Energy Improvement in Rural or Remote Areas (ERA)

Est. deadline: ~March 2025

Concept papers may be required (~Nov. 2024)

Total funding for 2025: $400M

Rural funding for 2025: $400M

Estimated program details per FY24 NOFO; subject to change with FY25 NOFO release.

Source: FY2023 ERA NOFO; FY2024 ERA NOI

The Energy Improvement in Rural or Remote Areas will fund projects that advance clean energy solutions in rural and remote areas

Goals and merit criteria for Energy Improvement in Rural or Remote Areas grants:

This opportunity provides financial investment, technical assistance, and other resources to advance clean energy demonstrations and energy solutions in rural and remote areas that can be **replicated and scaled**

The main goals of the program are to:

- Deliver **measurable and sustained benefits** to people who live in rural or remote areas
- Demonstrate rural or remote energy system approaches using **climate-resilient technologies**
- **Build clean energy knowledge, capacity, and self-reliance** in rural and remote parts of America

For this program, “rural or remote community” is defined as **“a city, town, or unincorporated area that has a population of not more than 10,000 inhabitants”**, per Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Section 40103. All communities that directly benefit from the proposed project must meet the definition of “rural or remote area.”

Source: FY2023 ERA NOFO; FY2024 ERA NOI

Assistance for Energy Improvement in Rural or Remote Areas grant details

Assistance for the Energy Improvement in Rural or Remote Areas grants cover two topics

Match funding requirement: 20-50%, or 5-20% with waiver

	Community-Scale Demonstrations	Large-Scale Demonstrations
Description	Funding available to implement clean energy projects with a Federal cost share of at least $5 million and at most $10 million, using one or more clean energy technologies that advance resilience and provide other benefits to one or more rural or remote communities.	Funding available to implement clean energy projects with a Federal cost share of at least $10 million and at most $100 million. Projects should benefit multiple communities, either through a single installation (single site project), or through a series of installations with similar or complementary characteristics across multiple communities (aggregation projects).
Eligible grant uses	• Microgrid designs and service models • Small hydropower systems • Hybrid configurations of distributed energy resources that are operable during extreme weather	• Solar and/or wind farms, with or without energy storage, in multiple locations that share a common administrative and support staff • Utility-scale solar, wind farm and/or hydrogen or battery storage facility • Bioreactor that uses locally available biomass to replace fossil fuel generation • Renewables project that delivers significant additional benefits to a local community. • Transmission investment that reduces reliance on fossil fuels • Clean energy generation in an area having trouble attracting investment due to geographic isolation.
Award amounts	Minimum award	$2M minimum award size
	Maximum award	$50M minimum award size
	Award distribution	Tribal governments may apply for a waiver to reduce cost share from 20-50% to 5-20% depending on project type)
	Award number	Estimated 16 – 69 awards
Previous awards (national)	2024 Awards	67 awards ($6.7M)

Source: FY2023 ERA NOFO; FY2024 ERA NOI

High level requirements to apply for a for Energy Improvement in Rural or Remote Areas grant

Community grant applications are open to government entities and require a thorough application package

Eligible Entities

(As long as they can identify a US area with a population of over 10,000 that would befit from the project), eligible entities include:

- Institutions of higher education
- Non-profit entities
- For-profit entities
- Tribal Nations
- State and local governmental entities
- Incorporated Consortia
- Unincorporated Consortia

Key Grant Application Components[1]

Specific page limits for each application section in the FOA

Full application including:

- Cover page
- Project overview
- Business development and management (including business, management, and financial plan)
- EPC&O section (including description of technologies, existing infrastructure, and engineering evaluations)
- Safety and Occupational Health, Cybersecurity, Permitting and Regulatory Requirements
- Risk Analysis and Mitigation
- Workplan

Additional information on application requirements

Prior application included a Concept Paper phase and a Full Application. Only applicants who have submitted an eligible Concept Paper will be eligible to submit a Full Application.

Concept paper previously included:

- A statement about the applicant and an attestation of the entity's authority to adopt building codes
- A description of the applicant's high-level plan to adopt, implement, and enforce the eligible code or codes, or implement and enforce an already adopted eligible code or codes

1. *Not the requirements to apply for TAC support. Not inclusive of all documents required to apply; please refer to NOFO for the full requirements and details*

Source: FY2023 ERA NOFO; FY2024 ERA NOI