

# **Energy Office Mini-Grant Program**

## **Tips for Writing a Strong Application**

# Mini-Grant Program Overview

- Annual funding program
- High-impact demonstration projects
- Energy efficiency, renewable energy, and clean transportation projects
- Open to all SC government entities and non-profits
- Individual awards of up to \$25,000
- <https://energy.sc.gov/programs/funding/mini-grant-program>

# Mini-Grant Program Timeline

- July (beginning of fiscal year): Application period opens
- August: Application period closes
- September – November: Applications reviewed
- December: Grant award agreements issued
- January - October: Project implementation



# Application Tips and Guidance



# General Application Tips

- Complete all application fields
- Address all scoring criteria
- Be consistent in information that is provided (e.g., project cost, scope, etc.)
- Provide supporting documentation
  - Product specification sheets
  - Calculations for energy metrics
  - Material and/or labor quotes, if available
  - Other supplemental information as needed

## GRANT APPLICATION MINI-GRANT



State Energy Office within the SC Office of Regulatory Staff (SCEO)  
State Energy Office Mini-Grants  
1401 Main Street, Suite 900  
Columbia, SC 29201  
Federal Award ID: DE-EE0010099 – CFDA #81.041  
Contact: Rick Campana  
Phone: (803) 737-5229 / Email: [rcampana@ors.sc.gov](mailto:rcampana@ors.sc.gov)

*Mini-Grants are for new projects ONLY. Acceptance of an application does not guarantee nor represent approval of a grant.*

### I. APPLICANT INFORMATION:

*Print clearly or type*

Type of Project: Energy Retrofit      Alternative Fuel/Transportation      Renewables  
*Must check one*

Project Title:

Name of Organization:

Mailing Address:

Employer Identification Number (EIN) or Federal Tax ID:

Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)/SAM:

*Required before awards are made. [UEI/SAM REGISTRATION](#)*

Project Coordinator:

*print or type name and title*

Telephone:  Email:

Organization Head/Signatory:

*print or type name*

Title:  Email:

Telephone:

Financial Department Contact:

*print or type name*

Title:  Email:

Telephone:

SCEO Mini-Grant Application Revised: 2024

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# Mini-Grant Criteria

- All applications reviewed across each of the following criteria:
  - Expected energy savings and simple payback period
  - Visibility of the project
  - Ability to complete the project within the specified timeframe
  - Applicant's contribution to the project
  - Educational and/or demonstration value of the project
  - Located in a [Disadvantaged Community](#)
- **EACH of the above criteria need to be addressed in the application!**

# Energy Savings and SPP

## What we look for:

- Projects that provide a greater energy impact
- Projects with higher savings and/or shorter payback periods
- Projects considered against those of similar type, e.g., lighting vs lighting, solar vs solar
- More clearly defined scopes
- Calculations and support for energy metrics
- **If you need help with calculations, contact us!**

# Visibility of the Project

## What we look for:

- Projects that will be seen by the public and can be used for demonstration
- Project locations with greater public visibility, e.g., in public spaces, accessible to many different people
- Energy measures that are more visible to end users
- A detailed description of how you plan to enhance visibility through promotional materials, placards, etc.



# Ability to Complete Project within Timeframe

## What we look for:

- All applications we select for award must be successfully closed out by end of fiscal year
- Consideration of compressed timeframe for installation
- Projects with more clearly defined scopes, have identified specific products, received quotes, etc.
- Potential for review under National Environmental Policy Act and/or Historic Preservation

# Applicant's Contribution to Project

## What we look for:

- Applications that are best served by Mini-Grant Program
- Percentage of project cost covered by mini-grant (If possible, some contribution to the project cost)
- Leveraging of other external funds, such as utility incentives
- Size of project and appropriateness for Mini-Grant Program
- Evidence of effort put into application

# Educational and/or Demonstration Value

## What we look for:

- Applications that can be used to educate the public
- Specific plans for how project will be used for education
- Projects that include student involvement or used in educational settings
- Consideration of more novel energy measures

# Located in a Disadvantaged Community

## What we look for:

- Applications that impact disadvantaged communities
- Determined by project location(s) census tracts
- [Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool](#) used to verify

# Clean Transportation Additional Criteria

- Avoided consumption of petroleum products
- Reduction in vehicle miles traveled
- Compatibility with current or future infrastructure, community interest, or policies/goals
- Expected useful life of the project and impact

# Other Considerations

- Number of applications received, and individual amounts requested
- Mixture of project types and locations, and types of receiving organizations
- Previous funding awards to organization

# Successful Application Examples



# City of Greenville - Solar

- >31 kW solar installation on David Hellams Community Center
- Greatest savings and fastest SPP of solar apps received
- Project located on community center in “Special Emphasis” neighborhood
- Detailed plan on incorporating project into community center learning activities, and media campaign
- Significant portion of project costs covered by applicant
- Scope fully fleshed out with siting, analysis, etc. completed prior to submitting





# Lee School District - Lighting

- Parking lot LED lighting at Lee Central High and Middle Schools
- Higher savings and shorter SPP among lighting apps received
- Located in rural Bishopville
- Detailed plan on incorporating into teaching activities and publicizing project's benefits
- Significant portion of project costs covered by applicant
- Scope fully fleshed out with quote and product specs from lighting vendor



# Benedict College – Electric Vehicle

- Electric vehicle and charging station for use by campus police
- Avoidance of consumption of petroleum products
- Project incorporated into college's 5-year BEST Plan: A Bold Execution to Strategic Transformation
- First EV to be used by police force in SC
- Significant portion of project costs covered by applicant





# Clemson University – Building Controls

- Automated control system for motorized blinds in building atrium
- Completed in-house with student involvement
- Educational project teaching students engineering and coding principles, in addition to energy savings
- Publicized as part of work done by Clemson Energy Visualization & Analytics Center (CEVAC)
- Portion of project costs covered by applicant



# Richland School District 2 – Biodiesel Production

- Expansion of biodiesel production program at Blythewood High School
- Completed in-house with student involvement
- Educational project teaching students on biodiesel production and performing advanced chemical analyses
- Publicized as part of Bengal Biodiesel Program



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