



**Notice of Funding Opportunity
For
Sustainable Energy in Schools
and Public Buildings**

Date Issued: July 10, 2023

Vermont Public Service Department

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OVERVIEW:

Vermont was awarded \$1.0 million from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) through a congressionally directed spending award originating with Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders. The objective of the award is to provide financial and technical support for the installation and/or repair of clean energy technologies in public schools and municipal buildings in underserved and disadvantaged communities in Vermont to lower their energy costs, decrease emissions from heating and power sources, and increase the exposure and experience with clean energy technologies in these public buildings.

The Public Service Department (PSD) is issuing this notice of funding opportunity (NOFO) to the public and specifically Vermont's public schools and municipalities to alert them of this opportunity and to give them ample time to prepare questions and a proposal in response to a pending request for proposals that the PSD will issue in the coming weeks.

The clean energy measures supported via this funding opportunity will be limited to the following three technologies:

1. Solar photovoltaics (PV) systems (up to 15kW AC)
2. Advanced wood-fueled heating systems
3. Cold climate air- or ground-source heat pumps

Installations of new systems and repairs/improvements to existing systems will be eligible for funding.

Eligible recipients of awards via this funding opportunity will be limited to:

- Vermont public elementary, middle, and secondary schools.
- Vermont town and city municipalities.

Funding provided via this opportunity will be federal DOE funds awarded through a sub-grant agreement between an eligible recipient (sub-grantee) and the Vermont PSD. Schools awarded a sub-grant will be encouraged to partner with [DOE's Efficient and Healthy Schools Campaign \(EHSC\)](#) to access technical assistance capabilities offered.

Energy and cost savings data will be required of the sub-grantees and will be collected on the installed clean energy measures. The sub-grantees will collect and report data on the measures to verify the energy and energy cost savings achieved by the incentivized measures to the Vermont PSD as well as any lessons learned by the sub-grantees in completing the measures and collecting the data.

Sub-grant agreements will include detailed monitoring and reporting as well as other federal requirements including, but not limited to: Build American, Buy American; Davis-Bacon wages, National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Historic Preservation Act, and others.

An applicant may only submit one proposal per qualifying school; however, an applicant may request more than one eligible sustainable energy technology in a single proposal.

Sub-contractors are allowed to be on more than one proposal.

Grant awards must be for the benefit of Vermont residents. The awarding of grants will be competitive. Proposals awarded a grant award must complete the project(s) no later than October 31, 2025.

Funds cannot be used for projects that have begun construction or for equipment purchased before the start date of the grant agreement.

PROGRAM SUMMARY:

Award Description	
Recipient Eligibility:	Vermont underserved or disadvantaged city and town municipalities and public elementary or secondary school
Funding Type:	Program Grant
Total Amount available: <i>Maximum Grant:</i> <i>Minimum Grant:</i>	\$1,000,000 \$250,000 \$20,000
Cost Share Required from recipients:	A minimum grantee cost share of 20% of the total project costs is required
Eligible Clean Energy Technologies:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pellet fueled heating systems (boilers, furnaces) that are: Highly efficient ($\geq 85\%$) Low particulate emissions (≤ 2.0 grams per hour) • Woodchip fueled heating systems (boilers, furnaces) that are: Highly efficient ($\geq 80\%$) Low particulate emissions (≤ 2.0 grams per hour) • Necessary electric service and electric panel repairs when related to and required by the eligible technologies are also eligible. • On-site wood pellet/chip storage systems • Cold-climate heat pumps (air or ground source) • Solar PV Array (up to 15kW AC).
Additional Grant Program Proviso	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An on-site particulate emission monitoring system will be encouraged to be installed (outdoors) with each project that receives grant funding where wireless internet is available. The associated equipment will be included as part of the grant and will not need to be included in budgets that are submitted as part of the application process.

Pending Request for Proposals (RFP)

The funding opportunity will include a two-step application process. An Initial RFP will be issued to collect basic information from the towns and eligible schools. Initial proposals will be reviewed, and a select number of proposals will be invited to submit a Comprehensive Application.

Through the RFP, the PSD plans to award five to twenty grants for projects at eligible schools and municipal buildings. Proposals must be for measures installed at qualifying schools and municipalities in Vermont.

Projects eligible to be supported through the RFP shall:

1. Assist with school energy cost reduction through the installation of new photovoltaic solar systems, high efficiency pellet or woodchip heating systems, and/or cold climate heat-pumps.
2. Maximize the displacement of fossil fuel use for space heating and/or increase renewable power production.
3. Decrease the particulate emissions, inefficient use of wood fuel and/or carbon emissions related to energy and heating loads.

Any questions regarding this NOFO should be submitted in writing, preferably by email, with the subject line, “Sustainable Energy for Schools and Municipalities NOFO”

Questions should be addressed to:

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OTHER INFORMATION:

The PSD will be releasing a separate RFP as part of its School Heating Assistance with Renewables & Efficiency (SHARE) program to support wood heating systems in Vermont public schools. There will be \$2 million available to support the repair, improvements, or the installation of a new wood-fueled heating system. This \$2M was appropriated by the State to the SHARE program in the State’s Fiscal Year 2024 budget. The PSD anticipates releasing this RFP in July.