



# Energizing Rural Communities Prize

PARTNER Track Webinar

April 5, 2023



# Housekeeping

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**This webinar is being recorded and will be made available later.**

## **Questions:**

- There will be time for a Q&A session at the end of the presentation
- You can type questions in the chat at any time.

## **Technical Issues:**

If you experience technical issues, please check your audio settings under the “Audio” tab

# Agenda

1. PARTNER Track Goals
2. Submission Package
3. Scoring Criteria
4. Q&A

# PARTNER

# Track



## Energizing Rural Communities Prize TIMELINE

The Energizing Rural Communities Prize consists of two tracks, both following the same phased timeline:

### Partner Track

\$10M Prize Pool

### Finance Track

\$5M Prize Pool

#### PHASE

# 1

Awards up to  
\$100,000

**March 1, 2023**

Phase 1 Opens  
*Competitors develop and submit  
a partnership or finance plan*

**May 24, 2023**

Phase 1 Closes

**July 2023**

Winner Announcements

#### PHASE

# 2

Awards up to  
\$200,000

**July 2023**

Phase 2 Opens\*  
*Phase 1 winners implement their  
partnership or finance plan*

**July 2024**

Phase 2 Closes

**August 2024**

Winner Announcements

*\*Phase 2 is only open to Phase 1 winners within each track.  
All dates subject to change.*

# Overarching Prize Goals

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This prize seeks to:

- Demonstrate innovative and replicable partnership and financial mechanisms that act as initial steps toward clean energy projects.
- Better prepare rural or remote communities to secure funding for clean energy projects, either through future ERA funding opportunities or other public or private funding sources.
- Identify, understand, and further develop activities that prepare communities to complete clean energy projects.
- Build trust and strengthen the networks between and within rural and remote communities in support of energy improvements aligned with DOE's Justice40 priorities.

# PARTNER Track Goals and Outcomes

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Facilitate new or existing partnerships that enable development of clean energy projects in rural or remote communities. Successful competitors will **create connections** that lead to collaborative efforts for the development of clean energy projects in rural or remote communities. **Collaborative efforts** could include providing engineering services to advance project concepts, encouraging multiple communities to aggregate similar energy projects to unlock economies of scale, or facilitating equipment acquisition.

**Formation of partnerships that advance development of clean energy projects in rural or remote areas.**

**At the conclusion of this prize, targeted outcomes include:**

- Project permitting
- Preliminary engineering studies or designs
- Renewable energy resource assessments
- Utility analysis or offtake agreements
- Hiring and building a team to complete the project
- Co-signed memorandum of understanding between the partnering organizations that outlines what they aim to achieve
- Creation of a new multi-stakeholder organization
- Other outcomes critical to improving clean energy deployment in rural or remote communities.



## What to Submit: PARTNER Track

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- Cover Page (Unscored, Public)
- Summary Slide (Unscored, Public)
- Three-Minute Video Pitch (Scored, Public)
- Partnership Plan (Scored, Private) – Template available on HeroX
- Evidence of Commitment (Scored, Private)



# How the Submission is Scored

Criteria	Number of Scored Statements	Percentage of Total Score (approximate)	Total Possible Points
Three-Minute Video	3	12.5%	18
Partnership Plan and Evidence of Commitment	21	87.5%	126
<b>Criterion 1:</b> Relevant Experience	4	17%	24
<b>Criterion 2:</b> Proposed Partnership Activities During Phase Two of the Prize	6	25%	36
<b>Criterion 3:</b> Expected Outcomes, Impacts, and Success Metrics	4	17%	24
<b>Criterion 4:</b> Budget, Staff, and Other Resources	4	17%	24
<b>Criterion 5:</b> Strategy for Achieving Community Energy Goals After Completion of the Prize	3	11.5%	18
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>144</b>

Reviewers will score each scored statement as follows:

1	Strongly Disagree
2	Disagree
3	Slightly Disagree
4	Slightly Agree
5	Agree
6	Strongly Agree

# 3-Minute Video Scoring Criteria

Suggested Content Competitor Provides	Each Statement Scored on a 1–6 Scale
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• An introduction to the competitor and experience working with rural or remote communities</li><li>• A high-level description of the targeted partnership(s) the competitor aims to build or improve should the submission be selected</li><li>• An explanation of the need and impact the proposed partnership(s) aims to achieve specific to the community or communities this submission will support</li><li>• A description of how these partnership(s) will help better prepare the community for future clean energy projects</li><li>• An explanation of how the submission aligns with one or more goals of the prize stated in Section 2.2 of the official rules document.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The competitor has demonstrated that they have experience in collaborating with rural or remote communities.</li><li>• The proposed partnership(s) that the competitor aims to build or leverage will contribute to the development of clean energy projects within one or more rural or remote communities.</li><li>• The competitor has demonstrated that they will have access to, or can obtain, the necessary resources and capabilities to execute their proposed plan.</li></ul>

# Partnership Plan Scoring Criteria

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1. Criterion 1: Relevant Experience
2. Criterion 2: Proposed Partnership Activities
3. Criterion 3: Expected Outcomes, Impacts, and Success Metrics
4. Criterion 4: Budget, Staff, and Other Resources
5. Criterion 5: Strategy for Achieving Community Energy Goals After Completion of the Prize

# Partnership Plan Scoring Criterion 1

## Criterion 1: Relevant Experience

### Suggested Content Competitor Provides

- A description of the mission of the competitor and how it aligns with goals of the prize stated in Section 2.2 of this document
- A description of the competitor's previous experience working with rural or remote communities
- A description of the competitor's previous experience working with overburdened and underserved communities, as indicated by [DOE's Energy Justice Dashboard](#), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) [EJScreen](#), or another explanation
- A description of established practices the competitor has used to evaluate the success or failure of previous efforts and incorporate lessons learned into subsequent efforts
- A description of experiences, insights, or lessons learned by the competitor from strategies—both successful and unsuccessful—to support the development of renewable energy or other infrastructure in rural or remote communities.

### Each Statement Scored on a 1–6 Scale

- The competitor has demonstrated experience in successfully working with rural or remote communities, particularly those that are overburdened and underserved.
- The competitor has demonstrated experience and current capabilities in at least one of the following areas: community-driven economic development; development of clean energy projects; or development of infrastructure in rural or remote areas.
- The competitor has clearly articulated practices to evaluate the success or failure of past efforts.
- The competitor has clearly articulated lessons learned from prior collaboration efforts and how those practices will inform this activity.

# Partnership Plan Scoring Criterion 2

## Criterion 2: Proposed Partnership Activities During Phase Two of the Prize

### Suggested Content Competitor Provides

- A description of proposed activities the competitor aims to carry out that will form partnerships to facilitate clean energy projects in rural or remote communities, connect these communities to engineering services or other resources to support clean energy projects, and/or aggregate similar energy projects in multiple rural or remote communities
- A description of the competitor's plan to build trust and strengthen relationships with overburdened and underserved communities, as indicated by [DOE's Energy Justice Dashboard](#), [EPA's EJScreen](#), or another explanation.
- A description of how proposed activities are likely to increase access to funding for rural or remote communities
- A description of strategies and methods the competitor can use to build trust and strengthen relationships and partnerships with and within rural or remote communities or organizations within the clean energy ecosystem
- A detailed description of activities and milestones and how they support achieving the goals of the proposal
- A timeline, outlined as a Gantt chart or similar, for implementing the activity.

### Each Statement Scored on a 1–6 Scale

- The competitor's proposed activities are likely to build trust and strengthen relationships and partnerships with and within rural or remote communities, particularly within overburdened and underserved communities.
- The competitor's proposed activities are likely to enable partnerships that achieve the ultimate goal of clean energy projects in rural or remote communities.
- The competitor's proposed partnership activities are likely to result in the mutual alignment of organizations toward delivery of a clean energy project, as defined in Section 2.2.1, and/or other resources that support clean energy projects in rural or remote communities.
- The competitor's proposed activities are likely to result in increased access to federal, state, or local government or private funding for rural or remote communities.
- The competitor provides a detailed description of the activities and milestones that support the proposal's goals.
- The competitor provides a timeline that is ambitious yet achievable for accomplishing the outlined milestones.

# Partnership Plan Scoring Criterion 3

## Criterion 3: Expected Outcomes, Impacts, and Success Metrics

### Suggested Content Competitor Provides

- A description of the outcomes and impacts of the activity that will determine its success
- A description of how outcomes improve partnerships supporting a clean energy project in a rural or remote community
- A description of credible methods and metrics to evaluate the progress of the competitor's activities, such as through **Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-Bound (SMART)** goals
- A description of how the competitor's goals align with the prize goals
- A description of ambitious and achievable deliverables that the competitor will accomplish during the 12 months after receiving funding from this prize.

### Each Statement Scored on a 1–6 Scale

- The competitor has clearly communicated the anticipated outcomes and impacts of the proposed activity and how this activity will improve partnerships supporting a clean energy project in a rural or remote community.
- The competitor has proposed specific, quantifiable goals (such as SMART goals) and metrics to evaluate whether the proposed activities have achieved these goals.
- The competitor's end-of-activity deliverables are achievable and will yield measurable success in meeting one or more of the prize goals.
- The described plan has a high likelihood for success (1 or 6).

# Partnership Plan Scoring Criterion 4

Criterion 4: Budget, Staff, and Other Resources	
<p><b>Suggested Content Competitor Provides</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• A budget for the proposed activity</li><li>• A description of staff resources the competitor can use to execute the proposed activity</li><li>• A description of any other resources and strategies the competitor plans to utilize to execute the proposed activity, which may include technical resources and facilities.</li><li>• Evidence of commitment from target partner organization(s) that conveys their openness to building or improving a partnership, such as letters of commitment, memoranda of understanding, contracts, and/or funding agreements.</li></ul>	<p><b>Each Statement Scored on a 1–6 Scale</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The description of proposed activities during Phase Two of the prize and associated budget, in alignment with award funding, are of adequate detail and indicate a high likelihood of ultimately delivering the proposed outcomes.</li><li>• The staff resources that will be available to the competitor, or that the competitor plans to obtain, are adequate for achieving the stated goals.</li><li>• The competitor has demonstrated that they will have access to, or can obtain, the necessary resources and capabilities to execute their proposed activity.</li><li>• The competitor has submitted evidence of commitment that demonstrates intent from target organizations in building or improving a partnership.</li></ul>

# Partnership Plan Scoring Criterion 5

## Criterion 5: Strategy for Achieving Community Energy Goals After Completion of the Prize

### Suggested Content Competitor Provides

- A description of the rural or remote community or communities the team serves and their goals for energy improvement related to resilience, safety, reliability, and availability, as well as reduction of adverse environmental impacts from energy generation
- A description of the clean energy project the team plans to construct and how it improves the resilience, safety, reliability, and availability of energy, and reduces the adverse environmental impacts from energy generation in rural or remote communities
- A description of the competitor's plans to maintain or grow partnerships to provide support to rural or remote communities leading to the development of a clean energy project
- A description of the vision and goals resulting from participation in the prize
- A description of how participation in the prize and the described activity would result in overcoming systemic barriers to energy improvements in rural or remote communities
- A description of how the proposed project could be replicated in other rural or remote communities.

### Each Statement Scored on a 1–6 Scale

- The competitor has clearly described the rural or remote community's goals for energy improvement after completion of Phase Two of this prize related to resilience, safety, reliability, and availability, and reduction of adverse environmental impacts from energy generation; and, if available, a description of the clean energy project the team plans to construct to achieve these goals.
- The competitor has described how prize activities, and partnerships formed therein, will advance the community's goals for energy improvement and/or a specific clean energy project.
- The competitor's plan is likely to result in a replicable model to improve partnerships in other rural or remote communities, particularly by demonstrating partnership methods that overcome systemic barriers.



# Power Connector Support: Phase One

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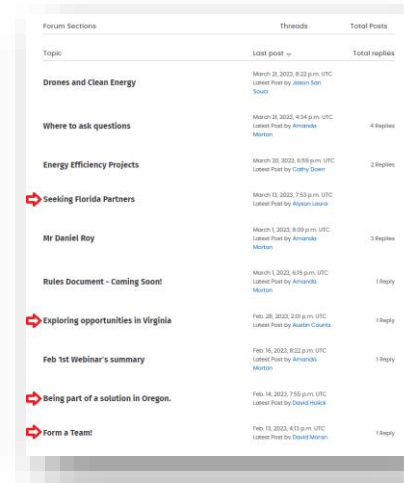
- Community Development through Network Outreach and One-on-One Engagements
- Virtual Networking Events for Teambuilding
- [Office Hour Support](#): Dedicated time slots to provide feedback on in-process applications



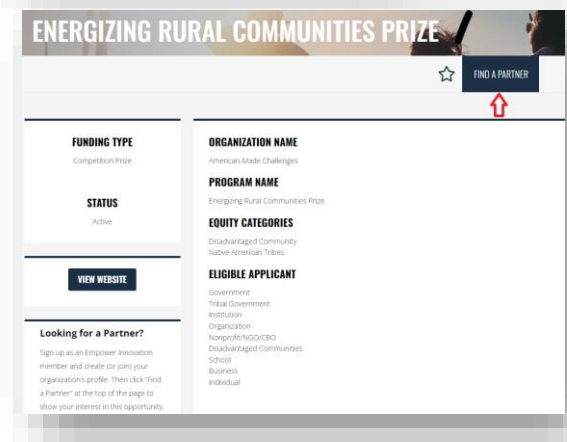
# Teaming and Q&A

## Teaming

- Post your teaming interests in the [HeroX forum](#) or search for teams that have [registered](#).
- Entrepreneur Futures Network also offers a tool through the [Empower Innovation](#) network.
  - [Sign up](#) as a member and create (or join) your organization's profile.
  - Then from the [Energizing Rural Communities funding opportunity](#), click "Find a Partner" at the top of the page to connect with other interested members.
  - Watch this [4-minute video](#) for more information.



Forum Sections	Threads	Total Posts
Topic	Latest post	Total replies
<b>Drones and Clean Energy</b>	March 20, 2023, 9:22 p.m. UTC Latest Post by <a href="#">Jason San-Suen</a>	
<b>Where to ask questions</b>	March 20, 2023, 4:34 p.m. UTC Latest Post by <a href="#">Armando Mota</a>	4 Replies
<b>Energy Efficiency Projects</b>	March 20, 2023, 6:19 p.m. UTC Latest Post by <a href="#">Cathy Queen</a>	2 Replies
<b>Seeking Florida Partners</b>	March 19, 2023, 7:53 p.m. UTC Latest Post by <a href="#">Alison Laura</a>	
<b>Mr Daniel Roy</b>	March 1, 2023, 8:59 p.m. UTC Latest Post by <a href="#">Armando Mota</a>	3 Replies
<b>Rules Document - Coming Soon!</b>	March 1, 2023, 8:59 p.m. UTC Latest Post by <a href="#">Armando Mota</a>	1 Reply
<b>Exploring opportunities in Virginia</b>	Feb. 20, 2023, 3:08 p.m. UTC Latest Post by <a href="#">Austen Clarke</a>	1 Reply
<b>Feb 1st Webinar's summary</b>	Feb. 16, 2023, 8:22 p.m. UTC Latest Post by <a href="#">Armando Mota</a>	1 Reply
<b>Being part of a solution in Oregon.</b>	Feb. 16, 2023, 7:18 p.m. UTC Latest Post by <a href="#">David Mack</a>	
<b>Form a Team!</b>	Feb. 15, 2023, 4:17 p.m. UTC Latest Post by <a href="#">David Mack</a>	1 Reply



**ENERGIZING RURAL COMMUNITIES PRIZE**

[FIND A PARTNER](#)

<b>FUNDING TYPE</b> Competition Prize	<b>ORGANIZATION NAME</b> American Made Challenges
<b>STATUS</b> Active	<b>PROGRAM NAME</b> Energizing Rural Communities Prize
<a href="#">VIEW WEBSITE</a>	<b>EQUITY CATEGORIES</b> Disadvantaged Community Native American Tribes
<b>Looking for a Partner?</b> Sign up as an Empower Innovation member and create (or join) your organization's profile. Then click "Find a Partner" at the top of the page to show your interest in this opportunity.	<b>ELIGIBLE APPLICANT</b> Government Tribal Government Institution Organization Nonprofit/NGO/CBO Disadvantaged Communities School Business Individual

## Questions

- Questions on the prize should be posted to [HeroX](#) forum.
- Questions containing proprietary information can be sent to [ruralenergyprize@nrel.gov](mailto:ruralenergyprize@nrel.gov)

# Thank you / Q&A



Email: [ruralenergyprize@nrel.gov](mailto:ruralenergyprize@nrel.gov)



American Made: [americanmadechallenges.org/challenges/rural-energy](https://americanmadechallenges.org/challenges/rural-energy)



HeroX Forum: [www.herox.com/rural-energy](https://www.herox.com/rural-energy)