

# Southeast Energy Efficiency Fund RFP

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## Frequently Asked Questions

Below you will find a list of questions received via the [rfp@seealliance.org](mailto:rfp@seealliance.org) email or during SEEA's webinar on August 13, 2018. If you have a question that is not answered below, please email us. This document was last updated on **August 15, 2018**.

### Proposal Submission

- I. **Question:** Where do applicants submit completed proposals?

**Answer:** Please send completed proposals to the email address listed on SEEA's website and in this document: [rfp@seealliance.org](mailto:rfp@seealliance.org)

### Eligibility

- I. **Question:** Can an organization apply for more than one category?

**Answer:** Yes, an organization can apply as a prime applicant or as a project partner for more than one application and category.

- II. **Question:** The list of eligible applicants from the SEEA webinar do not align with the original RFP. Which is correct?

**Answer:** The SEEA webinar is correct and an updated version of the RFP is available on SEEA's website. In reviewing the U.S. Department of Energy criteria for potential projects and the primary recipient, we determined that there are more eligible applicants than previously thought.

- III. **Question:** Would a regional commission or a regional council consisting of member local governments be considered a local government for the purposes of this grant?

**Answer:** Possibly. It would depend on the nature of the application. If the proposed use of funds is for strategic planning activities, SEEA would recommend a member government of the commission or council serve as the prime applicant.

- IV. **Question:** What categories would a municipal or cooperative utility be eligible to apply for as a prime applicant?

**Answer:** A municipal or cooperative utility would meet eligibility requirements as the prime applicant for all categories except for Category A, where a local government is required to be the prime applicant. For Category A, the municipal or cooperative utility could be a named project partner and subcontractor.

- V. **Question:** What categories would a local or state health department be eligible to apply for as a prime applicant? Specifically, would they be eligible for Category E?

**Answer:** A state health department would fall under the same eligibility requirements as any local government department and would be eligible for all categories, *including* Category E. For state health departments, they are eligible for all categories *except* Category A. In both cases, SEEA would recommend that the health department applying for funding includes project partners that have demonstrated expertise in energy efficiency.

## Matching Funds

- I. **Question:** What can be used to demonstrate match? Is in-kind match acceptable? Is the use of SEP Formula funds acceptable?

**Answer:** All forms of cash match are acceptable. Additionally, in-kind match is acceptable, including, but not limited to in-kind donations of time, services, resources (e.g. meeting space), equipment, materials (e.g. insulation installed for a retrofit) and/or software. Since the RFP's request for match is a SEEA preference, not a DOE requirement, use of federal funds is acceptable.

## Project Area-Specific Questions

### *All Project Areas*

- I. **Question:** Can "project partners" include other local government departments?

**Answer:** Yes. SEEA would consider local government departments from the same jurisdiction as project partners (e.g. a local government's building department is the prime applicant and one of the listed project partners is the local government's health department). SEEA would also consider local government departments from different jurisdictions project partners as well (e.g. one local government's sustainability department is the prime applicant and one of the listed project partners is another local government's sustainability department).

- II. **Question:** Does my project proposal have to build off an existing program or initiative?

**Answer:** Yes. SEEA is seeking projects that will be viable and create lasting impact and are looking to support projects, programs or initiatives that expand the reach of established initiatives. Conceptual projects will not meet the selection criteria.

- III. **Question:** Could funding be used for staff time to support the development of clean energy policy?

**Answer:** Unlikely. SEEA will not fund any staff time to support the development of non-energy efficiency related policy, such as renewable-focused policy. Additionally, proposals must demonstrate the sustainability of the project long-term as well as replicability, which is often

difficult to determine with policy work. With that said, the development of energy efficiency policy on a local level (e.g. ordinance) may be an appropriate benchmark for a project to achieve.

- IV. **Question:** When SEEA refers to the retrofits of buildings, what building types can this funding be used for?

**Answer:** SEEA allows this funding to be used towards programs and initiatives that support, increase or otherwise impact retrofits of any building type. With that said, funding cannot be used to pay for the materials and equipment installed during the retrofit. The purchase or donation of materials and equipment installed can be counted as match.

- V. **Question:** Would SEEA consider a project that focused on energy conservation education for low-income residents?

**Answer:** The project would be considered, though it is unlikely to meet the desired impact criterion for selection. While SEEA finds awareness education important, it is often difficult to measure results and demonstrate a reduction in energy use and would not be a good fit for this funding opportunity.

- VI. **Question:** Would SEEA consider a project that provided education for real estate agents on how to properly value homes with photovoltaics?

**Answer:** No. SEEA will not fund any projects that focus on renewable energy. Projects will be supported by a pool of legacy funds from SEEA's allocation under the Department of Energy's Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) program; all project funding must support energy efficiency measures.

**Project Area B:** *Enhance the performance of the built environment through industry trainings that will increase energy code compliance and support incorporation of emerging clean energy technologies into local codes and ordinances.*

- VII. **Question:** For Category B, is training only open to energy code training? Could an applicant propose training on other subjects, like the U.S. Department of Energy's Weatherization Assistance Program?

**Answer:** Yes. Applicants can propose training on other subjects that improve energy efficiency in buildings.

**Project Area C:** *Advance local governments programs and strategies that increase the accessibility of energy efficiency investment resources (i.e. on-bill financing, PACE)*

- VIII. **Question:** Can my project be the first of its kind in my state or region, specifically for Category C?

**Answer:** No. If your proposal is currently untested in the location you are proposing it will not meet the selection criteria.

IX. **Question:** For Category C, could the funds be used to conduct a study to identify target areas for an on-bill financing program, if the program can demonstrate that it has support and funding?

**Answer:** No. SEEA is seeking projects that support or expand existing program models. Studies to identify future projects, programs or initiatives will not meet the selection criteria.

***Project Area D: Advance energy efficient transportation planning initiatives in the Southeast.***

X. **Question:** If your state developed a transportation plan, can an applicant propose updating it under Category D?

**Answer:** Maybe. A successful proposal will demonstrate that there are significant updates needed to the state's current plan, as well as demonstrate that updates will create success in increasing the deployment of energy efficient transportation. Additionally, SEEA will not fund any sections of the transportation plan that are not related to energy efficient transportation.