

# 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](mailto: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 units of local government within the state that are ineligible for direct formula grants from US DOE.

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

South Carolina's EECBG Competitive Subgrant Program is designed 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 US DOE.

### Who may apply for a SC Competitive EECBG Subgrant?

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

## **What qualifies as a unit of local SC government? (Updated 4/10/24)**

**Round 2 eligible entities include the following local government entities:**

- Counties or municipalities that are ineligible for US DOE EECBG funding,
- Local public authorities,
- School districts,
- Special districts,
- Councils of Governments (COGs),
- Any other regional or intrastate governmental entity or instrumentality of a local government.

## **May municipalities or other entities, such as school districts or special districts, located within a county eligible for direct EECBG formula grants from US DOE apply for the SC EECBG Competitive Subgrant Program? (Updated 4/10/24)**

Yes, as long as the municipality or other entity 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? (Updated 4/10/24)**

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 US 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.

- Non-profits
- Businesses
- Universities/Colleges
- Planning organizations
- Utilities
- Community-based organizations
- 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](#).

**Does the SCEO plan to offer a third round of EECBG funding?** *(Added 4/10/24)*

No.

## **Application Process**

**When are applications due?** *(Updated 4/10/24)*

Applications for Round 2 of the SC EECBG Competitive Subgrant Program are due by April 15, 2024.

**Is an Employer Identification Number (EIN) the same as a Federal Tax ID Number?** *(Added 12/28/23)*

EIN and Federal Tax ID are terms often used interchangeably to refer to the number issued by the US Internal Revenue Service (IRS) used to identify a business entity.

**May one entity apply for multiple projects?** *(Added 12/28/23; updated 1/8/24)*

Yes.

**May one application include multiple project ideas?** *(Updated 12/28/23, 1/8/24)*

Yes. Each proposed project should include a separate project metrics summary, project site information, budget, and project timeline. Each application, regardless of how many projects are proposed within that application, shall be evaluated for a potential subgrant between \$50,000 - \$75,000 total.

**If an application contains more than one project concept, is it possible to be awarded for just one of the projects and not all of the projects in the application?** *(Added 12/28/23)*

No.

**Is it possible to list a priority preference for which project gets awarded [on an application that has multiple project ideas]?** *(Added 12/28/23)*

No.

**May an entity submit more than one application?** *(Updated 1/8/24)*

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?**

*(Updated 1/8/24)*

Each entity's application shall be evaluated individually for a potential subgrant between \$50,000 - \$75,000.

## **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 [energycs@ors.sc.gov](mailto:energycs@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.

## **Do applicants have to use a DOE Blueprint in its entirety, or can they use it in part? *(Added 4/10/2024)***

DOE Blueprints are guidance documents and may be used in whole or in part.

## **Blueprint 2a says applicants must execute at least one of the following key activities: energy assessment, energy audit, or building upgrade. Does this mean an assessment/audit is not required before an upgrade is performed? *(Added 4/10/2024)***

Energy assessments and/or audits are not required before eligible upgrades are performed.

## **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.

## **Is it appropriate to apply for the SC EECBG grant for funds to hire a contractor to retrofit and upgrade a materials recycling facility to align with current energy efficiency standards? *(Added 12/28/23)***

Yes. SC EECBG may be used for energy efficiency retrofits. The energy efficiency retrofit must result in energy savings (e.g., kwh/BTUs) or improved energy efficiency. The energy efficiency retrofit must not constitute new construction or non-replacement equipment.

## **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.

## **How long will reimbursement take? (Added 12/28/23)**

Subrecipients should submit invoices at least quarterly in accordance with their grant agreement. Subrecipients will be paid no less frequently than net 30 if all the invoice requirements are met by the subrecipients.

## **Additional Resources Related to EECBG**

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

[Application Form \(due by April 15, 2024\) \(PDF\)](#)

[Supplemental Information Worksheets \(PDF\)](#)

[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](#)