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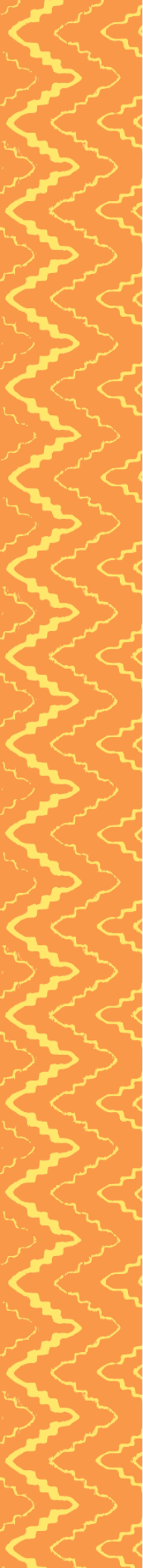
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# Tribal Solar Accelerator Fund (TSAF) RFP

*GRID Alternatives' Tribal Solar Accelerator Fund aims to catalyze the growth of solar energy and expand solar job opportunities in tribal communities across the United States.*

## TSAF Background

Since 2010, GRID Alternatives' has worked with tribal communities across the United States to support their renewable energy goals and visions for a sustainable future through tribal focused programs. Over the last four years, the TSAF has provided tribes with access to philanthropic capital through competitive grantmaking and leadership development programs. At its core, TSAF is about more than just regranting; it's about mobilizing and developing tribal solar projects and integrating workforce development and training, nation-building, and strengthening the energy resilience of tribal communities with visions for a clean energy outlook for generations to come. The upfront expenses to install and maintain solar systems are out of reach for many tribal communities, which is why TSAF funding has been critical to each grantee we have supported. The tribal led TSAF team operates from an action plan centered on grantmaking and programming, communications and storytelling, outreach and relationship building that evolves throughout the year to meet as many tribal communities' needs as possible. TSAF grants clearly focus on building renewable energy infrastructure and are feasible, cost-effective, and engage broad tribal community participation. Energy leadership, educational scholarships, workforce development, and training



are also at the forefront of TSAF-funded projects and programs to ensure that tribal members from the communities we partner with have equitable access to career pathways and the economic benefits of renewable energy.

The TSAF supports tribes in asserting control over their energy resources and focuses on making project implementation feasible by leveraging state and federal programs, philanthropic dollars, and partnerships with other tribes across Indian Country while working in alignment 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.

*Please read about the past TSAF grantees at [tribalsolar.org](http://tribalsolar.org).*

## TSAF Funding Priorities

- The TSAF supports and encourages solar education, training, and workforce development in tribal communities through leadership programs and industry related opportunities
- Provide access to funding to support the development of renewable energy projects and the development of long-term energy plans to increase tribal energy security and resiliency
- Ensure that equity is a driving principle in the national transition to a clean energy economy through learning from our TSAF community and generating awareness in the climate action arena.

The TSAF in collaboration with tribes and tribal leaders aims to address challenges and opportunities related to energy sovereignty, climate resilience and resource sustainability.

The TSAF team is excited to share our mission, vision, and goals through grantmaking with tribal communities across Indian Country by engagement and communication, advocacy, technical assistance, collaboration, and a commitment to build capacity in tribal energy sovereignty.

## TSAF Funding Areas

1. *Tribal Facility Solar Project Funding* can include rooftop, carport or ground-mount solar installations that meet the energy needs of the tribal community.

*Tribal Facility Solar Projects Priority:*

- The TSAF will provide necessary funding to tribes for solar installations on tribal facilities that have the potential to generate significant cost-savings to the tribe, and/or catalyze other business development outcomes.

*Tribal Facility Solar Projects Objectives:*

- To enhance and strengthen tribal energy development and infrastructure
- To support solar projects that benefit tribal community members, tribal staff/administration, and/or tribal programs
- To serve tribal facilities with high energy needs and costs

2. *Tribal residential solar project funding* is designated for solar energy installed on a low-income single-family home or small multi-family complex to significantly reduce the financial burden spent on electricity costs.

*Tribal Residential Solar Projects Priority:*

- The TSAF will provide funding to tribes for solar installations on tribal homes to generate significant cost-savings to tribal residents.

*Tribal Residential Solar Projects Objectives:*

- To bring solar energy to low-income single-family homes or small multi-family complexes on tribal land
- To reduce and stabilize energy costs for low-income tribal members
- To serve tribal members with high energy needs and costs

**Tribes are eligible to apply for up to \$200,000 total, which can include one or both of the funding areas, for example: \$125,000 facility + \$75,000 residential.**

## TSAF Grant timeline and reporting

RFP – INVITE TO APPLY NOTIFICATION	March 31, 2023
TSAF INFORMATIONAL WEBINAR (registration link available at <a href="https://tribalsolar.org/grants">tribalsolar.org/grants</a> )	April 6, 2023 at 1pm EST
GRANT APPLICATION DUE	May 31, 2023 by 5:00 p.m. MST
GRANT AWARD/DENIAL NOTIFICATIONS	June 26-30, 2023
GRANT TIMELINE (PROJECT FISCAL YEAR START/END)	July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024
GRANTEE CHECK-INS WITH TSAF STAFF	July 2023, November 2023, February 2024, June 2024
GRANTEE FINAL REPORT DUE	July 31, 2024

## TSAF review and selection criteria

Our team utilizes external tribal subject matter experts (energy, policy, education, culture, arts, grantmaking) to review grant applications in an unbiased guidance and scoring that helps the TSAF identify the strengths and weaknesses in applicant objectives, priorities and key outcomes of their project based on the seven areas of the TSAF funding criteria;

- Solid and concrete matches between project purpose and funding priority area
- Clear focus on building renewable energy infrastructure in the tribal community
- Demonstrated ability and/or experience necessary for a successful project
- Clear plan of action, including specific goals and measurable objectives
- Feasible, cost-effective, and sustainable budget
- Partnerships that engage broad tribal community participation and support
- Potential for application and replication in other tribal communities

Grant applications do not need to be strong in all funding criteria categories to be assessed likely to have major impact, a project that by its nature is not

innovative may be essential to advancing the tribal community toward greater energy planning, savings, resilience and sovereignty.

## TSAF Eligibility

The TSAF is committed to serving, supporting, and strengthening American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) tribal communities by investing in renewable energy development and sustainability.

The TSAF eligibility criteria is as follows:

- Federally recognized tribal governments in the lower 48 states and Alaska (tribal government programs, such as tribal housing authority, cultural departments, economic development entities, etc.)
- Tribally-led 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations (fiscally-sponsored tribal community organizations, tribal community organizations without a 501(c)(3) nonprofit status may submit an application through a sponsoring organization if the sponsor has IRS 501(c)(3) status and can provide written authorization confirming its willingness to act as the fiscal sponsor.
- Schools that are tribally-controlled 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations and schools that are tribally-operated such as tribal colleges and universities (TCUs), any public or Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) schools.
- The definition of “tribal-led” is: an organization in which a majority (>51%) of the board of directors and leadership team are American Indian or Alaska Native. Organizations that are not tribal-led are not eligible to apply (with or without a fiscal sponsor).
- For tribal facility projects, the community served must be designated low-to-moderate income (LMI) as demonstrated by eligibility for federal, state, or tribal low-income programs, or with Census data.
- For tribal household or multi-family projects, the resident households must be 80% or below the area median income as defined by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) or another LMI-serving program.

## TSAF Application Site and Submission Guidelines

This year we are using a new online grant portal in which we hope will enhance your TSAF grant application experience.

This TSAF Facility and Residential Application can be accessed via our **NEW Zengine portal** here: [https://webportalapp.com/sp/tsaf\\_residential\\_facility\\_grants](https://webportalapp.com/sp/tsaf_residential_facility_grants)

**The budget and timeline sections of the application will require an upload of your project budget and timeline.**

**A TSAF budget and timeline template are downloadable here:**  
<https://tribalsolar.org/grants/facility-residential-grant/>

The TSAF application must conform to the following requirements:

- All applicants will need to secure a tribal resolution or a letter of support from your tribal council or board of directors acknowledging the application for the proposed project.
- All application attachments must accompany the full narrative application; **Project Timeline and Budget Form templates** are downloadable from [tribalsolar.org/grants/facility-residential-grant/](https://tribalsolar.org/grants/facility-residential-grant/)
- **TSAF Applications are due May 31, 2023 by 5:00 p.m. Mountain Standard Time (MST), 4:00 p.m. PST, 6:00 p.m. CST, 7:00 p.m. EST.** Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit their applications at least 24 hours in advance of the submission deadline.
- Applicants may revise or update their application until the expiration of the application submission deadline.
- All applications that pass eligibility and initial review will undergo a comprehensive review and will be scored according to the 7 criteria identified in the RFP.
- This grant program is funded by various funders, a full list is available at [tribalsolar.org](https://tribalsolar.org)



*PLEASE READ THOROUGHLY*

## Considerations for Communications and Receipt of Funding

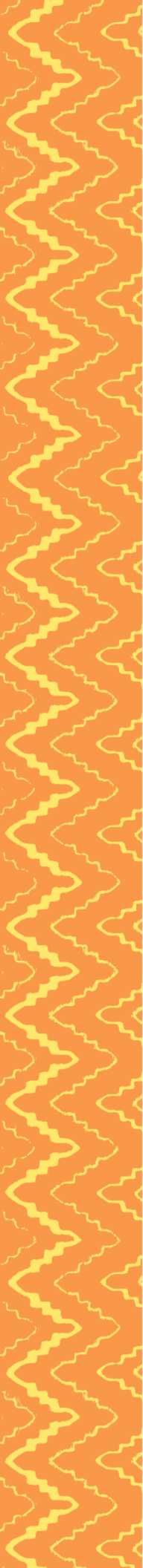
Participation in communications activities that acknowledge the support of TSAF funders, is a requirement of grants through the Tribal Solar Accelerator Fund. A full list of TSAF funders can be found at [tribalsolar.org](http://tribalsolar.org). GRID Alternatives and TSAF understand that tribes have different cultural values, expectations and traditions around communications, as well as ethical and moral principles when it comes to accepting financial resources. The following are GRID's commitments to and expectations of tribal partners participating in TSAF projects.

Our Commitments to You (TSAF grantee):

1. GRID Alternatives will provide you with a single point of contact for all TSAF-related communications activities.
2. GRID Alternatives will collaborate with your designated communications representative to develop a set of communications activities that is appropriate for the project and your tribe. Activities may include one or more of the following:
  - Press release announcing receipt of TSAF grant for local, regional or national audience
  - News item on GRID Alternatives' website(s), press releases, and/or newsletter about the project
  - Groundbreaking or other public event with speaking opportunities and/or branding for TSAF funders
  - Project video produced by GRID Alternatives or other approved partner
3. GRID Alternatives will provide you the opportunity to review and approve all external-facing communications assets and their intended use prior to their release.

Our Expectations:

1. You will provide a single point of contact for all TSAF-related communications activities who is authorized to provide and or/secure permissions on behalf of the tribe.

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2. You will collaborate with us in good faith to identify appropriate communications activities to promote the project and acknowledge TSAF support.
  3. You will provide timely review of external-facing communications assets, and not unreasonably withhold approval.