



Request For Proposal: Power Saver Rewards Grant Program

Executive Summary

The Power Saver Rewards Grant Program provides grants to Community-Based Organizations (501(c)(3) non-profits) to educate Californians about the Power Saver Rewards program and motivate them to take action by reducing their energy use during a Flex Alert. California's Power Saver Rewards program enables utility customers to get a bill credit for reducing their energy use while a Flex Alert is in effect. Community outreach and education for the six-month program begins in May and ends in October. The Power Saver Rewards Grant Program is funded by the California Public Utilities Commission.

Overview of Community-Based Organization (CBO) Participation in the Power Saver Rewards Grant Program

CBOs serve as the critical connectors, among geographies and communities, that inform the public with valuable information and services. CBOs can also reach audiences who are otherwise difficult to access and with whom they have built trusted relationships. CBOs with a robust network, excellent outreach capabilities, and extensive experience engaging with their communities are encouraged to consider this grant program. Outreach must only be conducted to residential customers in Pacific Gas & Electric, Southern California Edison, and San Diego Gas & Electric territories. [Click here](#) for a comprehensive list of cities and counties that are **not** participating in the PSR program and where outreach **cannot** be conducted.

Grantees will become part of the Power Saver Rewards (PSR) and Flex Alert communications effort. They will leverage their strong community ties to educate audiences about the Power Saver Rewards program and activate them when a Flex Alert is called. Grantees will be provided with approved messaging, printed collateral, branded posters, banners and tablecloths, scripts, email content, graphics, social media posts, and ongoing programmatic support. They can also request any graphics, materials, and other types of support from the program's creative and communications teams.

*Grantees selected for this program must be prepared to conduct general education on PSR throughout the six-month grant program **and** mobilize their communities if/when a Flex Alert is called. Flex Alerts can be called over a weekend and may be called for multiple days in a row. Applicants must clearly display and give examples of their ability to conduct consistent outreach and activate quickly when a Flex Alert is issued.*

Power Saver Rewards Grant Program Goals and Criteria



The goal of the Power Saver Rewards Grant Program is to educate Californians about Power Saver Rewards **and** mobilize communities if/when a Flex Alert is called.

Energy Upgrade California will select CBO partners based on the following criteria:

- Power Saver Rewards outreach and education plan: applicant's reach (number of people) among up to three Core Customer Groups, variety of outreach methods, and creativity of your PSR outreach plan (45%).
- Flex Alert activation plan: applicant's reach and ability to quickly respond to and report on Flex Alert outreach (30%).
- Applicant's experience successfully executing education and outreach programs with similar Core Customer Groups and in a variety of languages (20%).
- Proposal details including budget, organizational write-up, and staff information (5%).

Reporting is a vital component of the program and will require accurate and timely responses from grantees. Grantees will be provided with an online reporting mechanism.

The Core Customer Groups (CCGs) for the Power Saver Rewards Grant Program are:
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Low-Income Residents• Senior Residents• Multicultural Residents• Residents with Disabilities• Rural Residents

Programmatic Background

Energy Upgrade California

Energy Upgrade California® is a statewide initiative committed to helping Californians be more energy efficient, utilize more sustainable natural resources, reduce demand on the energy grid, and make informed choices about their energy use at home and at work—all of which goes a long way for California. The Power Saver Rewards Grants Program is an initiative of Energy Upgrade California and the California Public Utilities Commission. For more information, visit www.EnergyUpgradeCA.org

California's Power Saver Rewards Program

California's Power Saver Rewards program enables utility customers to get a bill credit for reducing their energy use while a Flex Alert is in effect. This program uses these bill credits to incentivize utility customers to do their part to help avoid power outages. For more information, visit www.PowerSaverRewards.org.

California's Flex Alert Program

A Flex Alert is a call for utility customers to voluntarily reduce electricity use when there is an anticipated shortage of energy supply. Flex Alerts are most often called during extreme heatwaves when Californians use more energy than usual to stay cool. When utility customers



reduce electricity use during a Flex Alert, they can help prevent a power outage. For more information, visit www.EnergyUpgradeCA/FlexAlert

Outreach Tactics

Outreach tactics are separated into direct and indirect communications. Direct communications are a conversation between two or more people, while indirect communications rely on one-way engagement. To create an effective outreach plan, grantees should incorporate a diverse mix of tactics. However, there is a strong emphasis on direct, in-person, one-on-one conversations with residents to maximize impact.

Direct Communication Tactic Examples*:

- Event tabling and one-on-one engagement with event attendees
- Face-to-face meetings, online or in-person
- Virtual events (FB Live, webinars)
- Texts that users can respond to
- Phone calls
- Canvassing where a conversation occurs
- Presentations/announcements to audiences of under 100 attendees

**Past examples of successful direct outreach have included tabling at local food distribution centers, presentations at faith services, tabling at community events, agency resource fairs, and door-to-door neighborhood canvassing.*

Indirect Communication Tactic Examples:

- Social media posts*
- Emails*
- Mailers
- Webinars without Q&A or audience engagement
- Radio*
- PSAs
- Op-Eds and Letters to the Editor

**While there may be opportunity for individuals to respond, we always classify these communications as indirect.*

Prohibited Outreach Tactics:

- Paid media and advertising
- Outreach at political events
- Announcements to an audience larger than 100
- Flyer drop-offs at local businesses, at other vendor tables, on cars, etc.
- Participating in events centered around alcohol



- Outreach in areas not covered by PG&E, SCE, or SDG&E. See a comprehensive list of cities and counties not participating in the PSR program [here](#).

Administrative Requirements

In-Person Training:

Selected grantees will be required to participate in an in-person training session before outreach begins. This session will be approximately 2 hours long and take place between April 21-25. All staff conducting PSR outreach throughout the grant period must be in attendance. The Energy Upgrade California team will coordinate with selected grantees on a convenient location.

Reporting Requirements:

The grant program requires robust reporting to ensure that outreach goals are met and tracked. Grantees must stay current with their reporting, as outreach updates are submitted to the CPUC weekly.

Grantees will be required to submit outreach calendars each month with scheduled direct outreach (events, canvassing, text blasts, phone banking). Additionally, grantees will be given access to an online form to submit each time any outreach is completed, including events, social posts, radio interviews, newsletters, etc. These must include event attendance/estimated reach, detailed descriptions, and photos of outreach.

Key Dates

- **January 30, 11:00 a.m. PST:** Applicants are invited to participate in a Microsoft Teams teleconference on the RFP where representatives will answer applicant questions. The teleconference will be recorded and posted on energyupgradecacommunity.org along with a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) document. Please submit questions to discuss during the teleconference to grants@energyupgradecacommunity.org by **January 24**.
 - [Click here to join the meeting](#)
 - Meeting ID: 255 447 606 695
 - Passcode: Mf2gS63h
 - **Or call in (audio only)**
 - Dial in Number: +1 585-484-9873
 - Phone Conference ID: 950 126 259#
- **February 21, 2:00 p.m. PST:** Application submission deadline
- **April 1:** Contracts will be awarded
- **April 21-25:** In-person CBO trainings
- **May 1:** Accepted applicants begin work
- **October 31:** Accepted applicants end work



Budget

The total program budget is \$1,000,000. Cost-per-engagement will be an important consideration in the budget evaluation process.

Invoices will be paid on net-30 terms based on a payment schedule outlined in your contract.

Application Submission

Please submit your Power Saver Rewards Grant Program application by **February 21, 2025, at 2:00 p.m. PST**. All grants should be submitted using the Google Form [here](#). We recommend you have your grant proposal prepared in advance (see application below), because you will not be able to edit your proposal once it is submitted through the Google Form. If you have questions, please email grants@energyupgradecacommunity.org.



Application

The following questions will be on the application form.

DO NOT SUBMIT UNTIL YOUR APPLICATION IS COMPLETE. You cannot go back and change responses.

Section 1: Contact Information

NAME:

ORGANIZATION:

EMAIL:

CELL PHONE NUMBER:

Section 2: Engagement Audience and Area

- Which Core Customer Groups (CCGs) will be your primary targets (select up to three)?
 - Low Income Residents
 - Senior Residents
 - Multicultural Residents
 - Residents with Disabilities
 - Rural Residents
- Do you classify yourself as a statewide, regional, or local organization? (choose one)
 - Statewide
 - Regional
 - Local
- In which counties will you physically conduct outreach? (name up to ten)
- In which primary cities will you conduct outreach? (name up to ten)
- If applicable, indicate the ability to reach non-English-speaking audiences.
 - List all languages that apply.

Section 3: Project Plan – Grant applicants must submit a written campaign plan that includes the following elements:

POWER SAVER REWARDS

- Power Saver Rewards Plan Overview
 - Provide an overview of your Power Saver Rewards general education plan. Include how your plan reaches your core customer groups.
- Power Saver Rewards Direct Outreach



- List **all** your **direct outreach tactics** (refer back to the list of direct outreach tactics). For each tactic, specify how many of each outreach tactic you will employ and how many people you intend to reach. Include a brief description of the type of events you plan to attend.
- *For example:*
 - 30 community events – 10,000 total reach
 - Table at local community events, which will help us reach customers in a setting that allows relaxed interactions with the whole family and builds trust in the Power Saver Rewards program, including:
 - 15 cultural events
 - 5 farmers' markets
 - 5 city-sponsored events
 - 2 back-to-school events
 - 2 resource fairs
 - 1 faith service
 - 100 doors knocked – 300 total reach
 - 6 text blasts – 6,000 total reach
 - 4 phone call blasts – total 4,000 reach
 - 6 Facebook Lives – total 5,000 reach
- What is the total expected direct reach over the course of your plan? This should add up to the total outreach number of all your listed direct tactics.
- Power Saver Rewards Indirect (One-way) Outreach
 - List all your **indirect outreach tactics** (refer back to the list of indirect outreach tactics). For each tactic, specify how many of each outreach tactic you will employ and how many people you intend to reach.
 - *For example:*
 - 10 social posts – 10,000 total reach
 - 3 radio interviews/podcasts – 100,000 (general radio station listenership) total reach
 - 12 newsletters – 2,000 total reach
 - 6 Facebook Live reposts – 20,000 total reach
 - 3 earned media pieces – 200,000 (general publication readership) total reach
 - What is the total expected Indirect reach over the course of your plan? This should add up to the total outreach number of all your listed indirect tactics.

FLEX ALERT

- Flex Alert Plan
 - Provide a detailed outreach plan for what you will do when a Flex Alert has been issued. **Notifications of an impending Flex Alert are typically sent the day before, with the expectation that outreach begins as soon as groups are alerted and continues until the Flex Alert is over.** Flex Alerts



may be called for several consecutive days, including weekends. Specify how you will quickly activate to inform your communities that a Flex Alert has been called and mobilize them to take energy-saving actions.

- Flex Alert Outreach Tactics
 - List **all** your outreach tactics (refer back to the list of outreach tactics) that you will employ with **each called Flex Alert**.
 - *For example:*
 - 2 pre-recorded radio PSAs – 100,000 (general radio station listenership)
 - 2 text blasts – 2,000 reach
 - 1 email – 5,000 reach
 - 4 social posts – 10,000 reach
- What is the total expected reach during each Flex Alert? This should add up to the total outreach number of all your listed tactics.

Section 4: Funding Request

- Please upload a brief budget (Excel file) that demonstrates how requested funds will be used. Provide details on personnel costs and costs associated with outreach. All creative materials, including collateral, social posts, and booth assets will be provided. This grant does not include paid advertising or media buys.

Section 5: Project Team, Organization, and References

- Please upload a Word document with brief biographies of the head of your organization, project manager, and team leaders **who will work on the PSR grant**.
- If applicable, please list any affiliates/partners you plan to work with.
- Provide a brief summary of your organization's mission and audiences.
- Provide a detailed statement about your community outreach experience.
 - Explain at least one other education or activation program you have been involved with. **Do NOT include a previous Energy Upgrade California initiative.**
 - List three examples of community engagement tactics you have used in the last six months (tabling at community events, email blasts, neighborhood canvassing)
- Provide the name and contact information for **two** references outside your organization. The reference(s) must be familiar with your outreach campaigns.
- Provide your social media handles and follower counts.

Section 6: Supporting Materials



- Provide proof of 501(c)(3) status with your **IRS form**.
- Optional: Provide supporting material from previous campaigns, such as example reports, campaign plans, budgets, marketing material, etc., to demonstrate past success. Do not include any materials from work on a previous Energy Upgrade California campaign.