Communities LEAP (Local Energy Action Program) Cohort 2
Competitive Technical Assistance Opportunity

U.S. Department of Energy

September 27, 2023

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A. Executive Summary

Program Name: Communities Local Energy Action Program (LEAP)

Summary: Communities LEAP aims to facilitate sustained community-wide economic empowerment through clean energy, improved local environmental conditions, and open the way for other benefits primarily through the Department of Energy's (DOE) clean energy deployment work.

Opportunity type: Technical assistance (expert services), with the opportunity for selected communities to receive direct funding (up to $50,000) for services rendered to facilitate or help implement technical assistance.

Total amount: Up to $18.75 million in total, with up to $17.5 million in technical assistance and up to $1.5 million in funding for community organizations for services rendered.

Eligible communities: Low-income, high energy-burdened communities that are also disadvantaged as identified by the Council on Environmental Quality's Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool, and/or experiencing direct economic impacts from a shift away from historical reliance on the fossil fuels industry. Applicants must include at least one community-based organization and at least one local, tribal (Federally recognized tribe), territorial, regional, or state government entity.

Number of estimated selected communities: 24-32 communities

Length of program: approximately 12-18 months

Approaches of Interest for community-wide economic empowerment through clean energy: Communities may pursue one or more Approaches and are encouraged to explore integrating multiple approaches to increase community benefits. Communities may explore opportunities beyond the specific approaches provided that they are in line with the objectives of Communities LEAP:

- Clean Energy Planning and Development
- Energy Efficient Buildings and Beneficial Electrification Planning and Investment
- Clean Transportation Planning and Investment
- Carbon Capture and Storage
- Critical Minerals Resource Potential from Energy Wastes and By-products
- Community Resilience Microgrids
- New or Enhanced Manufacturing
- Advanced Nuclear Technology and Support for Existing Reactors
- Puerto Rico Community Resilience (for Puerto Rico communities only)

How to apply: DOE is providing an optional fillable template that identifies the information required for an application. Submit fillable template application. Alternatively, applications with all required information can be sent as a PDF to: CommunitiesLEAPInfo@hq.doe.gov.

Deadline to apply: December 14, 2023, 5:00 PM EST

B. Competitive Opportunity Description

1. Introduction and Background

The Communities Local Energy Action Program (LEAP) Initiative of the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) seeks to help communities access the economic and environmental benefits of clean energy and clean energy manufacturing. The initiative aims to facilitate sustained community-wide economic empowerment through clean energy, improve local environmental conditions, and open the way for other benefits primarily through DOE's clean energy deployment work. This opportunity is specifically open to disadvantaged and/or energy communities, including Tribes, that are also low income and experiencing high energy burden.

The opportunities and potential benefits to communities from the nation's transition to clean energy are compelling. They include lower local air pollution, lower utility costs and energy burdens, improved access to reliable energy, enhanced economic productivity, and new clean energy supply chain demonstration and manufacturing opportunities. Many of these opportunities will create and sustain high quality jobs when coupled with strong labor standards.

The country is facing a period of major investment in new clean energy technologies and their supply chains due to the passage and implementation of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). DOE designed this competitive technical assistance opportunity to help ensure that communities will benefit from clean energy investments, advancing priorities detailed in President Biden's Executive Order 13985, *Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Under-served Communities Through the Federal Government;* Executive Order 14008, *Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad;* Executive Order 14017, *America's Supply Chains*; Executive Order 14096*, Revitalizing Our Nation's Commitment to Environmental Justice for All*; and Executive Order 14091, *Further Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government.*

Over the last 18 months, 24 communities from around the country have participated in the Communities LEAP pilot program. From conducting building stock analysis to inform actions to help residents save money on energy bills, to exploring resilience hubs to keep residents safe and businesses open during extreme weather, to creating an electric mobility plan that meets the needs of community members in getting around, each community received customized technical assistance support that will serve as a launch pad to help them advance their vision for a clean energy future.[1]

Through the pilot program, Communities LEAP has proven to be a valuable platform for DOE to support community-led energy and economic development work, particularly in communities that have historically faced challenges in participating in Federal programs. Communities LEAP has reduced barriers to participation for historically disadvantaged communities, allowing them to pursue multiple clean energy technologies and approaches through one program. The second cohort will build on the experience gained in the pilot and make some key improvements.

[1] For more information on pilot LEAP communities, visit https://www.energy.gov/communitiesLEAP/leap-communities

In Communities LEAP Cohort 2, DOE will provide technical and financial assistance services valued at up to a total of $18.75 million to support 24-32 communities to develop and advance their own community-driven clean energy transition approach. Technical assistance is defined on page 6, and its goals and structure are described in this document below. ***This is not a funding opportunity announcement; however selected communities may have the opportunity to receive funds (up to $50,000) for services rendered to help implement the technical assistance.***

Examples of community-wide clean energy opportunities that can lead to substantial economic, environmental, and other benefits to communities are provided below in the section titled, "Approaches of Interest to Clean Energy-Related Economic Development". It is DOE's intent to help selected communities realize those benefits.

DOE has designed this initiative with the aim of:

- Recognizing each community's specific energy-related challenges and opportunities.
- Supporting community member and stakeholder leadership in designing and implementing actions to address those challenges and opportunities.
- Building toward long-term community economic and environmental change and a more sustainable, resilient, and equitable energy future.

Multi-stakeholder teams representing eligible communities described below can apply to this opportunity whether they are ready to begin their clean energy transition, or their transition is already in progress. Selected communities will commit to working with DOE and its technical assistance provider network for approximately 12-18 months. Selected communities will receive:

- A dedicated point of contact within the national lab system to coordinate all program related activities.
- Extensive technical support from the DOE national laboratory complex as well as other experts based on individualized needs.
- Facilitation and community engagement support, as needed, to bring together community stakeholders to identify local clean energy objectives, core community assets, and data and resource requirements.
- A potential opportunity for certain community coalition members to serve as a subcontractor within DOE's technical assistance network to receive compensation for services rendered.

At the end of the technical assistance period, each participating community will have an action plan or other deliverable(s) that prepares it to take further steps toward realizing its goals, including leveraging federal, state, and local funding or financing opportunities, participating in programs offered by philanthropic organizations, and/or partnering with private sector investment. DOE intends to assist participating communities in identifying specific resource opportunities to take those further steps.

This technical assistance opportunity is managed by DOE's Office of State and Community Energy Programs and offered in partnership with DOE's Offices of Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy, Grid Deployment, Electricity, Policy, Indian Energy, Fossil Energy and Carbon Management, Manufacturing and Energy Supply Chains, Nuclear Energy, and Economic Impact and Diversity. This initiative complements DOE's ongoing efforts to deliver benefits from clean energy research, development, demonstration, and deployment to overburdened and underserved communities and communities with

historical ties to fossil fuel industries, including Tribes. Furthermore, this initiative complements services and resources across the federal government to these same communities. DOE also recognizes that energy is a critical part of a larger set of factors requiring cross-sectoral and long-term response for sustained economic and environmental health of the nation's communities.

2. Technical Assistance Structure

The term "technical assistance" is used throughout this document to refer to expertise and resources provided by DOE to selected communities. Technical assistance can take the form of deliverables (e.g., an action plan) and/or services (e.g., expert consultation) provided through DOE's network of experts, primarily in the fields of energy and economic development. DOE will make additional expertise available as needed to support the success of selected communities depending on the specific skills and capabilities required for success. As the provider of technical assistance, DOE views its relationship with selected communities receiving the technical assistance as a committed and collaborative partnership.

Technical assistance provided under this opportunity will focus on the development of community-driven clean energy planning and implementation with economic, environmental, and other benefits based on each community's unique combination of:

- Energy-related resources, assets, or potential.
- Social, institutional, and economic strengths and opportunities.
- The specific clean energy approach the community hopes to pursue.

Communities LEAP core staff at DOE will connect selected communities to the relevant technical assistance provider organizations. One or more organizations may provide technical assistance to selected communities. Upon selection, each community will work with DOE's technical assistance providers to develop a scope of work for technical assistance based on community-led needs, technical feasibility and level of effort supported by this opportunity. DOE anticipates providing limited-duration technical assistance to selected communities for approximately 12–18 months after the start date.

Subcontracting Opportunity. Community team partners in the selected LEAP Communities may have the opportunity to receive funds up to $50,000 total over the performance period for services rendered as a subcontractor to one of DOE's technical assistance providers. Upon selection, each community will work with DOE's technical assistance providers to develop a scope of work that the community partner(s) will deliver. These funds can be used by one or more members of the multi-stakeholder applicant team for activities such as convening community stakeholders, compiling community energy-related risks and opportunities, identifying key decision makers and resources, developing clean energy materials, assessing strengths of the community relative to possible clean energy transitions, developing a governing framework to equitably manage a community-wide energy transition, reviewing and improving documents produced by DOE's technical assistance provider, and more. Subcontractor funds cannot be used for any activities not agreed to as part of the scope of work.

Applicants interested in being considered to receive subcontracting funds for services rendered as part of the technical assistance delivery should describe how funds would be utilized in question 8 of the application. DOE encourages applicants to consider how to utilize funds in an equitable manner to further build community support and improve the project outcomes. Each proposed subcontractor from a selected community must take all necessary steps to become a subcontractor. These steps will be outlined to interested recipients after initial selection of LEAP communities.

3. Approaches of Interest for Clean Energy-Related Economic Development

The below Approaches of Interest represent broad areas of opportunity for community clean energy-related economic development and where DOE has extensive research, resources and expertise to support community progress. Communities may choose to pursue one or more Approaches toward clean energy-related economic development, and communities are encouraged to explore integrating multiple approaches to increase community benefits. Selected communities may explore opportunities beyond the specific approaches if they are in line with the objectives of Communities LEAP. Each Approach can include an emphasis on developing energy jobs and workforce skills, as well as promoting minority-owned businesses and small- to mid-size businesses. The eligible approaches include:

1. Clean Energy Planning and Development
2. Energy Efficient Buildings and Beneficial Electrification
3. Clean Energy Transportation
4. Carbon Capture and Storage
5. Critical Minerals Resource Potential from Energy Wastes and By-products
6. Community Resilience Microgrids
7. New or Enhanced Manufacturing
8. Advanced Nuclear Technology and Support for Existing Reactors
9. Puerto Rico Community Resilience (for Puerto Rico communities only)

Descriptions of each Approach, along with example projects, are provided in Appendix A.

Applications Specifically Not of Interest

- Technology R&D or commercialization projects or programs.
- Applications for capital projects, including the purchase or installation of infrastructure or equipment.
- Lobbying activities.
- Applications that are not focused on community-scale impacts.
- Applications from teams that do not represent the applying community. Applications will be evaluated in part based on the extent to which community members, organizations, or businesses are directly and substantively involved in the project design and execution in a leadership role, either as team lead organization or as a member of the multi-stakeholder team with responsibility for a substantial share of project effort.
- Applications seeking funding. This opportunity is to provide technical assistance only; financial compensation may be available only to selected entities that join the project delivery team and provide agreed upon services.

4. Communities of Interest and Eligibility

<u>Eligible Communities</u>

For the purpose of this initiative, a community is defined as a group of individuals, households, and businesses in geographic proximity to one another. This opportunity is focused on strengthening communities—and is not focused on providing direct assistance to individual persons, companies, or

technologies. Communities in the United States—including communities in U.S. territories—are eligible to apply if they meet the criteria below:

- At least 30% of the community population is classified as low income **AND**
- High or severe energy burden[2] (median spending of household income on energy bills ≥5%).

As well as **one or both** of the following criteria:

- Historical economic dependence on fossil fuel industrial facilities defined as:
    - A census tract or directly adjoining census tract in which a coal mine closed after 1999 or in which a coal-fired electric generating unit has been retired after 2009; or
    - Metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) and non-metropolitan statistical areas (non-MSAs) that are energy communities for 2023. These MSAs and non-MSAs have had for at least one year since 2009, 0.17% or greater direct employment related to extraction, processing, transport, or storage of coal, oil, or natural gas (the fossil fuel employment (FFE) threshold) and have an unemployment rate for 2022 that is equal to or greater than the national average.
- Disadvantaged communities defined as:
    - Overburdened and underserved using the Council on Environmental Quality's geospatial mapping tool Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST) [3]

The CEJST map includes Federally recognized Tribes and Alaska Native villages, therefore these communities are defined as disadvantaged communities for the purposes of LEAP eligibility criteria.

Data on each of the criteria is provided HERE.[4] While this data is provided at the census tract level, census tracts do not necessarily have the same physical boundaries as a community but are used as they provide the closest proxy based on publicly available information collected using an empirically robust method. Applying communities should describe how they meet the eligibility criteria in their application even if these data do not specifically show that they are eligible.

Eligible Multi-Stakeholder Team Applicants

Multi-stakeholder teams representing communities are eligible to apply to this competitive technical assistance opportunity. Multi-stakeholder teams will be best positioned to ensure efforts supported by Communities LEAP have the necessary support from local, state and regional government partners and from community members and stakeholders to be successful both during and after the project period.

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[2] Energy burden is defined as the percentage of gross household income spent on energy costs. Information about community energy burden can be found at Low-Income Energy Affordability Data (LEAD) Tool | Department of Energy

[3] Explore the map - Climate & Economic Justice Screening Tool (geoplatform.gov)

[4] Datasets for DOE 2023 Communities LEAP Cohort 2 **https://edx.netl.doe.gov/dataset/datasets-for-doe-2023-communities-leap**

Community applicants in the form of multi-stakeholder teams ***must:***

- Identify a lead organization to represent the team.
- Include at least one community-based organization with a demonstrated track record of working with stakeholders within the applying community. (Note: This can be the same as the lead organization.)
- Include at least one local, tribal (Federally recognized tribe), territorial, regional, or state government entity. (Note: This can be the same as the lead organization.) Public colleges and universities are not considered government entities for the purpose of LEAP eligibility.
- Include entities and organizations that together have sufficient authority and influence to ensure overall success in applying the DOE-provided technical assistance within the community toward the community's goals and objectives.

Community multi-stakeholder teams are ***strongly encouraged*** to include a local economic development official.

Community multi-stakeholder teams planning to pursue the Puerto Rico Resilience Approach must be based in Puerto Rico.

Community multi-stakeholder teams ***may*** include, but are not limited to, the following types of organizations: non-profit organizations, community-based organizations, grassroots organizations and environmental justice networks, faith-based organizations and those affiliated with religious institutions, private organizations, and academic institutions. Community multi-stakeholder teams ***may*** also include companies, corporations or similar organizations contributing to the economic development of the community, in particular: (1) the community's minority-owned businesses and small- to mid-size businesses or (2) organizations critical to success such as manufacturing firms under the New or Enhanced Manufacturing approach or utilities (investor-owned or public power) under the Clean Energy Planning and Development, Energy Efficient Buildings and Beneficial Electrification, or Community Resilience Microgrid approach example.

Participants in the first Communities LEAP pilot are eligible to apply again and will be evaluated equally along with other applicants, with no advantage or disadvantage based on their previous participation. However, applicants are encouraged not to apply for the same purpose of their first application.

<u>Ineligible Entities</u>
Ineligible entities for this opportunity are individual persons, foreign entities, and Federally Funded Research and Development Centers (FFRDCs) and any entities or teams that do not meet the eligibility criteria defined in this Opportunity Announcement.

C. Submission Information and Application

1. Important Dates and Deadlines

• Opportunity Announcement Issued	September 27, 2023
• Application Deadline	December 14, 2023 at 5 p.m.ET
• Expected Date for Selections	March 2024

All dates are subject to change.

Questions

The Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) in connection with this competitive technical assistance opportunity announcement will be posted at https://www.energy.gov/communitiesLEAP/. Applicants are encouraged to check the FAQs webpage prior to submitting a question. DOE will regularly update the FAQs webpage. Any other questions regarding this competitive technical assistance opportunity announcement must be directed to CommunitiesLEAPInfo@hq.doe.gov. Questions must be submitted not later than three (3) business days prior to the application due date and time. DOE will strive to provide an email response or post answers to questions on the FAQs website within five (5) business days unless a similar question and answer have already been posted on the website's FAQs page.

DOE will host virtual informational sessions related to this announcement. The dates, times, and information on how to participate will be available on the website.

2. How to Apply

To assist applicants with their submissions, DOE is providing a fillable template that identifies the information required for an application. Use of the template is not mandatory. If an applicant chooses to rely on a different form or format, they must ensure all the information specified in the template is provided (subject to the word limitations specified in the template) or the application will be considered incomplete. The fillable application template can be found here.

Alternatively, applications with all required information can be sent as a PDF to CommunitiesLEAPInfo@hq.doe.gov.

All applications must be submitted by December 14, 2023, by 5:00 p.m. EST.

Additional Requirements

Inclusion of Personally Identifiable Information (PII) (i.e., information that can be used to distinguish or trace an individual's identity) beyond what is specifically requested in this opportunity announcement is strongly discouraged. Inclusion of business sensitive or proprietary information is prohibited.

3. Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be screened for compliance with eligibility and submission requirements. Applicants that do not meet requirements will be notified; these applications will not be considered. Applications meeting the submission requirements will be evaluated and scored using the evaluation criteria described below.

For the purpose of the evaluation criteria below, "community" or "communities" refers to the description of Eligible Communities in Section 3 of this document.

CRITERION 1: MULTI-STAKEHOLDER TEAM COMPOSITION AND CAPABILITIES (30%)

1. Extent to which team members together have sufficient authority and influence, as well as the skills and demonstrated track record, to ensure overall success in applying the DOE-provided technical assistance within the community toward the community's goals.
2. Extent to which the community/ies members, organizations, or businesses are directly and substantively involved in project design and execution in a leadership role, either as team lead organization or as a member of the multi-stakeholder team with responsibility for a substantial share of project effort.

CRITERION 2: TECHNICAL MERIT (30%)

3. Extent to which the community/ies clean energy and economic development goals, challenges and opportunities/benefits are clearly articulated.
4. Extent to which the applicant has a clearly defined request for technical assistance services and deliverables.

CRITERION 3: COMMUNITY IMPACT (40%)

5. Extent to which the submission clearly and convincingly demonstrates how the requested technical assistance can help the community/ies successfully address its clean energy and economic development challenges, opportunities and goals beyond the current level of development or practice.
6. Extent to which the submission directly includes key needs and preferences identified by the community/ies.

4. Other Selection Factors

In addition to the criteria above, the Selection Official may consider the following unweighted program policy factors in determining which applications to select for technical assistance under this opportunity:

- Overall alignment with the objectives of Communities LEAP.
- Geographic and demographic diversity (e.g., rural versus urban, Southeast versus Northwest).
- Overall diversity of Approaches of Interest being pursued by the cohort of selected communities (aligned with DOE programmatic funding).
- Diversity among participants in having prior experience participating in DOE funding or technical assistance programs.
- Strategy for utilizing funds for services rendered as part of technical assistance delivery.

APPENDIX A

Approaches of Interest for Clean Energy-Related Economic Development

1. Clean Energy Planning and Development

Clean, low carbon electricity and renewable energy sources can provide significant local economic, environmental, reliability, and other benefits and are major tools in the fight against the climate crisis.

The goal of this approach is to support communities in developing design, implementation, and/or investment strategies for renewable energy projects that meet local environmental, economic, or community priorities and quantifies community benefits where possible (e.g., energy bill savings, reduce pollution, improve energy access, revenue streams). Among other activities, DOE anticipates providing selected communities with an analysis of clean energy planning and development opportunities based on current infrastructure, workforce availability, energy resource potential, utility regulatory structure, and other aspects of the community relevant to this approach.

Projects could include technologies such as solar, wind, hydropower, geothermal, nuclear, hydrogen, hybrid power plants, storage, energy efficiency, distributed energy resources, and electric vehicle charging stations. These plans could also outline how to transition a significant portion of local electricity and energy consumption to be served by renewable energy generation. Project designs, informed by community priorities, could include details such as project size and technologies, how to pay for new investments, and community roles in ownership or operation of the technologies.

Example project:

- Communities LEAP Pilot Program Example: Questa, New Mexico

Next steps for implementation: At the end of the project period, communities participating in the Clean Energy Planning and Development approach will have either a plan that outlines a series of investments to meet a community-wide clean energy goal, or locally developed parameters for renewable energy projects that provide environmental, economic and/or social benefits to the community. In addition, the community will have either local project development capacity or local leadership and participation structure that can engage directly with externally based project developers.

2. Energy Efficient Buildings and Beneficial Electrification

Upgrading existing buildings to efficiently run on clean energy will help address climate change. Building upgrades may include transitioning to efficient electric equipment, including heat pumps and heat pump water heaters, and improving building efficiency through measures such as insulation and air sealing. Together, efforts will help reduce carbon emissions and energy costs, while improving indoor air quality and occupant comfort.

The goal of technical assistance for the Energy Efficient Buildings and Beneficial Electrification Planning and Investment approach is to develop a customized plan to comprehensively approach energy-related building upgrade programs in support of community clean energy objectives. DOE's technical assistance providers will work with community stakeholders to assess the current building stock and power supply, identify building-related load management needs and opportunities for energy and cost savings, and

determine additional community priorities such as reducing energy bills for residents and businesses, increasing building and community resilience and sustainability, improving the health of indoor environments, and developing new workforce opportunities. The technical assistance providers will facilitate stakeholder engagement to incorporate community objectives and needs and provide proven strategies for an energy plan that incorporates recommended partnerships and investment options.

The plan may include projects focused on building efficiency, demand flexibility, distributed energy resources, and/or electrification solutions across different building types such as residential homes, multifamily and commercial public buildings and/or privately-owned commercial buildings.

Example project:

- Communities LEAP Pilot Program Example: North Birmingham, Alabama

Next steps for implementation: At the end of the project period, communities participating in the Energy Efficient Buildings and Beneficial Electrification Planning and Investment approach will have a plan which outlines a strategy for a building upgrade program/s aligned with meeting the community's overall clean energy vision. Communities with this plan will be well positioned to initiate deployment programs and seek project funding available at the federal, state, and local level.

3. Clean Transportation

The transportation sector accounts for approximately 30% of total U.S. energy needs and is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in the energy sector. The average U.S. household spends more than 15% of its total family expenditures on transportation, making it the biggest expense for families after housing.

The goal of technical assistance for the Clean Transportation Planning and Investment approach is to assist communities with developing a clean energy transportation plan to meet community objectives. DOE's technical assistance providers will work with community stakeholders to assess the local transportation system, identify community transportation needs, and determine plan objectives (e.g., decarbonization, air quality improvement, community access to transportation, workforce development, increase in electric vehicle charging availability, assessment of grid capacity for transportation electrification). The technical assistance providers will work with communities to develop strategies to meet community transportation needs and objectives and facilitate stakeholder engagement to develop a clean energy transportation plan. The clean energy transportation plan will inform future community partnerships and investments. The plan may include projects that implement alternative fuels, fuel-saving technologies and practices, and new mobility choices.

Example project:

- Communities LEAP Pilot Program Example: Hennepin County, Minnesota

Next steps for implementation: At the end of the project period, communities participating in the Clean Transportation Planning and Investment approach will have a plan with specific clean energy transportation projects working toward a cohesive vision for meeting the community's goals. Communities that have gone through this planning process will be well-positioned to pursue future

funding opportunities for transportation deployment projects available at the federal, state, and local levels.

4. Carbon Capture and Storage

Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS) is among a broad portfolio of carbon management solutions for combatting the climate crisis by reducing carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions from industries that together currently vent billons of tons of CO_2 every year. These emissions have been accumulating in the atmosphere for decades and influencing climate change with profound impacts. Impacts such as rising sea level, terrestrial and aquatic habitat degradation, drought, increase in storm severity and frequency, flooding, wildfires, and others will continue to worsen unless CO_2 emissions can be avoided or captured for conversion or for permanent geologic storage. Certain regions of the country have deep geologic formations that are suitable for safe and secure geologic storage of captured CO_2. While CCS projects can help the United States meet its climate goals, it can also improve the conditions of communities by creating new jobs or offering opportunities for job transitioning, increasing regional tax revenue, and creating new c sources for private landowners. Recently enacted incentives such as the amended 45Q tax credit and California's Low-Carbon Fuel Standard have made CCS an economically viable option for many CO_2-emitting industries, which has created a surge in interest in deploying CCS as part of a nationwide effort to transition to clean energy sources and low-carbon industries.

The DOE Office of Fossil Energy and Carbon Management seeks applications for technical assistance from communities interested in exploring the potential community benefits associated with different types of industries equipped or fitted with CO_2 capture, and how these industries might serve community, regional, and/or state CO_2 emission reduction goals or strategic plans. Technical assistance will be provided in the form of a techno-economic analysis of community selected industries integrated with CCS or carbon dioxide removal (CDR) with storage that could bring high quality jobs, increase tax revenue, and other benefits. Examples of industry types integrated with CCS technologies include, but are not limited to, bioenergy with carbon capture and storage (BECCS), biomass with carbon removal and storage (BiCRS), power/electricity generation, chemical/cement production, hydrogen production from natural gas, and direct air capture (DAC). The techno-economic analysis will consider various parameters such as local and state policies and regulations, available skilled workforce, workforce training and education opportunities, local supply chain economics and availability, and proximity to resources for geologic storage of captured CO_2. The end deliverable will be a report that highlights the industries that have the highest potential for sustaining/creating jobs and preserving/increasing tax revenue – and other benefits as may be desired by the applicant – based on the community's regional attributes, resources, and/or community development plans. Deliverables can also include engagement and/or outreach materials. Technical assistance providers will work directly with LEAP awardees to identify the criteria of the analysis to ensure the benefits of interest are defined by the community.

It is important to note that the federal funding that technical assistance providers will use for projects awarded under the LEAP CCS pathway is mandated exclusively for projects that address geologic storage of CO_2. Technical assistance under the LEAP CCS pathway cannot expand into land-based carbon management (e.g. forestry), renewable energy such as wind, solar, or geothermal as part of the techno-economic evaluation. However, applicants are encouraged to request technical assistance from other LEAP pathways with the intent to create a combined and integrated techno-economic evaluation that is more inclusive of a broad range of decarbonization and CO_2 removal approaches.

Example project:

- Communities LEAP Pilot Program Example: Kern County, California

Next steps for implementation: At the end of the project period, communities participating in the CCS pathway will have a techno-economic analysis of the types of industries integrated with CCS/CDR that align with community interests and resources. Communities can use this report to supplement their efforts to implement emission reduction goals or strategic plans and/or improve the community's economic, health, or environmental conditions. Potential sources of funding for a commercial-scale CO_2 storage project could include private and public sector investments in research, development, and deployment that leverage existing policies and incentives.

5. Critical Minerals Resource Potential from Energy and Mining Wastes and By-products

Over the past century, energy-related activities have left a legacy of environmental impacts (e.g., mine tailings, ash piles, acid mine drainage (AMD)) in thousands of communities across the country In some cases, these waste materials that were left behind can become a valuable resource because they may contain critical minerals including rare earth elements that could help pay for remediation costs, while producing valuable domestic resources needed to support the clean energy transition.

The goal of technical assistance for the Critical Minerals Resource Potential from Energy and Mining Wastes and By-products approach is to assist communities with evaluating whether there is a significant concentration of rare earth elements or other critical minerals within their community or region to justify building a hypothetical minerals processing facility to remediate the waste while separating and concentrating the valuable critical minerals. DOE's technical assistance providers will work with the community to develop a pre-feasibility study for a hypothetical critical minerals processing facility that will: evaluate the scale of the remediation and critical minerals extraction opportunity; assess the potential economic prospects of a hypothetical processing facility and related remediation activities; and identify specific workforce needs and opportunities in pursuing this approach. The benefit to the community would be providing an approach to improve water and/or air quality that would likely have a positive impact on human health and economic outcomes in the region. Jobs could eventually be created, both at the reclamation site, as well as in the mineral processing plant. Finally, the critical minerals and rare earths will provide economic value for the project, as well as produce supplies of materials necessary for transitioning to a clean energy future.

Example project:

- Communities LEAP Pilot Program Example: Mingo and Logan Counties, West Virginia

Next steps for implementation: At the end of these activities, the selected communities will have a pre-feasibility study for a remediation and mineral processing project located in the community. This study would provide communities with the information required to decide whether to pursue a commercial-scale project. Potential sources of funding for a commercial-scale remediation project could include private and public sector investments in research, development, and deployment that leverage existing policies and incentives.

6. Community Resilience Microgrids

Microgrids not only provide backup for the grid in case of emergencies but can also be economically beneficial by providing grid services (such as demand response, renewable energy integration, ancillary services, etc.). Communities can become more energy independent and, in some cases, more environmentally sound, with microgrid operations.

The goal of technical assistance for the Community Resilience Microgrids approach is to assist communities with evaluating the suitability of microgrids for the community (including the regulatory, technical, and financial barriers and opportunities); the potential location, size, and composition of a new microgrid; how best to match clean and renewable energy and storage alongside conventional generation to meet a community's most important loads (such as electric, thermal, and water) at the lowest life cycle cost; and the potential for a microgrid to provide power during outages. DOE's technical assistance providers will work with the community to develop a plan that outlines a series of investments to meet a community-wide resilience goal, or locally- developed parameters for microgrid projects that provide environmental, economic and/or social benefits to the community.

Example project:

- Communities LEAP Pilot Program Example: Iowa Tribe of Kansas and Nebraska

Next steps for implementation: At the end of the project period, communities participating in the Community Resilience Microgrid approach will have either a plan that outlines a series of investments to meet a community-wide resilience goal, or locally developed parameters for microgrid projects that provide environmental, economic and/or social benefits to the community. In addition, the community will have either local project development capacity or local leadership and participation structure that can engage directly with externally based project developers.

7. New or Enhanced Manufacturing

The manufacturing sector is a cornerstone of the U.S. economy; more than 240,000 manufacturing firms employ roughly 8.5% of the workforce and account for approximately 11% of the country's gross domestic product (GDP). At the community level, the U.S. manufacturing footprint translates to substantial opportunities for economic growth and high-quality jobs, including for the 60% of Americans without a four-year college degree. Manufacturing is critical to producing technologies needed for the country's clean energy transition, but as an industry also faces its own decarbonization challenges.

The goal of technical assistance for the New or Enhanced Manufacturing approach is to assist communities in developing and implementing a strategy to foster a strong, clean, and resilient local manufacturing ecosystem, including assessing potential for clean energy supply chain manufacturing. Selected communities can receive assistance to engage with existing local manufacturing facilities on energy performance to lower emissions and reduce waste; identify how local strengths—such as natural resources or existing manufacturing infrastructure or capabilities—could play a role in manufacturing new clean energy technologies; evaluate education and workforce development resources to train a skilled local workforce; and/or provide planning support for new manufacturing capacity. This coordinated approach can help communities develop more sustainable and cost-competitive manufacturing capabilities while fostering local conditions to attract new firms to the area. Additionally, DOE's technical assistance providers will work with communities to tailor implementation strategies for approaches from existing DOE programs around efficiency, education, and technology adoption to serve

the dual purposes of bolstering economic growth and increasing environmental quality through decarbonization.

DOE's technical assistance may also connect community-based manufacturers with additional opportunities, such as demonstrating emerging technologies at their facilities, receiving financial consulting services, and conducting R&D at cutting edge facilities like the Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL) Manufacturing Demonstration Facility.

Example project:

- St. Louis electric battery production facility

Next steps for implementation: At the end of the project period, communities participating in the New or Enhanced Manufacturing approach will have a plan to support a resilient manufacturing ecosystem in their community, connections with the manufacturing firms in their community, plans for education and workforce development programs that train skilled workers, and identified supply chains for clean energy manufacturing processes. Communities can continue to work with local firms on encouraging new technology implementation and continuous improvement of their energy and water use. Continuous improvement also leads to continuous cost savings that can be reinvested into growth. Improved or new education and workforce development activities will be identified and planned to increase the pool of eligible candidates to work in manufacturing.

8. Advanced Nuclear Technology and Support for Existing Reactors

With advanced nuclear energy's flexibility to support multiple industries, it can be an important cornerstone technology to achieving a clean economy. Nuclear energy is also uniquely positioned to replace the jobs and the local revenue in communities currently hosting fossil plants. The varied use cases for nuclear energy, including both generation and industrial applications, allows regions/communities to reimagine how they might want to redevelop their economic strategies around a cornerstone of clean nuclear energy.

For communities with retired or retiring fossil fuel plants or existing nuclear plants, technical assistance for nuclear energy could explore various project schedules, sites, and advanced nuclear reactors that meet local/state/regional objectives. Technical assistance can be used to understand how nuclear energy can be used to attract new industries to a community by articulating the local and regional assets that are a direct match to hosting nuclear energy projects. These can be captured in a roadmap, strategy or a community benefits plan. Technical assistance can also help a community understand how nuclear energy and renewable projects can be integrated.

The goal of the technical assistance for the Advanced Nuclear approach is to assist communities in assessing technology maturity, development timelines, feasibility and applicability of technologies available as well as speak to the potential job retention and creation and economic growth. The advanced nuclear approach will also aid in forming collaborative partnerships and connections with similar communities allowing for information sharing and technical assistance as they develop mature plans for implementing nuclear energy strategies. These collaborative partnerships can provide expertise, support and resources throughout various stages of project development. DOE's technical assistance providers will work with communities to curate a feasibility action plan to embolden decision

making and planning for the inclusion of advanced nuclear that results in significant economic benefits for the affected communities/regions. Finally, hosting nuclear technology requires open transparent conversations with all stakeholders. Technical assistance can be used to support local organizations in leading conversations about barriers/concerns related to nuclear energy such as safety, waste management, regulatory process, cost and public perception.

Since the Department of Energy has a separate effort underway for consent-based siting of nuclear waste, this funding opportunity would not be used for similar work scopes.

Example project:

- GAIN Case Study: Repurposing the Coronado Generating Station with Nuclear Technology

Apache and Navajo Counties report "Estimating Economic Impacts of Repurposing the Coronado Generating Station (CGS) with Nuclear Technology". The report describes the socioeconomic characteristics of these counties and the results of a comparison between two scenarios: one where CGS runs as a coal power plant and one where it runs as a nuclear power plant and the related economic impacts to jobs, labor income in the region, value added (i.e., new economic activity) and economic output.

Next steps for implementation: At the end of the project period, communities participating in the Advanced Nuclear approach will have a feasibility action plan that assesses technology applicability and job creation and economic growth potential and addresses safety concerns and other barriers. This study would provide communities with the information needed to decide on what, if any, kind of advanced nuclear project they would like to pursue.

9. Puerto Rico Community Resilience

Communities in Puerto Rico face a unique combination of energy-related challenges. The Puerto Rico Community Resilience approach is tailored towards reducing energy burden and enhancing energy resilience in Puerto Rico and is only open to multi-stakeholder teams located on the island.

Participants in the Puerto Rico Community Resilience Approach will receive technical assistance to partake in each step of planning a local community energy resilience project, including project realization, education opportunities and planning and development. Selected teams participating will be provided assistance to:

- Identify the community-wide resilience goal and/or clean energy-related economic development approach(es) that offer the best fit to the community.
- Make a community-wide commitment to these approach(s) through a resolution, Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among the community's participating parties, adoption of an environmental or clean energy goal, and/or similar formalized approach.
- Develop a strategic and long-range community roadmap that defines the community-wide resilience goal and/or clean energy-related economic development goals and major steps to achieve those goals.

By the end of the initial phase, participants will have identified the best-fit approach to community solar or renewable energy solution that enhances energy resilience, considered all necessary steps toward project completion and produced a reasonable project timeline.

The second phase of the Puerto Rico Community Resilience Approach will provide a hands-on education in community energy project development. Participants will be provided technical assistance to create a publicly vetted business plan or project design requirements based on an existing community clean energy plan. The technical assistance may include an intensive training course, individual mentoring, personalized deliverables, a mid-point review, and a final project presentation.

Applicants to the Puerto Rico Community Resilience approach may incorporate other LEAP approaches into their projects (e.g., community resilience microgrids). Applications to the Puerto Rico Community Resilience Approach must be submitted in English, but translation assistance can be provided if requested by emailing CommunitiesLEAPinfo@hq.doe.gov by November 30th by 5pm EST.

Example project:

- Puerto Rico Energy Cooperative: La Margarita AveynoCoop
  This example project is centered on deployment of individual residential rooftop solar and storage systems. While it serves as an example of the scale of eligible projects, applications to the Puerto Rico Community Resilience Approach must be centered on community-wide energy solutions.

Next steps for implementation: At the end of the project period, communities participating in the Puerto Rico Community Resilience approach will have a clear business and development plan to construct new community energy projects that will be paired with developers in a future DOE funding opportunity. Communities will have the education and technical tools to create new project pipelines that will continue to reduce the energy burden and enhance resiliency in Puerto Rico.

Appendix B

Term and Conditions

By registering and submitting an application to the Communities LEAP technical assistance opportunity, the applicant acknowledges and agrees to the following Terms and Conditions.

Compliance

DOE reserves the right to require additional documentation demonstrating an Applicant's compliance with the eligibility and application requirements and may at any time disqualify those Applicants who are unable to satisfactorily demonstrate compliance to DOE. Applicants must comply with the following eligibility requirements:

a. Applicants must have complied with all eligibility, registration and application requirements set forth above for Communities LEAP.
b. The Applicant's authorized representative must be a United States citizen or a permanent U.S resident and be at least 18 years of age.
c. The lead organization representing the multi-stakeholder applying team must be formed (e.g., incorporated, chartered) in and maintain a primary place of business in the United States, which includes tribal nations and territories.
d. DOE employees and DOE support service contractors are not eligible to participate.
e. Non-DOE federal entities and federal employees are not eligible to participate.

By uploading an application, an Applicant certifies that it complies with the compliance and eligibility requirements described above. DOE reserves the right to require additional documentation demonstrating an Applicant's compliance and may at any time disqualify those Applicants who are unable to satisfactorily demonstrate compliance to DOE.

Applicant Representations and Warranties

Upon submission, the Applicant hereby represents and warrants that:

a. The Applicant has sufficient rights to use and to authorize others, including DOE, to use the application, as specified above.
b. The application does not contain Publicly Identifiable Information (PII), business sensitive, confidential, or proprietary information beyond what is specifically requested in the application.
c. The application does not infringe upon any copyright, trademark, patent, trade secret or upon any other third-party rights of which the Applicant is aware.
d. The application does not constitute or result in any misappropriation or other violation of the publicity rights or right of privacy of any person or entity, or infringe, misappropriate or otherwise violate any intellectual property rights, privacy rights, or any other rights of any person or entity.
e. The application is free of malware.
f. The application, and any use thereof by DOE, is not defamatory or libelous in any manner.
g. The Applicant is free to provide an application without the consent of any third party.

h. The Applicant's authorized representative is a United States citizen or a permanent U.S. resident, and 18 years or older.
i. The Applicant is not a party to (and it agrees that it shall not become a party to) any agreement, obligation, or understanding that is inconsistent with these Terms and Conditions or might limit or impair DOE's rights or the Applicant's obligations under the Terms and Conditions.
j. The Applicant otherwise meets the eligibility requirements set forth by this technical assistance opportunity.

Verification of Eligibility and Notifications

DOE will verify the identity and the role of an Applicant potentially selected to receive the technical assistance. DOE will notify each selected applicant using the provided email contact information after the date selections are announced. Before technical assistance is provided, each selected applicant will be required to sign and return to DOE, within a specified time period, an agreement addressing the terms and conditions of the technical assistance to be provided. At the sole discretion of DOE, a selected Applicant may be disqualified and receive no technical assistance if:

- The Applicant cannot be contacted, or the notification is returned as undeliverable.
- The Applicant fails to sign and return the required documentation within the required time period.
- The application or person/entity is not otherwise found to be in compliance with the Terms and Conditions.

Records Retention and the Freedom of Information Act

Information received from the Applicant is considered a federal agency record, and as such, subject to public release under the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). Applicants should therefore use care in only submitting information that is necessary for purposes of the application. Inclusion of PII beyond what is specifically requested in this opportunity announcement is strongly discouraged.
Inclusion of business sensitive or proprietary information is prohibited. For more information on DOE's FOIA process and regulations, please see 10 CFR Part 1004 and/or visit DOE's FOIA website here: https://www.energy.gov/management/office-management/operational-management/freedom-information-act.

Privacy Act Statement

Personally Identifiable information (PII) collected pursuant to this activity is subject to the requirements of the Privacy Act, 5 U.S.C. 552a. Any PII collected as part of this effort will be used for communication and evaluation purposes. Specifically, DOE will use this information to communicate with the applicants that respond to this Competitive Technical Assistance Opportunity and, in some limited circumstances, to evaluate members of a given applicant team when making selection determinations. Routine uses of this information include: applicant communication and technical review. For a complete overview of the routine uses for which this information may be used, please refer to the Department of Energy's System of Records Notification (SORN) at DOE-82. Disclosure of information under this action is voluntary, however failure to provide the requested information may result in an inability of the Department to

make timely contact with the applicant with necessary communications regarding this Competitive Technical Assistance Opportunity.

Use of Data

All information and data contained in the application will be made available to DOE and parties authorized to act on behalf of DOE. By accepting these Terms and Conditions, the Applicant consents to the use of information and data submitted to DOE for evaluation purposes and for any other purpose consistent with the Terms and Conditions. All materials submitted to DOE as part of an application become DOE records and cannot be returned.

Relationship of the Parties

Nothing contained in these Terms and Conditions is intended to create or constitute a relationship between DOE and the Applicant. Participation in the technical assistance opportunity does not imply any form of sanction, endorsement, or support of the Applicant by DOE, nor does it grant either party any authority to act as agent, nor assume or create any obligation, on behalf of the other party. Applicants may not use the DOE logo or official seal in their submissions.

Merit Review and Selection Process

Each submission will be reviewed and evaluated by qualified technical reviewers and a Merit Review Panel selected by DOE at its sole discretion. Technical evaluators and Merit Review Panel members may not (A) have personal or financial interests in, or be an employee, officer, director, or agent of any entity that is a registered Applicant; or (B) have a familial or financial relationship with a registered Applicant. The Merit Review Panel will rate the qualified applications based on the evaluation criteria identified above and determine a final score for each submission. DOE's final determination of selected applications will take the Merit Review Panel's scores and program policy factors listed above into account. All selection decisions by DOE are final. The scores of the Merit Review Panel and the final determination of selected applications may not be challenged or appealed.

Publicity

The selected applications may be featured on DOE social media sites, newsletters, and other similar forms of media. Except where prohibited by law, submission of an application constitutes each Applicant's consent to DOE's and its agents' use of each Applicant's name, likeness, photograph, voice, opinions, and/or hometown and state information, and abstract of each Applicant's submission for promotional purposes through any form of media, worldwide, without further permission, payment or consideration. As a condition of receiving technical assistance, the Applicant will be required to submit an executed DOE approved publicity release from each of the Applicant's stakeholder team members after the Applicant is notified of selection.

General Conditions

DOE reserves the right to cancel, suspend, and/or modify the technical assistance opportunity, or any part of it, if any fraud, technical failure, or any other factor beyond DOE's reasonable control impairs the

integrity or proper functioning of the opportunity, as determined by DOE in its sole discretion. DOE is not responsible for, nor is it required to accept, incomplete, late, misdirected, damaged, unlawful, or illicit applications.