

Energy Office Mini-Grant Program

Tips for Writing a Strong Application

October 5, 2021

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 \$10,000
- <http://energy.sc.gov/incentives/grants>

Mini-Grant Program Timeline

- July 1 (beginning of fiscal year): Application period opens
- July 31: Application period closes
- August – September: Applications reviewed
- September - October: Selected applications presented to Energy Advisory Council
- October – November: Award agreements executed
- November – May 15: Project implementation
- May 15 – June 30 (end of fiscal year): Post-installation monitoring, disbursement of grant funds, and closeout



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

Energy Office - SC Office of Regulatory Staff
Energy Office Competitive Demonstration Project Mini-Grants
1401 Main Street, Suite 900
Columbia, SC 29201
Federal Award ID: DE-EE0009486 – CFDA #81.041
Contact: Rick Campana
Phone: (803) 737-5229 / Email: 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 Institution: _____

Mailing Address: _____

Federal Tax ID #: _____ DUNS/SAM #: _____

*Required if awarded:
[DUNS/SAM # FORM \(PDF\)](#)*

Project Coordinator: _____

print or type name and title

Telephone: _____ Email: _____

Organization Head/Signatory: _____

print or type name

Title: _____ Email: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

Financial Department Contact: _____

print or type name

Title: _____ Email: _____

Telephone: _____ Fax: _____

II. TYPE OF INSTITUTION:

Check appropriate description

Public School District (K-12) County / City Municipality

State Agency State-Supported Colleges and Universities

501(C)(3) Organization Other Governmental Entity (specify): _____

Competitive Mini-Grant Application Revised: 2020

ENERGY OFFICE



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
- **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

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
- Rural and/or low-income benefit
- 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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