

Competitive Grants for Photovoltaic Energy Systems for Schools: \$10 Million Statewide

What is a photovoltaic (PV) energy system?

A PV energy system is a solar electric system that converts the sun's abundant energy into clean, reliable, and affordable electricity. Multiple components like solar panels, structure mounts, and modules that convert solar energy into usable electricity make up a PV system. As a renewable energy technology and a domestic source of energy, it has numerous environmental benefits and contributes to the nation's energy security.

Who can apply?

Governor Bill Richardson, through the New Mexico Office of Recovery and Reinvestment, allocated \$10 million of federal stimulus funds for the purchase and installation of 100 kilowatt (kW) PV systems in public schools throughout the state. The \$10 million allocation is estimated to fund PV systems at 15 to 20 schools in New Mexico. The purpose of the funding is to support clean energy education in New Mexico's public schools and demonstrate the benefits of commercial-scale PV to communities throughout New Mexico. Funds will be awarded through a competitive grant application process and any district can apply. School districts that are selected are eligible to receive no more than one award.

Application criteria include:

- Completion of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act Application for PV Solar Energy Systems;
- Strengths and merits of the project;
- Whether the PV system will be roof-top, ground mounted or covered parking lot;
- Square footage for each selected type of PV system;
- If roof-top mounted, the roof cannot be older than 5 years;
- Any energy efficient measures your district has implemented, or plan to implement, at the school which you are applying for funds;
- How the district will incorporate an educational component to educate its students, faculty and staff on renewable energy and the system installed;
- How the project will be maintained and protected from vandalism;
- Visibility of the PV system;
- The district's ability to make the system operational by December 1, 2010. As an example, include staff and other resources to ensure that procurement and project management will stay on schedule, or proven success with projects being implemented in a relatively short time frame,
- No funding match is required, but in-kind resources are encouraged and should be identified, and;
- School board must have taken formal action supporting the project.

All grants that are awarded must comply with the reporting and record keeping requirements imposed by ARRA, the Secretary of the U.S. Department of Education, and the Public Education Department. Funds that are awarded will be subject to the offset for all future Public School Capital Outlay Council grants.

For technical questions regarding the solar energy systems please contact Ryan Helton of the Energy, Minerals and Natural Resources Department at (505) 476-3318 or at ryan.helton@state.nm.us.

For specific questions regarding submission of the application please contact Antonio Ortiz of the Public Education Department at (505) 827-3863 or at antonio.ortiz1@state.nm.us.