



Illinois Department of Commerce & Economic Opportunity

JB Pritzker, Governor

Southwest Region Weekly Update December 8, 2023

Back to Business New Biz Grant

Governor JB Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) announced \$25 million in available grant funding through the Back to Business (B2B) NewBiz program. Following state recovery programming for businesses totaling \$1.5 billion, the latest American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)-funded opportunity is designed to provide additional support for businesses in hard-hit sectors who launched during the pandemic. Businesses that launched in 2020 or 2021 and remain in operation have faced significant impacts during the pandemic, but they have not been eligible for other federal or state relief programming since they were not operational prior to the pandemic. To provide hands-on support and raise awareness about the program, the State has mobilized a network of nearly 100 community navigators across Illinois. Applicants are encouraged to visit b2bnewbiz.com to learn more and apply. **Application deadline January 11, 2024.**

Office of Trade and Investment

Join DCEO's Office of Trade and Investment for a webinar **Thursday, December 14 at 8:30am** and learn about export opportunities to China, Hong Kong and Taiwan. These key Asian markets account for more than \$4.5 billion in Illinois exports, and offer tremendous opportunities for Illinois companies. Reserve your spot at this free webinar by visiting <https://bit.ly/3uHOotp> and learn ways to grow your business in these high-performance economies.

Job Training and Economic Development Program

Governor JB Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) announced an additional \$13 million investment in the Job Training and Economic Development Program (JTED) for workforce training and wrap-around services that will bolster equitable workforce recovery for Illinoisans struggling to gain meaningful employment. As part of Illinois' workforce recovery efforts, JTED grants focus on helping increase employment among workers and industries hardest hit by COVID-19. Grantees will be selected through a competitive Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) process.

In the second round of the program, JTED will address the economic impacts experienced by employers and individuals who are underemployed, unemployed, or underrepresented, including youth who have one or more barriers to employment which are identified as risk factors. Priority populations include immigrants and refugees, justice-involved individuals, and rural residents.

JTED funding will continue to focus on hard hit sectors which have seen a labor shortage since the onset of the pandemic – such as manufacturing, agriculture, information technology, transportation distribution and logistics, architecture and construction, healthcare, and hospitality and tourism.

The State's JTED model boosts access to education, training and support services needed for vulnerable residents to successfully re-enter the labor force. Additionally, JTED offers flexible funding through Barrier Reduction services for individuals that have emergency costs for basic needs.

Eligible applicants include employers, private nonprofit organizations, federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act administrative entities, Community Action Agencies, industry associations, and public or private educational institutions that have demonstrated expertise and effectiveness in administering workforce development programs.

Eligible entities can apply for grants between \$250,000 to \$750,000. **Applications will be accepted until January 10 at 5:00 p.m.** To view the NOFO and apply for the grant, please visit the [DCEO website](#).

To help applicants prepare to apply for funding, DCEO will be holding a [webinar](#) from 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. on December 13. Interested parties are also encouraged to reach out to CEO.GrantHelp@illinois.gov for application assistance.

Through the first round of the JTED program, the State of Illinois invested \$20 million in 44 community-based organizations that are currently serving nearly 1,900 unemployed, underemployed, or underrepresented Illinoisans, with a special training focus on industries hardest-hit by the pandemic.

Digital Equity Capacity Kickstarter (DECK) Grant Program Renewed

After awarding \$1 million in grant funding to 22 community-based organizations, local governments, and other qualified applicants, the Illinois Office of Broadband is adding another \$1 million to the *DECK Grant Program*. Funding will support local initiatives, pilot new approaches, and maintain momentum in anticipation of an estimated \$30 million or more in federal Digital Equity Capacity Grant resources likely available in late 2024.

The renewed DECK program will provide grant support ranging from \$30,000 to \$100,000 in support of Affordable Connectivity Program (ACP) outreach and adoption; digital skill building, navigation, and use; community technology center access; and broadband access expansion feasibility studies. Applications currently received, but not funded, will be considered. In addition, **new applications can be submitted by a pair of deadlines: December 15, 2023, for projects ready to begin now, and January 19, 2024, for those applicants looking for funding to deploy later in 2024.** Additional information regarding the DECK notice of funding opportunity will be updated [here](#). Watch the NOFO webinar [here](#).

Illinois BEAD Map Challenge & Webinars

The Illinois Broadband Lab (IBL), a collaboration between the Illinois Office of Broadband and the University of Illinois System, is taking the next steps toward deploying \$1.04 billion in federal Broadband Equity, Access, and Deployment (BEAD) Program funds to accelerate our efforts to connect all homes and businesses to modern high-speed internet.

The BEAD Program requires states to allow local governments, nonprofit organizations and internet service providers to challenge the accuracy of the FCC broadband map's designation of unserved and underserved locations. An accurate map ensures federal funds go where they are needed most. Illinois is planning to launch its map challenge in January 2024, pending final NTIA approval.

IBL will be hosting a series of webinars in December to help pre-registered and interested eligible entities prepare for the challenge.

Register [here](#) for the Illinois BEAD Challenge Process webinars.

- **Tuesday, December 12, 1:00-2:00pm** – BEAD Challenge Process preparations for eligible entities, including:
 - Pre-registration
 - Types of challenges and related evidence required
 - Understanding and using FCC Fabric or the Illinois BEAD Challenge Map
 - Speed test data collection
 - Best practices for documenting and aggregating challenges
- **Tuesday, December 19, 1:00-2:00pm** – *Deeper treatment of December 12 session information.*

Additional webinars will be scheduled for early January to cover how to submit challenges to the Illinois portal before the process formally opens. Exact challenge period dates are dependent on the timing of federal approval.

CEJA Equitable Energy Future Grants

Governor JB Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) launched \$25.5 million in funding for the Equitable Energy Future Grants Program as part of a larger strategy to equitably grow the clean energy workforce in Illinois through the landmark Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA). The program supports renewable energy and energy efficiency projects in low-income and historically disadvantaged communities to grow and diversify the clean energy ecosystem across Illinois. Grantees will be selected through a competitive Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) process.

The goal of the Equitable Energy Future program is to provide seed and pre-development funding opportunities to eligible contractors to support the development of renewable energy and energy efficiency projects benefitting businesses, community organizations and the workforce in historically disadvantaged communities. The program is designed to help remove barriers to projects, community and business development efforts caused by lack of access to capital.

Grant funding can be used to support a variety of projects to benefit historically disadvantaged communities, including planning and project development, professional services, purchasing and leasing of land, equipment, staff, and more.

Qualified entities include equity eligible contractors and independent contractors, non-profits, co-operatives that are majority-owned by equity eligible persons, and businesses or non-profits with a proposed project that meets equity building criteria. Equity eligible contractors are businesses or non-profits that are majority-owned by equity eligible persons, including participants in CEJA workforce programs, Illinoisans who are in the foster care system or who were formerly in the foster care system, people who were formerly incarcerated, and Illinoisans who live in an R3 zone or environmental justice community.

Through a competitive Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), qualified entities can apply for grants, with awards ranging from \$250,000 to \$1 million. **Applications will be accepted on a rolling basis until funds are exhausted.** To view the NOFO and apply for the grant, please visit the [DCEO website](#). Interested parties are encouraged to reach out to CEO.GrantHelp@illinois.gov for application assistance. To help applicants prepare to apply for funding, DCEO will be holding a technical assistance webinar from 12-1 p.m. on **December 14**.

Tourism Partnership Program

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity is issuing a Notice of Funding Opportunity (“NOFO”) to match/leverage local funds with State funds to market and promote destinations, tourism attractions

and tourism events throughout the State. The goal of the program is to increase overnight stays in paid accommodations.

Total amount of funding expected to be awarded through this NOFO is \$2,500,000. Awards will range from \$10,000 to \$100,000. Anticipated start date for awards is March 1, 2024. The period of performance is expected to be March 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024, pre-award costs may be permitted with approval.

The Program shall provide matching grants to eligible Applicants to assist in promotional activities including, but not limited to, the following:

- 1) Travel Related Promotional Materials: Costs related to production, design and distribution of travel related brochures, visitor guides, direct mail literature or travel guides that are primarily used to promote areas outside of 50 miles from the Tourism Attractions, Tourism Destinations or Tourism Events in Illinois;
- 2) Media: Costs related to production, design and placement for print advertising, radio advertising, on line advertising, out of home advertising and television advertising directed toward areas outside of 50 miles from the Tourism Attraction, Tourism Destination or Tourism Event in Illinois;
- 3) Billboards: Costs related to design and production of billboard artwork and rental of billboard space directed toward areas outside of 30 miles from the Tourism Attraction, Tourism Destination or Tourism Event in Illinois, unless the billboard is placed on an intrastate;
- 4) Web Sites: Costs related to Web site development, including hosting fees, domain registration and related maintenance fees, search engine optimization and key word searches;
- 5) Market Research: Costs to conduct research to optimize the effectiveness of marketing the tourism Attraction, Tourism Destination or Tourism Event in Illinois to areas outside of 50 miles;
- 6) Travel/Trade Shows: Costs related to travel/trade show booth space rental and related expenses, including travel show registration fees for domestic and international marketing, utilities, furniture rental, cleaning, etc.;
- 7) Visitor Inquiries: Costs related to telephone expenses for toll free telephone numbers for visitor inquiries;
- 8) Mail Promotions: Costs of the purchase and use of mailing lists for direct mail promotions, provided the promotional material is printed under this Program and provided the postage is billed at bulk rate;
- 9) Promotional Publications: Expenses for shipping and distribution of promotional publications printed under this Program to State funded Tourism information centers;
- 10) Ad Campaigns: Costs related to email newsletters and ad mail campaigns primarily directed towards visitors outside a 50 mile radius from the Tourism Attraction, Tourism Destination or Tourism Event in Illinois; and
- 11) Maps: Costs related to the design and production of maps illustrating the Tourism Attractions of an area being promoted.

Each grantee shall provide matching funds equal to no less than 100% of the Grant Amount. **The application deadline is January 16, 2024.**

To review the NOFO and application documents for Downstate Illinois, click [here](#)

To review the NOFO and application documents for Cook County, click [here](#)

Tourism Attractions Grant

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity is issuing this Notice of Funding Opportunity to provide grants to assist in the development or improvement of tourism attractions that increase the economic impact of tourism throughout the State. Grantees must be able to match grant dollars as described in the NOFO.

The Tourism Attractions Grant program is part of a broader effort underway to help reinvigorate tourism in Illinois, and help the tourism industry on a path to economic recovery and welcome more visitors to Illinois. Grants up to \$500,000 will be awarded to develop and enhance Illinois tourism attractions.

Applicant must identify performance measurements they will use to identify successful outcomes as a result of the capital investment; such as:

1. Anticipated number or percentage of increased visitation as a result of the capital investment;
2. Anticipated increase in local hotel tax revenue to the area served after completion of the project;
3. Anticipated increase in local sales tax revenue after completion of the project;

Total amount of funding expected to be awarded through this NOFO is \$10,800,000. Awards will range from \$15,000 to \$500,000. Anticipated start date for awards is February 1, 2024. The period of performance is expected to be January 1, 2024 through December 31, 2024. **Applications are due December 18, 2023.** To view the NOFO and application documents click [here](#)

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) – Public Infrastructure

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity is soliciting applications for the 2023/2024 Public Infrastructure Grant opportunity funded by the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The purpose of grants relative to the Public Infrastructure (PI) Notice of Funding Opportunity is to fund water and sanitary systems and storm sewer construction projects that alleviate public health, safety, and public welfare and help communities with substantial low to moderate-income populations.

Project areas must be primarily residential in character. Projects that are designed to benefit a commercial/business area are not eligible.

All grant funded projects must meet the following requirements:

1. Low-to-Moderate Income Benefit Requirements: Projects must benefit at least 51.0 percent low-to-moderate income (LMI) persons. Those projects benefiting less than 51.0 percent LMI persons will not be considered for funding.
2. Documentation of Threat to Health and Safety: Projects must address present conditions that affect public health and safety.
3. Water and Sewer Rates: Water or sewer rates must currently meet or exceed 1 percent of the Median Household Income (MHI) per 5,000 gallons. This requirement does not apply to storm sewer or drainage projects.

For more information and to apply click [here](#). **Applications are due January 19, 2024.**

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) – Housing Rehabilitation

The Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity is soliciting applications for the 2023/2024 Housing Rehabilitation Grant opportunity funded by the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) through the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. The purpose of grants relative to the Housing Rehabilitation (HR) Notice of Funding Opportunity is to provide units of general local government with funds to address housing needs of eligible low-to-moderate income (LMI) households. The program targets projects which preserve singlefamily, owner-occupied housing needing rehabilitation and encourage neighborhood revitalization.

As this is a direct benefit activity, 100 percent of CDBG housing rehabilitation funds must benefit low-to-moderate income persons. CDBG funds can be used to rehabilitate only those homes occupied by families verified to be of low-to-moderate income. Project must rehabilitate a minimum of eight (8) homes. Applications must demonstrate the need for housing rehabilitation and support for the proposed project from eligible residents of the project area. Need should be demonstrated through the submission of surveys, completed within 24 months of the application filing date. Resident support can be demonstrated through submission of public meeting minutes and/or resident sign-up sheets.

For more information and to apply click [here](#). **Applications are due January 19, 2024.**

CEJA Contractor Incubator Hubs

Governor JB Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) launched \$21 million in funding for the Clean Energy Contractor Incubator Program or "CEJA Contractor Incubator Hubs." The program establishes a network of 13 community-based hubs across the state offering incubator services designed to assist clean energy contractors – especially those from underserved areas – grow their businesses.

The CEJA Contractor Incubator Hubs is CEJA's central small business support program among a highly interconnected set of statewide clean energy workforce development and community support programs. The Hubs will provide a variety of services to contractors and clean energy small businesses, including access to low-cost capital, training, mentorship, networking opportunities and other business-related assistance. The program prioritizes support for business owners and contractors from historically marginalized backgrounds as well as entrepreneurs located in environmental justice communities.

Through a competitive Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), qualified entities can apply for grants, with awards ranging from \$500,000 to \$2.5 million. **Applications will be accepted until December 11, 2023, at 5:00 p.m.** To view the NOFO and apply for the grant, please visit the [DCEO website](#). Interested parties are encouraged to reach out to CEO.GrantHelp@illinois.gov for application assistance.

Qualified entities include community-based organizations such as non-profit organizations and accredited public colleges or universities that have experience providing business-related assistance, knowledge of the construction and clean energy trades, have a record of effectively serving diverse populations, and have established relationships within the local area. The Hubs will be located in the 13 geographic areas designated by statute: Alton, Aurora, Carbondale, Champaign, Chicago (South Side), Chicago (Southwest and West Sides), Danville, Decatur, East St. Louis, Joliet, Peoria, Rockford, and Waukegan. DCEO anticipates identifying at least one grantee to administer the program in each of the 13 locations.

LIHEAP Program for Energy Bill Assistance

Governor JB Pritzker and the Illinois Department of Commerce and Economic Opportunity (DCEO) are encouraging additional income-eligible families to apply for the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) to support with utility bill assistance for natural gas, propane, and electricity. Applications expanded November 1 to include income-eligible households that are disconnected or facing imminent disconnection. Eligible families including those that are disconnected or facing imminent disconnection can apply by visiting helpillinoisfamilies.com or by visiting their local agency (a list of partners throughout the State can be found [here](#)). Families can also call 1-833-711-0374 for assistance in 30 languages.

All families who meet the qualifications and provide proper documentation will receive support until funding is exhausted. Families who earn up to 200% the federal poverty level, have a household with a senior, a child or children under 6, and/or a person with a disability, along with households that provide proper documentation of disconnection or imminent disconnection from a utility are now eligible to receive support through LIHEAP. A chart with eligible income thresholds can be found on the [webpage](#). Income-eligible households in addition to October priority period households and households that are disconnected or facing imminent threat of disconnection will be able to apply for assistance during the upcoming application opening period December 1, and **applications will be accepted through August 15, 2024, or until funds are exhausted**. The energy bill assistance program offered through the Help Illinois Families Program in program year 2024 will provide \$237 million to eligible families for energy bill assistance.

LIHEAP provides one-time payments directly to energy service providers on behalf of recipients. While the amount of support varies based on the needs of individual families, last year over 311,000 households received LIHEAP, with an average of over \$1,000 per household.

Additional Program Information:

The State of Illinois offers various programs to support eligible low-income families with utility assistance. These programs are open to ALL eligible low-income Illinois families who meet the criteria, including undocumented families. Programs for eligible families include:

- **One-Time Direct Vendor Payment:** All LIHEAP recipients receive a one-time payment.
- **Crisis/Reconnection Assistance:** Funding is available for families in heating-related emergency situations.
- **Furnace Assistance:** Based on funding availability, Furnace Assistance may be provided to households that do not have an operating furnace for their residence.
- **Home Weatherization Program:** The Illinois Home Weatherization Assistance Program (IHWAP) helps low-income residents and households conserve fuel and reduce energy costs by making their homes and apartments more energy efficient.

To apply, visit helpillinoisfamilies.com to fill out and submit a request for services form online OR visit your local agency (a list of partners throughout the State can be found [here](#)). After you submit the form, someone from your local agency will be in touch. Call 1-833-711-0374 for assistance at any point during the application process. Additional information about eligibility and criteria can be found on the [website](#) along with fact sheets in [English](#) and [Spanish](#).

For a complete list of current DCEO grant opportunities, upcoming grant trainings, video resource library and Grant Help Desk assistance, visit [DCEO Grants \(illinois.gov\)](https://dceogrants.illinois.gov)

Business Resiliency Grant Program [click here](#) **Deadline December 31, 2023**
Illinois Clean Jobs Workforce Network Program (CEJA) [click here](#) **Deadline March 31, 2024**
SBIR/STTR Match Program [click here](#) **Deadline June 30, 2024**
Illinois Energy Transition Navigators Program (CEJA) [click here](#) **Deadline rolling**
Federal Grant Support Program [click here](#) **No specific due date**
Illinois Meat and Poultry Supply Chain Grant Program [click here](#) **Deadline rolling**
CDBG Economic Development Program [click here](#) **Deadline rolling**
Connect Illinois Broadband Grant [click here](#) **Deadline rolling**

Other Federal and State Agency Grants & Programs

Illinois EPA Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program

The Illinois Environmental Protection Agency's Office of Energy has announced \$2,909,890 of grant funding available for the development of local strategic energy plans as well as energy efficiency audits and local government building upgrades. Under the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program (EECBG), grant awards ranging from \$200,000 to \$249,900 will aim to create long-term sustainability and energy reduction roadmaps and reduce energy usage for Illinois municipalities and counties.

The grant program will invest U.S. Department of Energy (U.S. DOE) Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) funds in energy planning, energy audits, and energy efficiency building upgrades. Municipalities and counties eligible for direct formula funding through the U.S. DOE are not eligible for funding through this state program. Grant applications will undergo a comprehensive, merit-based review. Scoring factors will include funding justification, projects located in environmental justice areas of concern, energy burden, energy/electric service, and partnerships between units of local governments or where projects benefit multiple communities. Application materials are available at the [Illinois EPA Office of Energy webpage](#). **The application period closes at 5:00 pm on January 22, 2024.**

The Illinois EPA will provide a pre-recorded Technical Assistance webinar by **December 11, 2023**. The WebEx will be available at: <https://epa.illinois.gov/topics/energy/energy-efficiency/energy-efficiency-conservation-block-grant.html>

The Illinois EPA is investing U.S. DOE IIJA funds in projects across the State that focus on energy efficiency, resiliency, and clean energy technologies specifically in areas of environmental justice concern. For more information about Office of Energy programming, including the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant Program, please visit <https://epa.illinois.gov/topics/energy.html> or call 217-785-8841. More information on the U.S. DOE EECBG is available at <https://www.energy.gov/infrastructure/articles/doe-iija-congressional-report>

Illinois EPA Third Notice of Funding Opportunity for County Solid Waste Planning

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (Illinois EPA) Director John J. Kim announced the latest funding opportunity to assist counties and other units of local government in implementing their solid waste planning obligations under the Illinois Solid Waste Planning and Recycling Act (SWPRA). A Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) has been posted to the [Illinois EPA website](#).

Under the SWPRA, counties and units of local government are obligated to revisit their Illinois Solid Waste Management Plans every five years and, if necessary, submit plans with significant updates to the Illinois EPA. The Illinois EPA Material Management and Compliance Section is responsible for reviewing any solid waste

management plans with significant updates submitted pursuant to the SWPRA. Through this funding opportunity, Illinois EPA intends to provide interested counties, and other units of local government required to develop a county solid waste management plan, financial assistance to help prepare the next plan update.

Eligible projects include, but are not limited to, conducting a local solid waste and materials management needs assessment, surveying local solid waste and materials management stakeholders to determine programmatic expansion viability, internally authoring solid waste management plan updates, or procuring consulting services to prepare solid waste management plan updates. Each county or unit of local government is eligible for up to \$10,000 in funding. All required forms and information can be found at: <https://epa.illinois.gov/topics/waste-management/materials-management/county-solid-waste-planning.html>.

Applications for the County Solid Waste Planning Grants will be accepted through 5:00 PM (CST) on January 20, 2024. Applicants may not apply for a grant until they are pre-qualified through the [Grant Accountability and Transparency Act \(GATA\) Grantee Portal](#).

IDOT Building Blocks of Success Disadvantaged Business Enterprise Workshops

The Illinois Department of Transportation is hosting free virtual workshops in December as part of its continuing Building Blocks of Success series for Disadvantaged Business Enterprise firms interested in strengthening their skills, growing their business and bidding on state projects. New and existing DBEs, as well as firms interested in becoming certified in the program, are invited.

December workshop dates and topics are:

- **December 12**, 10 a.m. to noon: Construction: Before Contract – IDOT Standard Specifications, Division 100
- **December 14**, 10 a.m. to noon: Construction: Before Contract – IDOT Specs, Plans and Conducting a Site Review Q & A Session
- **December 19**, 10 a.m. to noon: Construction: Before Contract – Estimating and Bidding Spreadsheet
- **December 21**, 10 a.m. to noon: Construction: Before Contract – Subcontractor Awareness

Building Blocks of Success will continue through April. Workshop information, including dates and times, is available through Eventbrite at bit.ly/DBEworkshops. Advance registration is required.

Questions can be directed to IDOT's Bureau of Small Business Enterprises at (217) 785-4611.

Through Gov. JB Pritzker's historic, bipartisan Rebuild Illinois, IDOT is helping to deliver the largest capital program in state history while promoting diversity, equity and inclusion.

Administered by IDOT, the DBE program provides minorities, women and eligible small businesses with opportunities to participate in federally and state funded highway, transit and airport contracts. For more information on becoming a certified DBE and learning more about available IDOT resources, visit www.idot.illinois.gov/dbe.

Illinois EPA Public Light-Duty EV Fast Charging Infrastructure Grant

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (Illinois EPA) Director John J. Kim announced the Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA) EV Charging Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) for the purchase and installation of new Direct Current Fast Charging (DCFC) light-duty electric vehicle charging stations at publicly accessible locations. This opportunity is being made available through Governor Pritzker's bipartisan Rebuild Illinois capital plan for electric

vehicle projects authorized under CEJA. The NOFO and related documents have been posted to the [Illinois EPA website](#).

Illinois EPA anticipates funding a percentage of projects with awards for electric DC fast charging stations to be located at publicly accessible locations (shopping centers, retail stores, gas stations, etc.). This round is expected to fund 675 fast charging ports.

Each application must include a minimum of two charging station locations, with at least two standalone chargers at each charging station location. Additional points will also be awarded to projects at a charging station location in an area identified as an equity investment eligible community through the [EIEC mapping tool](#). At that link, communities qualify for the additional points if they are in either an EJ or an R3 Community. They do not need to be in both.

Eligible applicants include private organizations (including sole proprietorships, partnerships, corporations, and limited liability companies) that are incorporated under Illinois law and registered and in good standing with the Illinois Secretary of State. Eligible applicants must be an owner of a proposed charging station location and/or an owner of the proposed charging station.

All required forms and information can be found on the Driving A Cleaner Illinois webpage: <https://epa.illinois.gov/topics/air-quality/driving-a-cleaner-illinois.html>. **Applications for the Driving a Cleaner Illinois – Climate and Equitable Jobs Act EV Charging NOFO will be accepted November 3, 2023 through 5:00 PM (CST) on December 22, 2023.**

All applicants must pre-qualify through the [Grant Accountability and Transparency Act Grantee Portal](#).

Illinois EPA Energy Efficiency Projects Grant

Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Director John J. Kim announced the Residential Energy Efficiency Trust Fund Grant Program – previously known as the Low-Income Residential Energy Efficiency Program or LIREE - with up to \$5,000,000 in funding available for energy efficiency upgrades at single family or duplex residential properties. The Energy Efficiency Trust Fund Grant Program will benefit residents receiving housing assistance from a state or federal housing assistance program and located in areas of environmental justice concern. A Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO) has been posted to the [Agency's website](#).

Eligible applicants include public housing authorities, units of local government (municipalities, counties, or townships), or nonprofit organizations. Examples of eligible projects include window replacement, heating and cooling equipment retrofits, and lighting upgrades. Total project costs may range from \$25,000 - \$500,000 with a match requirement subject to total funding request.

Applications for the Energy Efficiency Trust Fund Grant Program NOFO will be accepted on a rolling basis and eligible properties will receive funding on a first come, first serve basis. For eligibility and application information, visit: <https://epa.illinois.gov/topics/energy/energy-efficiency/energy-efficiency-trust-fund-grant.html>.

Before applying to the grant program, applicants must be pre-qualified through the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) Grantee Portal, <https://gata.illinois.gov/>.

Clean School Bus Rebate Program

The 2023 Clean School Bus Rebate program is now open! **Applications are due January 31, 2024, 4:00 PM ET.**

For more information visit <https://www.epa.gov/cleanschoolbus/events-related-clean-school-bus-program>. As a reminder, potential applicants should check their SAM.gov registration and ensure it is still valid or renew if it is set to expire soon! This is the first step in order to apply.

The major updates to this round of rebates from the previous two CSB funding opportunities are:

- An updated lottery process where approximately 60% of funds will be available for prioritized applicants with approximately 40% to other applicants.
- Certain eligible applicants can use funds for ADA-compliant wheelchair lifts.
- Certain eligible applicants can use funds for high bus delivery costs.
- Changes in funding levels per bus and applicant prioritization criteria.

For more information visit : <https://ev.illinois.gov/communities.html>

Office of the State Fire Marshal Small Equipment Grant

The OSFM will award \$4 million to eligible fire departments and ambulance services for the purchase of small firefighting and ambulance equipment. **All interested departments should send an application to OSFM electronically or postmarked no later than December 15, 2023.**

The Small Equipment Grant Program was established to provide grants of up to \$26,000 to eligible departments. The grants allow eligible applicants the opportunity to purchase small tools and equipment. In addition to firefighting personal protective equipment (PPE), applicants can also apply for personal infection control items such as masks, gowns, and gloves this application cycle. Most Illinois fire departments, fire protection districts, and township fire departments are eligible to apply. In addition, stand-alone, not-for-profit ambulance service providers are eligible to apply.

All applicants are required to have participated in the National Fire Incident Reporting System (NFIRS) for a minimum of two years prior to applying. The OSFM will require departments to be current from September 2021 through August 2023 for this grant period. Additional information including the application can be found here: <https://sfm.illinois.gov/iam/firedepartment/grants-and-loans.html>

Completed applications should be submitted to: Office of the State Fire Marshal, Small Equipment Grant Program, 1035 Stevenson Drive, Springfield, IL 62703

Illinois Department of Employment Security Workshare Illinois

WorkShare IL is a voluntary program that provides employers facing a decline in business with an alternative to layoffs. The program allows an employer to reduce the number of hours worked in any unit of their business in order to avoid permanent layoffs. Each employee in an affected unit continues to work but experiences a reduction in hours that ranges from 20% to 60%. Employees receive a corresponding percentage of unemployment benefits during the period of temporary reduction to offset the reduction in earnings.

Resources

- If you are an employer and want to apply, please go to the [WorkShare e-Services](#) website or contact the [WorkShare Program](#)
- Illinois statute authorizing WorkShare/Short-time compensation program, [820 ILCS 405/502](#)
- Background information from the [U.S. Department of Labor](#)

Helpful Resources

Grant Help Desk Resources DCEO Office of Accountability

- Office Hours for Grantees – Office of Accountability is hosting a weekly office hour **every Tuesday from 2-3pm** for any questions grantees or potential grantees may have.
 - [Sign up for any of these sessions with this link](#)
- **Email Us:**
 - ceo.granthelp@illinois.gov
 - Or use our Inquiry Form:
<https://app.smartsheet.com/b/form/df9d38efa4e241218ced486c54f3c109>
- **Visit Our Website:**
 - <https://dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/grantopportunities.html>
 - Browse our Learning Libraries, Quick Reference Guides, and Instructional Videos

Grant Accountability and Transparency (GATA)

- GATA Grantee Portal: <https://grants.illinois.gov/portal/>
- GATA Grantee Portal New User Guide:
<https://www2.illinois.gov/sites/GATA/Documents/Resource%20Library/GATA%20New%20User%20Guide.pdf>
- GATU Resource Site: <https://gata.illinois.gov/>
- Catalog of State Financial Assistance (CSFA): <https://gata.illinois.gov/grants/csfa.html>
- DCEO Current Grant Opportunities: <https://dceo.illinois.gov/aboutdceo/grantopportunities/grants.html>

Audit Report Review Process Manual:

<https://gata.illinois.gov/content/dam/soi/en/web/gata/documents/audit/audit-manual-august-2018-revision.pdf>

DCEO Website – <https://dceo.illinois.gov>

The Illinois DCEO website includes a page dedicated to current state and federal grant opportunities as well as Grantee resources. Click [here](#) to find valuable information!

Do you have questions about ARPA NEU funding?

To ask a question or request a support call, contact the NEU Support Team at either ILARPA@crowe.com or CEO.CURE@illinois.gov.

To ask a question about the U.S Treasury Reporting Portal, please contact covidreliefITsupport@treasury.gov

Join DCEO's Team

DCEO's Team is expanding around the state. To apply for these jobs, please go to the Work4Illinois website at <https://illinois.jobs2web.com/> and use the search function to find the positions for our department.

Posting closing 12/12/23

Tas Incentive Program Coordinator (Executive I) – Office of Entrepreneurship, Innovation & Technology – Sangamon County

Office Associate, OPT 2 – Office of Grants Management – Sangamon County

OET Technical Assistance Manager (SPSA, OPT 1) – Office of Employment and Training – Sangamon County

Posting closing 12/13/23

Facility Services Coordinator (Office Administrator IV, OPT 2) – Office of Management Operations – Sangamon County

Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Access Plan Coordinator (Personal Services Contact) – Director’s Office – Sangamon &/or Cook County

Posting closing 12/14/23

Accountant Advanced – Office of Employment & Training– Williamson County

Assistant Deputy Director (PSA, Opt. 1) – Office of Human Resources– Sangamon County

Posting closing 12/15/23

Statistical Research Technician – Office of Employment & Training– Sangamon County

Following DCEO & Connecting with Team RED

If you have upcoming meetings or events and would like DCEO to participate, please reach out to us. Follow us on our social media channels for real time updates.

Facebook – facebook.com/IllinoisDCEO

Linked In – linkedin.com/company/IllinoisDCEO