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**Community
Power
Accelerator**

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Community Power Accelerator Prize Informational Webinar

September 19, 2023

Housekeeping

Two Options for Audio (select audio mode):

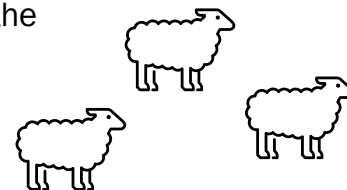
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Under "Select a Speaker," click "Same as System."
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- A video/audio recording of this webinar and the slide deck will be made available on HeroX in the week following the webinar



Topics

- 1 National Community Solar Partnership and Community Power Accelerator Overview
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- 3 Phase 1 Ready!: What You Need to Know
- 4 Phases 2 and 3: What To Expect
- 5 Get Started Today!
- 6 Questions





The American-Made program is your **fast track to the clean energy revolution**. Funded by the U.S. Department of Energy, we incentivize innovation through prizes, training, teaming, and mentoring, connecting the nation's entrepreneurs and innovators to America's national labs and the private sector.

The American Made Program is growing:



\$100M
in cash prizes and support



40+
prizes

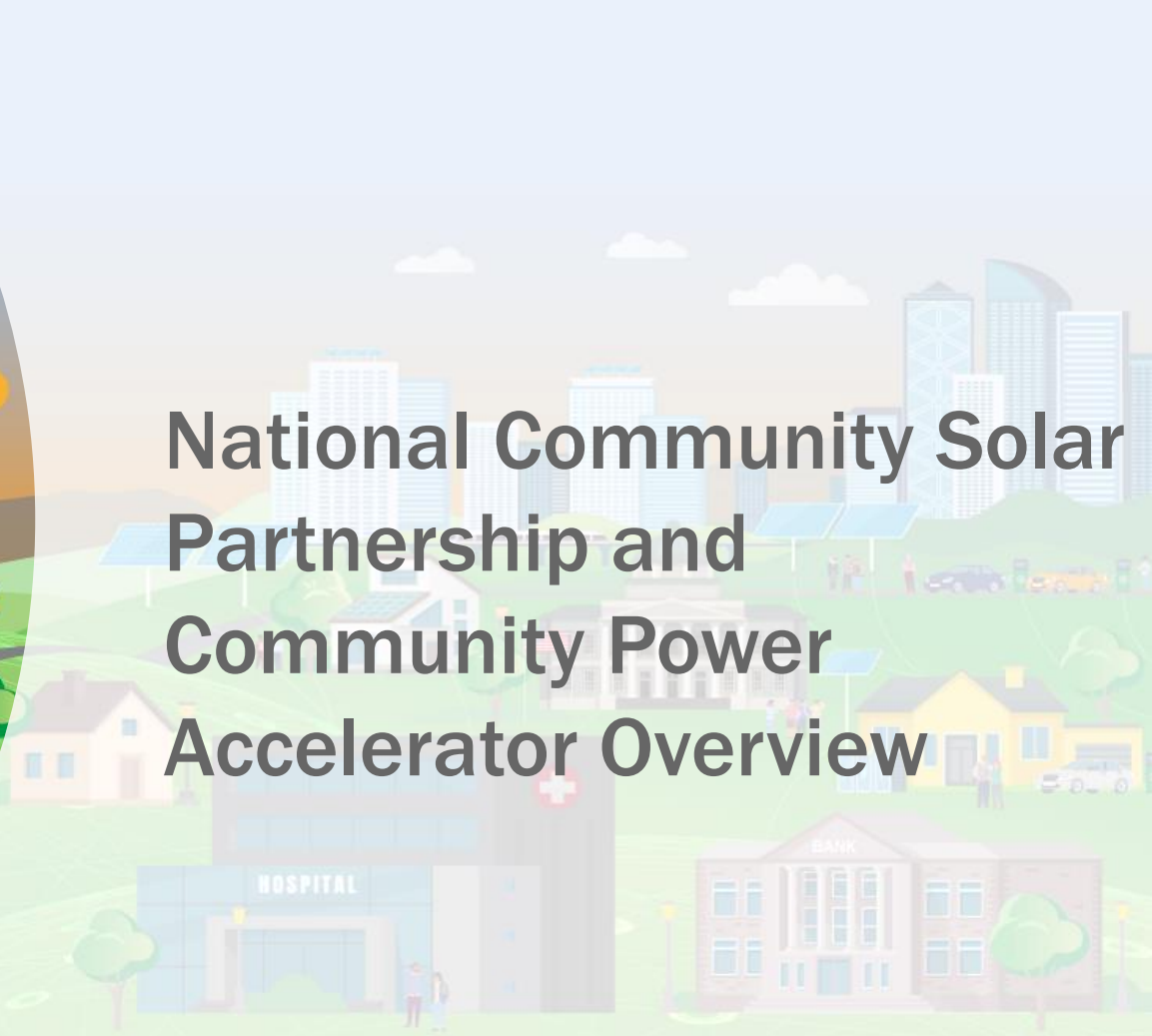


300+
Network members

AmericanMadeChallenges.org



National Community Solar Partnership and Community Power Accelerator Overview



Pathway to Success Priorities

TECHNICAL
EXPERTISE
AND CAPACITY
BUILDING



STATE
ENGAGEMENT



ACCESS
TO CAPITAL



CUSTOMER
ENGAGEMENT



EDUCATION
AND OUTREACH



**NCSP
TARGET**
5 million households
and \$1 billion in
savings by 2025

Resulting in...

- ★ An average 20% energy bill reduction
- ★ 700% increase in community solar capacity

Meaningful benefits:

Greater household savings; LMI household access; Resilience and grid benefits; Community ownership; Workforce development and entrepreneurship

The Five Meaningful Benefits of Community Solar



GREATER HOUSEHOLD SAVINGS

- Provide a net savings for residential subscribers to a project

J40 Priority 1: Reduce Energy Burden



LMI HOUSEHOLD ACCESS

- Include subscribers from low- to moderate-income (LMI) households

J40 Priority 3: Increase Parity in Clean Energy



RESILIENCE AND GRID BENEFITS

- Include the capability to deliver power to households and/or critical facilities during a grid outage or strengthen grid operations

J40 Priority 7: Increase Energy Resiliency



COMMUNITY OWNERSHIP

- Local community members, subscribers, or local community organizations own or have equity in the project
- Other wealth-building strategies

J40 Priority 8: Increase Energy Democracy



WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

- Support prevailing wages and pre-apprenticeship and apprenticeship programming
- Ensure women- and minority-owned businesses have equitable opportunity

J40 Priority 6: Increase Clean Energy Jobs



What is the Community Power Accelerator?

Goals:

- **Standardize** equitable access to community solar financing;
- **Expand capacity and expertise** for community-led, community-focused deployment; and
- **Build a robust project pipeline** with meaningful benefits.

Community Power Accelerator Ecosystem

Lenders and Investors

Philanthropy

Developers

Community-Based Organizations

Technical Assistance Experts

NCSP Team



Community Power Accelerator Elements

A central circular icon on the left contains a stylized graphic of a sun with rays on the left and a grid of solar panels on the right. Six colored wedges radiate from the right side of the circle, each pointing to a corresponding text box on the right. The wedges are colored blue, green, orange, dark orange, grey, and dark blue from top to bottom.

Online Platform with Partner Commitments

Credit-Ready Checklist, Organization, and Project Profiles

Community Power Learning Lab

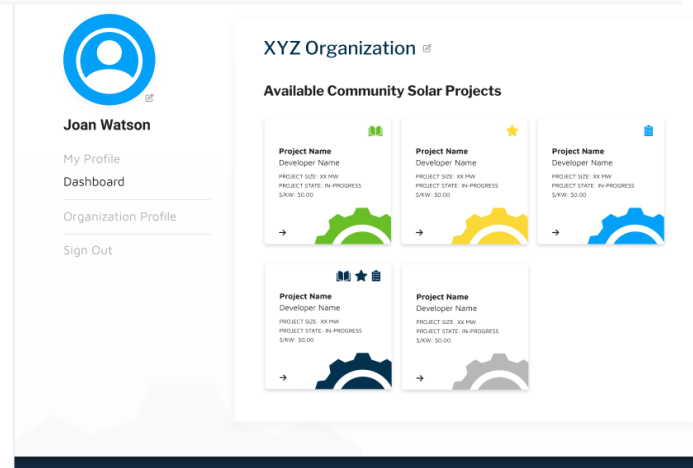
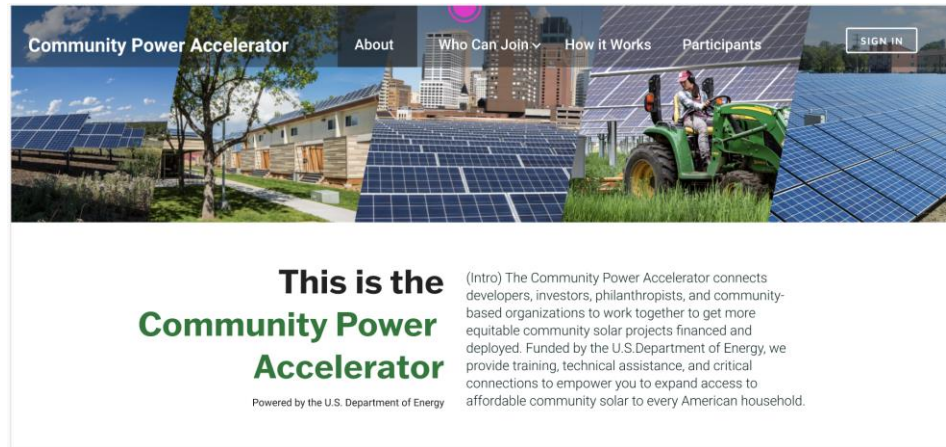
Philanthropy-Ready Guide

Technical Assistance Programming

Prize Funding

Online Platform

The Community Power Accelerator platform makes it easier for developers, community-based organizations, lenders, and philanthropic organizations to identify and connect with each other based on criteria each participant includes in their profiles.



Check out the Community Power Accelerator Online Platform: <https://communitypower.energy.gov>

Community Power Learning Lab

[Community Power Accelerator Learning Lab | Center for Impact Finance \(unh.edu\)](https://unh.edu)

- Developed by UNH Carsey School Center for Impact Finance, Housing Sustainability Advisors, and 8 mission-aligned community solar developers
- Live instructor-led virtual course that covers:
 - Regulatory and Market Context for Community Solar
 - Community Solar Site Selection
 - Community Engagement for Community Solar
 - Community Solar Development Process and Contracts
 - Community Solar Financial Modeling
 - Community Solar Asset Management and Operations
 - Community Solar Business Development



Phase 1 winners will have the opportunity to join a learning lab cohort starting in January 2024

Technical Assistance Program

- Assist in completing:
 - Credit-Ready Checklist
 - Project Profiles
 - Additional TA needs
- Develop additional resources and tools
- Experts currently include *Sustainable Capital Advisors*, *Urban Ingenuity*, and *Solar 1*.



Teams participating in the prize will receive free Technical Assistance in Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the prize.

Credit-Ready Workbook & Project Profiles

Throughout the Learning Lab Course, Phase 2 teams will work to complete the [Credit-Ready Workbook](#):

- Includes a list of rigorous project requirements that investors look for before they are willing to fund a project.
- Developed in collaboration with over 40 financial institutions familiar with solar lending and tax equity
- Investors that sign up to participate in the [Community Power Accelerator platform](#) are specifically interested in funding community solar projects and have agreed to consider funding projects that use the Credit-Ready Workbook.

National Community Solar Partnership Community Power Accelerator - Developer Project Profile Information

Community Power Accelerator
DEVELOPER PROJECT PROFILE

<H1>Add a Community Solar Project SAVE

Complete this form to add a community solar project to your developer profile.

Once added, the project will be reviewed by a technical assistance provider. The provider will work with you qualify your project. When qualified, your project will receive a gold star, and Community Power Accelerator investors and philanthropic organizations **you decide to connect with** will be able to view the project and connect with you about it on the Accelerator. **Only once both organizations decide they want to connect, will the project information be shared.**

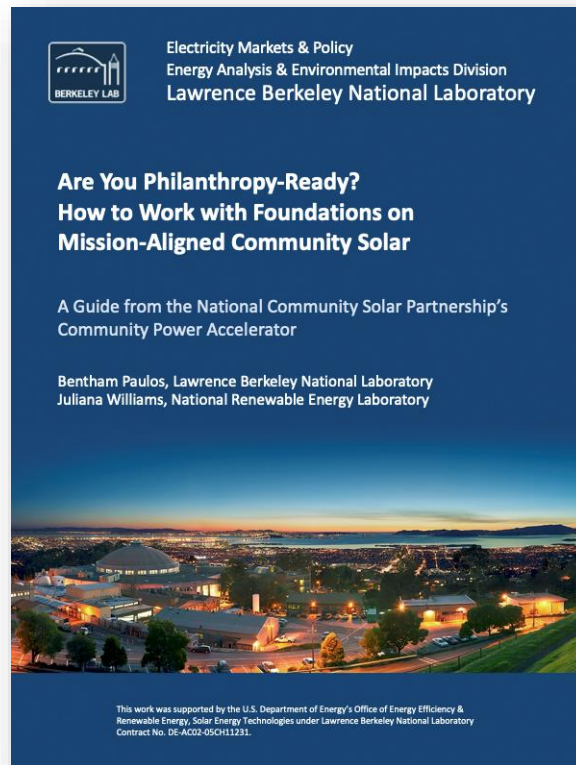
| # | Question/Field | Format |
|----|--|--|
| 1 | Project name | Freeform text |
| 2 | Developer organization name | From the developer organization dropdown menu |
| 3 | Do you have a project team? (Be prepared to provide proof.) | Yes/no toggle |
| 4 | Where is the project geographically located? Select all that apply. | State and U.S. Territories list multi-select, drop-down |
| 5 | What is the zip code(s) for the project? | Numeric field |
| 6 | Is the project located within a Justice40 community? | Yes/no toggle. If Yes: Please list Justice 40 communities. <i>Freeform text</i> |
| 7 | Have site control documents been executed? | Please briefly describe (e.g., site lease option agreement, power purchase agreement): <i>Freeform text (with word limit)</i> |
| 8 | What is the current stage of project development? | Radio buttons – select one: • Pre-development • Development • Construction • Operations and Maintenance |
| 9 | Do you need predevelopment capital for your project to proceed? | Yes/no toggle |
| 10 | Which type of installation is this community solar project using? Select all that apply. | Check boxes - select all that apply: • Rooftop • Ground-mount (<S megawatts [MW]) • Utility-scale distribution system (5-20 MW) • Carport/garage |
| 11 | In which utility's service territory is the project located? | Freeform text |
| 12 | What is the size (or projected size) of the project in capacity (megawatts [MW]) and expected generation (gigawatt-hours [GWh])? | Two numeric fields (limit to 6 digits): MW: ___ (numbers only, allowing for 0.XX - 2 sig figs) GWh: ___ (whole numbers only - with up to 6 digits allowed) |

Teams will complete the Credit-Ready Workbook in Phase 2 of the Prize and create a developer profile to prepare for Phase 3 of the competition.

Philanthropy-Ready Guide

- Describes what foundations do:
 - Make grants
 - Mission-related investments
 - Community leadership
- A self-assessment to get your project “philanthropy-ready”
- Tips on how to make your case for funding

Goal: Increase the quantity and quality of proposals that lead to successful outcomes.



Community Power Accelerator Inaugural Partners



THE
KRESGE
FOUNDATION



Wells Fargo
Foundation



INCLUSIVE
PROSPERITY CAPITAL



CLIMATE
IMPACT CAPITAL



EnhancedCapital



Coastal Enterprises



sunwealth®



CollectiveSun™



URBAN INGENUITY



Raise Green



Hawaii Green
Infrastructure Authority



University of
New Hampshire



LSC

The illustration is split into two main sections. On the left, a circular cutout shows a rural scene with a red school building labeled 'SCHOOL', a grey apartment building, a red brick apartment building, solar panels, and a path. On the right, a larger, semi-transparent illustration shows a cityscape with various buildings, including a hospital labeled 'HOSPITAL' with a red cross, a bank labeled 'BANK', and residential houses. The background is a light blue sky with clouds and a sun. The text 'Community Power Accelerator Prize Overview' is centered over the right side of the image.

Community Power Accelerator Prize Overview

Prize Overview

The Community Power Accelerator Round 2 Prize is a **\$10 million, three-phase** prize.

The prize is designed to **fast-track the efforts of new, emerging, and expanding solar developers and co-developers** to learn, participate in, and grow multiple successful community solar projects.

By the end of the prize, competitors will be ready to **engage with the Community Power Accelerator** online platform.

This three-phase prize intends to increase the number of equitable community solar projects by providing:

- **Funding** throughout the project pre-development process.
- **Tools and resources** to connect developers with private sector financing.
- **Training** to understand the full cycle of community solar development.
- **Free consulting** to competitors on the steps necessary to get a community solar project financed.
- **Coaching** on expanding developers' solar customer markets.

\$10 Million in Prizes!

| Prize Phase | Duration | Anticipated Number of Awards | Dollar Amounts (prize pool to be evenly split among winners) |
|-----------------|------------------------|------------------------------|--|
| Phase 1: Ready! | 3 Months | Up to 25 | \$1,250,000 (\$50,000 per winner) |
| Phase 2: Set! | 6 months (anticipated) | Up to 25 | \$5,000,000 (\$200,000 per winner) |
| Phase 3: Grow! | 6 months (anticipated) | Up to 25 | \$3,750,000 (\$150,000 per winner) |

3 Phases: Ready!, Set!, GROW!



Phase 1 Ready!

Identify new or expanding community solar developers and co-developers with a high potential to develop at least 1MW of equitable community solar projects that includes at least two meaningful benefits.

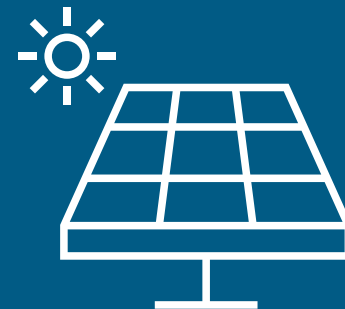
July 14– October 4, 2023



Phase 2 Set!

Recognize successful community solar pre-development activities via participation in the **Learning Lab, Coaching,** and Completion of the **Credit-Ready Checklist**

January 25 – July 31, 2024
(Anticipated)



Phase 3 Grow!

Engage in the Community Power Accelerator and secure investment commitments for a portfolio of at least 1MW of community solar projects with investors or philanthropic organizations.

July 2024– January 2025
(Anticipated)

Who Can Participate?

- The Community Power Accelerator Prize is open to **U.S. community solar developers**, including new developers and experienced developers who are expanding their community solar operations.
- The prize is seeking developers who have the desire and ambition to develop and finance a project portfolio of at **least 1 MW of community solar with meaningful benefits** incorporated.
- **Single projects** are not eligible for this prize.
- The prize is seeking organizations that have the ambition to **scale** their community solar portfolio **beyond the scope of the prize**



Who Can Participate?

The prize encourages organizations who are new to community solar development to apply, new community solar developers, intermediaries, nonprofits, and community-based organizations, such as:

- Community-based organizations (such as local community health organizations, community action agencies, community and economic development organizations, etc.) that have real estate portfolios and/or are in construction
- Multifamily affordable housing providers
- State, local, and municipal governments
- Intermediary organizations such as community development financial institutions (CDFIs)
- General contractors with roofing and/or electrical experience
- Socially and economically disadvantaged individual (SEDI) demographics-related business and women- and minority-owned businesses
- Other large real estate holders that could be available for solar deployment.
- Other co-developers who partner with a community solar developer



Power Connector Support and Teaming

Competitors who are participating in Phase 1 will be able to access support from ADL Ventures, an American-Made Power Connector:

- Ask questions about the prize
- Receive verbal feedback on submission materials
- Participate in upcoming teaming events and resources to connect first time community solar co-developers with experience community solar developers
 - Keep an eye on HeroX for more information

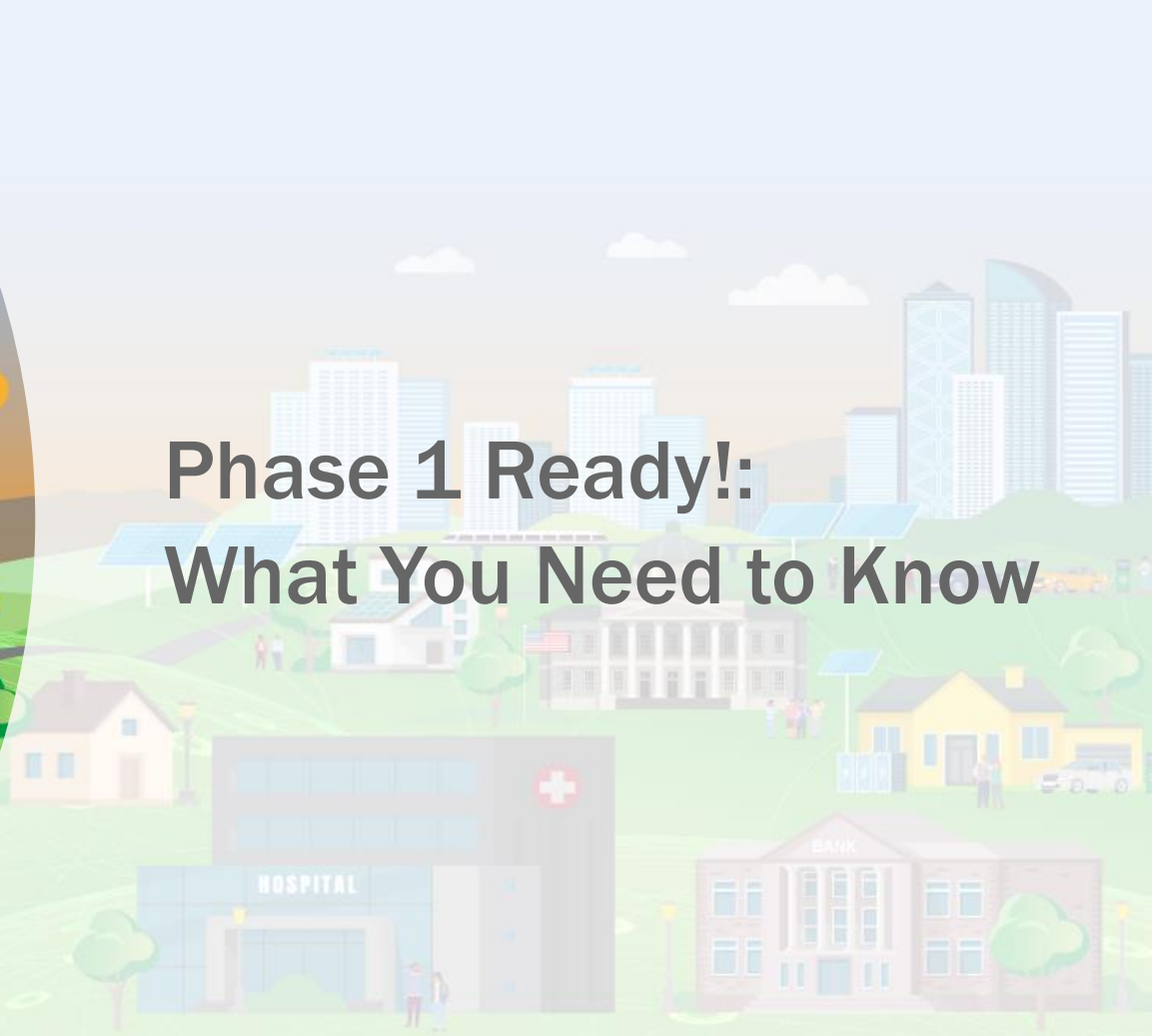


To connect with ADL Ventures,
contact
Matt Paul at

matthew.paul@adlventures.com



Phase 1 Ready!: What You Need to Know



Phase 1: Ready! Overview

- The Phase 1: Ready! Contest is the first in this three-contest series and has a total of \$1,250,000 in cash prizes.
- The goal of Phase 1: Ready! is to recognize successful new and expanding community solar project developers as they prepare and begin to execute community solar project development (e.g., pre-development activities and project financing).
- Competitors may propose to develop and seek financing for more than two projects and 1 MW during the course of the prize. Competitors who propose more than two projects and 1 MW must, in Phase 2 and Phase 3, deliver a total portfolio equal to the same megawatt capacity as their initial Phase 1 proposal.

Ready! Contest Prizes

- Up to 25 awards (expected range 15–25)
- Each Phase 1 winner will receive a \$50,000 cash prize
- Phase 1 winners must designate a single individual to participate in the Community Power Accelerator Learning Lab (required for Phase 2: Set! award)
- All Phase 1 winners will receive direct technical assistance mentorship and coaching

Phase 1: Ready! Logistics

Important dates

- Open: July 14, 2023
- Submission deadline: October 4 at 5 p.m. ET
- Winner announcement: December 2023 (anticipated)

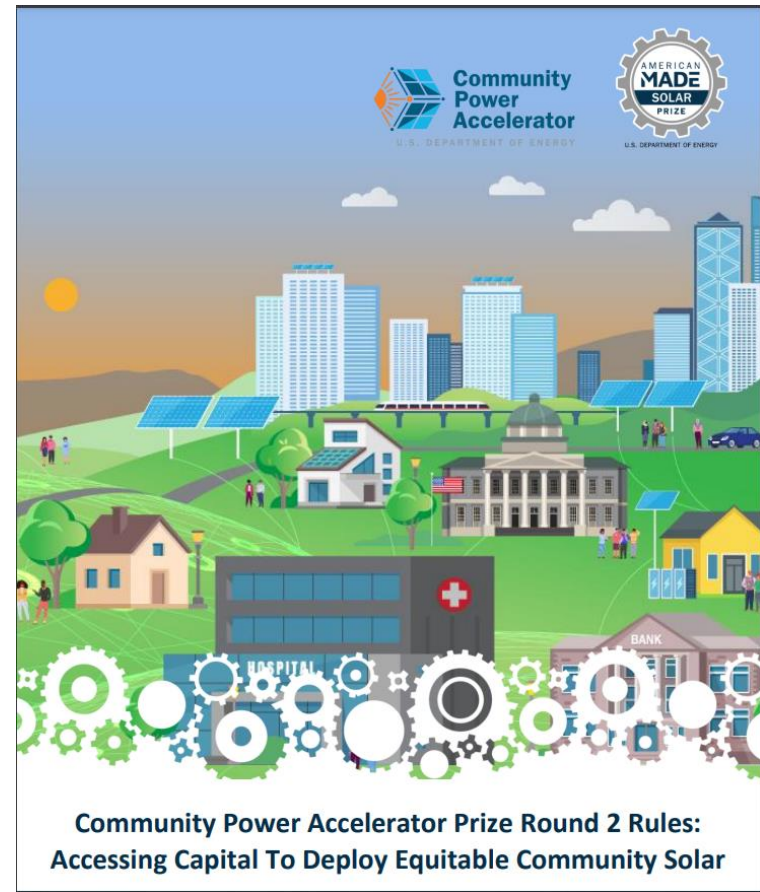
Read the Rules

- The official rules can be found at:
herox.com/CommunityPowerAcceleratorRound2

Enter your Phase 1 submission

- The Phase 1 submission form can be found on HeroX by clicking on:

SOLVE THIS CHALLENGE



Official Rules

HeroX Live Demo



American-Made Challenges

254

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Community Power Accelerator Round 2

Fast-tracks the efforts of solar developers to learn and grow their operations to support multiple, successful community solar projects.

Energy, Environment & Resources Government

Stage: Enter Prize: \$10,000,000

SOLVE THIS CHALLENGE

- Summary
- Timeline
- Forum
- Teams 5
- Entries
- Resources
- FAQ

- Overview
- Guidelines



Follow Along



Sign-up for the prize and read the official rules document at: herox.com/CommunityPowerAcceleratorRound2

What to Submit for Phase 1: Ready!



1. Cover page (selected questions public)
2. Portfolio narrative
3. PowerPoint summary slide (public*)
4. Evidence of completion of [Introduction to Community Solar](#) course
5. Narrative (3,500 words max)

Cover Page

To be completed via HeroX

List basic information about your submission:

- Submission title*
- Organization name*
- Organization city* and state*
- Organization address
- Organization nine-digit zip code
- Organization website URL*
- Point of contact information (name, email, phone)

Starred (*) elements will be made public on HeroX.

This is only a draft. You can start now and complete your submission later!



Create Submission

Save & Preview

Section 3: Cover Page: Organization and Team Information

Let us know who's on the team! This allows us to know who is part of each team and give credit to each member.

Organization or Team Name *

What is your official team name? If you're selected, we'll use this name on various outreach materials.

Organization or Team Name

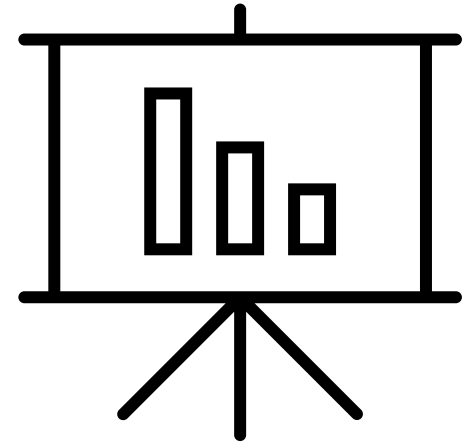
0/3000

Team Members *

Please provide the following details for each team member in the format below. Use a new line for

Summary Slide

- Competitors must create a single-slide summary in PowerPoint that contains specific technical details about the submission that can be understood by a nontechnical audience.
- No specific template is required, but text should be readable on a standard printout and conference-room projection.
- Teams should not include any trade secrets or commercially sensitive information that is privileged or confidential on their summary slide.



Summary slide will be made public on HeroX.

Portfolio Narrative

List basic information about your portfolio:

Past and Current Portfolio

- Community solar and other solar projects you have developed, or have helped develop, to date.
- Total capacity (MW) of the community solar or other solar projects that you have developed, or have helped develop, to date.
- The states and cities where the operational community solar or other solar projects are located.

Planned Portfolio

- Community solar projects (minimum two, totaling in aggregate at least 1 MW) that you are planning to develop during the course of the prize.

Important Note: Competitors may propose to develop and seek financing for **more than two projects and 1 MW during the course of the prize.** Competitors who propose more than two projects and 1 MW must, in Phase 2 and Phase 3, **deliver a total portfolio equal to the same megawatt capacity as their initial Phase 1 proposal.**

Template Available at: herox.com/CommunityPowerAcceleratorRound2/resource/1379

Introduction to Community Solar

- The Introduction to Community Solar Course is intended to help teams understand how to become a community solar project developer for projects that include the five meaningful benefits.
- The course is approximately 3-4 hours (including videos, reading assignments, and the self-assessment).
- Competitors will be asked to submit to HeroX the email they used to register for the course as well as date of completion as evidence.
- Organizations who have already completed and passed the course within the past year will not be required to retake the course for Phase 1 but will be required to provide the email used to register as well as the date of completion.



The Introduction to Community Solar course was created by HP Sustainability Solutions and the Center for Impact Finance at the University of New Hampshire Carsey School of Public Policy with support from the U.S. Department of Energy Solar Energy Technologies Office.

Partners from across the country have also share their expertise via materials, resources, and leadership throughout the course.

Target Audience: Primary audience for this course is non-profit organizations, cooperatives, and mission-driven (community co-benefits focused) organizations interested in building out a business line to develop community solar.

Secondary Audiences: Organizations seeking to understand community solar. Organizations with land seeking to partner with community solar developers, including the following types of organizations: Affordable Housing developers, commercial land and real estate owners, non-profit organizations that own real estate (such as churches), government organizations that own real estate, community organizations that are starting up an energy cooperative to develop solar.

Course Overview: This introductory course consists of one self-paced module reviewing the basics of community solar technology, accessibility, and development roles. You will also be asked to perform a self-evaluation for your organization. This self-paced, entirely online course will take about 3-4 hours to complete, not counting any additional time that you may want to take for optional readings, self-reflection, market assessment, and conversations with team members at your financial institution as well as with stakeholders in your local solar industry. Those conversations can be quite valuable, so we do recommend trying to set aside some additional time for them if you can.

To get access to the course, please complete the request form at:
https://unh.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bP1tGbJLyOcnpB4

Narrative

3,500 word maximum

You should answer each of the questions in the three areas:

- **Organization and Team:** Describe your organization, past experience, and team, and how your team would benefit from participation in the Community Power Accelerator Prize.
- **Prize Portfolio Plan and Future Plans to Scale:** What is your plan to develop a portfolio of at least 1 MW of community solar projects over the course of the prize? What is your long-term vision for scaling your community solar portfolio post prize?
- **Underserved and Disadvantaged Community Engagement:** What is your plan to engage with and work with underserved and disadvantaged communities in which you plan to develop community solar projects?

2. **Prize Portfolio Plan and Future Plans To Scale** – What is your plan to develop a portfolio of at least 1 MW_{DC} of community solar projects over the course of the prize?

A key mission of this prize is not just to have individual projects built, but to empower new community solar developers who intend to use this experience to scale up development of such projects once the prize is concluded. What is your long-term vision for scaling your community solar portfolio after the prize?

24 points possible

Note: Both the narrative responses to this question and the information in the portfolio Narrative will be used to evaluate the below judging criteria.

Teams can describe:

- **Portfolio Projects:** Describe and provide context for the portfolio that your team plans to develop over the course of the prize. Why did you select these projects? What is the potential impact of these projects? Please explain any missing information from the portfolio narrative.
- **Meaningful Benefits:** For each meaningful benefit that you identified in the portfolio narrative, please provide additional detail on why that meaningful benefit was selected and how you envision implementing that meaningful benefit into your projects.

Judging criteria (1–6 points per statement):

- **Portfolio Projects:** The proposed prize portfolio described by the team is ambitious yet achievable and is well positioned for successful development and financing within the scope and timeline of the prize.
- **Meaningful Benefits:** The team presents a well-thought-out plan for implementing the identified meaningful benefits into their projects, showcasing innovative approaches and strategies that can effectively deliver these benefits to the target communities.

Template Available at: herox.com/CommunityPowerAcceleratorRound2/resource/1380

Phase 1 Submission Scoring Overview

- Expert Reviewers will be assigned to each eligible submission and will assign a score for each scoring statement between 1 and 6 in each of the below review categories:
 - **Category 1: Organization and Team (24 points)**
 - **Category 2: Prize Portfolio Plan and Future Plans to Scale (24 points)**
 - **Category 3: Underserved and Disadvantaged Community Engagement (30 points)**

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------|-------|----------------|
| strongly disagree | disagree | slightly disagree | slightly agree | agree | strongly agree |

- Advisory reviewers will review submissions and provide input to the U.S. Department of Energy, Solar Energy Technologies Office (SETO)
- SETO is the final judge and will make selections based on Expert Reviewers scores, comments and program policy factors.

Program Policy Factors

- While the scores of the expert reviewers will be carefully considered, it is the role of the awards administrator to maximize the impact of contest benefits.
- Some factors outside the control of teams and beyond the independent expert reviewers' scope of review may need to be considered to accomplish this goal.
- In addition to the reviewers' scores, program policy factors may be considered in determining winners
- **Example program policy factors include:**
 - Geographic diversity of potential winners.
 - Diversity in project or program type (state program, utility-led program, third-party-developed project, community-owned project, etc.).
 - The degree to which the submission supports and complements DOE's existing programs and strategies to achieve DOE goals.



A full list of Program Policy Factors can be found on page 45 of the [official rules](#)



Phases 2 and 3: What To Expect

Phase 2: Set! - Learning Lab + Credit Ready Workbook

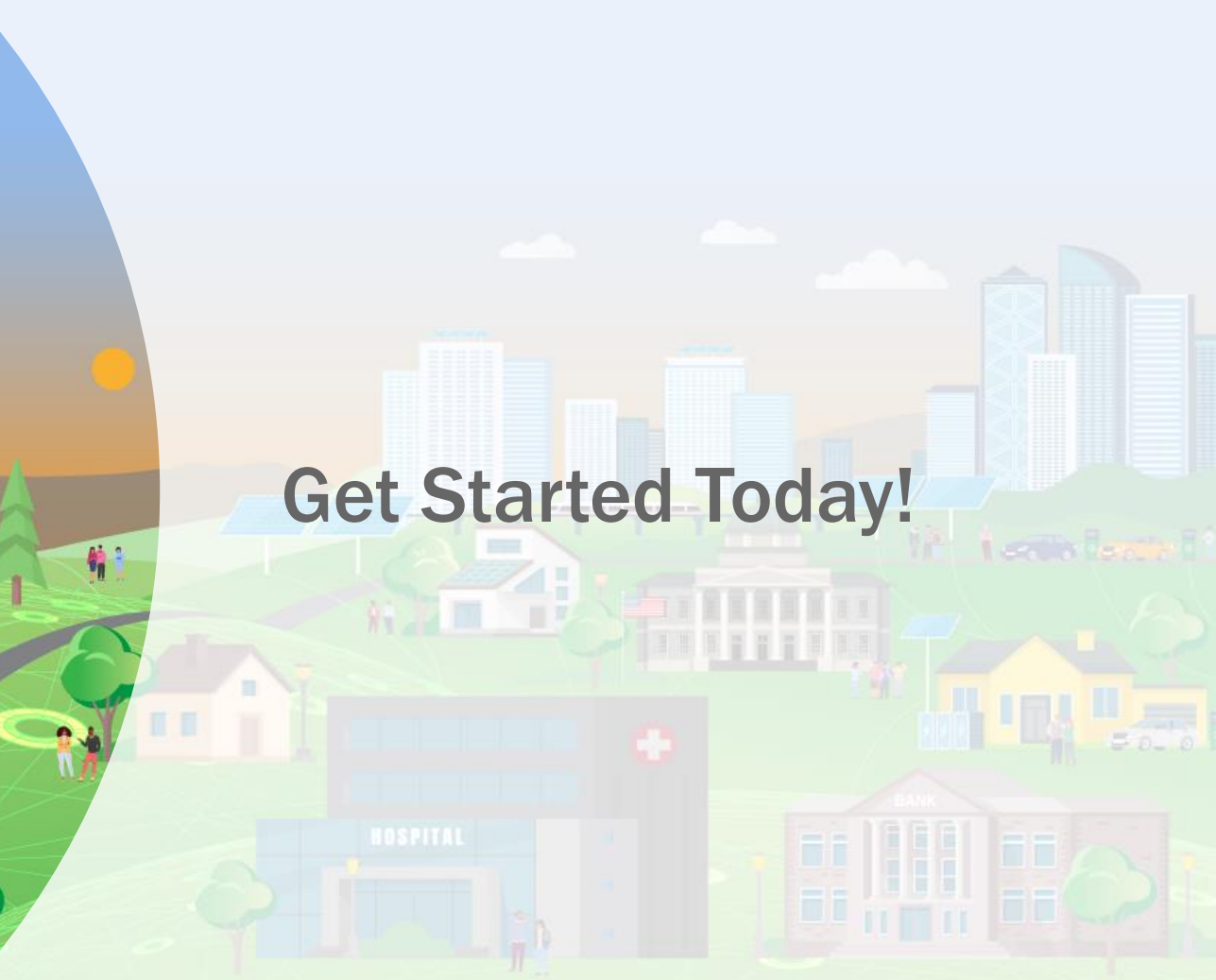
- **Phase 2 Overview:**
 - Phase 2 will begin in January 2024 shortly after Phase 1 winners are announced.
 - Up to 25 teams will be eligible to receive \$200K cash award and be eligible to compete in Phase 3.
- **Phase 2 Activities and Requirements (Anticipated):**
 - Phase 1 winners will need to designate an individual to participate in, and graduate from, the [Community Power Accelerator Learning Lab](#), a live, remote course designed to educate developers on community solar in disadvantaged communities.
 - This course is anticipated to run from **January 25, 2024, through March 28, 2024.**
 - The course consists of eight learning modules as well as weekly, instructor-led Zoom sessions.
 - Participants can expect to commit 6–8 hours per week, plus a 90-minute Zoom session.
 - In addition, Phase 2 competitors will also be required to complete the credit-ready workbook, list their Phase 1 portfolio of projects on the accelerator website, and create submit a Phase 2 HeroX submission which includes an investor pitch deck.
 - Phase 2 teams will work directly with technical assistance coaches to advise on the checklist.

Phase 3: Grow! – Securing Investment via the Community Power Accelerator

- **Phase 3 Overview:**
 - Phase 3 will begin in July 2024 shortly after Phase 2 winners are announced.
 - Up to 25 teams will be eligible to receive \$150K cash award.
 - Phase 3 rules are anticipated to be released for competitor feedback.
- **Phase 3 Activities and Requirements Requirements (Anticipated):**
 - Phase 3 teams will begin to engage fully in the [Community Power Accelerator platform](#),
 - Using the Community Power Accelerator platform, competitors will **secure investment commitments from investors** and/or philanthropic organizations for a community solar portfolio of at least 1 MW (2+ projects).
 - **If competitors proposed more than 1MW in their Phase 1 plan, they will be required to meet those goals**
 - Teams will work directly with technical assistance coaches to create and refine project profile(s)—on the Community Power Accelerator platform; create an investor pitch deck; and engage with potential investors, lenders, and philanthropists.
 - A Phase 3 submission package will be due via HeroX at the end of the phase.



Get Started Today!



Get Started Today!

Get Signed Up:

- Follow the [challenge on HeroX](#)
- Join the [NCSP](#)



Sign up on
HeroX



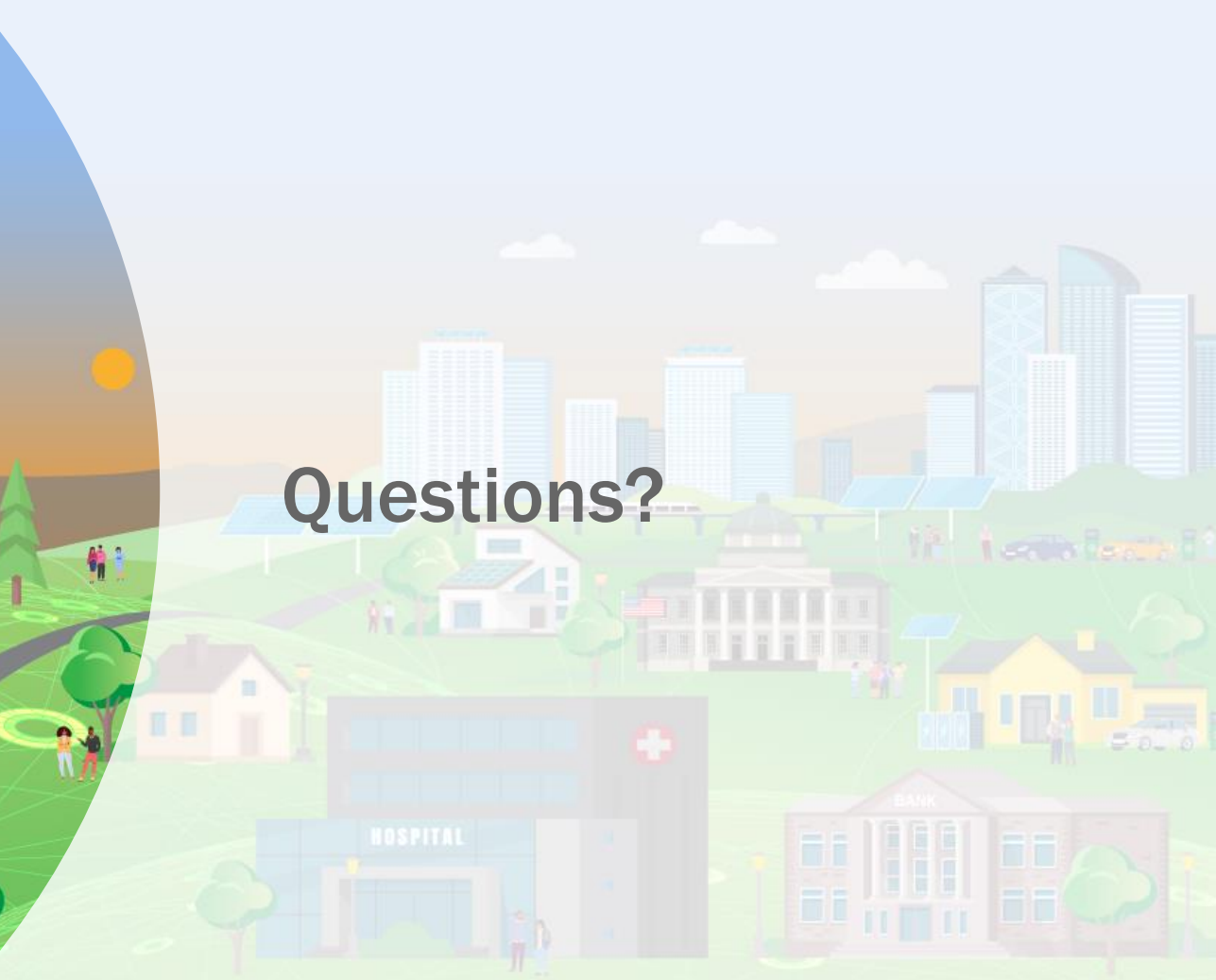
Submit your Phase 1 Ready! Submission:

- Read the [Rules](#)
- [Sign Up](#) for the Introduction to Community Solar Course
- Connect with ADL Ventures
- Submit by **October 4, 2023, at 5 p.m. ET.**
- Email Solar.Prize@nrel.gov with any questions





Questions?





Thank You!
Solar.Prize@nrel.gov

