Inclusive Community Solar Adder (ICSA)

Frequently Asked Questions

Version 3.0, released July 2026

Version 3.0 of the ICSA FAQs is intended to provide guidance to applicants in conjunction with the rules outlined in the NY-Sun Program Manual.

In the event of any discrepancies between the FAQs and the Program Manual, the Program Manual will be the controlling document. The FAQs will be updated periodically. The answers in Version 3.0 supersede the ones in Version 2.0.

1. General ICSA Questions

#	Question	Answer
1	**Is there funding left for the ICSA, and which projects are eligible to apply?**	Projects with a MW Block or SEEF Block 1 award in Approved status are eligible to apply for ICSA while capacity remains available. Remaining ICSA capacity is posted on the ICSA dashboard: https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/All-Programs/NY-Sun/Contractors/Dashboards-and-incentives/Inclusive-Community-Solar-Adder
2	**Will additional pathways to participating in ICSA be available after the closures of the MW block program and SEEF Block 1?**	No, additional pathways to participate in ICSA after the closure of the MW Block and SEEF Block 1 are not planned.
3	**Can an entity other than the Contractor that was awarded the ICSA manage the award?**	If the new entity is an NY-Sun Participating Contractor, they can take ownership of and manage the award. They will need to complete a full assignment of the corresponding MW Block award, and NYSERDA will assign the ICSA award in tandem. This change in award ownership may only be done once, and it must be completed before invoicing for the MW Block award. If a Contractor sells the project after invoicing for the MW Block award, the Contractor must notify NYSERDA. The Contractor on record remains responsible for submitting any remaining ICSA invoices.
4	**Can a project that offtakes 20% of its power to a single metered non-profit located in a disadvantaged community receive the ICSA?**	Round 1 projects: ICSA Round 1 requires participating projects to allocate a minimum of 20% of the project's capacity to ICSA-eligible residential subscribers. Therefore, a

		project that offtakes 20% of its power to a single metered non-profit located in a disadvantaged community may be eligible to receive the ICSA provided that an additional 20% of its capacity is allocated to ICSA-eligible residential subscribers. In this example, the project can receive the ICSA for 40% of the project's capacity. Round 2 projects: ICSA Round 2 requires participating projects to allocate a minimum of 40% of the project's capacity to ICSA-eligible subscribers, and a minimum of 50% of the ICSA allocation must be for ICSA-eligible residential subscribers. Therefore, a project that offtakes 20% of its power to a single metered non-profit located in a disadvantaged community may be eligible to receive the ICSA provided that at least 20% of its capacity is allocated to ICSA-eligible residential subscribers. In this example, the project can receive the ICSA for 40% of the project's capacity.
5	**Is the minimum 10% discount requirement for ICSA-eligible subscribers only, or is it for all subscribers to an ICSA project?**	The minimum 10% discount (or 15%/20% for community benefit projects and/or Category 4 projects) applies to ICSA-eligible customers. A project may offer one discount rate for market rate customers and another for ICSA-eligible residential subscribers, provided that ICSA-eligible customers receive the correct minimum discounts outlined in the program manual.
6	**Can the ICSA be applied to already built projects?**	No, projects must have an NY Sun award in Approved status to be eligible for ICSA. Completed projects are not eligible.
7	**How will ICSA applications be reviewed and awarded? Is it first-come, first-served?**	Applications will be reviewed in the order they are received until all available funding is fully committed.
8	**If we apply for the ICSA and are awarded the incentive, how long do we have to build the project and bring it to commercial operation before we lose the award? What happens if the project never gets built due to situations beyond our control?**	All ICSA-funded projects are subject to completion requirements of the NY-Sun C&I program or Non-residential program, depending on which program the project falls under. If the project is not built to these requirements the ICSA award will be canceled.

9	**Can a project change its customer acquisition provider and/or its acquisition and management strategy after being awarded?**	Yes, a Contractor can switch to a different customer acquisition provider after being awarded the ICSA. The Contractor must notify NYSERDA, and provide any details about resulting changes to acquisition and management strategy. Staff will update the ICSA award record to reflect these changes, provided they meet ICSA program requirements. Any other changes to acquisition and management strategy, for example adding door-to-door-sales, must similarly be brought to NYSERDA before implementing. Specific documents such as a revised M&I plan, subscriber agreement, or customer enrollment demonstration may be requested, depending on the nature of the change.
10	**What happens if a project fails to reach its targeted threshold of LMI subscribers? Will projects lose other NYSERDA funding?**	SEEF Block 1 projects: SEEF Block 1 projects awarded the ICSA must meet the minimum ICSA requirements, or enroll in Statewide Solar for All,to receive any other adders attached to their SEEF Block 1 award (e.g Prevailing Wage Adder). Projects that enroll in Statewide Solar for All must cancel their ICSA award. MW Block projects: MW Block projects will not lose other NY-Sun funding if ICSA requirements are not met. The ICSA award will be cancelled but will not impact the MW Block award and other adders (e.g. Prevailing Wage Adder).
11	**How does NYSERDA address the ESCO issue?**	We recognize that customers are often confused about the difference between a community solar subscription and ESCO retail energy supply. Moreover, LMI customers have often had negative experiences with ESCOs that reduces interest in community solar. NYSERDA created the Regional Clean Energy Hubs to help New Yorkers access and understand their clean energy options, program rules, and safeguards put in place by the UBP-DERS. Potential customers can connect with their regional hub by visiting NYSERDA's website: https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/All-Programs/Regional-Clean-Energy-Hubs

2. ICSA Relationship to Statewide Solar for All (S-SFA) and SEEF Blocks

#	Question	Answer
1	**Can one project participate in both S-SFA and ICSA?**	No, a project may elect to pursue ICSA or S-SFA, but not both.
2	**If a SEEF Block 1 award applies to the ICSA and is awarded but cannot demonstrate compliance with the ICSA program rules at time of invoicing, can that project still receive the Prevailing Wage Adder (PWA) and other adders?**	SEEF Block 1 projects that elected and were awarded the ICSA, must demonstrate compliance to ICSA program rules at time of invoicing. If the project fails to meet ICSA requirements including the minimum allocation to ICSA-eligible customers, the project will lose all NY-Sun funding. A SEEF Block 1 project may, however, switch from ICSA to S-SFA after award. This change can only be made once.
3	**Can a SEEF Block 1 project that was awarded ICSA switch to S-SFA instead?**	Yes, this change can be made once, before the project reaches commercial operation. Projects switching to S-SFA must enroll in the project's utility S-SFA program, and notify NYSERDA immediately upon requesting enrollment in the utility's S-SFA program.
4	**Are SEEF Block 2 projects eligible for the ICSA?**	No, SEEF Block 2 projects must participate in S-SFA and are not eligible for ICSA.

3. Subscriber Requirements and Verification Process

#	Question	Answer
1	**What resources will be made available that identify low-income, environmental justice, and disadvantaged communities?**	The Final Disadvantaged Communities map and its source data are available here: https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/ny/Disadvantaged-Communities Round 1 and Round 2 ICSA projects may continue to utilize the Empower eligibility map, per the program manual. Due to changes to the Empower+ program, NYSERDA no longer hosts a public Empower map. However, NYSERDA will provide limited-use shapefiles of the archived map upon request. Please reach out to communitysolar@nyserda.ny.gov. Round 1 projects may continue to utilize the Interim Disadvantaged Communities map as long as attestation forms are also collected from these customers, per the program manual. ICSA Round 2

		projects may not use the interim map for geo-eligibility.
2	**Can a provider collect tax documents to demonstrate a customer's ICSA eligibility in the Individual Household eligibility category?**	No, NYSERDA must be able to verify the customers' total household income, and tax documents alone are insufficient. To be eligible for this category, customers must complete the income eligibility application and select "Community Solar" as their program type.
3	**Can individually metered units be considered geo-eligible if the utility bill is in the property owner's name?**	Individual Residential Subscribers must have their own electric accounts and pay their own electricity bills to qualify under geo-eligibility, categorical eligibility, or individual household eligibility. Meters in the property owner/managers name or other business name may be submitted only for qualifying affordable housing properties. The affordable housing provider must provide documentation specifying how the required bill discount will be provided to building residents who are considered eligible residential subscribers. The savings that each resident will receive must be equivalent to what they would receive had they signed up for community solar themselves (i.e., the ICSA bill discount).
4	**In what circumstances is the Self Attestation form required? Will NYSERDA provide a template self-attestation form?**	The Self Attestation Form is only required for geo-eligible customers subscribing to Round 1 projects and residing in an interim DAC. Customers that live in EmPower New York pre-screened areas have been deemed income eligible by NYSERDA and do not need fill out a self-attestation form. The Self Attestation form alone cannot be used to verify customer eligibility if the customer does not reside in a DAC. A copy of the template self-attestation form can be found on the Resource for Contractors webpage in the "Inclusive Community Solar Adder Resources" section.
5	**Is the LMI % just for the initial allocation? For example, if an LMI customer drops off the project because they move, does that**	The ICSA award is paid in three installments, based on the actual allocation to eligible customers at the Commercial Operation, Year 1 Anniversary, and Year 2 Anniversary milestones. After the final milestone payment, the project must maintain minimum ICSA-

	customer need to be replaced with another LMI customer?	eligible subscriber allocations as detailed in Section 2.5.2.4.6 of the program manual under: "Long-Term Subscriber Makeup".
6	**What are "new" eligible subscribers? Can we take eligible subscribers from existing community solar projects and add them to ICSA projects?**	No. You cannot take eligible subscribers from existing projects and add them to ICSA-funded projects to meet the requirements of this program. The intent of the ICSA program is to reach and subscribe new income eligible customers that have been historically underserved by the solar industry into community solar projects. As such, ISCA funds are to be used to support customer acquisition and marketing efforts to subscribe LMI households and disadvantaged community members to community solar projects. The funds cannot be used to move existing subscribers from one project to another.
7	**What documentation is required to verify that an affordable housing property is eligible for the ICSA?**	A list of accepted affordable housing eligibility proxy documents is provided in the Inclusive Community Solar Adder section of the NY-Sun program manual. The provided document must include the address of the property being submitted, and stipulate that residence is restricted to households under the 80% AMI threshold. In cases where a single document meeting all of these requirements does not exist or cannot be found, multiple documents in tandem may be considered on a case-by-case basis.
8	**Do we need to get new proof that a customer is LMI for the 1st and 2nd anniversary if they were included and documented previously as being LMI?**	No, once a customer is deemed eligible by NYSERDA, they do not need to be re-approved in subsequent milestones. NYSERDA will complete a verification audit on any new customers submitted in a given milestone.

4. Milestones and Invoicing

#	Question	Answer
1	**Who can submit an invoice for ICSA?**	The NY-Sun Participating Contractor that received the ICSA award or an assignment of the ICSA award is responsible for submitting milestone deliverables and invoices, and responding to requests for additional documentation from NYSERDA.

2	**How to submit an invoice?**	The NY-Sun Participating Contractor that received the ICSA award or an assignment of the ICSA award must submit all deliverables for a given milestone for review and approval by NYSERDA before an invoice can be generated. Please refer to the "ICSA Milestone Submission and Invoicing Guide", available on the Resources for Contractors site, for further instruction.
3	**What happens if we do not meet the required minimum ICSA allocation for a given milestone?**	<u>Round 1 projects:</u> If the minimum requirements are not met at Commercial Operation (no less than 20% allocated to ICSA-eligible residential subscribers), the Adder could still be received for the following two payments if the requirements are met at that time. However, if the required minimum has not been allocated to eligible subscribers by the Commercial Operation milestone, the balance of the minimum allocation must be left unallocated. If a Commercial Operation invoice is submitted that is fully allocated, but does not meet the minimum ICSA allocation requirement, the ICSA award will be cancelled, and the contractor will not be able to invoice for future payments for that project. No payment in any amount will be made on any invoice where the minimum 20% allocation requirement for eligible residential subscribers is not met. <u>Round 2 projects:</u> If the minimum requirements are not met at Commercial Operation (no less than 40% allocated to ICSA-eligible subscribers, with 50% of the ICSA allocation to eligible residential subscribers), the ICSA award will be cancelled, and the contractor will not be able to invoice for future payments for that project. No payment in any amount will be made on any invoice where the minimum allocation requirement (40% to ICSA-eligible subscribers, with 50% of the ICSA allocation to eligible residential subscribers) is not met.

4	**What happens if we achieve a target that is higher than what we proposed? Say we proposed 40-60% but we achieve 80%?**	<u>Round 1 projects:</u> If a project exceeds its original Eligible Subscriber Target, NYSERDA will calculate each milestone using the actual allocation, until the maximum award amount is reached. In this example, (40-60% targeted, 80% achieved) the project would receive a higher commercial operation payment (based on the 80%) but then a lower third payment as the maximum funding amount in the contract was reached. The total amount invoiced across all three payments may not exceed the total funding amount contracted for the ICSA. <u>Round 2 projects:</u> All Round 2 awards were made with an Eligible Subscriber Target range of 40-60%. A Round 2 project that exceeds 60% at the Commercial Operation Milestone will be granted a High Performance funding adjustment, as long as High Performance funds are available. If the Commercial Operation milestone allocation is between 60-80%, the total award will be adjusted to reflect an 80% allocation. If the Commercial Operation allocation is 80-100%, the total award will be adjusted to reflect a 100% allocation. High Performance adjustments will only be made at the Commercial Operation milestone. The total amount invoiced across all three payments may not exceed the total funding amount contracted for the ICSA.
5	**For Round 1 projects, what happens if we meet the minimum 20% allocation to ICSA-eligible residential subscribers, but the allocation is lower than proposed at time of application? Say we proposed 80-100% but we achieve 60%?**	Round 1 projects are assigned an Eligible Subscriber Target range based on the proposed allocation submitted in the project's ICSA allocation. If the Round 1 minimum 20% ICSA residential allocation requirement is met at Commercial Operation, but the allocation is lower than the Eligible Subscriber Target for the project, the milestone will be paid according to the actual allocation, and the project may increase the ICSA allocation in future milestones to make up for the gap. Any awarded funds remaining after the final milestone payment due to lower-than-expected allocations will be disencumbered.

6	**How will invoicing work for SEEF Block 1 projects with ICSA?**	For all NY-Sun projects submitted under SEEF Block-1 and awarded ICSA, the ICSA Commercial Operation Milestone and all related deliverables must be submitted and reviewed before the NY-Sun Commercial Operation payment can be made. The Commercial and Industrial Commercial Operation payment will be approved when NYSERDA has determined that the project has met minimum requirements for the ICSA Commercial Operation Milestone.