



# Pennsylvania Grid Resilience Grants Program

2023 Guidance Document

Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
Energy Programs Office

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## 2023 PENNSYLVANIA GRID RESILIENCE GRANTS PROGRAM

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## **2023 Pennsylvania Grid Resilience Grants Program**

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is offering competitive grant funding to provide financial assistance to improve the all-hazards resilience of the electric grid and prevent disruptive events. The Pennsylvania Grid Resilience Grants (PA GRG or Program) Program is funded under Section 40101(d) Formula Grant Program of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). DEP has been allocated approximately \$40.5 million over a five-year period to improve the resilience of our electric grid. DEP is seeking applications for innovative, advanced, and transformative projects resulting in a more resilient and reliable electric grid while promoting the expansion of clean energy generation, workforce benefits, and positive outcomes in disadvantaged communities. DEP will receive applications for projects which fall within the category areas listed under the General Eligibility section of these guidelines. DEP anticipates awarding all funding identified as available within the funding information section.

The 40101(d) Formula Grant Program, entitled Preventing Outages and Enhancing the Resilience of the Electric Grid, was established under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) of 2021 commonly referred to as the BIL. 40101(d) is also a part of the U.S. Department of Energy's (DOE) Building a Better Grid Initiative, launched January 12, 2022, which seeks to catalyze the nationwide development of new and upgraded high-capacity electric transmission lines and support investments to modernize the flexibility and resilience of the distribution system to create a more resilient grid. We encourage you to read similar Building a Better Grid Initiatives available at [Building a Better Grid Initiative | Department of Energy](#).

The Department of Environmental Protection values working with partners who share our view that diversity and equity are integral to success in restoring and protecting the environment for all Pennsylvanians. As we work to demonstrably improve the inclusivity of our programs and processes, we also encourage our partners to pursue increased inclusivity in their operations. In this way, Pennsylvania's natural resources are best protected as "the common property of all the people," as identified in our state constitution.

## **2023 Award Overview**

### **Funding Information**

Approximately \$16 million is available for new awards under this competitive grant program. Projects funded will have an initial Period of Performance of five years. Awards may be extended to span the amount of time necessary for recipients to complete all project efforts, up to ten years. At least five percent of the program funding is being set aside for eligible entities that sell not more than 4,000,000 MWh of electricity per year. This funding portion is referred to as "Small Utility Set Aside."

### **Cost Match Requirements**

An eligible entity that receives a grant award under the Program is required to match a minimum of 100 percent of the award amount. However, if the eligible entity sells not more than 4,000,000 megawatt hours of electricity per year, the required minimum match will be one-third of the award amount. Matching funds means any new public or private investment in the proposed project made by an eligible applicant. Eligible applicants must provide letters documenting the financial commitment. Eligible letters and matching fund use are discussed in the application requirements section of these guidelines.

## Key Considerations Prior to Applying

- All applications must be submitted online through DCED's Electronic Single Application (ESA) system. <http://www.esa.dced.state.pa.us/>.
- Activities funded must be conducted in Pennsylvania.
- Activities funded are subject to Federal pass down requirements.
- DOE will exercise Federal stewardship in overseeing the project activities performed under this program.
- Projects will not be reimbursed for any work performed prior to the grant award date.

## General Eligibility

### Eligible Applicants:

The following applicants are eligible for grants:

- a) an electric grid operator;
- b) an electricity storage operator;
- c) an electricity generator;
- d) a transmission owner or operator;
- e) a distribution provider;
- f) a fuel supplier;
- g) and any other relevant entity, as determined by DEP in consultation with DOE.

Multiple eligible entities may form a consortium and file a joint application. A consortium will be evaluated to be a "Small Utility" for cost match requirements and "Small Utility Set Aside" funding purposes by the following guidance:

- Each member of a consortium will be evaluated individually if they sell not more than 4,000,000 MWh of electricity per year and will all be required to submit EIA form 861 for verification.
  - The consortium of eligible entities' electricity sales will not be evaluated as a combined amount.
- Example 1: Entity A (400,000 MWh), Entity B (3,000,000 MWh), and Entity C (3,000,000 MWh) form a consortium. Because Entity A, B, and C all individually sell not more than 4,000,000 MWh of electricity per year, this consortium will be evaluated as a Small Utility.
- Example 2: Entity A (400,000 MWh) and Entity B (4,400,000 MWh) form a consortium. Because Entity B sells more than 4,000,000 MWh of electricity per year, this consortium will not be evaluated as a Small Utility.

Each applicant may submit only one application for this solicitation. However, an eligible entity that applies as a member of a consortium may apply for a separate award as an individual entity.

### Eligible Projects:

Grant funding provided by DEP may only be used to implement the following resilience measures intended to mitigate the impact of disruptive events. This list of measures includes:

- a) weatherization technologies and equipment;
- b) fire-resistant technologies and fire prevention systems;
- c) monitoring and control technologies;
- d) the undergrounding of electrical equipment;
- e) utility pole management;

- f) the relocation of power lines or the reconductoring of power lines with low sag;
- g) advanced conductors;
- h) vegetation and fuel-load management;
- i) the use or construction of infrastructure for enhancing system adaptive capacity during disruptive events, including microgrids and battery-storage subcomponents;
  - o Note: These projects are only eligible if used exclusively during disruptive events.
- j) adaptive protection technologies;
- k) advanced modeling technologies;
- l) hardening of power lines, facilities, substations, or other systems; and
- m) the replacement of old overhead conductors and underground cables.

Funding may also be used for the training, recruitment, retention, and reskilling of skilled and properly credentialled workers to perform the work required for the resilience measures listed above. DEP will give priority to projects that will generate the greatest community benefit (whether rural or urban) in reducing the likelihood and consequences of disruptive events.

The following types of projects are ineligible:

1. Construction of a new –
  - a. electric generating facility; or
  - b. large-scale battery-storage facility that is not used for enhancing system adaptive capacity during disruptive events; or
2. Cybersecurity.

Note: Any applicant who begins a project and incurs costs before receiving a fully executed grant agreement does so at their own risk.

**Note:** Modification of an existing generation facility may be an eligible use of funds, but the scope of the project would need to reduce the likelihood and consequences of disruptive events and meet one of the eligible uses of grants funds listed above. Additionally, any work performed on an existing generating system cannot increase the maximum rated output of the original nameplate capacity.

**Note:** If it is determined that constructing a new distribution power line, below 69 kV, reduces the likelihood and consequences of disruptive events by providing redundancy or fail-over capability, then it is an eligible project. Constructing new distribution or transmission conductors over 69 kV are an ineligible project.

### *Eligible Expenditures*

Note: matching funds may only be used for the same eligible expenditures as grant funds themselves.

The following types of expenditures are eligible:

- Cost associated with personnel and fringe, materials, equipment, software, construction, retrofitting, tools, and contractual work directly related to the project.

The following types of expenditures are ineligible:

- Costs associated with preparation of the PA GRG application; land acquisition; permits; landscaping; advertising; business start-up costs; indirect costs (i.e., general administrative and overhead, contingency funds, etc.); travel, lodging, subsistence; conference or meeting expenses including catering, conference equipment and room rental.
- Revenues or royalties from the prospective operation of an activity beyond the time considered in the award; proceeds from the prospective sale of an asset of an activity; or other appropriated Federal funds.
- Repayment of the federal share of a cost-shared activity under Section 988 of the Energy Policy Act of 2005 shall not be a condition of the award.

## Application Requirements

- Applicants must submit a Concept Paper to be eligible to submit a Full Application.
- The Concept Paper, Full Application, and required attachments must be complete, and the application must include all applicable items as outlined in the appropriate application instructions.
- Concept Paper and Full Application Project Narrative must follow formatting requirements: 8.5x11 paper size, 12-point font, font color black, and standard margins.
- The Concept Paper and Full Application must describe where all project activities will occur.
- The Full Application must include equipment specifications, maps, plans, or financial documents associated with the project.
- The Full Application must describe any other public funding included in the project.
- The Full Application must contain letters documenting the financial commitment for any match claimed; these letters of commitment must include clear documentation of the amount of financial commitment from each source (both the applicant and from any entity other than the applicant). The letters must state:
  - Applicant acknowledges that the DEP does not consider the following items as matching funds nor as eligible costs for the use of this funding: costs associated with preparation of the PA GRG application; land acquisition; permits; landscaping; advertising; business start-up costs; indirect costs (i.e., general administrative and overhead, contingency funds, etc.); travel, lodging, subsistence; conference or meeting expenses including catering, conference equipment and room rental; revenues or royalties from the prospective operation of an activity beyond the time considered in the award; proceeds from the prospective sale of an asset of an activity; or other appropriated Federal funds.
  - Applicant has funds available and in-hand to support the match funding identified in this application's budget either through an already approved loan or cash on hand; or
  - Applicant has a third-party agreement to support the match funding identified in this application's budget. A letter from that organization identifying the amount available must be provided.
- Monies "applied for" from other sources may not be included as matching funds.
- The Full Application must include a detailed budget for the project. PA GRG funds cannot be used to cover the following ineligible costs, which are also ineligible as match:
  - Preparation of the PA GRG application; land acquisition; permits; landscaping; advertising; business start-up costs; indirect costs (i.e., general administrative and overhead, contingency funds, etc.); travel, lodging, subsistence; conference or meeting expenses including catering, conference equipment and room rental; revenues or royalties from the prospective operation of an activity beyond the time considered in the award; proceeds from the prospective sale of an asset of an activity; or other appropriated Federal funds. and any other cost not deemed acceptable to DEP.
- All awarded projects will need to comply with the following Federal Requirements:
  - [Build America](#), [Buy America](#), Foreign National Participation, Transparency of Foreign Connections, [Davis Bacon Act](#), [Environmental Review in accordance to NEPA](#), and [Flood Resilience](#).

## Evaluation

DEP will conduct a comprehensive review of all complete and eligible Concept Papers and Full Applications including supporting documentation. Applicants will be evaluated based solely on the data provided: therefore, completeness and accuracy are important. Applications will be reviewed and evaluated by DEP using the criteria listed and defined below. Please see Concept Paper and Full Application instructions for more information.

Improving Grid Performance: the magnitude of the community or regional benefits that the project will generate by reducing the likelihood and consequences of disruptive events.



Improving Grid Resilience: the magnitude of community or regional benefits that the project will generate by reducing restoration time, total number of event days, and/or average number of customers impacted by events because of the project.

Increasing Economic Resilience: the magnitude of the community or regional benefits that the project will generate through ongoing permanent jobs created, wages, benefits, and build-out of the supply chain or other induced economic effects.

Ensuring Workforce Benefits: the magnitude of the community or regional benefits that the project will generate through promoting strong labor standards and protection.

Improving Environmental Performance and GHG Reduction: the magnitude of the community or regional benefits that the project will generate through improving energy efficiency, reducing congestion, expanding grid capacity for renewable generation, reducing GHG emissions, etc.

Improving Outcomes in Disadvantaged Communities: the magnitude of the community or regional benefits that the project will generate through direct or indirect investments or positive project outcomes that achieve or contribute to environmental justice goals including decrease in energy burden, decrease in environmental exposure, increase in high-quality job creation, etc. See Appendix A.

Project Readiness: the technical and financial feasibility of the project, the financial need of the project, the capital efficiency of the project, and the soundness of the proposed cost share.

### *Concept Papers*

Applicants will receive feedback on Concept Papers via email and given an “encourage” or “discourage” notification. **Applicants must submit a Concept Paper by the due date to be eligible to submit a Full Application.** Applicants may still submit a Full Application if given a “discourage” notification from DEP.

### *Full Applications*

In addition to the criteria listed above, Full Applications will be evaluated on the following factors:

- Sufficiency of technical detail to demonstrate that the proposed project is feasible and would likely result in the described community or regional resilience benefits.
- Level of understanding of the key anticipated risks (e.g. technical, financial, market, environmental, regulatory) involved in the proposed work and the quality of the mitigation strategies to address them.
- Clarity and appropriateness of the roles and responsibilities of the project management organization and the project team.
- The qualifications, relevant expertise, and time commitment of individuals on the team.
- Extent to which project supports and works in tandem with State, local, regional resilience, decarbonization, or other energy strategies and plans (See Appendix A for State plans).
- The level of clarity in the identification and definition of baseline metrics and project milestones.
- Extent to which the project would contribute to meeting the objectives that 40% of the benefits of climate and clean energy investments flow to disadvantaged communities (See Appendix A).

Projects may be determined to be incomplete and as such ineligible for an award if the information provided in the application:

- Is incomplete or contains inaccurate information.
- Does not clearly indicate that the project activities funded will be conducted in Pennsylvania.
- Does not clearly indicate that the project is ready to commence and can be completed within the grant period of performance.

- Does not provide letters from the applicant or project partners providing cost share that clearly documents financial commitment.
- Indicates that costs have been expended prior to dates stated in the solicitation.
- Does not document the minimum 100% cost match for entities that sell more than 4,000,000 MWh of electricity per year.
- Does not document the minimum one-third cost match for entities that sell not more than 4,000,000 MWh of electricity per year.
- Does not clearly indicate the project will follow State and Federal requirements.
- DEP reserves the right not to award funds to applicants that have:
  - exhibited poor performance in complying with the expectations and requirements of previously awarded grants with DEP including, but not limited to, failure to complete previously awarded projects or failure to submit required paperwork in a timely fashion; or
  - non-compliance issues with DEP or outstanding obligations to the Commonwealth, including other commonwealth agencies.

DEP may, at its discretion, award partial grant funding for a dollar amount less than the requested amount.

### **Grant Award and Contract Conditions**

- All applicants will receive notification of their funding status once awardees have been selected.
- Projects selected for funding will receive a letter via email from the DEP Secretary or designee, addressed to the contact person specified in the application.
- Grantees will be assigned a DEP project advisor who will be their primary DEP point of contact.
- After the announcement of a grant award, DEP will forward a grant agreement to the recipient; individuals vested with the authority to do the legal business for the organization will be required to execute (sign) the grant agreement electronically.
- The grant recipient will provide a detailed scope-of-work, project schedule, budget, and other information as required to DEP.
- Grantees that have not had previous contracts or grant agreements with the commonwealth will be required to obtain a vendor identification number through the Vendor Data Management Unit, [Non Procurement Vendor Registration \(state.pa.us\)](https://state.pa.us) (Non-Procurement Registration Link) and to submit a Form W-9, Request for Taxpayer Identification Number and Certification.
- Payment:
  - PA GRG is a **reimbursement** grant program. Payment requests may begin only after the grantee has received a fully executed grant agreement.
  - DEP will make payment to a grantee based on review of the required Statement of Expenditures form, accompanying invoices and adequate proof of payment documentation; DEP will not fund costs in excess of the awarded grant amount.
  - DEP will approve expenditure requests submitted in appropriated timelines determined via contract negotiations.
  - Grantees will be paid for funds expended only during the grant period of performance.



- Reporting and Invoices:
  - The grantee will be required to submit the following reports, on forms provided by DEP, as per the grant agreement:
    - Quarterly Progress Reports.
    - A Final Report.
    - A One-Year Follow-Up Report, including performance measures and jobs created or retained, one year after the project completion date.
  - Additional reporting requirements apply to projects funded by BIL. As part of tracking progress toward key DOE and DEP goals – ensuring justice and equity, creating jobs, boosting domestic manufacturing, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and advancing a pathway to private sector – DOE will require specific data collection. Examples of data that will be collected include:
    - Project locations.
    - Measurable improvements of resilience.
    - Transmission capacity upgraded, expanded, or built.
    - Electricity storage capacity installed.
    - Value of contracts or agreements with minority owned business for supplies, services, or equipment.

Award recipients must maintain sufficient records to substantiate this information upon request.

- Completion of Project:
  - The project must be completed as described in the grant agreement; modifications to the project will not be considered, except for limited scope, time, and budget changes approved by DEP via your DEP project advisor.
  - With DEP approval, changes may include replacements of equal quality and function, and reallocation of funds within the budget as long as the maximum contract dollar amount payable by DEP to the grantee is not exceeded.
- Permits:
  - Grantees must secure all permits (federal, state, or local) or approvals otherwise required for the project to proceed; this includes any permits required by DEP.
  - If permits are required for the project, copies of the permits shall be submitted prior to the first reimbursement request. DEP will not make payments to the grantee prior to receiving a copy of the required permit(s). If applicable, the final building inspection report must be signed, and a copy must be submitted to DEP, before the grantee applies for final payment.
- Grantees must comply with all applicable laws and local ordinances including local, commonwealth and federal requirements in the implementation of the project.

- Accounting and Financial Controls:
  - Grantees must properly manage and account for funding received. A complete spending record for all expenditures will be required, including invoice receipts, logs of record and other properly certified documents.
  - All work or delivery of equipment, etc., must occur during the stated period of performance in the grant agreement. No reimbursement will be given for costs expended prior to the grant period of performance. **Any applicant who starts a project and incurs costs before receiving a fully executed grant agreement does so at their own risk.**
  - Matching funds provided by the applicant or other project partners must be spent during the grant period of performance. No credit will be given for funds spent prior to the grant period of performance. Matching funds must correspond to eligible categories as outlined in the project budget.
  - Documentation will be required for expenditure of matching funds as well as DEP funds.
- DEP reserves the right to terminate the project and/or recover funding from grant recipients that the department determines are either not performing or not properly managing the funding, as per the conditions of these PA GRG solicitations or the grant agreement.
  - Time extensions to the grant period of performance are possible but will only be granted if:
    - DEP determines the extension to be necessary through review of a time extension request.
- DEP reserves the right to inspect projects financed with PA GRG funds and to audit or require a third-party audit of any project's financial transactions or compliance with grant agreement terms.
  - PA GRG grant proposals are public documents and subject to disclosure to the public. Any information included in the grant proposal that the applicant wishes the commonwealth to consider as proprietary must be on a separate sheet of paper and must be clearly marked as proprietary.
- Projects may be subject to Pennsylvania **Prevailing Wage Act** requirements, as follows:
  - Grantees shall ensure where necessary that construction projects with a cost more than \$25,000, which are subject to Pennsylvania's Prevailing Wage Act requirements, are paid appropriate wages commensurate with the Act.
  - For information about the applicability of Prevailing Wage, applicants should contact the Department of Labor and Industry at 717-705-7256 or 800-932-0665 or visit the website at [www.dli.pa.gov](http://www.dli.pa.gov). It is solely the responsibility of a grantee to ensure the Act is followed if applicable.

## Definitions

The following are definitions of key terms that are used in this application package:

*Pennsylvania Grid Resilience Grants (PA GRG)* Monies allocated from the 40101(d) Formula Grant Program for a project approved by DEP.

*Award* – The financial assistance offered to an applicant under this grant.

*Concept Paper* – A paper containing all information required by DEP as identified in the Concept Paper Instructions. The Concept Paper must be materially complete in form and substance satisfactory to DEP within the specified time as defined in this guidance document. Submitting a Concept Paper is required to be eligible for a Full Application.

*Department or DEP* – The Department of Environmental Protection of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

*Disruptive Event* – an event in which operations of the electric grid are disrupted, preventively shut off, or cannot operate safely due to extreme weather, wildfire, or other disaster.

*Distressed and Disadvantaged Communities* – A Disadvantaged Community, for the purpose of this program, is identified by using the Council on Environmental Quality’s Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST) which identifies communities burdened by climate change and economic and environmental injustice. Distressed Community, for the purpose of this program, is identified by using the Economic Innovation Group’s Distressed Communities Index, which uses several socioeconomic measures to identify communities with low economic wellbeing. To determine if your project is located in a Disadvantaged Community or a Distressed Community, please use: [General Guidance on Justice40 Implementation](#).

*Environmental Justice (EJ) Area* – An EJ area is any census tract where 20% or more of individuals live in poverty, and/or 30% or more of the population is minority, based on the most current census data and the Federal guidelines for poverty. See Appendix A.

*Financial Feasibility* – An eligible entity’s ability, as determined by DEP, to generate sufficient revenues to cover its expenses, sufficient cash flow to meet the financial ratios set forth in the competitive grant program.

*Full Application* – An application containing all information required by DEP as identified in the Full Application Instructions. The Full Application must be materially complete in form and substance satisfactory to DEP within the specified time as defined in this guidance document.

*Grantee* – An applicant that has an executed PA GRG grant agreement with DEP to receive funding.

*Greenhouse Gases (GHG)* – For purposes of this grant program, GHG shall mean carbon dioxide, methane, and nitrous oxide.

*The Justice40 Initiative* – created by E.O. 14008, establishes a goal that 40% of the overall benefits of certain federal investments flow to disadvantaged communities. [M-21-28 \(whitehouse.gov\)](#)

*New Generation* – BIL Section 40101 prohibits a grant awarded to an Eligible Entity under the program being used for construction of a new electric generating facility. In this context, new generation is defined as construction of a facility that produces electricity, including emergency back-up generation, solar generation or any other electric generation unit or facility.

*Power Line* – The term “power line” includes a transmission line or a distribution line, as applicable. Distribution power lines are below 69 kV.

*Section 40101(d)* – Section 40101(d) of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) authorizes the U.S. Department of Energy to award formula grants to States and Indian Tribes to improve the resilience of their electric grids.

*Small Utility* – As defined in BIL Section 40101(h)(2) for the purpose of this grant program, a Small Utility sells not more than 4,000,000 megawatt hours of electricity per year.

*Weatherization* – Technologies or equipment that can be used to enhance reliability and resiliency of electric grid components in preparation for extreme weather conditions.

## DEP PA GRG Staff

For project inquiries, please contact:

Primary Grant Manager:

Daniel Eitzman | Energy Program Specialist

Department of Environmental Protection | Energy Programs Office

Email: [deitzman@pa.gov](mailto:deitzman@pa.gov) | Phone: 717.772.5628, 8:00am-5:00pm, Monday-Friday

Other Supporting Staff

Secondary Grant Manager:

Tedd Johns | Energy Program Specialist

Department of Environmental Protection | Energy Programs Office

Email: [tejohns@pa.gov](mailto:tejohns@pa.gov) | Phone: 717.772.5695

Secondary Grant Manager:

Amanda Eyer | Environmental Group Manager

Department of Environmental Protection | Energy Programs Office

Email [amaeyer@pa.gov](mailto:amaeyer@pa.gov) | Phone 717.772.5984

Grants Processing, Application Submission and Deadlines:

For questions regarding the online application process, refer to the Help tab on the grant application website or contact:

Enterprise Help Desk, PA Office of Administration

Customer Service:

Email [egrantshelp@pa.gov](mailto:egrantshelp@pa.gov) | Phone: 833.448.0647, 8:30am-6:00pm, Monday-Friday

## Application Submission and Deadline

Concept Paper

Concept Papers will be received any time after the grant opening date of **October 2, 2023, until the deadline of November 1, 2023, at 11:59pm\***. All Concept Papers must be submitted online through DCED's Electronic Single Application (ESA) system. <http://www.esa.dced.state.pa.us/> Emails, hard copy mailings, or faxes will not be accepted.

Applicants will receive feedback on Concept Papers via email and given an “encourage” or “discourage” notification by November 28, 2023. **Applicants must submit a Concept Paper to be eligible to submit a Full Application.** Applicants may still submit a Full Application if given a “discourage” notification from DEP.

Full Application

Full Applications will be received any time after the second grant opening date of **December 5, 2023, until the deadline of January 19, 2024, at 11:59pm\***. All Full Applications must be submitted online through DCED's Electronic Single Application (ESA) system.

<http://www.esa.dced.state.pa.us/> Emails, hard copy mailings, or faxes will not be accepted.

\*Timeline is subject to change. Applicants will be notified of changes.

## **Appendix A**

### **Identifying Disadvantaged Communities**

DEP Office of Environmental Justice’s mission is to help ensure the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people with the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental policies, regulation, and laws; as well as with respect to the identification of environmental issues that affect the most vulnerable communities. PA GRG will ensure that applications submitted from Environmental Justice areas are given additional consideration as appropriate.

Justice40 directs that 40% of the overall benefits realized from Covered Programs flow to “disadvantaged communities.” OMB’s Interim Implementation Guidance defines a community as either: (1) a group of individuals living in geographic proximity (such as census tract), or (2) a geographically dispersed set of individuals (such as migrant workers or Native Americans), where either type of group experiences common conditions. [M-21-28 \(whitehouse.gov\)](https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-action/m-21-28/).

Pursuant to the Interim Implementation Guidance, DOE has developed DOE’s working definition and tool to identify applicable Disadvantaged Communities at [Energy Justice Dashboard \(anl.gov\)](https://energyjustice.dashboard.doe.gov/). DOE will also recognize Disadvantaged Communities as defined and identified by the White House Council of Environmental Quality’s Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST), which can be located at <https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/>.

DOE’s working definition of disadvantaged is based on cumulative burden and includes data for thirty-six (36) indicators collected at the census tract level.

To be considered a Disadvantaged Communities under the DOE definition, a census tract must rank in or above the 80<sup>th</sup> percentile of the cumulative sum of the 36 burden indicators for its state and have at least 30% of households classified as low-income.

Nationwide, 13,581 census tracts were identified as disadvantaged (18.6% of 73,056 total U.S. census tracts). Additionally, federally recognized Tribal lands and U.S. territories, in their entirety, are categorized as Disadvantaged Communities in accordance with OMB’s Interim Implementation Guidance “common conditions” definition of community.

Please see [General Guidance on Justice40 Implementation](#) for more information regarding identifying Disadvantaged Communities with available tools.

### **State Climate, Energy, and Hazard Mitigation Plans**

Applicants are recommended to clearly describe how proposed work aligns with and supports the Commonwealth’s climate, energy, and hazard mitigation strategies. The following plans describe these strategies.

- [2018 State Hazard Mitigation Plan](#)
- [2021 Pennsylvania Climate Action Plan](#)
- [2023-2025 Energy Programs Office Clean Energy Program Plan](#)