

Unity: Creating Equitable Access to Solar

Unity Renewables is a new minority-owned solar developer in Rochester New York whose mission is to provide fair and equitable access to renewable power, careers in the renewables industry, and business creation opportunities.

It aims to unify Low to Moderate Income (LMI) households to actively participate in the renewables market and incentivize the private sector through workforce development to ensure inclusion of marginalized communities

Unity is applying for the Community Power Accelerator Prize to access private sector financing and scale opportunities for development and expansion.

Currently a participant in the Department of Energy sponsored Energy Storage for Social Equity (ES4SE) program, Unity supports the workforce development and equity components of a solar plus storage and EV charging system at the Open Door Mission

- The project comprises 2.05 MWh lithium-ion battery, >50 kW PV (rooftop and carport) for resilience of critical community infrastructure including a commercial kitchen and women's emergency shelter services
- It showcases the potential of community partnerships to harness renewable energy, particularly with the current Investment Tax Credits (ITC) for renewable energy projects and bonuses for low-income communities.
- Unity intends build a substantial portfolio by replicating its success in ES4SE by partnering with Community Based Organizations as ITCs and other funds from the Inflation Reduction Act become available

Planned portfolio of approx. 2 MW, primarily in Rochester with the majority anticipated allocated to LMI households

Unity intends to build community engagement plans informed by its background in climate justice advocacy coupled with extensive experience in community solar sales, particularly in low-income communities.

- It will create a media platform to engage communities and everyday people on climate justice, community solar and renewable energy issues
- Unity will leverage its community network to share its mandate to hire equitably and locally with a focus on building workforce development