Welcome to the Georgia Environmental Finance Authority Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) Program Application Guidance

The Georgia Environmental Finance Authority (GEFA) is awarding grant funding to communities interested in participating in the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) program. This program is offered to government entities, cities, and counties, that did not receive direct EECBG funding from the US Department of Energy (DOE).

The EECBG program provides funding to implement strategies to reduce energy usage and costs, reduce reliance on fossil fuels and decrease emissions and improve energy efficiency within the state. GEFA will provide communities grant funding to pursue a Blueprint that aligns with the community's desired energy goals.

Blueprint models are programs designed by the DOE to aid communities in achieving high impact results with limited funding. Blueprint models serve as a step-by-step guide for communities to follow, including key program activities for consideration. By selecting a Blueprint, communities will be provided with relevant tools, best practices, and resources to aid in program implementation. GEFA is offering several Blueprint models for communities to select from including:

- Blueprint #1. Energy Planning
- Blueprint #2A. Energy Efficiency- Energy Audits and Building Upgrades
- Blueprint #2B. Energy Savings Performance Contracts: Energy Efficiency and Electrification in Government Buildings
- Blueprint #3B. Community Solar
- Blueprint #3C. Solarize Campaign
- Blueprint #4A. Electric Vehicles and Fleet Electrification
- Blueprint #6. Workforce Development

Communities must select at least one key activity proposed by the Blueprint to receive the funding. Key activities can be found described under each Blueprint Appendix, attached below. Communities can select multiple key activities if interested and funding allows.

Application Reminders: This is a competitive application. Applicants must be a Georgia city, county, or registered local government authority. Each entity may only submit one application. The funding for this program is provided by the US Department of Energy. Communities who have received direct funding from the DOE for EECBG are not eligible to apply. Link for governments who have received direct funding from the DOE.

Please make sure to fill out all required (*) fields of the application. When complete, click the SAVE button at the top of the screen; this will submit the application. GEFA will review completed applications until all funding has been expended. GEFA will utilize a competitive scoring methodology to score applications. Sample applications can be found on the QuickBase Home Page and GEFA website. **Reminder:** Edits made in the QuickBase application cannot be saved. We recommend downloading the sample application to preview application questions prior to beginning the QuickBase application.

Selected applicants will begin contract negotiations with GEFA within 30 days of notice of award. Program

timelines will vary based on Blueprints chosen.

If you have questions or need assistance regarding the application process, project implementation, project design, budget planning, community/ stakeholder engagement, please contact our technical assistance partners at Southface:

Nathan Bassette
Email: nbessette@southface.org
Phone: 404-604-3618

If you have any questions about the program or about this form, please contact GEFA Program Manager:

Leah Lord
Email: llord@gefa.ga.gov
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APPENDIX A
BLUEPRINT 1: ENERGY PLANNING

What is Energy Planning?

A strategic energy plan is a long-term roadmap to focus and guide efforts and actions toward a defined energy vision. Plans catalog existing energy consumption, sources, users, articulates goals, develops strategies and actions to meet the goals, and identifies resources needed to ensure effective completion of these strategies.

Energy plans – whether for your organization or for your community – can identify areas of opportunity to reduce energy use and energy waste, switch to different energy sources, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, anticipate increased energy needs and associated infrastructure, and/or improve resiliency. By undertaking an energy planning process, organizations and communities can be strategic; instead of undertaking decisions on a reactive or single-project basis, a strategic energy plan enables organizations and communities to make decisions that are:

- Proactive—by outlining deliberate actions based on clearly articulated government and community priorities.
- Comprehensive—by encompassing a broad scope, based on community priorities, that identifies and pursues high payoff opportunities through coordinated planning and sustained effort.
- Structured—by providing defined and thoughtfully organized guidance through a specific plan for action.
- Long-term—by supporting decisions that require multi-year investments and/or multiple project and planning stages and identifying a series of steps to undertake as funds and resources become available.
- Enduring—by establishing a path forward that will maintain relevancy beyond a current administration and can include development of policies and procedures to institutionalize energy-saving practices across the organization and over time as staff change.

Who Should Consider This Blueprint Topic?

Governments that do not have an energy plan are encouraged to review this blueprint. It is recommended for jurisdictions that are at the beginning of their clean energy journeys and have yet to develop widely agreed upon climate, clean energy, decarbonization, or energy savings goals.

Key Activities-

Stakeholder Engagement- To develop an energy plan, you will need the support and participation of multiple types of stakeholders. Some will be on your team and will help develop and guide the plan throughout the process; others will inform and shape portions of the plan or specific topics. Spending allocated towards stakeholder engagement could include:

- Setting up Your Team of Supporting Staff, Project Managers and Possibly Consultants
- Identifying and Engaging Stakeholders

Energy Data Collection to Establish a Baseline- Developing an understanding of how your community uses energy and the sources of its fossil fuel and greenhouse gas emissions is the first step to energy planning. It's important to know which data sets are available to help your community establish a baseline and measure progress towards your goals.

Develop and Energy Vision, Goals and Strategies- This step is the "meat & potatoes" of energy planning. Tangible long-term goals and nearer-term strategies provide a pathway from the conceptual energy vision to concrete, cost-effective actions. Prioritizing strategies and aligning them with potential funding sources will result in an actionable plan.

Write, Adopt and Publicize Plan- The last phase of the planning process is to prepare a plan, present it for formal adoption, and publicize it to the broader community. This plan is a roadmap for you to understand your state/community's energy future, where things stand today, set your long-term vision, and articulate the goals, strategies, and actions you will take to achieve that vision. It also incorporates the implementation blueprint, including responsible parties, timelines, financing strategy, and process for tracking progress.

For more information regarding the Blueprint and key activities, as well as resources, tools and case studies, follow the link provided below.

https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2023-04/Planning_Blueprint_v08_508.pdf

APPENDIX B
BLUEPRINT 2A: ENERGY EFFICIENCY: ENERGY AUDITS, BUILDING UPGRADES

What are Energy Audits and Building Upgrades?

Energy assessments and audits are key activities to identify potential energy saving opportunities in buildings and provide the technical and financial information (e.g., upfront costs, ongoing costs, projected energy savings, return on investment, etc.) that decision makers need to evaluate and approve energy efficiency, electrification, and grid interactivity retrofits. Retrofitting existing buildings presents an opportunity to improve the energy performance and operational costs of building assets including heating, cooling and ventilation (HVAC) systems and equipment, lighting and control systems, and the building envelope, while improving occupant control (such as with grid-interactive technologies). Retrofits also offer a chance to invest in energy burdened and underinvested areas.

Who Should Consider This Blueprint Topic?

State, local, and tribal governments with significant building-related energy expenditures or those who have not recently performed an energy assessment should consider this blueprint topic. It is a good starting point for those who wish to track building operations and maintenance, reduce energy costs, cut greenhouse gas emissions, and plan for capital improvements. Governments can lead by example to encourage other community stakeholders and businesses to evaluate their own buildings.

Key Activities:

Building Energy Assessments- Understanding how much energy your buildings are using and how that compares to similar types of buildings is an important first step to understanding where energy efficiency improvements could be made and how much opportunity for savings they could offer. Examples of how to utilize the money include:

- Gathering Data and Establishing a Baseline
- Benchmarking your Building

Energy Audits- Onsite energy audits provide a deeper analysis of a building's energy performance and energy savings opportunities and typically involve an onsite, whole-building evaluation of current energy usage relative to prospective energy usage that could be achieved through improved operations and maintenance procedures and upgrades to building systems, such as lighting, HVAC, and the building envelope. Energy audits range in rigor and complexity, ranging from low-cost or limited-detail analyses to high-cost, highly detailed analyses known as investment grade audits (IGAs). Spending allocated towards energy audits could include:

- Hiring an Energy Auditor
- Determining Funding Sources

Building Upgrades, including Energy Efficiency, Grid-Interactivity and Electrification Upgrades- Based on the energy audit results, implement energy improvements. Plan to hold a final meeting with the energy auditor and key building staff to review the analysis, results, and recommended energy efficiency, electrification, and/or grid-interactive measures. Identify which measures can be implemented immediately, the ideal sequence of upgrades, and which upgrades may need further study or should be incorporated into longer-term plans.

With the information provided by the audit, consider the present and future uses for the building. Determining whether a building is a candidate for rehab, onsite renewables, resilience projects, electrification and grid-interactivity or if the property is in an energy burdened or disadvantaged community can affect the direction of the upgrade pursued. Comprehensive upgrades can achieve 2.5 to 7 times more savings than typical single-measure retrofits and enable more advanced improvements.

For more information regarding the Blueprint and key activities, as well as resources, tools and case studies, follow the link provided below.

https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2023-04/Upgrades_Blueprint_v04_508.pdf

APPENDIX C
BLUEPRINT 2B: ENERGY SAVINGS AND PERFORMANCE CONTRACTS- ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND ELECTRIFICATION IN GOVERNMENT BUILDINGS

What is Energy Savings Performance Contracting (ESPC)?
ESPC is a contracting and financing method that enables public and private-sector entities to implement facility improvements with little or no upfront capital by leveraging a guaranteed multi-year stream of avoided utility and other costs. This approach saves money by reducing energy, water, and operational expenses, thus freeing up those operating funds for other priorities. ESPC is not a financing option on its own, but rather a mechanism that must be paired with one or more funding sources (e.g., loans, leases, bonds, grants, internal funding, etc.). HVAC, lighting, building controls, and water efficiency have all been common targets for upgrades offered through ESPC. Distributed renewable technologies such as solar and ground source heat pumps as well as procurement of electric and hybrid vehicle fleets can often be integrated into ESPC projects as well, depending on state regulations.

Who should Consider This Blueprint Topic?
Government organizations (state, local, or tribal) facing aging infrastructure, rising energy costs, and limited budgets. This may include organizations such as cities, housing authorities, and school districts that are seeking to lower energy bills and have deferred maintenance in their buildings, as well as entities that are seeking to pursue building performance upgrades with little to no upfront capital investment. Most states and territories have legislation that authorizes public-sector entities to enter into energy saving performance contracts and defines requirements and parameters, such as maximum contract term.

Key Activities:
Explore Potential Financing Options- High-level plans for funding/financing the project are helpful to determine at the outset of the project, perhaps even before the ESCO is selected, and final details are determined once the project scope and terms are more defined, late in the Investment Grade Audit (IGA) process. Although financing is usually separate from the ESPC, the two are informally linked through payment schedules and the savings guarantee.

Many funding resources are available to public entities, including grants, rebates, and incentives. The balance of the project cost is financed, generally through bonds, loans (such as from state revolving loan funds or green banks), or tax-exempt lease purchase agreements. Legislation, regulations, or program policies may dictate what financing mechanisms are allowable in a jurisdiction.

Procurement of Energy Savings Performance Contractor and Legal Support/ Technical Assistance-
Spending allocated towards procurement could include:

- Retaining and Owner's Representative
- Solicit and Select a Qualified Energy Service Company (ESCO)
    - Prepare the RFP or RFQ
    - Solicit and Evaluate RFP/ RFQ Responses
- Investment Grade Audits, Project Proposal and Contract Negotiation

Project Implementation and Acceptance- During the construction phase, the customer's team must stay in sync with the ESCO to avoid delays and project complications. The facility owner's responsibilities during the construction and post-installation commissioning and performance verification stages include facilitating

site access for the ESCO, witnessing tests and measurements (when required), reviewing reports and documentation provided by the ESCO, and understanding the commissioning results and report prior to project acceptance. The customer should ensure the project complies with contractual requirements, that performance verification is completed, and that any agreed-upon training and materials are provided, before notifying the ESCO of project acceptance in writing.

Post- Implementation Measurement and Verification- Effective and meaningful measurement and verification (M&V), which costs a small percentage of the project's savings, provides multiple benefits to ESPC customers. M&V enables documentation of ESPC project performance and whether guaranteed savings are being achieved and ensures that any needed corrective action or reimbursement is provided to the customer. Additionally, M&V can improve or optimize the performance of facilities by identifying deficiencies in equipment performance, as well as support the documentation of any non-energy benefits, such as improved occupant comfort and productivity and environmental sustainability, that are of value to the customer. The M&V report and supporting data should be reviewed and accepted by the ESPC customer each year to verify that contractually agreed-upon ECM performance is being sustained.

For more information regarding the Blueprint and key activities, as well as resources, tools and case studies, follow the link provided below.

https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2023-04/ESPC_Blueprint_v06_508.pdf

APPENDIX D
BLUEPRINT 3B: COMMUNITY SOLAR

What is Community Solar?

EECBG Program awardees can facilitate the creation of a solar project, or set of projects, that shares its benefits across multiple customers. Community solar projects vary in size, customer type, and business model, and have the unifying characteristics of allowing multiple customers to "subscribe" to receive a portion of the energy generated by a specific solar installation at billing rates associated with that project. Community solar projects can go on rooftops (for example, a condominium or apartment building) or can be larger scale and offsite (such as parking lots, brownfield sites, and landfills). Note, the solar project must be located within the same electric utility territory as its subscribers. State, local, and tribal governments can engage in community solar development in several ways, including hosting a project on government property, helping to spread the word to potential customers, and helping to identify and overcome local barriers to community solar development, including siting and permitting.

Who Should Consider this Blueprint?

Governments interested in supporting community solar programs and projects should first understand their regulatory landscape. Currently, 22+ states allow third party-owned community solar, which enables project sponsors to follow established rules and regulations. If you are not located in one of these states, communities with municipal electric, rural cooperative utilities, or tribal utility authorities may have more flexibility to pursue community solar projects than those served by investor-owned utilities. Additionally, communities in 10+ states that allow community choice aggregation have opportunities to pursue community solar projects. Community choice aggregation enables local governments to buy power on behalf of residents, businesses, and city accounts from an alternative power supplier while continuing to receive transmission and distribution service from their existing utility provider.

Key Activities:

Stakeholder Engagement, Education and Outreach- All successful community solar projects need proactive engagement with community members, stakeholders, and potential subscribers. Governments can work together with solar developers to provide strong outreach and education across their communities. Early Engagement with utilities is an important effort. To inform your engagement efforts, confirm regulatory allowance for community solar projects, any applicable rate structures, or program requirements, and who will be the project lead/administrator and responsible for coordinating subscriptions and billing.

Site Assessment and Selection- The government can help identify and evaluate potential sites for community solar projects, including on government-owned rooftops and parking lots, brownfield sites, or privately-owned but under-utilized sites. Solar project developers may also be able to provide a short list of potential sites based on solar power generating potential and approximated development costs that could then be further evaluated. The information from these assessments can be collaboratively shared with community solar project developers who are interested in local projects and as part of the procurement process. Cost estimate: $2,000 - $5,000 per site evaluation.

Procurement of Developer, Legal and Technical Support- The government can run a Request for Proposals (RFP) process to select qualified community solar developer(s). The government can lead this step or seek out a partner to lead the procurement process as described in the Blueprint 3C: Solarize

Campaign example. » Cost estimate: $25,000-$100,000 for technical support and staff time to manage the procurement process.
Communications, Program Education and Promotion- Enlisting subscribers to the program will require communications, program promotion, and education about the benefits of participating, as well as the exact steps and terms of participation. Cost estimates for these activities include: » Advertising and public education: $10,000 - $75,000 » Website development: $5,000 - $15,000.

Installation of Solar Panels- Limited to projects less than or equal to 60kW. EECBG Program awardees may expect an expedited review of their applications if focusing on this blueprint's key activities related to stakeholder engagement, site assessment, and/ or communications. Awardees pursuing construction and installation of the community solar arrays, should confirm DOE approval of their plan prior to proceeding, and should consider the following**: Rooftop projects**: EECBG Program funds can be used for the construction of rooftop community solar projects so long as they comply with the state's historic preservation programmatic agreement (often abbreviated to "PA") and fall within a NEPA bounded category. **Ground-mounted projects**: Ground-mounted solar projects up to 60kW may receive an expedited review. Using EECBG Program funds to support construction of larger community solar projects (over 60kW) is permitted; however, awardees should expect a longer review and additional forms to complete.

For more information regarding the Blueprint and key activities, as well as resources, tools and case studies, follow the link provided below.

https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2023-04/Solar_Blueprint_v04_508.pdf

APPENDIX E
BLUEPRINT 3C: SOLARIZE CAMPAIGN

What is Solarize Campaign?

A Solarize Campaign is a local or regional coordinated effort to encourage and support community members, including small businesses and homeowners, to "go solar" by installing a solar PV energy system (most commonly on their home or building's rooftop). The solar PV system generates carbon-free electricity that the resident or business can use, reducing the amount of grid-supplied electricity they need from their electric utility provider. By participating in a solarize effort, customers receive a group discount and collectively learn how to "go solar" together. The Solarize model tackles three major market barriers: cost, complexity, and customer inertia. Solarize campaigns may be run by local governments or by third party organizations or companies.

Who Should Consider This Blueprint?

Communities interested in lowering GHGs from the power sector in areas with strong state solar policies in place, such as retail rate net metering, and a desire to boost their local residential and small commercial solar market. These efforts are typically initiated by a municipality (city or county) with partnership and support from a local sustainability-related non-profit organization that has an aligned mission to reduce community GHG emissions and expand access to on-site solar. States and tribes could also certainly lead such an effort.

Key Activities:

Design Solarize Campaign Details- Solarize campaigns can take different forms depending on the local community's context and the organizations available and interested in leading a campaign. Fortunately, Solarize is a well-established model and can be easily replicated using the resources listed below to minimize the level of effort required. Many Solarize programs also have websites and can be easily searched for additional examples. When designing your program, consider who the program partners are, timeline for the campaign, what information or assurances potential participants will want to know, how offers will be procured, financing options for customers, and plans to support outreach and access for low-income customers and environmental justice (EJ) communities. Explore financing options for customers, such as: solar installer-provided financing, Green Bank loan products, and other local financing institutions (e.g., credit unions).

Stakeholder Engagement though Education and Outreach- Stakeholder engagement is a core piece of a Solarize campaign and speaks to support of the program and its offerings. A Solarize program having a positive reputation, a clear understanding of what it is offering and how it works, and general support across the community can increase potential customer confidence and interest in participating. Example stakeholders could include representatives of the local economic development office and Chamber of Commerce, environmental and sustainability groups, solar installation companies, local government sustainability or environmental staff, and nonprofit groups. Local community group(s) can also be active program partners. Often, they are environmental or sustainability organizations that are active in the community but can also be organizations that are focused on equitable access to energy saving programs. Their support of a Solarize campaign can perform a vital role of bringing more potential program participants to the table through promotion, information sharing, and being a neutral or trusted voice of knowledge that has reviewed the program details and understands how solar installations work.

Procurement of Solar Installer/Developer, Legal, and Technical Support- The lead organization will be responsible for selecting an appropriate solar installer that will meet the objectives for the Solarize campaign and for conducting outreach and development of locally-focused marketing materials. The solar installer/developer will be responsible for offering discounted contracts for solar systems to participants, installing the solar systems according to the program rules and local building code regulations, and providing ongoing reporting of solar contract status and solar installation progress. This is a critical role, and careful attention must be paid to the criteria for selection and assessment of the partner's readiness and ability to proactively support this program. As part of selecting a solar installer/developer, make sure that there can be an agreed upon process for ensuring that the project proceeds as intended and at the appropriate cost and quality. Solarize program leads should evaluate prior Solarize programs and speak with knowledgeable peers to understand the methods and processes that are needed to make sure that participants in a Solarize program receive the expected benefits and are treated with respect by the solar developer. Examples of this could include, criteria that is included in the selection of a solar installation company, such as references and company capacity information, oversight and mechanisms to track responses to interested customers, contract offer and acceptance status, and project installation progress and customer check-ins from the Solarize program lead in addition to customer communication with the solar installation company.

Creation, issuance, and management of the RFP process, contractor selection, and contract/pricing negotiation. Cost estimate from external resources: $20,000-$40,000 battery storage typically warrant more procurement and legal support than standalone solar transactions.).

Solarize Program Education, Outreach, and Advertising- Education, outreach, advertising, and engagement aims to bring interested residents and businesses to the program and to overcome customer inertia and hesitation by providing information about how solar systems work, the financial benefits, and answering technical and ongoing maintenance questions, such as cleaning and operating needs and warranty options. Activities include general and direct outreach, events, developing educational materials and hosting stakeholder and interested customer meetings. Develop collateral and build website for public education, program promotion, and sign up cost estimate: $3,000-$10,000. Marketing and direct customer acquisition activities cost estimate: $10,000-$50,000.

For more information regarding the Blueprint and key activities, as well as resources, tools and case studies, follow the link provided below.

https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2023-04/Solarize%20Campaigns_v03_508.pdf

APPENDIX F
BLUEPRINT 4A: ELECTRIC VEHCILES AND FLEET ELECTRIFICATION

What are EVs and Fleet Electrification?
Planning for and purchasing electric vehicles (EVs) for government fleets, as well as the associated charging infrastructure, such as charging stations and site upgrades.

Who Should Consider this Blueprint?
Governments seeking to improve regional air quality, stimulate the EV market and infrastructure in their jurisdictions, improve public health, and save money on future fuel and maintenance costs. This blueprint topic area is relevant for governments whose fleets are aging or have scheduled replacements, as choosing EVs will have long-term economic and environmental benefits.

Key Activities:
Develop Fleet Replacement Plan, Including Stakeholder Engagement and Input- Begin by performing a fleet assessment: Gather as much information as you can about the vehicles in your fleet. This may include: total number of fleet vehicles; vehicle types; frequency of use per vehicle; engine fuel type; fuel economy; annual vehicle mileage; service route length and location; daily service hours; communities or constituency served; anticipated replacement date – noting any vehicles at or near retirement age, making them strong near-term candidates for EV conversion; maintenance and repair costs; vehicle use case; whether vehicles need to be four-wheel drive or snowplow capable; overnight vehicle parking locations; number of domiciled vehicles; and vehicle charging requirements, including whether or not charging stations can be made available during the vehicle's daily use. Evaluate which vehicles in your fleet are the best candidates for electrification. Spending allocated towards developing a plan could include:

- Engaging Stakeholders
- Planning for Driver and Technician Training

Siting Planning and Preliminary Assessments- Once the fleet has been evaluated for electrification opportunities and vehicle parking locations are identified, you will need to identify locations for electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE) installations, another term for charging stations and evaluate the site's existing infrastructure and the infrastructure fleet EVs will require. Spending allocated towards siting and assessments could include:

- Identify Charging Locations
- Evaluate Charging Infrastructure Options
- Contact your Electric Utility
- Siting Cost Estimate

Develop Utility Data Sharing Agreement- Sharing data with your utility can help utilities mitigate grid impacts through managed charging programs, which allow the utility to remotely control EV charging to respond to real-time grid needs. Types of data to share with your utility may include EVSE utilization rates, expected versus actual power demand, charging times, number of vehicles charging at each station, and projected changes to your fleet. Data sharing with your utility can help your fleet avoid excess demand charges, learn about your fleet's vehicle charging behavior, and plan for future infrastructure needs.

Develop Charging Plan, Including Cost Assessment of Electric Bill- A charging plan will set a schedule for your fleet's charging needs to ensure all vehicles have enough power to complete their required tasks. To develop this charging plan, you will need to have an understanding of the number of EVs charging at each location, their range, the total time they are able to charge overnight or during the day, and the frequency at which they will need to be charged. Vehicles with different use cases will require different charging considerations. For example, transit buses will need to charge quickly and multiple times throughout the day and can slow charge overnight. Other vehicles that have lower daily mileage can go a few days without charging and then charge for several hours overnight. Your charging schedule will want to take advantage of cheaper charging times, which typically occur at night, and avoid demand charges when possible.

Procurement, Legal, and Technical Support to Purchase EVs and EVSE- Once you are ready to begin purchasing EVs and EVSE, you may need support during the procurement and installation phase of electrification. Depending on your fleet's size, a formal solicitation process may help streamline the purchase and installation of charging infrastructure. Spending allocated towards procurement and technical support could include:

- Identifying EVs on the Market and Comparing to Your Fleet's Needs
- Vehicle Cost Estimates
- Examine Financials

Installation of Charging Infrastructure- Once you have identified vehicles for electrification and determined the type and location of supporting EVSE, you may begin the installation process. When installing EVSE, you must consider building code requirements, zoning requirements, compliance with other relevant local or state laws, permitting, and design specifications (e.g., signage, markings, etc.).

For more information regarding the Blueprint and key activities, as well as resources, tools and case studies, follow the link provided below.

https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2023-04/EV_Blueprint_v04_508.pdf

APPENDIX G
BLUEPRINT 6: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

What is Workforce Development?

Workforce development is a planned approach to enhance and broaden the skills of individuals outside the workforce seeking employment, entry-level workers looking for job growth, and experienced workers in changing industries. The aim of workforce development is to foster prosperity for individuals, communities, and businesses. In practice, workforce development means providing individuals with training, continuing education, and professional development opportunities to maximize their job success and career pathway. Successful approaches to workforce development engage multiple stakeholders from the community, educational institutions, and potential employers. Initiatives should consider areas of the clean energy industry most in need of trained workers and be designed to lead successful participants to quality jobs.

Who Should Consider this Blueprint?

Local governments, states, and tribes interested in supporting their community members to gain a first job, or enter a new career resulting from demand for skilled labor created by infrastructure investments in clean energy. Governments interested in positioning themselves to take advantage of new clean energy industries and Federal government programs aimed at supporting the development of these industries.

Key Activities:

Workforce Needs Assessment- Strategic planning is critical to the long-term success of any workforce development effort. A needs assessment or gap analysis can be a good place to start before a program is designed or a curriculum is fully developed. Understanding the gaps in your community's labor force, the current and future needs for certain skills, and whether certain types of clean energy industries are better suited than others for your region will be good to understand before designing a workforce development program and curriculum. Most of the occupations involved in the delivery of clean energy are familiar ones requiring upgraded skills. Some occupations like wind turbine technician and solar photovoltaic installers, have been created from emerging clean energy technologies. Traditional construction occupations, like electrician; heating, air conditioning, and refrigeration mechanics and installers; and carpenters are critical to implementing clean energy and energy efficiency technologies and are thus in greater demand.

Program Design and Curriculum Development- Program design should consider needs of the community and the members who will participate. Sector-specific strategies should be part of the design – depending on target industries, from solar PV to wind, to building electrification or energy efficiency retrofits, the emphasis of your program design will vary to meet the unique needs of those different industries. Very few occupations in the energy or construction trades require a full reboot of skills and training to transition to clean energy generation and delivery. Knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) required for conventional jobs like carpenters, electricians, plumbers/pipefitters/steamfitters, roofers, and HVAC installers have several key commonalities and some differences with clean energy jobs. Working with training and job skills organizations to grow and/or augment their offerings to include clean energy KSAs could be an effective approach to workforce development. Mathematics, critical thinking, critical problem recognition and solving, and deductive reasoning are all common skills future clean energy workers will need. More specific interest or skill in building and construction, mechanics, and design are useful as well.

Stakeholder Engagement- As you plan for a workforce development program, it is important to also convene clean energy employers, relevant community-based organization officers, local Workforce

Development Board leaders, economic development officials, education and training providers, workers' rights organizations (including but not limited to unions), and representatives of institutions of higher education to collaboratively develop the community's energy workforce development vision, mission, and strategic plan. There are five primary entities involved in publicly funded workforce development programs: 1. Government, which fund and sometimes operate employment and training initiatives to support economic growth and prosperity. 2. Public, private, and non-profit employers, which can support workforce development by participating in training and apprentice programs and opening employment opportunities to individuals with underdeveloped skills or nontraditional backgrounds. 3. Individuals seeking a first job, new job, or a way to advance their careers. 4. Training providers such as institutions of higher education, proprietary entities, career and technical education providers, and community-based organizations that can implement a training program. 5. Intermediaries that may connect employers with open jobs, individuals who are seeking job opportunities, training providers with workforce programs, and access to public funding to support workforce development programs.

Cost Estimates $0 to $10,000 depending on time and materials to develop a meeting agenda, create meeting materials, invite participants, secure meeting space, use audio and video equipment, provide refreshments for participants, post-meeting follow-up, and memorialize strategic planning efforts and outcomes. Strategic planning can be the foundation for public, private, and philanthropic funding.

Paying Trainers and Trainees, Including Supplemental (Wraparound) Services- Individuals interested in participating in workforce development efforts may face circumstances that prevent them from easily taking advantage of education and training opportunities. Barriers like childcare, viable transportation, or forfeited wages from time spent in training may preclude interested individuals from being able to participate in an occupational training program. Planning for and/or integrating ways to address these barriers for participants (and in some cases trainers) could help improve the chances for success.

Additionally, the aim of the workforce development program should be to match successful trainees with actual jobs. Employers engaged in your program should know and understand the concept of "high road" jobs, which emphasize living wages, providing benefits such as paid leave and workplace flexibility, keeping workplaces safe, and supporting workers' development through training (including on-the-job or registered apprenticeships). Case studies point to positive internal rates of return on apprenticeship programs in a variety of industries. It is also important to maintain respectful relationships with workers. Such "high road" employers are more likely to attract and keep talented and productive workers, which generates more revenue for the firm as they can produce more or higher-quality output in the same amount of time.

For more information regarding the Blueprint and key activities, as well as resources, tools and case studies, follow the link provided below.

https://www.energy.gov/sites/default/files/2023-05/Workforce_Development_v05_508.pdf