stretch Building Code Adoption Support
- Lease-to-Own Loans (PAUSED)
- Working Capital

- **SBA – U.S. Small Business Administration**
  - Lender Match
  - 8(a) Business Development Program
  - 7(a) loans | U.S. Small Business Administration
  - 504 loans | U.S. Small Business Administration
    - Certified Development Companies (CDCs)
  - Microloans | U.S. Small Business Administration

    - Investment capital | U.S. Small Business Administration
        - SBIC directory | U.S. Small Business Administration
    - Disaster assistance | U.S. Small Business Administration
    - Surety bonds | U.S. Small Business Administration
    - Made in America Manufacturing Initiative
    - SBIR/STTR
    - Other Grants
- **Minority Business Development Agency (MBDA)**
    - Capital Readiness Program
- **Women's Business Centers**
- **Veterans Business Outreach Centers**
- **US Export Assistance Centers**
- **Small Business Advisory Council**

    - Small Business Tax Credits and Incentives Listing

- **IRS Inflation Reduction Act Credits**
- **U.S. Economic Development Administration**
    - Funding Opportunities
- **One Big Beautiful Act**
- **USDA Rural Energy for America Program (REAP)**
    - Business Programs
    - Electric Programs
    - Other Energy Programs
- **Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)**
    - LISC Central Illinois
    - LISC Chicago
- **Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation**

- Grant Programs

- **DSIRE USA** (Database for Clean Energy Grants and Financing)

VI. Illinois Power Agency (IPA) Programs

- **Illinois Solar for All**
  - Programs
  - Become an Approved Vendor
- **Illinois Shines**
  - Find an Approved Vendor
  - Become an Approved Vendor
  - Become an Equity Eligible Contractor
  - Energy Workforce Equity Portal
  - Equity Investment Eligible Map

VII. Illinois EPA Programs

- **Illinois EPA**
  - Brownfields
  - Bureau of Land Permitting
  - Bureau of Land Inventory
  - Illinois Priority Climate Action Plan
  - Illinois PCAP Greenhouse Gas Inventory
  - Climate Pollution Reduction Grants
- **Illinois EPA Office of Energy**
  - IRA Home Energy Rebates Program
  - Energy Code and Training
  - Energy Efficiency Trust Fund Program

- Energy Efficiency and Community Block Grant (EECBG)
- Energy Efficiency at Public Water Infrastructure
- Evergreen Clean Energy Innovation Fund

- **Electric Vehicle Rebate Program**
- **Drive a Cleaner Illinois**

VIII. Transportation & Infrastructure

- **Illinois Department of Transportation** **(IDOT)**
  - National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Program **(NEVI)**
  - Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Discretionary Grants
  - Illinois EV Infrastructure Deployment Plan
  - Reliability and Accessibility Accelerator Program
- **Illinois Office of Broadband**

- State Digital Equity Plan

IX. Utilities

- **ComEd**
  - ComEd Smart Assistance Manager (SAM)
  - Made in Illinois Bonus Incentive
  - Business Assistance Programs
  - Doing Business with Us
  - Green Button
  - Developers and Contractors
- **Ameren Illinois**
  - Renewables Developer Resources
  - Business Partner Information

    - Become a Supplier
    - Energy Efficiency Program
    - Business Incentive Applications
- **Nicor Gas**
    - Energy Efficiency Program
    - Sustainability
- **Peoples Gas**
    - Incentives
- **Illinois Association of Electric Cooperatives**
- **MISO Energy**
- **PJM**
- **Touchstone Energy Cooperatives**

X. Local & Regional Initiatives

- **Cook County Sun and Save Program**
- **Midwest Energy Efficiency Alliance (MEEA)**
- **Illinois Clean Jobs Coalition (ICJC)**
- **Environmental Law & Policy Center (ELPC)**
- **Illinois Green Alliance**
    - Illinois Green Schools Project
- **Illinois Green Economy Network (IGEN)**
- **Illinois Innovation Network**

XI. Federal Energy & Environmental Programs

- **US DOE Office of Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy (EERE)**
    - Funding Opportunities
    - EERE Funding Opportunity Exchange

- Building America Solution Center
- Lab-Embedded Entrepreneurship Program
- Solar Energy Tech Office
- Geothermal Tech Office
- Wind Tech Office

- **US DOE Alternative Fuels Data Center**
  - Laws and Incentives
  - IIJA Incentives
  - EVI-X EV Infrastructure Toolbox
  - Illinois News and Data

- **US DOE Office of Small and Disadvantaged Business Utilization**
  - Doing Business with DOE
  - Mentor Protégé Program

- Acquisition Forecast
- Annual Small Business Awards
- Funding Opportunities
- DOE Unsolicited Proposals

- **US DOE Other**
  - Power Marketing Administrations
  - Federal Energy Management Program (FEMP)
  - Supply Chain Management Center (SCMC)
  - Fuel Economy
  - Energy Audit Template
  - State and Local Energy Profiles
  - Low-Income Energy Affordability Tool (LEAD)
  - Energy Planning (SLOPE)

    - Local GHG Toolkit
    - Adoption Readiness Levels (ARL)

- **US EPA**
    - RE-Powering America's Land
    - Superfund Redevelopment Program | US EPA
    - Combined Heat and Power (CHP)
    - Green Power Partnership
    - Landfill Methane Outreach Program (LMOP)
    - Resources for State and Local Governments
    - GHG Emissions Factor Hub
    - Freight Sustainability (SmartWay)
    - Green Vehicle Guide

- **Energy Star**

    - Product Finder
    - Rebate Finder
    - EV Incentive Finder

- **National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) – Research & Technical Assistance**
    - Innovation and Entrepreneurship Center
        - Programs
    - Data & Tools
- **U.S. Climate Alliance**

XII. Trade, Technical Assistance, Professional Organizations, Certifications

- **Illinois Solar Energy Association (ISEA)**
- **Green Building Initiative**
- **National Association of Energy Service Companies (NAESCO)**

- **Citizens Utility Board (CUB)**
- **Midwest Renewable Energy Association (MREA)**
- **U.S. Green Building Council**
- **NGBS Green Home Innovation Research Labs**
- **Interstate Renewable Energy Council (IREC)**
- **NABCEP**
- **ASHRAE**
- **Building Performance Institute (BPI)**
- **LEED AP Credential**
- **Urban Green Council - GPRO**
- **SEA & SEP**
- **AEE Certifications**
- **Green Globes**

- **TRUE Advisor**
- **Living Future Accreditation (LFA)**
- **Fitwel**
- **Green Roofs for Healthy Cities (GRHC)**
- **Phius**
- **RESET**
- **B Corp**
- **JUST Label**
- **Carbon Disclosure Project**
    - Data Portal
- **Dow Jones Sustainability Index**
- **Global Real Estate Sustainability Benchmark**
- **Investor Confidence Project**

XIII. Labor Standards, Policy Resources, Product Certifications

- **Illinois Department of Labor**
  - Illinois OSHA
  - Prevailing Wage Act
  - Certified Payroll Portal
  - Prevailing Wage Rates
  - PWA Fringe Benefits Update
- **US Department of Labor**
- **NEPA – National Environmental Policy Act**
- **Build America, Buy America (BABA)**
- **Energy Star**
- **Healthy Product Declaration**

- **Declare**
- **Living Product Challenge**
- **UL Product Lens Sustainable Product Certification**
- **Environmental Product Declaration**

XIV. Union Resources

- **International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers**
- **Electrical Contractors Association Chicago**

XV. Legislation & Policy

- **Energy Transition Act (CEJA)**
- **Public Utilities Act (220 ILCS 5/16-111.5B)**
- **Energy Efficiency Standard**

- **Illinois EE Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG)**
- **EE Cost Effectiveness (220 ILCS 5/8-103)**
- **State Agency Energy Efficiency Act**
- **Green Buildings Act**
- **Illinois Power Agency Act**
- **Inflation Reduction Act**
- **Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act**
- **One Big Beautiful Bill Act**
- **Illinois Energy Code**
- **Prevailing Wage Act (820 ILCS 130)**
- **Illinois Accessibility Code**
- **Environmental Barriers Act (410 ILCS 25/)**
- **2010 ADA Standards**

XVI. Other Resources

- **Energy Equity Portal**
- **Illinois Commerce Commission**
  - Equitable Energy Upgrade Program
  - EV Charging Station Installer Certification
  - Energy Efficiency Measures Installer Certification
  - Utility Scale Solar Installer Certification
  - Distributed Generation Installer Certification
  - Agent, Broker, and Consultant Application
  - Alternative Retail Electric Suppliers (ARES)
  - Meter Service Provider
  - Plug In Illinois

- **Illinois Community College Board**
    - Clean Energy Grants
- **Climate Jobs Institute**
- **Central Management Services**
    - Illinois Procurement Gateway
- **Capital Development Board**
    - CDB Vendor Registration and PreQual
    - Contractor Training
    - Bid Information
    - Grants
- **Illinois Economic Development Corporation**
- **Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center (IMEC)**
- **Illinois Manufacturer's Association**

- **Illinois Housing Authority**
- **Illinois Student Assistance Commission**
- **Illinois Comptroller**
    - Vendor Payments
- **CEJA Map**
- **Environmental Justice Community (EJ) Map**
- **Restore. Reinvest. Renew. R3 Map**
- **SCORE**

APPENDIX F: Document Change Log

Date	Initials	Sections Changed
