

IOWA GRID RESILIENCE FUND

IJA SECTION 40101(d): PREVENTING OUTAGES
AND ENHANCING THE RESILIENCE
OF THE ELECTRIC GRID



The goal of this U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) formula grant program, part of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, is to support the efforts of States and Indian Tribes to improve the all-hazards resilience of the electric grid and prevent outages. These grants offer a unique opportunity to advance the capabilities of States and Indian Tribes, and their communities, to address not only current, but future resilience. The State of Iowa is slated to receive an annual allocation of \$5,917,777 each year for five years, a portion of which must be set aside for small utilities.

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) will act as the authorized representative of the State of Iowa to administer and distribute the federal funds under a new program known as the Iowa Grid Resilience Fund. Through a competitive award process, electric grid operators, generators and transmission owners, and distribution providers may apply for funds to implement a wide range of grid improvement projects. Eligible projects include weatherization technologies, utility pole management, monitoring and controls, hardening of power lines and systems, training, vegetation management, and other similar activities. Subgrantees will be required to provide matching funds based on the size of the utility, with the estimated range from 33% to 100%. A maximum award limit will be established to ensure the funds are broadly distributed. Applications are expected to be accepted for the year 1 cycle beginning in the second quarter of 2023.



OBJECTIVES

The following proposed objectives of the Iowa Grid Resilience Fund will form a framework to address all hazards and guide resilience investment decisions:

- **Increase grid resilience:** Undertake preventive actions to strengthen the grid against severe weather and improve asset management through evaluation and monitoring.
- **Facilitate faster service restoration:** Undertake measures or training for accelerated restoration of power following outages.
- **Benefit underserved:** Provide benefits to vulnerable and disadvantaged populations to reduce the impact of severe weather-related outages.
- **Expand workforce:** Expand opportunities for a skilled workforce to secure and retain quality jobs improving the resilience of Iowa's electric grid.

Selected projects will further these objectives and must also demonstrate measurable impacts through metrics such as number of customers benefited, critical facilities served, outages reduced, medically electricity-dependent customers impacted, and other relevant factors to gauge the resulting benefits.

CRITERIA

Iowa has developed the following provisional criteria for reviewing applications and ultimately selecting and determining awards:

- Community benefit: customer impact, reasonableness of metrics proposed and cost effectiveness
- Grid improvement: likelihood of projects to reduce frequency, duration and/or consequences of outages in an area of high need and/or ability to enhance monitoring of the distribution system and outage management
- Small utility set-aside: fulfillment of the federal requirement to prioritize small utilities
- Eligible entity: awards limited to an electric grid operator, electricity generator, transmission owner or operator, distribution provider
- Compliance burden: complexity of compliance requirements, including level of environmental review, number of contractors required, and availability of American-made goods
- Administrative capacity: past grant management experience or identified service provider with experience
- Project schedule: reasonableness of timeline to complete project
- Applicant financial capacity: need for financial assistance
- Previous funding: number and amount of previous Iowa Grid Resilience Fund awards
- Technology innovation: demonstration of technology or practice not previously used by applicant
- Proposed plan to benefit underserved populations: identification of relevant underserved population(s) and benefits provided
- Proposed plan for workforce development: strategy to ensure adequate workforce for proposed project and enhance the energy sector workforce for further resilience activities

NEXT STEPS

A virtual public hearing will be held on Tuesday, August 30, 2022, from 3:00-4:00 p.m. (CDT), to gather input on the draft objectives and criteria proposed. Feedback provided will be considered as the program application for the state is finalized. Information regarding the public hearing and request for public feedback can be found at the Iowa Grid Resilience Fund webpage at iowaeda.com/iowa-grid-resilience-fund. Comments must be received by September 7, 2022, by 4:30 p.m. (CDT).

IEDA will submit the state application to the DOE on or before September 30, 2022. Upon approval of the state's application, IEDA will begin to develop a complete set of program guidelines and processes. Program details will continue to be made available at the Iowa Grid Resilience Fund webpage: iowaeda.com/iowa-grid-resilience-fund.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Details on the federal program can be found at netl.doe.gov/bilhub/grid-resilience/formula-grants.

For questions about the state's application process for the Iowa Grid Resilience Fund, please email energy@iowaeda.com.