

Launch Date: February 22, 2022

Pre-applications Submission Deadline:
March 22, 2022

Amount of Funding: \$2.5 million

Minimum Grant: \$10,000

Maximum Grant: \$1,000,000

Ideal Grant Size: \$150,000 - \$300,000

Average Grant Size: \$250,000

Award Announcement Date: August 11, 2022

Program Officer:

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Important Notes:

The Iowa Energy Center Grant Program's administrative rules can be found in Iowa Administrative Code section 261.404. You may also request a copy of the administrative rules by sending an email to iecgrants@iowaeda.com.

If an applicant does not have an IowaGrants or state of Iowa A&A account, **the applicant will need to register for an account no later than March 5, 2022** to ensure the grant application can be completed prior to the grant submission deadline.

The preferred browser for IowaGrants is Google Chrome. If an applicant uses Internet Explorer, compatibility mode must be enabled in order to complete the application.

Applicants must first complete a pre-application and be invited to complete a full application to be considered for funding.

PURPOSE

The IEC Competitive Grant Program is funded by Iowa utility ratepayers. Funds will be used for projects that aid in the implementation of the seven key focus areas of the Iowa Energy Plan and provide a benefit to the Iowa ratepayers. For the purposes of this program, a ratepayer is defined as a customer who pays for an electric or natural gas utility service in the State of Iowa. The seven key focus areas of the Iowa Energy Plan are:

- Energy workforce development
- Technology-based energy research and development
- Biomass conversion
- Natural gas expansion in underserved areas
- Support for rural and underserved areas
- Electric grid modernization
- Alternative fuel vehicles

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Iowa businesses, colleges and universities, and private nonprofit agencies and foundations are eligible to apply for IEC grant funds.

- Any eligible applicant may submit an application that includes one or more sub-recipients.
- An eligible applicant may apply individually or jointly with another eligible or other eligible applicants.
- A principal investigator will be allowed to submit one application per funding announcement. An applicant who has applied as the principal investigator for a funding announcement may also be named as a co-investigator on additional applications submitted but may not be named as a principal investigator on additional applications.
- An eligible applicant may apply jointly with ineligible applicants, but the applicant cannot act solely as a passthrough to the ineligible entity.
- A business will be considered an Iowa business if the business is incorporated in the State of Iowa or authorized to do business in the state of Iowa.
 - A business that is authorized to do business in the state of Iowa must provide a certificate of authority during the full application phase.
 - Applicant must have an office physically located in Iowa.

PROJECT PARTNERS

- Applications with project partners are preferred by the review committee.
- If project partners are named in the pre-application or full application, a letter of support must be provided.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Requirements for IEC grant awards include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Applicants shall demonstrate a benefit for ratepayers.
- Applicants shall demonstrate that they are eligible candidates.
- Applicants shall demonstrate the capacity for grants administration.
- Applicants who have previously received IEC awards shall have demonstrated acceptable past performance, including the timely expenditure of funds.
- Applications shall demonstrate the feasibility of completing the proposed activities with the funds requested.
- Applications shall identify and describe any other sources of funding for the proposed activities.

INELIGIBLE PROJECTS

The following projects are ineligible for funding:

- Relocation of a business
- Expansion of a business
- Funding for existing training programs
- Private asset development
 - Examples of private asset development include:
 - Installation of solar array on a building only to benefit the owners/occupants of that building.
 - Installation of equipment to benefit only one community or neighborhood with no opportunity for replicability outside of the applicant organization (i.e., community solar array or community LED light installation).
 - Research and development used to primarily enable the manufacturing of a product solely for the profit of the applicant.
- Pipeline, transmission line, and distribution line construction
- First generation ethanol
- Cellulosic ethanol

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

Only expenditures directly related to the implementation of the funded grant activity will be reimbursed. Examples of eligible expenses include, but are not limited to:

- Salaries/wages
- Supplies and materials
- Domestic travel
- Tuition
- Equipment purchases, which must be approved by the board at the time the award is made
- Vehicle purchases, which are eligible only when the purchase of the vehicle is an integral part of the funded grant activity and must be approved by the board at the time the award is made

INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

Ineligible expenses include, but are not limited to:

- Purchase or rental of buildings
- Office equipment
- Furniture and fixtures
- Intangible assets
- International travel
- Insurance
- Phone expenses

OTHER BUDGETARY REQUIREMENTS

Other budget requirements include the following:

- Indirect costs shall not exceed more than 20 percent of the IEC grant award request.
- IEC grant funds shall not be used as cost share to a federal grant award.
- Vehicle purchases or other vehicle-related expenses are not eligible if the purchase or expense supports the proposed grant activity but is not an integral part of the proposed grant activity. If a vehicle purchase is an integral part of a grant activity but a recipient fails to obtain board approval prior to the purchase, then the vehicle purchase is ineligible.
- The final application award request cannot increase more than 5% from the award request identified in the pre-application, unless a more substantial deviation is requested by the grant committee during the pre-application review.

COST SHARE

- Cost share is required to apply for Iowa Energy Grant Funds
 - Minimum cost-share 5%
 - In-kind donations can be used as cost share.
 - Cost share for Iowa based business applicants must include a monetary cost share contribution if supplies, materials or equipment are included in the budget (10% of these line items).

Example: Applicant includes the purchase/installation of batteries in their project budget under the equipment line item, at a cost of \$20,000. The total IEC grant award request is \$200,000. The applicant would be required to provide a total of \$10,000 in cost share (5% of \$200,000), of which, \$2,000 must be a monetary cost share contribution (10% of the \$20,000 equipment line item).

If cost share requirements are not met, the pre-application will be disqualified.

- Applicants do have the opportunity to obtain extra points if they provide or secure additional cost share.
- Unrecovered indirect costs cannot be used as cost share. However, matching indirect costs can be counted as cost share (not to exceed 20% of the total project budget).
- Cost share must be accounted for at the pre-application phase.
 - If an applicant obtains additional cost share after being selected for a full application, they must receive approval from the grant committee to include the additional cost share in the budget in the final application.
- Points awarded for cost share will be based on the total grant award request. (5.1%-20.1%)

PRE-APPLICATION PROCESS

- Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) will release an open call for grants on their website and via email to stakeholders.
- The pre-application will be completed via IowaGrants.
- Once the pre-application window has closed, all pre-applications received will be reviewed by the program manager for eligibility and completeness. Internal IEDA staff will then review the pre-applications and prepare recommendations for the committee. Internal IEDA staff included in the review may include:
 - Grant program manager
 - Other Iowa Energy Office program managers
 - Team leader
 - Legal counsel
 - Financial manager

- The grant committee will then review the pre-applications and select which will move forward in the application process. The grant committee will evaluate and record the collective answers on a single review sheet with a numerical score and comments. The grant program manager, on behalf of the grant committee, will invite selected applicants to submit a full application.
 - The invitation will be sent to the point of contact as provided in the pre-application.

HOW TO APPLY

- Pre-applications will only be accepted during the established application period, as identified in IowaGrants and at iowaeda.com.
- Pre-applications are available and accepted through IowaGrants.gov.
- Applicants planning to apply must use an IowaGrants account.
 - If the person completing the application already has an IowaGrants or a State of Iowa A&A account, this same account will be utilized.
 - If the applicant does not have an IowaGrants or A&A account, **the applicant will need to register by March 5, 2022** to ensure the registration can be completed prior to the submission deadline.

INFORMATION NEEDED TO APPLY

Applicant Information

- Name
- Address
- Phone number
- Email
- Program manager/contact
- Title of project
- Website
- State of incorporation
- Application approval/certification document

Project Information

- Project summary (500-character limit)
- Description of ratepayer benefit (500-character limit)
- Focus area alignment and explanation (250-character limit for each focus area)
- Grant administration experience (500-character limit)
- Statement of need/impact for Iowans (250-character limit)
- Project duration (in months)
- Qualifications/experience of project team
- Dissemination plan (500-character limit)
- Budget and high-level budget narrative (500-character limit)
- COVID-19 potential impact (500-character limit)

PRE-APPLICATION REVIEW CRITERIA

Pre-Application Screening Criteria

- Applicant is an eligible candidate
- Funding request meets eligible project and expense requirements
- Request is for no less than \$10,000 and no more than \$1,000,000
- Initial grant duration does not exceed three years
- Application is complete and submitted through IowaGrants
- Applicants must indicate if they have obtained cost share in the pre-application phase
- Principal investigator/applicant is not named as principal investigator/applicant on any other applications – they can, however, be named as co-investigators or sub-recipients on additional applications
- Signature from the applicant organization’s legally responsible official on the application approval document, which will be uploaded to IowaGrants by the applicant
- Application approval document/certification has been signed and uploaded

Pre-application Review Sheet

Applicant must achieve a minimum score of 30 out of 37 to move on to the full application round.

Evaluation Criteria	Total Points
Does the proposal demonstrate how the project meets one of the seven key focus areas of the Iowa Energy Plan?	4
Does the proposal demonstrate how the project provides a benefit to Iowa ratepayers?	7
Does the proposal differentiate itself from previously funded IEC projects?	5
Does the proposal clearly describe the project goals?	5
If the applicant has received previous IEC awards, did they demonstrate acceptable past performance?	2
Is the applicant collaborating with any other relevant partners?	5
Is the budget proposal complete and does it appear to appropriately support the grant activities as described?	3
Does the proposal describe a dissemination or post-grant activity plan?	3
Does the proposal demonstrate that the applicant has obtained cost share?	3

PRE-APPLICATION AND APPLICATION PROCESS OVERVIEW

- February 21, 2022 – IEDA will release an open call for grants at iowaeda.com and via email to interested stakeholders.
- February 22, 2022 - IEDA will open pre-applications in IowaGrants.
- March 22, 2022 – Pre-applications are due via IowaGrants by 11:59 p.m.
- Once the pre-application window has closed, all pre-applications will be reviewed by the program manager for eligibility and completeness.
- Internal IEDA staff will then review the applications and prepare recommendations for the grant committee.
- The grant committee will evaluate the pre-applications together and record the collective answers on a since review sheet. The grant program managers will invite selected applicants to submit a full application and will also send denial letters to applicants that were not selected to move forward.
- Pre-applicants selected to submit a full application will complete and submit their applications via IowaGrants prior to the submission deadline. The program manager will communicate application submission information to selected applicants via the email address provided during the pre-application process.
- Once the application submission window closes, IEDA staff will review the applications and prepare recommendations for the grant committee.
- The grant committee will review the applications and prepare recommendations for the Iowa Energy Center Board, who will then review the recommendations and vote on each application at an Iowa Energy Center Board meeting.
- August 11, 2022 – Applicants selected to receive grant funding will be notified in writing of the board's decision. Applicants not selected will receive a denial letter.