

REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL:
FLEX OUR POWER GRANT PROGRAM

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.

California's Flex Alert Program

A Flex Alert is a call for consumers to voluntarily conserve electricity when there is an anticipated shortage of energy supply, especially if the grid operator needs to use reserves to maintain grid integrity. Flex Alerts are called most often during extreme heatwaves, when Californians are using more energy than usual to stay cool. When consumers reduce electricity use during a Flex Alert, it can prevent more dire emergency measures, including rotating power outages.

Community-Based Organization (CBO) Participation in the Flex Our Power Grant Program

CBOs serve as the connectors, among geographies and communities, that inform the public with valuable information and services. Not only do they act as a conduit to the public writ large, but CBOs can also reach audiences who are otherwise difficult to access. For this program, we are specifically looking for statewide and regional CBOs with a strong online presence and readily available tools to reach large groups of California residents quickly and efficiently. CBOs with a robust network within their communities or around the state are encouraged to consider this program and funding.

The Flex Our Power Grant Program is focusing on the following Critical Customer Groups:

- Low-Income Residents
- Seniors
- Multicultural Residents
- Residents with Disabilities
- Rural and Agricultural Communities
- Small Businesses

Flex Our Power Grant Program Goals and Criteria

The goal of the Flex Our Power Grant Program is to work with statewide and regional CBOs to effectively educate and communicate:

- **When a Flex Alert is imminent or is in progress**
- **What Flex Alerts are and why they happen**
- **Reasons why it is important to conserve energy before and during a Flex Alert**

These messages will need to be communicated to two or more critical customer groups (listed above). Energy Upgrade California will select CBO partners that submit proposals based on the criteria listed below:

- Quality and quantity of proposed organization’s outreach to two of the listed critical customer groups for Flex Alert education
 - Regional CBOs should have a reach of at least 100,000 residents
 - Statewide CBOs should have a reach of at least 350,000 residents.
- Quality, quantity, and ability to complete outreach quickly and share effective messaging around imminent or in progress Flex Alerts
- Previous experience in completing issue outreach and quick reaction outreach to critical customer groups and small businesses
- Utilizing creative strategies to reach consumers and/or small businesses, for both education and in response to a Flex Alert, and their ability to execute against them
- Proposals include a defined, metrics-based project plan
- Ability to demonstrate a plan for strong qualitative and quantitative reports

Outreach

Applicants outreach and engagement strategies should be cost effective and nimble in their approach. Applicants should think through the capabilities they possess that can be effective in reaching community members quickly around imminent or in progress Flex Alerts and what outreach strategies are most effective to educate the consumer as to why we have them. Outreach strategies may include, but aren’t limited to:

- Text message
- Group meetings and tabling at events, community gatherings, religious services, etc.
- Phone calls
- Social media posts
- Emails
- Newsletters
- Online video presentations
- Canvassing
- Mailers
- Media placements

Timeline and Budget

Decisions on the received responses will be issued in late July 2021 and chosen organizations will be expected to begin delivering against their project plan immediately. Organizations should plan to be active through November 12, 2021. An organization can receive up to \$50,000 for their outreach, but a majority of applicants will be funded at lower levels. The program will limit its CBO engagement to fewer than 20 potential partners, so organizations must demonstrate they can achieve the goals of the campaign and have the ability to engage in outreach activities as soon as contracted.

Submission of Application

Flex Our Power Grant Program applications will be accepted until **July 22, 2021 at 12:00 PM PST**. Please submit your grant applications to grants@energyupgradecacommunity.org. Submissions will be reviewed in a timely fashion and organizations can expect to hear in late July on whether they have been awarded the grant.

Application

Organizations' applications should be no more than 5 pages. Please include the following:

1.1 Engagement Audience and Area – Grant applicants should indicate:

- Which two or more critical customer groups you will reach
- Do you classify yourself as a statewide or regional organization?
- The region(s) and location(s) in which outreach will occur.

1.2 Funding Request – Grant applicants should indicate the monetary amount being requested. Please include a brief budget that demonstrates how these funds will be used.

1.3 Project Plan – Grant applicants must submit a simple written narrative that:

- Specifies a detailed outreach plan for Flex Alert education
- Specifies a detailed outreach plan in response to a Flex Alert being issued
- Clearly states the connection between their respective grant request and the engagement of at least two of the consumer groups identified above
- Displays the number of people they propose to engage through each outreach strategy as well as the number of times they propose that outreach strategy to take place
 - EX: 45 tabling events where we will reach 150 critical customer group community members – estimated 6,750 CCG residents engaged
 - Provides metrics on outreach capacities, such as social follower counts, contact amounts for listservs, etc.
- Indicates the different types of educational and outreach materials that will be needed
- If applicable, indicates the ability to reach non-English-speaking audiences
- Provides a sample event and communication calendar

1.4 Project Approach and Outcomes – Grant applicants should describe the projected reach and outcomes the submitted plan is expected to yield.

- Includes the projected number of residents to be engaged (in-person, interactive online activities, newsletters, email, social media, text messages, phone calls, etc.)
- Details why they believe the strategies proposed would be successful for the communities they are proposing to reach

1.5 Project Team – Grant applicants should include brief bios, contact information, a day-to-day point of contact, secondary contact, and role descriptions for each project team member.

1.6 Project Reporting – Grant applicants should indicate how their education project’s progress will be monitored, tracked, and reported.

- Grant projects will need to submit monthly progress reports with qualitative and quantitative information
- Grantees will need to provide a brief synopsis of efforts and outreach for each Flex Alert that is issued

1.7 Organizational Write-Up and Past Experience– Grant applicants should provide a brief summary on the organization’s mission and identify the various audiences it serves. Additionally, to substantiate the grant applicant’s community outreach experience, please provide a brief statement about the outreach or education programs your organization has executed in the past

1.8 Supporting Materials (*does not count toward total page count*) – Grant applicants may provide any supporting material from previous campaigns such as example reports, campaign plans, marketing material, etc., to help demonstrate past success.