

South Carolina Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (SC EECBG) Competitive Subgrant Program

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

This FAQs document will be updated periodically throughout the application window in response to questions submitted to our customer service email at energyics@ors.sc.gov.

Program Information and Eligibility

What is SC's EECBG Competitive Subgrant Program?

South Carolina's EECBG Competitive Subgrant Program is a program to distribute funds to units of local government in South Carolina to implement projects and programs that reduce fossil fuel emissions, improve energy efficiency, and cut overall energy use.

The Federal EECBG Program is authorized by Title V, Subtitle E of the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (EISA), as amended, and signed into Public Law on December 19, 2007. The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), Section 40552 provided \$550 million for the EECBG Program for fiscal year 2022, to remain available until expended.

EECBG funding is available for units of local government either (i) directly from the US Department of Energy (US DOE) or (ii) indirectly through a state program.

US DOE allocated 68% of EECBG in formula funding directly to larger, eligible units of local government. The full list of local governments eligible for direct formula grants from US DOE are listed [here for local governments](#) and [here for tribal allocations](#). See [here](#) for a list of SC entities eligible for direct formula grants from US DOE.

US DOE allocated 28% of EECBG in formula funding to states. South Carolina was allocated \$2.1 million. Each state is required to pass not less than 60% of its allocation through to cities and counties within the state that are ineligible for direct formula grants from DOE.

More details about US DOE's EECBG programs are on their [webpage](#).

South Carolina's EECBG Competitive Subgrant Program is a program to distribute the State's formula funds to units of local government in South Carolina to implement applicable energy projects and programs. The South Carolina Energy Office (SCEO) anticipates making approximately 20–30 subgrant awards ranging from \$50,000 to \$75,000 each. EECBG Subgrants from the state are available to units of local SC government ineligible for direct formula grants from DOE.

Who may apply for a SC Competitive EECBG Subgrant?

Units of local SC government that were ineligible for direct formula grants from DOE may apply for SC's EECBG Competitive Subgrants.

What qualifies as a unit of local SC government?

For purposes of South Carolina’s EECBG Competitive Subgrant Program, a unit of local SC government includes city and county governments that did not meet the eligibility requirements for direct EECBG formula grants from US DOE. US DOE’s guidance¹ further defines “city” and “county” to include:

1. A currently incorporated entity or county
 - (a) Listed in the 2021 Census of Governments Survey
 - (b) Having a governance structure with an elected official and governing body
 - (c) Capable of carrying out the activities outlined in 42 U.S.C. §17154,² and
2. is NOT one of the top 10 most populous cities or counties within South Carolina, thus not exceeding the population thresholds outlined in statute.³
 - (a) Cities with populations less than 50,000.
 - (b) Counties with populations less than 200,000.

A “unit of local government” meeting the above criteria may also include,

- (a) certain city-equivalent units of local government (town, village, or *other municipality*), or
- (b) a consolidated or unified city-county government, where a city and a county overlap geographically and govern as one consolidated government.

May municipalities, that are located within a county that was eligible for direct EECBG formula grants from US DOE apply for the SC EECBG Competitive Subgrant Program?

Yes, as long as the municipality submitting an application for the SC EECBG Competitive Subgrant Program was not listed as an entity eligible to receive direct EECBG formula funding from US DOE.

Are other public entities or organizations eligible for the SC EECBG Competitive Subgrant Program?

The only eligible entities for the SC EECBG Competitive Subgrant Program are units of local SC governments and tribes that were not eligible to receive direct EECBG formula funding from DOE. Additional organizations such as those listed below may be project partners, and may receive sub-grants through the applicant, but are not eligible to apply for a SC EECBG Competitive Subgrant.

- School Districts
- Non-profits
- Councils of Government
- Businesses
- Universities/Colleges

¹ These definitions for “local government,” “city,” and “county” are based upon US DOE’s respective definitions found in US DOE’s Application Instructions for the EECBG Program Formula Grant. See EECBG Program Notice 22-01 (January 18, 2023).

² The statutory framework for the EECBG program may be found in the Energy Independence and Security Act of 2007 (EISA), 42 U.S.C. 17151 et seq as amended by Section 40552(a) of the IIJA.

³ Population thresholds are defined in EISA, §541(3)(A) and (B).

- Planning organizations
- Utilities
- Community-based organizations
- Quasi-governmental entities

Visit our [webpage](#) to learn about other funding opportunities available through the SCEO.

When will entities that applied for direct EECBG formula funding from US DOE receive their funding?

US DOE posts EECBG award announcements on a rolling basis [here](#).

Application Process

When are applications due?

Applications for the SC EECBG Competitive Subgrant Program are due by January 8, 2024.

May one application include multiple project ideas?

Yes.

May applicants submit more than one application?

Yes.

May multiple applicants submit a combined single application?

No. Each applicant should submit a separate application. Include information in the project description portion of the application that details with whom and how your entity intends to work with other applicants.

How will funds be allocated if multiple applicants elect to work together?

Each application shall be evaluated individually and subgrants between \$50,000-\$75,000 shall be awarded individually to selected applicants.

What technical assistance will be provided during the application process?

The SCEO cannot provide technical assistance during the competitive application process. However, questions may be submitted via energy@ors.sc.gov. This FAQs document will be updated periodically throughout the application window in response to submitted questions.

What eight (8) categories are listed for the SC EECBG Competitive Subgrants?

The SCEO intends to fund projects from any of the eight (8) categories listed below:

- Strategy Development and Implementation
- Energy Efficiency Retrofit Grants for Government Agencies
- Conservation of Transportation Energy

- Building Codes and Inspection Services
- Reduction, Capture, and Use of Landfill Gases
- Replacement of Traffic Signals and Street Lighting
- On-site Renewable Energy on or In a Government Building
- Programs for Financing, Purchasing, and Installing Energy Efficiency, Renewable Energy, and Zero-emission Transportation (and associated infrastructure) Measures and Capital Investments, Projects, and Programs for Leveraging Public and Private Sector Funds

The SC EECBG Competitive Subgrant Program offers the above categories that are most relevant to the needs of South Carolinians.

What resources are available for cost estimates on charging stations / EV infrastructure?

Applicants are responsible for providing sufficient supporting documentation for any cost estimates.

Does the purchase of an electric vehicle fall within the “Conservation of Transportation” category?

Yes.

May funds be allocated towards existing projects or plans?

Yes, funds may be allocated towards existing projects and plans. However, only expenses for an existing project that are incurred after the subaward agreement is in place are eligible for reimbursement.

Is there a match requirement for these EECBG subgrants?

No.

How do we account for Justice 40 with local government buildings or fleet projects?

As the State’s grant recipient, the SCEO shall satisfy the Justice 40 reporting obligation.

Administration

What is the difference between DUNS and UEI?

The Federal government uses a unique identifier to track entities applying for grants and cooperative agreements. On April 4, 2022, the unique identifier used across the federal government changed from the nine-digit Data Universal Numbering System (DUNS) to the 12-character alphanumeric Unique Entity ID (UEI). All applicants must register with [SAM.gov](https://sam.gov) and receive a UEI to be considered for EECBG funding. A UEI is required for each applicant for the SC EECBG Competitive Subgrant Program since the funding comes from the US DOE.

Additional Resources Related to EECBG

[SC State EECBG RFA Guidance \(PDF\)](#)

[Application Form \(due by January 8, 2024\) \(PDF\)](#)

[EECBG Eligible Activities and Program Guidance \(energy.gov\)](#)

[Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program Blueprints | Department of Energy](#)

[Resource for Assistance and Community Training in Region 4 on Environmental Justice is the Technical Assistance Center \(TCTAC\) for EPA's Region 4](#)