



Clean Energy Fund #3 (CEF #3) – Solar Deployment Program Questions and Answers

(Questions since the last posting are highlighted in gray.)

The following are responses for non-project specific questions emailed or submitted via chat during the webinar or during the open application process to energy_policy@commerce.wa.gov. Some edits may have been made to avoid project-specific details in the original question, but otherwise, questions are presented as submitted.

1. I have one additional question regarding the "distribution side" description throughout the grant materials. Does this mean that large behind-the-meter projects are not eligible from this program? Or could projects behind-the-meter that export to the grid at times be eligible?
A. Behind the Meter Projects are eligible under the Solar Deployment program. Distribution side projects that reduce peak electricity demand must be given priority and as a result will be given additional points in the application process.
2. Are past Q&A going to be posted?
A. This is the first Year of the program. The Q&A document will be updated weekly and posted on website weekly.
3. Does the entire company need to be located in the state of Washington?
A. No. But the applicant must have a business presence with a UBI and the corporation needs to be registered with the Secretary of State.
4. Do all the solar sites need to be aggregated?
A. The locations of the assets need to be within the same general location. Commerce is not allowing solar panels at different sites to be aggregated.
5. I have land but no specific project. Will Commerce be facilitating partnership for applicants who are unable to submit on their own?
A. No. Commerce will not be facilitating applicant partnerships. Attendees on the call are encouraged to form partnerships, but Commerce is not linking partners up together at this time.
6. Are there definitions for low-income residents, low-income communities, and direct benefits?
A. At this time, Commerce is not providing specific definitions regarding low-income requirements for residents or communities. Commerce is encouraging applicants to use accepted standards and qualification methodologies to explain their target low-income audience and direct benefits. While Commerce will be comparing applicants' answers to accepted low-income definitions and standards, Commerce wishes to allow some flexibility in how applicants are approaching the benefits to low income residents and communities.
7. Are projects with no low-income benefits excluded?
A. No. Projects with no low-income benefits are not excluded. However, applicants must keep two things in mind: 1) a minimum of 25% of the total programmatic funding must benefit low-income, and that funding will be awarded first; 2) All application scoring criteria gives



points to low-income projects, and as a result, low-income projects will receive additional points compared to projects with no low-income projects.

8. Is this a quick grant turnaround time? This seems fast.
- A. *Commerce recognizes that the funding from this grant is only a small percentage of an overall solar project. There is an overall assumption that projects are already in the works and not wholly dependent on CEF #3 Solar Deployment funds.*

Please note that the first review date is just a review date and that applications may be submitted after that timeframe. Applications received after the initial application period close date may be considered for possible evaluation for funding if there is need for additional applications

9. Is there a minimum point tally required?
- A. *Commerce does not have a minimum point tally; however, we are looking for good applications that meet the general goals of the program overall.*

10. What stage should a project be in at the time of application?
- A. *The expectation is that the project should be in the planning/development stage and not under active installation/construction. Project components should not be installed at the time of application.*

11. Will the entire project be subject to State Prevailing Wages or Davis Bacon?
- A. *Potentially. There may be a way for the project to be structured in a way that these requirements do not apply to the entire project, but this would need to be determined on a case-by-case basis.*

12. Which funding source box, state or federal, should I check to accept?
- A. *The intent of this section is to allow applicants to let us know if there is a funding source they are unwilling to accept, and for applicants to realize that federal funding has additional requirements. If an applicant is able and willing to accept both funding sources, Commerce recommends the applicant check both.*

13. Can you elaborate on the geographical distribution aspect of the program?
- A. *Past projects should not count toward geographical distribution. Geographical location points will be awarded depending on where the application projects are distributed throughout the state, and in relation to all the submitted applications.*

14. Will solar racking be considered a major component for the made-in-Washington criteria? Racking can be more expensive than inverters.
- A. *At this time, Commerce is only considering panels, modules, and inverters.*

Additional comments from the end of the webinar:

- The application is in two parts. The first part is meant for less technical review, with more concise responses. The second part allows for additional detail. Information from the first part does not automatically transfer to the second part.*
- For the low-income benefits, point calculations are based upon ratios, with a total of 50 points available. The narrative part in Section Two provides up to 40 points to define the low-income componentst that support the low-income direct benefits, and how the benefits are being addressed. There may be an additional ten points for benefits that are not necessarily quantifiable.*