

INFORMATIONAL WEBINAR QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Energy Equity Collaborative Founding Steering Committee Application



Resource Links:

[Energy Equity Collaborative Founding Steering Committee Application](#)
[Energy Equity Collaborative Founding Steering Committee Overview Document](#)
[Energy & Climate Equity Initiatives webpage](#)

The following questions and answers are based on those received during an informational webinar held by NYSERDA on August 30, 2022.

How many members will there be on the Collaborative Founding Steering Committee?

NYSERDA is aiming to have approximately 10-12 members on the Founding Steering Committee; however, this number is an estimate, and may change after a review of applications received. The goal is to have a manageable group size that can build consensus on a reasonable timeline while ensuring adequate representation of the diversity of experiences of frontline communities across New York State. While it may be challenging to fully represent all communities across the State, the goal is to ensure that membership in the Founding Steering Committee is generally reflective of the diverse types of communities that face unique barriers and opportunities at the intersection of energy and environmental justice, workforce development, housing affordability, resilience, and renewable energy.

How will the Collaborative interrelate with the Regional Clean Energy Hub program?

The Energy Equity Collaborative will be closely coordinated with the Regional Clean Energy Hubs, a complementary initiative which is also managed by NYSERDA's Energy and Climate Equity team. Most directly, the Collaborative will house a Statewide community engagement working group that each Hub has agreed to attend on a bi-annual basis to gain insights from the Collaborative when it comes to outreach and engagement of NY State's diverse communities in NYSERDA clean energy programs. Based on insights from the working group, Hubs will consider enhancements in engagement and improvements to services for disadvantaged communities that have not historically been effectively engaged by NYSERDA programs and initiatives.

As background, the Regional Clean Energy Hubs will work to position frontline communities throughout New York State to participate in and benefit from the emerging clean energy economy. They will do this by supporting outreach, education, and workforce development at the local level through partnerships within their region from across various public sectors and industries including clean energy, social service, housing, economic development, health, and academia. A single Hub will be established in each of ten regions across the state, except for the New York City region which will have three hubs, creating a total of 12 Hubs.

What has NYSERDA done to ensure that there is a robust pool of Founding Steering Committee applicants representing all the geographic regions of New York State?

We have done outreach throughout the State to try to get representation from all geographic regions. We have sent multiple communications to a large list of community-based organizations that work on environmental justice and energy equity issues. This includes outreach to the organizations who attended the three Energy Equity Collaborative co-planning sessions NYSERDA held from November 2021 through March 2022 and to a larger environmental and climate justice community organization list developed by NYSERDA over time. We have raised awareness of the opportunity through other NYSERDA-hosted meetings and done outreach to different organizations with which we are looking to expand relationships, such as Indigenous nation-based organizations.

We are encouraging community-based organizations with whom we have made contact

to help spread the word about this opportunity to their networks,

asking them to help us broaden outreach to organizations that would be good candidates to join the Founding Steering Committee. Please reach out to Jenny Sing-Bock (jenny.sing-bock@nyserda.ny.gov) to receive template outreach information to share with your networks.

How will the Collaborative interface with other State agencies?

The Collaborative will be available for other New York State agencies, including members of the interagency Low-Income Energy Task Force, to engage with frontline communities and work in coordination with NYSEERDA. As a NYSEERDA initiative, the Collaborative will primarily focus on initiatives and opportunities that NYSEERDA oversees, for input and collaboration. Our starting point is to bring opportunities we can act on now. At the same time, we recognize NYSEERDA programs are interrelated with regulations and programs administered by other New York State agencies and Authorities. As such, while the focus will be on NYSEERDA initiatives, we expect that issues related to other agencies may emerge, and the Collaborative will provide a space to explore these linkages. LIETF members include the Department of Conservation (DEC), Department of Public Service (DPS), Office of Temporary Disability Assistance (OTDA), Homes and Community Renewal (HCR), and the Department of State (DOS). In consultation with the Founding Steering Committee, interagency partners, and NYSEERDA leadership, NYSEERDA will work to be as responsive as possible to policy and interagency matters raised. We will work with NYSEERDA leadership and with other NYS agencies to address questions, issues and opportunities that come up to ensure accountability and transparency with NYSEERDA in coordination with our LIETF partner agencies.

How will Founding Steering Committee activities be compensated? Will there be travel, and how will travel be compensated?

NYSEERDA's Disadvantaged Community (DAC) Honorarium will compensate under-resourced community-based organizations for serving on the Founding Steering Committee and helping complete its first-year responsibilities as well as for participation in other applicable Collaborative activities. The [DAC Honorarium](#) will be offered to Founding Steering Committee members to expand participation capacity in the steering committee and Collaborative. In-person meetings will be determined in consultation with the Founding Steering Committee. Travel (including any applicable mileage, hotel, per diem food expenses) will be compensated in accordance with NYSEERDA policies. NYSEERDA is committed to providing compensation for any tasks we ask the Founding Steering Committee to do. Founding Steering Committee-related Collaborative tasks will be compensated even if the time spent on Collaborative tasks exceeds the estimated 8 hours per month. NYSEERDA will make clear how much time will be compensated for any tasks.

Does a community-based organization need to meet all the selection criteria to serve on the Founding Steering Committee?

NYSEERDA will use the [Founding Steering Committee Selection Criteria \[PDF\]](#), developed in collaboration with community organizations, as a guide for selecting Founding Steering Committee members. In subsequent years, a Steering Committee will be selected by the Energy Equity Collaborative membership based on the governance structure and selection process developed by the Founding Steering Committee.

Preference will be given to organizations that meet as many of the selection criteria as possible

while balancing other factors such as geographic representation and diversity of issue expertise. If multiple organizations from the same coalition apply, we may ask the coalition to select one representative to serve on the Founding Steering Committee. The Founding Steering Committee selection criteria will be used to prioritize equity and representation of diverse types of communities on the Committee. A community-based organization¹ is eligible to apply to serve on the Founding Steering Committee if it is a New York State-based community organization and principally serves (greater than 50% of their work is in service of) and/or represents in a New York State (NYS) Disadvantaged Community, as defined here.² A community-based organization does not need to meet all the criteria to be selected for the Founding Steering Committee. Organizations will be selected based on how well they meet the criteria and based on how the organization contributes to the Founding Steering Committee's overall diversity of geographic representation and issue expertise. We need organizations from all regions of the State that are³ committed to an inclusive, just clean energy transition.

Will each organization on the Founding Steering Committee have one representative participate or can multiple people from the same organization attend Founding Steering Committee meetings?

Our preference is for each organization to designate one person to be the organization's representative on the Founding Steering Committee. Compensation offered is per organization and not to multiple staff from the same organization. So, the same rate is offered regardless of how many people from an

organization attend. We are open to working with what is preferable to organizations, but we want to make sure there is fair and equal representation for communities across the State. We also want to make sure coalitions are not overrepresented which is why we ask organizations to indicate in the application if they are applying as an individual organization or on behalf of a coalition. If multiple organizations from the same coalition apply, NYSERDA may ask the coalition to select one representative to serve on the Founding Steering Committee.

While the first year of the Collaborative will have the Founding Steering Committee focused on finalizing the Collaborative's scope and structure, will there still be opportunity to provide input into programs?

Yes, there still will be an opportunity to provide input into NYSERDA programs during the first year of the Collaborative where the Founding Steering Committee and NYSERDA deems program input is time sensitive and should be made a priority issue for the Founding Steering Committee to address with NYSERDA.

Contact Energy & Climate Equity Team member Jenny Sing-Bock (jenny.sing-bock@nyserda.ny.gov) if you have any additional questions.

¹A community-based organization refers to a private non-profit (incorporated or unincorporated) or for-profit organization with a mission focused on making desired improvements to a community's social health, well-being, and overall functioning. The organization should also be representative of a community or significant segments of a community and provide services to individuals in the community, based on input from community members.

² For the purposes of the Collaborative Founding Steering Committee application, the term disadvantaged communities is inclusive of hard to reach, underserved rural communities, Indigenous Nations, and other areas of the State with high levels of poverty and limited access to resources as well as the NYS interim DAC definition as defined here: <https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/ny/disadvantaged-communities>.