

Office of Indian Energy Policy and Programs

(\$K)

| FY 2024 Enacted | FY 2025 Enacted | FY 2026 Request | FY 2026 Request vs FY 2025 Enacted |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------------------------|
| \$70,000 | \$70,000 | \$50,000 | - \$20,000 |

Proposed Appropriation Language

For necessary expenses for Indian Energy activities in carrying out the purposes of the Department of Energy Organization Act (42 U.S.C. 7101 et seq.), \$50,000,000, to remain available until expended: *Provided*, That, of the amount appropriated under this heading, \$10,000,000 shall be available until September 30, 2027, for program direction

Mission

The mission of the Office of Indian Energy Policy and Programs (45 U.S.C. § 7144e) is to: promote Tribal energy development, efficiency, and use; reduce or stabilize energy costs, enhance and strengthen Tribal energy and economic infrastructure; and electrify Indian lands and homes. The Office carries out this mission within the scope of DOE's mission and in accordance with Tribal self-determination policies.

Overview

The Office of Indian Energy Policy and Programs (IE) offers financial and technical assistance to Indian Tribes, including Alaska Native villages, and eligible Tribal entities for advancing electrification and energy development and deployment on Indian lands, reducing energy costs, and assisting economic development in Tribal communities where unemployment and poverty rates far exceed national averages. Through financial assistance and technical assistance, IE catalyzes American Indian and Alaskan Native nations to lead the development of reliable, firm power in Indian Country. These efforts advance energy abundance, help to restore American energy dominance, and address energy access challenges in Indian Country. Programs will not support work on solar, wind, or battery technologies. The FY 2026 Budget Request will focus on the following priorities:

- Expand reliable, firm energy development in Indian Country.
- Leverage IE's grant making authority to fund energy infrastructure planning and deployment.
- Provide expert assistance to Tribes for productive engagement with project developers to unleash new American energy.
- Improve energy access for Tribes.

Summary Funding Table by Budget Control Office of Indian Energy Policy and Programs (\$K)

(dollars in thousands)

| | FY 2024 Enacted | FY 2025 Enacted | FY 2026 Request | FY 2026 Request vs FY 2025 Enacted | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|------------------------------------|--------------|
| | | | | \$ | % |
| Assistance Program | 56,000 | 56,000 | 40,000 | -16,000 | -29% |
| Program Direction | 14,000 | 14,000 | 10,000 | -4,000 | -29% |
| Total, Office of Indian Energy | 70,000 | 70,000 | 50,000 | -20,000 | -29 % |

Assistance Programs

Overview

The Office of Indian Energy Policy and Programs (IE) serves all 574 federally recognized Indian Tribes, including Alaska Native Regional Corporations and Village Corporations, as well as Tribal and Intertribal organizations, and Tribal energy development organizations. Numerous factors challenge Indian Tribes interested in developing their vast energy resources. Energy and infrastructure development in Indian Country is constrained due to limited funding and financing, inadequate infrastructure, limited technical capacity, and a complicated legal and regulatory structure governing Indian lands. As a result, many Indian Tribes spend a disproportionate amount of their income on energy (28.3% higher on average than the U.S. National median energy burden of 3% with some paying well over 4 times the national average) and a significant number, especially in Alaska, experience a severe energy burden (i.e., paying more than 10% of income on energy)¹.

IE prioritizes expanding access to reliable, firm energy across Indian Country to reduce overall energy costs for consumers and create employment opportunities. To do so, IE supports unleashing Tribal energy development through financial assistance and technical assistance:

- **Financial assistance to increase affordable, reliable and secure power:** IE provides competitive funding opportunities for reliable, firm energy infrastructure deployment to American Indian and Alaska Native federally recognized Tribes across the Nation. Programs will not support work on solar, wind, or battery technologies.
- **Technical Assistance to overcome energy development barriers:** IE provides technical assistance at no cost to Indian Tribes to develop a tangible product or specific deliverable to address a need or barrier and move energy projects forward, and to enable a competitive business environment for energy development in Indian Country. The FY 2026 budget request enables IE to continue this assistance which leverages DOE's network of subject matter experts and partner organizations to unleash Tribal energy development. Programs will not support work on solar, wind, or battery technologies.

Highlights and Major Changes in the FY 2026 Budget Request

IE's FY 2026 budget streamlines the Office of Indian Energy's technology focus but proposes to expand energy development in Indian Country. The Budget requests a 29% reduction in funding.

¹ Megan Day, Ricardo Oliveira, Jon Weers, and Aaron Vimont. (2019) [Low-Income Energy Affordability Data \(LEAD\) Tool Methodology](https://lead.openei.org/assets/docs/LEAD-Tool-Methodology.pdf). <https://lead.openei.org/assets/docs/LEAD-Tool-Methodology.pdf>.

Assistance Programs (\$K)

| | FY 2024 Enacted | FY 2025 Enacted | FY 2026 Request | FY 2026 Request vs FY 2025 Enacted | |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------|-------------|
| | | | | \$ | % |
| Assistance Programs | | | | | |
| Technical Assistance | 5,000 | 5,000 | 10,000 | 5,000 | 100% |
| Financial Assistance | 51,000 | 51,000 | 30,000 | -21,000 | -41% |
| Total, Assistance Programs | 56,000 | 56,000 | 40,000 | -16,000 | -29% |

Explanation of Changes for Assistance

The increase in technical assistance funding will enable the expansion of technical assistance to more Tribes and increased local providers. The decrease in federal assistance funding focuses support on reliable, firm energy infrastructure.

Program Direction

Overview

Program direction provides federal staff responsible for the management and execution of IE's programs and activities, as well as the associated support contractors, rent, supplies, travel, and other related expenses. The staff is responsible for providing overall guidance and direction for DOE program offices on Tribal energy activities and initiatives necessary to achieve IE's mission and provides day-to-day management of financial assistance, technical assistance, and outreach and capacity building efforts. Program direction also provides managerial support for the reporting, compliance, and other statutory responsibilities.

Salaries and Benefits support federal employees who provide management and programmatic and project oversight, tribal affairs and engagement, and analysis for the effective implementation of the IE program. The FY 2026 Budget anticipates 24 federal staff.

Travel includes transportation, per diem, and incidental expenses allowing IE to effectively deliver on its mission. Major drivers of travel include the need to support Tribal energy engagement and capacity building, enhance energy planning and management while advancing energy deployment on Tribal lands, and raising awareness among Tribes of IE and DOE services and resources to unleash American energy through effective partnership with Tribes.

Support Services include contractor support to perform administrative and analytical tasks in support of IE's mission.

Other Related Expenses include DOE's Working Capital Fund support, Energy Information Technology Services, equipment purchases, upgrades, and replacements, office furniture, commercial credit card purchases, general and advanced training, security clearances, and other miscellaneous expenditures.

Highlights and Major Changes in the FY 2026 Budget Request

This budget request accounts for decreased on-board FTEs, supports project management and procurement across IE's portfolio of projects, and supports efforts to further the success of programs and projects across DOE programs through effective Tribal engagement and consultation.

**Program Direction
Funding (\$K)**

| FY 2024 Enacted | FY 2025 Enacted | FY 2026 Request | FY 2026 Request vs FY 2025 Enacted | |
|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------------------------|---|
| | | | \$ | % |

Program Direction

| | | | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|--------|------|
| Salaries and Benefits | 5,036 | 5,036 | 4,700 | -336 | -7% |
| Travel | 265 | 265 | 200 | -65 | -25% |
| Support Services | 5,396 | 5,396 | 2,800 | -2,596 | -48% |
| Other Related Expenses | 3,303 | 3,303 | 2,300 | -1,003 | -30% |
| Total, Program Direction | 14,000 | 14,000 | 10,000 | -4,000 | -29% |
| Federal FTEs | 29 | 34 | 24 | -10 | -29% |
| Total, IE Funded FTEs | 29 | 34 | 24 | -10 | -29% |

Program Direction

Activities and Explanation of Changes

| FY 2025 Enacted | FY 2026 Request | Explanation of Changes FY 2025 vs FY 2026 |
|--|---|---|
| Program Direction \$14,000,000 | \$10,000,000 | -\$4,000,000 |
| <i>Salaries and Benefits</i> <i>\$5,036,000</i> | <i>\$4,700,000</i> | <i>-\$336,000</i> |
| Provided salaries and benefits for 34 full-time equivalents (FTEs) that provide executive management, programmatic oversight, and analysis for the effective implementation of the IE program. | Provides salaries and benefits for 24 FTEs that provide executive management, programmatic oversight, and analysis for the effective implementation of the IE program. | The decrease is due to a lower number of FTEs. |
| <i>Travel</i> \$265,000 | <i>\$200,000</i> | <i>-\$65,000</i> |
| Provided for travel, subsistence and incidental expenses of FTEs to support the 574 federally recognized Indian Tribes throughout the nation, many of which are in remote and rural areas. | Provides travel, subsistence and incidental expenses of FTEs to support the 574 federally recognized Indian Tribes throughout the nation, many of which are located in remote and rural areas. | Decreased due to a lower number of FTEs. |
| <i>Support Services</i> \$5,396,000 | <i>\$2,800,000</i> | <i>-\$2,596,000</i> |
| Provided for management, administrative, and operations support to monitor grants, support execution of technical assistance, and outreach. | Provides for management, administrative, and operations support to monitor grants, support execution of technical assistance, support to DOE program offices on Tribal matters, energy access strategy and execution, and outreach. | Decreased due to streamlined scope of technologies. |
| <i>Other Related Expenses</i> \$3,303,000 | <i>\$2,300,000</i> | <i>-\$1,003,000</i> |
| Computer hardware and software provided through the Office of Chief Information Officer (OCIO), Working Capital Fund, office space, registration fees, supplies, and small purchases through the micro-purchase credit card. | Computer hardware and software provided through the OCIO, Working Capital Fund, office space, registration fees, supplies, and small purchases through the micro-purchase credit card. | Decreased due to a lower number of FTEs. |