



The TSAF believes that community-based solutions for renewable energy that meet tribal needs and are the result of local leadership. Every day we advance resources for tribal communities because the renewable energy challenges tribes face is unique and innovative. With your help, we can leverage philanthropic capital for tribal renewable energy projects and programs that are educational, entrepreneurial, and completely renewable.

[GRID Alternatives](#) is the country's largest nonprofit solar installer, with an unparalleled track record of delivering clean energy technologies in communities that most need the savings and jobs but have the least access. Our vision is a successful transition to clean, renewable energy that includes **everyone**.

## GRID's Growing Impact – Tribal Solar Accelerator Fund

GRID Alternatives' National Tribal Program has worked since 2010 to help tribal communities across the United States achieve their renewable energy goals. Using a community-centric approach, we partner with tribes to identify, develop, finance and implement solar power projects that meet community needs, including education, hands-on training, and energy cost reductions for tribal members.

In alignment with the National Tribal Program, the Tribal Solar Accelerator Fund was created in 2018 with a 3-year \$5million seed funding to provide direct project grants to tribes for tribal facility buildings and tribal residential solar projects which includes matching funds for large Department of Energy tribal grantees. In addition, the TSAF provides scholarship support to tribal college and university students in renewable energy related degree programs, and small grants and resources to tribal members awarded for a one-year Tribal Energy Innovator Fellowship. Each TSAF initiative aligns with the priorities listed below:

- The TSAF solar project funding will provide necessary capital to support the development of new solar demonstration projects in tribal communities around the country
- The TSAF solar project funding supports solar education, training, and workforce development in tribal communities
- The TSAF solar project funding prioritizes the development of long-term energy plans to increase tribal energy security and resiliency



## COVID-19 Emergency Fund Relief

### **GRID and the Tribal Solar Accelerator Fund are seeking philanthropic support to help us weather the impacts of the COVID-19 crisis and unlock these opportunities.**

Support from our community is essential to allow GRID and the TSAF to sustain our staff and maintain our financial position despite operational disruptions due to COVID-19 and ensure that tribal communities will benefit from the renewable energy and workforce development programs and opportunities that we have spent years developing. Without this funding, we may be forced to make staffing cuts that will harm our ability to execute our current project pipeline and set us back in terms of the capacity we have built to dramatically grow our work in the years ahead.

### **TSAF growth and direct tribal community impacts to date**

- \$2,216,972 awarded to 22 tribal grantees providing nearly 1,196.13kW of solar PV (includes 3 Dept. of Energy Matching Funds tribal grantees)
- Nearly \$6.7 million in energy cost savings over 25 years
- 61 tribal members (45 males, 16 females) received 1617 hours of classroom and hands-on installation training

### **GRID and the TSAF's Path Forward during the COVID-19 Crisis**

Safety is a core value at GRID and our top priority. We are responding to the evolving impacts of the COVID-19 crisis with the goal to limit potential exposure for our staff, our partners, our volunteers and job trainees, and the communities we serve as we continue our work. The need to follow social distancing guidelines and shelter-in-place orders is causing project delays due to several factors:

- Most GRID staff must now work remotely, limiting client outreach for future projects.
- Increased costs from implementing additional safety precautions on project sites, including acquiring personal protective equipment such as masks, disinfectant, porta-potties, etc.
- A significant slowdown in our pipeline due to the closure of public permitting offices and the postponement of projects by clients and affordable housing partners.
- Cancellation of sponsored volunteer days and hands-on training for job training partners on our installations, resulting in decreased income to support our work.
- A challenging fundraising environment within our shaky economy.

The pandemic has created especially difficult situations for construction staff that are still permitted to work in the field. Many use public transportation and fear being exposed to the virus, as social distancing policies limit the option of carpooling. One GRID installer shared: "I feel like I have to choose between getting paid to work and risking my family or staying home, collecting unemployment, and risking my income. And I worry about installation jobs stacking up." GRID wants to make sure that we continue to support staff whether or not they are able to work during this unprecedented pandemic.

Many of the communities we serve will be significantly impacted by the current public health crisis. GRID's no-cost solar installation services provide economic relief by lowering monthly energy bills up to 90%. GRID has installed solar for 16,000 families that are now able to use their free, clean solar to meet increased energy needs due to quarantining and self-isolation. Where safe, we are still working to continue solar installations so that new clients can access energy bill savings as soon as possible and direct more of their income towards critical expenses such as food, housing, and healthcare costs.



**TRIBAL SOLAR**  
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## COVID-19 Emergency Fund Relief

In the long-term, as we have yet to realize the full impact of the crisis on unemployment rates and job availability, GRID will need to be prepared to meet increased demand for training and job placement support from participants in our workforce development programs, maintain staff capacity to fulfill the job training requirements of public renewable energy programs, and partner with local and national employers to help them rebuild their workforces.

Emergency Fund contributions will ensure that, despite disruptions, GRID will be able to execute on our planned portfolio of solar projects in low-income communities hit hardest by the economic downturn. This funding will also allow us to maintain staff capacity so that, as the crisis subsides, we can hit the ground running and adapt to be responsive to the immediate and long-term needs of our communities.

For more information on contributing to the Fund and other ways to support TSAF's work, please contact Adam Bad Wound, Vice President of Philanthropy, at [abadwound@gridalternatives.org](mailto:abadwound@gridalternatives.org) or Tanksi Clairmont, TSAF Director, at [tclairmont@gridalternatives.org](mailto:tclairmont@gridalternatives.org).