**Clean Energy Fund #3 (CEF #3) – Electrification of Transportation Systems
Question & Answer - Updated 2-18-2020**

*Answers highlighted in gray were previously posted.*

1. I am the Real Estate Manager for Fred Meyer, QFC and other divisions of Kroger.  Question, would our stores qualify for potential receipt of vehicle charging grants?  If so, is there a particular group we should contact (i.e., Electrify America, Blink, EVgo, etc.)?

Please see RFA SECTION 1.3 MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS – businesses are not among the types of primary eligible applicants described. Businesses and other entities that are not primary eligible applicants may partner with eligible applicants to apply for an award. COMMERCE cannot recommend any particular group for partnership purposes.

1. What is the procurement type the city must use apparent low for the award?

Successful applicants must follow all applicable state and/or local laws governing procurements for publicly-funded projects. Successful applicants that receive federal funding must additionally follow all applicable procurement requirements for federally-funded projects. Applicants may also find it helpful to review the Service Contract Format including General Terms and Conditions found in EXHIBIT B of the RFA.

1. We had planned to charge an hourly fee for vehicles charging at these 6 stations. If we charge a fee for these services, are we still eligible to apply for the ETS grant?

Please see RFA SECTION 1.3 MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS – projects may charge a fee for charging services. If there is a fee to charge, then credit, debit, and prepaid cards must be accepted via an onsite card reader. Any other form of payment is permitted in addition to this minimum. Multiple EVSE at one location can share a card reader.

1. Are public transit agencies eligible to submit a project to the CEF?

Please see RFA SECTION 1.3 MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS – transportation authorities are among the types of primary eligible applicants described.

1. Does this program include fuel cell electric vehicles and infrastructure?

Please see RFA SECTION 1.1 PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND - This Program provides grants to Washington local governments and retail electric utilities for electric vehicle supply infrastructure (EVSE, as defined in RFA SECTION 1.7 DEFINITIONS) and related development costs. A list of eligible costs for grant funds and match can be found in SECTION 1.2 OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF WORK. ETS monies are not intended for rolling stock nor for hydrogen fueling infrastructure.

1. I've read through the RFA and it appears this only covers EVSE charging applications (which seems to be limited to passenger cars). Would you consider transit bus charging infrastructure to be eligible under this program?

EVSE, as defined in RFA SECTION 1.7 DEFINITIONS, is not limited to infrastructure serving passenger vehicles. Transit bus charging infrastructure would be eligible, provided it aligns with minimum project and equipment qualifications (or demonstrates no EVSE is available that can serve the purpose of the project while meeting certain requirements, as applicable), as described in SECTION 1.3 MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS.

1. We are reaching out to determine if Washington State Ferries is an eligible applicant for the ETS program that was just announced. We are not sure if we meet the criteria of a "local government", as we are a division of WSDOT, or if we need to partner on this one.

Washington State Ferries, being a division of a state agency, are not considered to be a local government for the purposes of this award. State agencies and divisions of state agencies would need to partner with a primary eligible applicants as described in RFA SECTION 1.3 MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS to submit an application under this award.

1. Does it allow for the purchase of used chargers?

EVSE purchased using ETS monies must be new and not previously put into service. Used equipment purchase is not allowed.

1. I am looking into obtaining electric fleet vehicles for the University as well as our police department.  Would we qualify under this grant for the fleet vehicles as well as providing charging spaces around campus for visitors?  If not, is there another grant for this purpose?

ETS monies are intended for electric vehicle supply equipment (EVSE, as defined in RFA SECTION 1.7 DEFINITIONS) projects, and may not be used to purchase rolling stock (electric vehicles). COMMERCE does not currently have open solicitations for grants to fund rolling stock.

1. Are public universities qualified to apply, or would we have to partner?

Public universities are typically classified as state agencies by the IRS. In such a case, they are therefore considered neither local governments nor retail electric utilities, and would need to partner with a primary eligible applicant as described in RFA SECTION 1.3 MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS to submit an application under this award.

1. Are there limitations on other funding that can be applied to the program (ie. ARRA funding)?

Information concerning limitations on applicable match funding for eligible project costs may be found in RFA SECTION 1.4 FUNDING. With respect to American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding, projects that receive ARRA funding via the ETS program cannot use other federal funding as Match. In addition to other limitations described in SECTION 1.4, Applicants should consider limitations imposed by other funding sources that they are considering to meet the match requirements.

1. Can applicants submit more than one application?

There is no limitation placed on the number of applications an eligible Applicant can submit, however applicants should be aware of RFA SECTION 2.11 MOST FAVORABLE TERMS, which states that the application should be submitted initially on the most favorable terms which the Applicant can propose. Please see Question 22 below for additional information.

1. For the question, “Identify any state employees or former state employees employed or on the Applicant’s governing board as of the date of the application. Include their position and responsibilities within the Applicants organization. If following a review of this information, it is determined by COMMERCE that a conflict of interest exists, the Applicant may be disqualified from further consideration for the award of a contract.” Can you confirm if we need to review every employee or just those directly related to the application?

Any previously or current employed state employees (within the last 24 months) that are on staff in the organization or working on the project, that would have a decision making ability for the project, must be reported. This applies to two tiers of contractors also. If contractors are not know at the time of application, it must be reported during the procurement process.

1. Do you anticipate extending the bid due date?

We do not currently anticipate extending the due date. Applicants must submit a Letter of Intent, Pre-Application, and Full Application by the deadlines listed in RFA SECTION 2.2 ESTIMATED SCHEDULE OF PROCUREMENT ACTIVITIES, unless COMMERCE revises the procurement schedule.

1. What additional details are you willing to provide, if any, beyond what is stated in bid documents concerning how you will identify the winning bid?

Applicants should refer to RFA SECTION 4.1-4.2 for all publicly disclosed information regarding application evaluation for the ETS program.

1. Was this bid posted to the nationwide free bid notification website at www.mygovwatch.com? Other than your own website, where was this bid posted?

All Washington state competitive solicitations are posted to the Washington Electronic Business Solution (WEBS) platform. COMMERCE has posted the RFA and other application materials to the program website identified in the RFA and to WEBS. COMMERCE takes no responsibility for ETS program materials posted to other webpages.

1. We’ve been approached by a few people who have asked us about having an electric charging station for our hotel guests. Would we qualify for such a grant under this program? We have a 50-unit hotel in Colfax.

Please see RFA SECTION 1.3 MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS – businesses are not among the types of primary eligible applicants described, and ETS-funded project must serve at least one of the following end uses: Public Transportation, Local Government Fleet Vehicles, Workplace Charging, Multi-Unit Dwelling (MUD) Resident Charging (Note: EVSE that exclusively or primarily serves residential buildings that are not Multi-Unit dwellings will not be considered), Public Charging, or Port – Marine or Aircraft. Businesses and other entities that are not primary eligible applicants may partner with eligible applicants to apply for an award.

1. Are the grants dispersed such that would cover the entire cost, or simply a percentage? Are there other requirements we’d need to meet?

Please see RFA SECTION 1.4 FUNDING. Applicants are required to provide 1:1 match funding for projects, unless they are eligible for reduced match options (which may allow 1:5 or 1:10 match funding for projects meeting certain equity metrics). Please read the RFA in its entirety for all other project requirements.

1. I am in the process of educating and trying to expand EV charging infrastructure with our community, with larger commercial customers and schools. Coincidentally, there are EV charging opportunities where either none currently exist (i.e. Sound Transit Sounder Lakewood parking structure, I-5/WA HWY 512 Park & Ride)or where there is desire to expand existing infrastructure (i.e. Pierce Transit headquarters and bus station). Do these types of opportunities qualify for the ETS and if so, which ratio of funding is applicable (i.e. is 1:1 only available)? Is transit eligible for this grant funding or is there a different grant program for them?

Please see RFA SECTION 1.3 MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS for all minimum applicant, project, and equipment qualifications. COMMERCE is not able to provide Applicants advice on specific projects’ applicability to the ETS program. Please see RFA SECTION 1.4 FUNDING for information on reduced 1:5 and 1:10 match options and criteria. As stated in RFA SECTION 1.3 MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS, retail electric utilities and local governments (including transportation authorities) are primary eligible applicants for the award.

1. Is the grant funding specifically restricted to EV charging station procurement and installation, or does it cover resource adequacy construction costs for utilities providing line and load extension? In the case of Pierce Transit, they are going to be installing at least 40 Level 3 bus charging stations where we will need to dedicate an entire feeder at a substation to carry that load of energy usage.

As long as they are not listed as ineligible costs under RFA SECTION 1.2 OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE OF WORK, ancillary project costs may be included in the application narrative questions and project cost proposal. Ancillary costs are meant to enable EVSE to be installed and to be a minority of a project’s costs. Applicants should note that all project costs are subject to contract negotiation and COMMERCE is under no obligation to fund all requested project costs when determining an award.

1. Second question is around EV infrastructure for multi-unit dwellings (MUDs). A little over 23% of the area we serve lives at or below the federal poverty level. As newer MUDs are constructed to support the growth of affordable housing, is there a particular ratio of funding which is applicable?

Reduced match eligibility requirements may be found in RFA SECTION 1.4 FUNDING (“Option 1” and “Option 2”). Applicants are responsible for selecting which match option they pursue, and for providing the requested project site information which will allow COMMERCE to determine the project’s eligibility for reduced match options.

1. Hence, since we have opportunities to serve both examples listed above, and funding ratios may vary for application, how do I need to complete my application accordingly? Will it require two different applications for each type of project?

Applicants may submit multiple applications if needed, though they should be aware of RFA SECTION 2.11 MOST FAVORABLE TERMS, which states in part that “…the application should be submitted initially on the most favorable terms which the Applicant can propose.” It is the Applicant’s responsibility to determine which application represents their most favorable terms for a given project. Applicants should not submit multiple applications for the same project, and COMMERCE reserves the right to deem an application ineligible if it is found to cover substantially the same project as another submitted application.

1. Finally, after reading the timeline, it appears that the successful funding recipients would receive their grants sometime between Q3 of 2020 and Q1 of 2021. Is this correct?

COMMERCE estimates that contracts will be signed by no later than 04/01/2021, as described in RFA SECTION 2.2 ESTIMATED SCHEDULE OF PROCUREMENT ACTIVITIES. Actual contract execution will happen after awards are announced and are subject to contract negotiations and no successful protests. Note that COMMERCE expects to use performance-based contracting methodology for this award, meaning that grantees should expect to receive funding upon the completion of pre-defined milestones (to be negotiated during contracting).

1. Are tribes eligible?

The Electrification of Transportation Systems Grant and Energy Efficiency and Solar Grants Programs have recently included Tribal Governments as eligible applicants under the Local Government or Local Agency definition. To better understand how the Energy Division’s grants programs can be inclusive of Tribal Governments while also acknowledging sovereignty, we consulted with the Attorney General’s Office. As a result, we were informed that Tribal Governments do not fall under the definition of Local Governments, and we do not have the statutory authority to extend grant eligibility to Tribal Governments as applicants under the current proviso language (which lists Local Governments and Retail Electric Utilities as primary eligible applicants).

The Electrification of Transportation Systems Grant (ETS) Request for Applications (RFA), originally issued February 5, 2020, has been revised to remove Tribes as primary eligible applicants. Tribes can still partner with primary eligible applicants, i.e. Local Governments and Retail Electric Utilities, to apply for this grant. The updated RFA is available here: <https://www.commerce.wa.gov/growing-the-economy/energy/clean-energy-fund/electrification-of-transportation/>

1. Would the University of Washington qualify under this applicant criteria?

***Applicant***

*The primary eligible Applicant, who may partner with other organizations, must be one of the following:*

***Washington State Local Government***

*For the purpose of this Program, “Local Governments” includes cities, towns, counties, special and school districts, transportation authorities, municipal corporations, port districts or authorities, tribal governments, political subdivisions of any type, or any other entities or authorities of local government in corporate form or otherwise****.***

Please see the answer to question #10 above regarding public university eligibility. Public universities are typically classified as state agencies by the IRS. In such a case, they are therefore considered neither local governments nor retail electric utilities, and would need to partner with a primary eligible applicant as described in RFA SECTION 1.3 MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS to submit an application under this award.

1. The city of Blaine recently signed a lease with ChargePoint for a couple of EV chargers in the public right of way. Would it be possible to get reimbursement for the lease through the grant? If so, we may look at a few more locations and include those in our application as well.

ETS monies cannot be used to fund project costs incurred prior to Commerce’s issuance of the award letter.

1. Similarly, could the applicant provide for construction activities through agreements with a private party (such as a property management company, performance contractor, housing authority or homeowner’s association)?

It is typical for construction activities to be provided for under agreements with third party subcontractors. Please see RFA EXHIBIT B SERVICE CONTRACT FORMAT INCLUDING GENERAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS for typical terms and conditions regarding subcontracting and Grantee responsibility to ensure subcontractor compliance with conditions of the award.

1. I'd like to talk with you to understand whether this sort of project would be of interest to Washington DOC.

Commerce is unable to provide advice on the suitability of particular projects for specific grant opportunities, or to indicate whether they would be of interest to Commerce as an Agency. Reading the latest version of the ETS RFA and Q&A and attending the Pre-Application Conference will be a potential Applicant’s best avenues to understanding the program’s priorities and determining their project’s fit for the current solicitation.

1. One of my colleagues would like to participate in the Pre-Application Conference via Skype, for the Electrification of Transportation Systems Program. Can you send some instructions our way, on how to connect?

As stated in the RFA, Skype and call-in information for the Pre-Application Conference is located on the program website.

1. When going over the materials and schedule, the Pre-Application was not included on the schedule and I assumed it was part of the Letter of Intent that is due on March 5th. Is that correct? In your answer to question #14 you list them as separate items (and I understand they are to an extent) but the Pre-Application is not listed on the schedule with a due date on page 11.

Only the Letter of Intent is due on the Letter of Intent deadline. The Pre-Application and Full Application are both due on the date of the Application deadline (they are both components of the Application, as described in SECTION 3 APPLICATION CONTENTS).

1. What is an example of a Workplace or MUD that is served by Government or Utility?

Qualifying applicants are free to pursue partnerships with other entities to enable the installation of projects that meet the requirements of the RFA, including the end use requirement listed in RFA SECTION 1.3 MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS. As an example, a retail electric utility could partner with a privately-owned MUD to submit an application, provided that their application fulfills all of the other minimum criteria outlined in the RFA.

1. Would a Government building be simply considered a workplace?

Government buildings may or may not be considered workplaces. Workplace Charging is defined in RFA SECTION 1.7 DEFINITIONS. Projects determined by Commerce to be serving this end use must, at a minimum, conform to that definition.

1. What is an example of government MUD? Aren't all MUD's owned by a corporation, and not Government?

Qualifying applicants are free to pursue partnerships with other entities to enable the installation of projects that meet the requirements of the RFA, including the end use requirement listed in RFA SECTION 1.3 MINIMUM QUALIFICATIONS.

1. If a workplace or MUD wants to be the recipient of a specific brand of EVSE, and they ask that manufacturer for help, is it best determined that the manufacturer reach out to their utility for assistance? If so, who at the Utility would the EVSE manufacturer reach out to (example of titles or departments at the Utility)?

Electrical utilities may be of assistance on certain topics related to EVSE installation, such as grid interconnection. Some electrical utilities and municipalities also have programs encouraging electric vehicle adoption. Specific contacts at a given organization will vary by the required subject matter expertise and by organization.

1. I see there is a pre-application conference for the Clean Energy Fund on Feb. 20, at 12:30 p.m., in Olympia. Do you happen to know the estimated end time for the meeting?

The Pre-Application Conference is expected to last approximately 1 hour, ending around 1:30 p.m. PT.

1. I see there is a phone conference on February 20th. Is this something that would be informative if we are getting up to speed on the opportunities available through this program?

The ETS Pre-Application Conference is intended to provide potential applicants with basic information concerning the program and an opportunity to ask questions about the contents of the RFA, Application, and other program materials. More information about attending is provided on the ETS [webpage](https://commerce.wa.gov/ets).

1. What would your typical incentive be for a hotel installing a charging station on their property?

The ETS Program is a competitive grant solicitation, with primary eligible applicants being Local Governments and Retail Electric Utilities, as defined in the program RFA. As stated in RFA SECTION 1.4 FUNDING, the minimum award amount is $25,000 and the maximum award is $2,500,000.