

# CPUC CBO Capacity Grant Program Discussion Draft

**Stephanie Green**  
**Chris Moore**  
**Asia Powell**  
**Hope Christman**

**LIOB, December, 2022**



California Public  
Utilities Commission

DISCUSSION DRAFT ONLY  
Final plan subject to Commissioner approval.

# Background: Current Barriers to CBO Outreach

- Many CBOs are under-resourced and under-staffed, forcing them to limit their engagement in governmental processes that can be very time consuming
- CBOs and the communities they serve lack technical capacity to access or engage with CPUC programs and policies
- CPUC unable to offer industry-standard stipends for CBO participation on workshop panels and advisory groups.
- I-Comp requirements too burdensome for one-off participation

DISCUSSION DRAFT ONLY

Final plan subject to Commissioner approval.

# AB 179

In AB 179, the Budget Act of 2022, the California Legislature approved \$30,000,000 to be “used by the Public Utilities Commission for capacity grants to community-based organizations that conduct outreach and obtain technical assistance for participation in Public Utilities Commission decision making processes and supporting activities and that support ongoing equity initiatives and provide clean energy access opportunities to tribes, as defined pursuant to Section 21073 of the Public Resources Code, and other underrepresented communities.”

DISCUSSION DRAFT ONLY

Final plan subject to Commissioner approval.

# Proposed Grant Programs

These grant programs are:

- Public Participation Grants
- Equity, Engagement, and Education Grants
- Clean Energy Access and Community Project Grants

Summary of Proposed Funding		
Category	Maximum Award	Total Available
Public Participation Grants	\$5,000	\$1,000,000
Equity, Engagement, and Education Grants	\$100,000	\$4,000,000
Clean Energy Access Initiatives and Community Project Grants	\$1,250,000	\$23,500,000
Administration	N/A	\$1,500,000
<b>Total:</b>		<b>\$30,000,000</b>

DISCUSSION DRAFT ONLY

Final plan subject to Commissioner approval.

# Public Participation Grants

Total proposed funding: \$1,000,000

Per-grant proposed funding: \$250 to \$5,000

Application and funding cycle: Rolling

- Grants up to \$5,000 per activity for an eligible entity to participate in defined and discrete activities. e.g. speaking on a workshop panel, service on working group or participation in other decision-making processes.
- Provides prompt payment for these discrete engagements.
- Applications may be accepted and on a rolling basis. Total funding for the Public Participation Grants portion of this program will be \$1 million. Method of distribution of grants to be determined (example payments dispersed by completion of project activities identified in approved application).
- Annual program cap and cap per organization to ensure even distribution over time and fair distribution across many organizations.
- Awardees for these grants will not be eligible for I-Comp for the same activities.
- Similar to the I-Comp program, successful applicants will be expected to demonstrate that they will bring a unique contribution that is beneficial to ratepayers.

DISCUSSION DRAFT ONLY

Final plan subject to Commissioner approval.

# Equity , Engagement and Education Grants:

**Total proposed funding:** \$4,000,000

**Per-grant proposed funding:** \$5,000 to \$100,000

**Application and funding cycle:** Awards in Summer of 2023 and Summer of 2024

- This program will provide grants up to \$100,000 for the purposes of building CBO, Tribal, and community capacity to understand and engage with CPUC decision-making processes.
- Activities in this category may include hiring consultants or technical experts, community engagement and outreach related to CPUC proceedings, education, training and curriculum development, and partnership and coalition development.
- Method of distribution of grants to be determined (example payments dispersed by completion of project milestones identified in approved application).

# Clean Energy Access and Initiatives Grants:

**Total proposed funding:** \$23,500,000

**Per-grant proposed funding:** \$100,000 to \$1,250,000

**Application and funding cycle:** Awards in Summer of 2023 and Summer of 2024

- This program will provide grants up to \$1.25 million for the purpose of developing equity initiatives and clean energy access opportunities for eligible applicants
- Examples of potential projects include:
  - Projects that develop community led solutions to climate change mitigation, adaption, and resilience challenges that can be carried out in partnership with a utility
  - Projects that cooperatively develop distributed energy resource projects
  - Community needs assessments that can be used to inform CPUC decision-making and improved on the delivery of current programs; Community-led data collection and analysis
  - Programs that improve awareness, participation and enrollment in existing clean energy programs;
  - Projects that improve the affordability of utility services for the communities as well as provide local economic opportunities or technical project implementation; etc.
- Method of distribution of grants to be determined (example monthly disbursements or payments dispersed by completion of project milestones identified in approved application).

DISCUSSION DRAFT ONLY

Final plan subject to Commissioner approval.

# Project Logistics:

## Program Development:

- Initial design phase, program details to be determined based on stakeholder feedback, subject to approval by commissioners.
- Collaboration with internal industry divisions will be essential to developing the grant program.
- Feedback from external stakeholders will inform the design of the grant program, and the success of the program will depend on robust participation from CBOs.

## Program Staffing:

- Staffing needs will be supported by a budget limited to 5% of the overall funds, not to exceed \$1.5 million. Funding could be used for the hiring of temporary staff and/or consultants to assist in the operations of the program and procuring the technical infrastructure to manage the project.

## Performance:

- Performance reporting metrics for CBOs should include operational reporting (potentially including program activities, budget, invoice, etc.), and program metrics



# Eligible Applicants :

Applicants eligible to apply for the CPUC's Equity Initiatives and Clean Energy Grant Program include:

- A California community-based organization holding a current tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code;
- A California Native American Tribe. For the purposes of this grant, this includes all Federally Recognized Tribes, and other California Native Americans, as defined by Public Resources Code Section 21073 “California Native American tribe” means a Native American tribe located in California that is on the contact list maintained by the Native American Heritage Commission for the purposes of Chapter 905 of the Statutes of 2004.
- Tribal entities organizations incorporated under tribal law and wholly owned by the tribe, Tribal Section 17 Corporations, Tribal utilities and authorities operated under tribal law. Other non-profit organizations.

# Questions?



# Thank you!



## California Public Utilities Commission

Stephanie Green

415-703-5245

Christopher Moore

213-220-1344

v