

2010 SMALL-SCALE SOLAR PV PROGRAM FOR K-12 SCHOOLS AND OTHER EDUCATIONAL FACILITIES

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation launched its **Small-Scale Solar PV Program for K-12 Schools** in 2006 to introduce the energy future to today's students. The program provides grants up to \$10,000 towards the cost of installing a new 1kW photovoltaic (PV) system to convert sunlight into electric power. Although small, each system will become part of the school's curriculum as well as generate free electricity. To enhance the educational value of the system, online monitoring to provide real-time data on the amount of electricity generated is included as part of the grant. Students see first-hand on a daily basis how sunlight is converted into electricity.

To date, the Foundation's program has awarded grants to over 140 schools across Illinois to support the installation of 1kW PV systems. To extend the reach of this program, the Foundation also launched a new website - **www.IllinoisSolarSchools.org** - to highlight completed PV installations. The real-time output of each of the solar electric systems will be displayed on the website. Students love to see their school's photovoltaic system on the internet and compare it to systems at other schools. Teachers use this data in lessons on renewable energy, science and math.

In 2010, the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation intends to award more grants under this program to K-12 schools and other educational organizations providing continuous educational services to K-12 students, such as children's museums or nature centers.

Grantees will be able to call on assistance from the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE). FEE helps to coordinate system installation and integrate specialized curricula about renewable energy and energy efficiency into the classroom. FEE has assisted over 100 Illinois schools implement their solar program.



Program selection and eligibility criteria

Applicants must meet all eligibility requirements including:

- be a school or other educational organization such as a children's museum or nature center that provides continuous educational services to K-12 students;
- have taken steps to make its facility(ies) energy efficient, including use of energy efficient lighting, e.g., T-8 fluorescent bulbs and electronic ballasts (whether the lighting installation was funded by a grant from the Foundation or directly by the applicant);
- have a suitable site for proper PV system installation and operation;
- co-fund a minimum of 10% of PV system installation costs;
- hold a "Solarbration" and make a commitment to teach about solar energy in the classroom beginning with the 2010-2011 school year;
- commit to educate the community about the benefits of solar energy; and
- agree to implement online monitoring of PV system performance via **www.IllinoisSolarSchools.org**.

How is the size of the grant determined?

Grants will cover 90% of the total system installation cost (equipment and labor) up to **\$10,000**. Applicants are required to provide a minimum 10% match. The project coordination services provided by FEE are valued at approximately \$3,000 per project and will be provided at no cost to interested grantees in the utilities' service territories. This support does not count toward the required 10% match.

When will grants be paid?

Each grant will be paid **after the installation is completed** and operational, and the work has been accepted by the grant recipient as satisfactory. Acceptance will be documented through submission of a brief final report on the project. The exact amount of the grant payment will be based on the actual cost of the system installed.

GRANT APPLICATION PROCESS

How does one apply for a PV system installation grant?

An applicant completes and submits to the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation an **application form** along with the supporting documentation listed on that form by March 27, 2010. All requests for PV system grants must be submitted on the Foundation's application form and must include all required attachments.

Where can one get an application form or ask questions?

Application forms may be downloaded and printed from the Foundation's web site: **www.IllinoisCleanEnergy.org** or **www.IllinoisSolarSchools.org**. Potential applicants also may request an application form or ask questions by calling the Foundation at (312) 372-5191.

Are grant recipients required to use specific vendors?

No. Grant recipients exercise complete control over the process of selecting vendors, contractors or consultants involved in the solar installation project. FEE will be available to work with grant recipients to select equipment, approve plans, and generally oversee the installation process.

What is the deadline to apply?

All eligible, complete requests for solar PV system grants will be reviewed by the Foundation as a group. Complete applications **must** be received by the Foundation **no later than close of business on March 27, 2010**.

What is the timing for grant decisions and project installation?

Grant decisions will be made in May 2010. Project installation may start immediately after execution of a grant agreement. Grant recipients are encouraged to install their system in the summer of 2010 and must complete the project by December 2010.

Will all grant requests be approved?

No. This is a competitive process and a limited amount of funds are available for this program. The Foundation anticipates receiving more requests than it can accommodate. If that occurs, the Foundation may give preference to applicants in areas of the state with few existing solar PV system installations in K-12 educational facilities. Applicants that are not selected will be eligible to reapply in future years.

MISSION & PROGRAM AREAS

The Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation invests in clean energy development and land preservation efforts, working with communities and residents to improve environmental quality in Illinois.

*The Foundation funds projects in three core program areas: improving **energy efficiency**, developing **renewable energy** resources, and preserving and enhancing **natural areas** and wildlife habitat throughout Illinois.*

VISIT www.IllinoisCleanEnergy.org

The Foundation's web site - www.IllinoisCleanEnergy.org - has other useful information for organizations seeking funding, including lists of past grants awarded, more information on the grant application process and announcements about new program initiatives that may be launched during 2010. It also has information on other grants such as funding for lighting upgrades and energy efficient design of new or substantially renovated facilities.

VISIT www.IllinoisSolarSchools.org



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