**DOE NCSP Equitable Solar Communities of Practice Objective Strategic Session-20231115\_120010-Meeting Recording**

0:02  
Glenn, my name is Brad Chetister.

0:05  
I'll be kind of the master of ceremonies with some of my other team mates on here from the Energy Works side.

0:08  
But I'm going to go over some quick housekeeping rules and then we'll get into a very brief agenda and then we'll kind of cruise through the objective strategic session that you're on right now.

0:18  
So some housekeeping again, this is the objective strategic session for the Equitable Solar program.

0:24  
Please keep yourselves on mute.

0:26  
I know folks are still dialing in and everything.

0:28  
Please, as you dial in, please keep your microphones on mute.

0:32  
So this won't be a kind of a speaking engagement from the perspective performer side.

0:37  
This will be more of a informational session.

0:39  
And then there's a chance to ask questions through a forum.

0:42  
Again, the chat feature in the actual teams here, the chat feature, please reserve that only for technical questions of hey, I can't see the thing, what's the link that kind of questions please.

0:54  
All the questions from the program side, after you hear from Ariel, we'll introduce the great subject matter expert on the inside here that's going to be leading the charge for equitable solar.

1:05  
All of those questions will go through Slido.

1:06  
So as you see on your screen here, you'll submit the questions at the link there on the screen and also be put in chat as well.

1:13  
You can go to slido.com and use the code, the event code #NCSP.

1:19  
That'll also be put in the in the chat feature here on on teams.

1:23  
So just go there and you'll be able to type in your question as they as your questions pop up.

1:28  
And also if there if you see someone that has a question that they've been they asked and you really want that question answered as well, there's a chance to upvote that.

1:36  
So questions are banned in the order of importance and how many votes they get.

1:40  
So if you have the same question, pay upvote it, it'll bring it to the top, we'll make sure we address it.

1:45  
One of our team mates, Chrissy, who's awesome, she'll be reading off the questions and answers and making sure that they all get addressed through Slido.

1:52  
So she's super, super keen on that.

1:53  
And if you have any technical questions about Slido, please again use the chat feature only for technical questions.

2:00  
But please do make sure you're up on Slido so you can ask your questions about the program about anything that Missario is going to talk about.

2:08  
This is being recorded, so that recording will be posted after the effect after the event here, as well as any slides that are briefed today.

2:16  
So I believe Missario has some slides, she'll brief those.

2:19  
Any slides that we have including any energy Works type stuff, they'll be also be posted.

2:23  
So you can go back and look through those and also look through the questions and answers.

2:28  
So I'm going to do some quick intros.

2:31  
So what basically we're going to do some intros from the Energy works and the DOE team we're going to get into, hey, what works is, what Energy works is and how this functions and how it works and a little bit of a timeline overview.

2:42  
The DOE team, which is Miss Ariel, Ariel Drehobel.

2:47  
So she's going to be the one briefing today and giving a lot of the really good technical information about equitable solar in the program and kind of going through some slides and then it'll be an open form Q&A.

2:58  
Again, we'll facilitate that.

2:59  
Please use Slido.

3:00  
As I said in the beginning of this call, it's still up on your screen.

3:03  
So those are just dialed in.

3:03  
Please use Slido and then I'll pass it over to Miss Carla Heron who's on the line.

3:08  
She'll be do a big wave as well.

3:10  
So Carla is the Director of Energy Works.

3:12  
She'll be kind of closing out the meeting with some key important facts and dates and way forward information.

3:18  
So with that quick intros.

3:21  
So again my name is Brad Chester.

3:22  
I'm the Chief Technology Innovation Officer of Defense Works, which is a 5O1C3 that partners with the government to support innovation activities, STEM, steam workforce development, novel tech transfer and tech transition.

3:34  
And really helping the government partners lower the barrier of entry to get non traditionals and traditionals more involved in the innovation framework and purposeful collisions around solving hard problems for our our nation.

3:45  
So thank you so much for participating in that.

3:48  
Along with me today, I'll introduce really quick Miss Ariel Dre Hoble.

3:52  
She is the lead for Equitable Solar and she'll be helping brief a lot of the stuff that you're going to hear today.

3:58  
She is the expert on the line.

3:59  
So we really appreciate her precious time and her offering that time up.

4:03  
She's going to be the really the kind of the sounding board to answer all of the questions that you might have.

4:08  
Any question that she's not able to answer, we'll try to come back with you and answer in the future.

4:12  
That's why we post all this stuff and share after the fact.

4:16  
So what is Energy Works really fast and I'll let Ariel have the mic and take the rest of the of the call.

4:21  
So Energy Works is an innovation platform set up as a partnership intermediary with the Department of Energy and defense works of five O 1C3 non profit.

4:31  
That partnership is a neutral platform that is here to facilitate activity of purposeful collisions, agile acquisition, you know all of these fun things discover, engage, accelerate novel solutions for the Department of Energy and our nation.

4:46  
So in this we are neutral facilitators, we are here as a service, we're here to help you all as an intermediary as well as help the DOE kind of get to what Wright looks like and really kind of Co develop together.

4:57  
So it's an exciting opportunity to work collectively with DOE experts like Ariel whose time is precious like I said and we're here to facilitate that process.

5:06  
So energyworks.org is our website, so please feel free to go there.

5:11  
And Miss Carla, who is the Director of Energy Works, will follow up with some more information about how to reach out to us.

5:17  
As you dial in, please do mute microphones.

5:19  
Thanks.

5:20  
So again, you're participating today in the objective strategic session to learn more about DOENCSP, Equitable solar, Communities of Practice.

5:28  
I'm going to read one quick sentence, and basically I'm going to hand it over to Miss Ariel.

5:32  
And she's going to go through a bunch of great slides and a bunch of great information.

5:35  
So the DOE and SETO team launched the Equitable Solar Community as a practice program to support the expansion of equitable benefits of solar adoption.

5:44  
So that means a lot of different things to a lot of different people.

5:47  
And Ariel's going to explain that.

5:50  
Ariel, please, ma'am, over to you.

5:52  
Thank you so much.

5:54  
Awesome.

5:55  
Thank you, Brad.

5:56  
And thank you so much to Energy Works for helping us get this project off the ground.

6:01  
And for organizing all of the folks who have joined us today, as Brad said, my name is Ariel Dre Hoebel.

6:09  
I work in the solar office at the Department of Energy, and I'll be providing some information about this new program opportunity that's open for folks to currently apply to the Equitable solar communities of practice.

6:24  
Moving to the next slide, great.

6:27  
So this is a little overview of the office.

6:29  
I think if you advance a couple more boxes will pop up as well.

6:33  
Thank you so much.

6:35  
So as I said, I currently work in the solar office at the Department of Energy and our mission is really to accelerate the advancement of solar technologies, but to do so in an equitable way.

6:48  
And it's really important to make sure that as we're rapidly decarbonizing and advancing solar technologies that we make sure that all households are able to participate and access the benefits of solar energy.

7:03  
Moving to the next slide, I more specifically work on the Workforce and Equitable Access team in the solar office.

7:11  
And I would describe this as the team that really is focused on the relationship between solar and people.

7:18  
So my team is really focused on helping to make sure that solar technologies are accessible and benefit all households and stakeholders across the country through innovations and financing and and other types of technology development.

7:34  
And we also work on the workforce side to make sure that we are developing A skilled and diverse clean energy workforce to help deploy the solar that's that's needed.

7:46  
So our team is really interested in exploring how we at the government and nationally can be working to better ensure that the benefits of solar are accessible to everyone.

8:00  
And we know that within this community of of folks who are on the call today and out there across the country, there's so much knowledge and expertise in terms of equitable solar access and development that we're hoping to be able to collaborate with and work work with you all on through this project.

8:20  
So moving to the next slide, so the communities of Practice project we we developed, this is a way that we can really be partnering with other expert organizations to develop stakeholder LED processes with a few different project goals in mind.

8:38  
We are interested in really analyzing and identifying the gaps in existing resources for equitable low income rooftop and low income solar deployment, community solar deployment.

8:52  
We also want to be identifying some leading best practices that we're seeing in the field right now that can be replicated and also be able to identify pathways to scale across these meaningful benefits.

9:05  
How do we scale access?

9:07  
How do we scale resilience?

9:10  
These are the questions that we're looking to answer through this project.

9:14  
And then in terms of what we're focused on, we really want to look at the deployment of meaningful benefits across different types of solar technologies.

9:22  
So we're looking at community solar, low income residential solar and potentially other types of distributed solar and storage that could be serving low income or disadvantaged communities.

9:34  
Moving to the next slide, So what is a community of practice, you may ask?

9:40  
So we are developing this project in a very collaborative way.

9:45  
So we are intending to put together 5 communities of practice to really explore these different aspects of equitable solar deployment.

9:55  
So Community of Practice is a group of individuals or organizations who have shared interest and expertise to really delve deeply into a into a specific topic or problem, identify best practices, share knowledge and work to advance solutions that are innovative.

10:15  
So in the equitable solar communities of practice we're we have a number of stakeholders who will be involved.

10:24  
This slide kind of lists out who that will be.

10:28  
So we have the partnership intermediary, which is Energy Works, who's working with us to coordinate this whole project.

10:37  
We'll have the lead organizations which the applications are currently open for those right now.

10:43  
And then the way we've designed the project, we're also intending for there to be additional expertise brought into each community of practice through up to six additional core organizations will be compensated for their time and expertise to bring knowledge into these conversations as well.

10:59  
And then also community participants through community convening.

11:02  
And on the next few slides, there's more details on how we've laid out this project.

11:07  
And then I'll also go through the application process and I'm happy to answer questions.

11:12  
This slide is a bit more details on the different stakeholders who were looking to work with and engage on this project.

11:20  
And I'll just flag the lead organization again.

11:22  
This is what the application process is currently open for folks to apply to.

11:27  
So we're looking for up to 5 organizations to lead the communities of practice.

11:32  
And I'll get into more details on some of these other stakeholders the next few slides.

11:39  
So moving forward, so through especially a lot of the work that the National Community Solar Partnership team in the solar office has worked on over the last few years through stakeholder engagement and a lot of conversations, RF is feedback from the broad community.

12:00  
We've identified a number of equitable aspects of solar that we're looking to ensure are embedded into the development of low income rooftop and community solar as we're looking to expand these across the country.

12:16  
So for this project, we've identified 5 communities of practice that we're looking for organizations to lead.

12:22  
The 1st is equitable access and consumer protections.

12:27  
Also meaningful household savings, resilience, storage, grid benefits, community LED economic development and solar workforce.

12:35  
I believe the next slide has more detailed descriptions of what each of these communities of practice can in entail.

12:42  
So this is, these are high level descriptions from us in terms of how we're envisioning each of these categories.

12:49  
I will say that as we identify community practice leads, we'd love for the leads to help shape how we're defining these categories as well and how we can be scaling solar development across these different categories.

13:04  
So looking at best practices in consumer protections, how to scale meaningful deep bill savings across different types of low income solar projects.

13:15  
How to build a resilient strong grid through a rooftop solar and community solar.

13:22  
How to build ownership opportunities at the community level, as well as other ways to build wealth and opportunity within communities through solar development.

13:32  
And then looking through many aspects of the solar workforce and how we can ensure that those are scaled at the national level as well.

13:40  
So these slides will be posted after the call and these definitions are also included in the application materials for folks to take a look at.

13:50  
Moving to the next slide, we have identified for this project, we really wanted to make it streamlined and and easy for the the organizations leading each community of practice to know what activities they're working on and to not have burdensome reporting either on activities.

14:11  
So we've divided up activities and deliverables kind of by rough time time frames, but these could be adjusted once we begin working with the leads for each community of practice.

14:23  
But overall, we're looking for the leads to to pull together a core team to talk about each of each of the community practice areas and to coordinate across all five of these communities of practice.

14:37  
We're looking for them to develop a literature review and some key takeaways on the area that they are exploring.

14:48  
Moving to the next slide.

14:53  
We're also looking for them to hold a community wide convening for any stakeholders who are interested in participating to get feedback, identify blind spots, best practices and additional materials that may be helpful for the community of practice as they're putting together a full report on these best practices and next steps there.

15:15  
And then towards the end of the six month engagement, we're looking for the community of practice leads to really be able to aggregate what they've learned through the community conversations, convenings and partnerships and be able to share that information with DOE.

15:29  
In terms of what are some opportunities for scaling each of these meaningful benefits of equitable solar development, what the role of the Department of Energy could be or other stakeholders so that we can really think about how to deploy quickly and equitably moving into this next year.

15:50  
We've also flagged here an opportunity for community practice leads to present at a conference and to be able to share these results and help get more individuals involved in these conversations as well.

16:03  
Moving to the next slide, Great.

16:06  
So now I'm going to walk through the application process for the communities of practice.

16:11  
I'm happy to answer any additional questions about the first half of the presentation in terms of what we're looking to accomplish, but in terms of the application process who should apply to lead a community of practice.

16:25  
So we're really looking for applicants who are expert level subject matter experts across these different areas of expertise.

16:36  
For the the five communities of practice areas we're looking for folks who really have a national scope and or regional.

16:45  
So kind of a bit far reaching to be able to understand the national perspective and what is needed to scale the meaningful benefit across the country.

16:55  
We're looking for organizations who have knowledge and relationships with local and regional organizations and are able to really help build that stakeholder engagement in the community convening and core team that they're putting together.

17:10  
And we're also looking for folks who have strong capabilities and experience and facilitation project management, research and analysis which are all parts of the project outcomes that we're looking to see.

17:23  
Moving to the next slide, why apply, so why, why may somebody want to lead one of these communities of practice.

17:31  
So we're really looking for the community of practice leaders to really be thought leaders on how to scale equitable solar at this pivotal time in history.

17:40  
There is so much federal funding and opportunity right now to scale solar development and we really want to make sure that we are thinking at the federal level and at, you know, across the country on how to make sure that equity is incorporated into the rapid deployment of solar as we move into the next year.

18:02  
So this really will be an opportunity for folks to lead the conversation, the discussion and the research on these different areas of interest.

18:12  
There'll be opportunities to present findings and research through different stakeholder convenings that DOE will help to organize.

18:19  
And we really want to be able to disseminate the learnings and findings from this from these communities of practice.

18:26  
And it'll be an opportunity again to work closely with the Department of Energy to help identify what some next steps can be and what the opportunities are to really make sure that we are as impactful as possible moving in to 2024 and beyond in terms of solar deployment and development.

18:45  
Moving to the next slide, in terms of the application, which is currently open, the application opened last Thursday and closes on December 8th, and the application has three different categories for folks to complete.

19:03  
If you're interested in applying, there's a section on eligibility criteria and general organization information.

19:11  
Then there's the capabilities assessment, which is a bit more information that applicants can provide and also an opportunity to provide some appendix materials such as resumes or additional materials that you may want to share with us.

19:25  
Moving to the next slide, so just at a high level where I'm going to walk through what is involved in the application.

19:34  
So one requirement for community practice leads is that they must be based within the United States or its territories.

19:42  
We also have a few additional questions for applicants around organizational size, capacity, scope, a contact and some other information that will be asked will be asked.

19:54  
Moving to the next slide.

19:58  
So the capabilities assessment for applicants includes 3 key sections.

20:04  
The first one, and let me say the overall we're looking for this not to be too burdensome or too detailed.

20:12  
We're looking for a maximum of about 15,000 word or 1500 words submitted as APDF for the application.

20:20  
So each of these sections is about five, 500 words maximum.

20:24  
So really looking for, you know, succinct answers and we don't want this to be too much of A challenge for folks to apply to.

20:31  
So the first section is exploring organizational expertise and alignment.

20:35  
So we want to hear about the applicants in terms of their history and working within the community of practice that they're applying for, any specific expertise they have and how their mission and values of their organization would align with this work.

20:52  
Secondly, we want to hear from applicants about their industry knowledge and leadership and this includes some questions related to knowledge of the critical challenge that are facing the target benefit categories.

21:04  
So again, that's the consumer protections and access, the bill savings, resilience, community wealth building and workforce categories as well as their experience leading diverse coalitions and conversations.

21:20  
It's something that we're really looking for in competitive applicants.

21:24  
And then lastly looking at again building more into those the organizational core capabilities and capacity.

21:31  
So looking for organizations that have experience with facilitation, project management, collaboration, research and analysis experience and there are a few questions within each of these categories that we'll get at this information.

21:45  
Again, looking for, you know, 500 words Max for each section, not you know, too much information needed for this.

21:54  
Moving to the next slide, appendix materials.

21:58  
So applicants are also encouraged to share any resumes of staff members who are proposed to work or lead on a community of practice in the application which can could be helpful if you're If you're not sure who those folks would be yet.

22:16  
Feel free to include resumes of folks who who may be working on it.

22:23  
And or you can let us know that that information is not yet available which is also which is also fine in this this point in the process.

22:33  
Moving to the next slide open forum and Q&A so we can go to questions.

22:41  
I think the the next slide or last slide which we'll also close on is just covering a couple of additional opportunities for folks.

22:50  
So we're also going to have an additional office hours where myself and my colleague Anna Balzer will be available to answer additional questions that folks may have through the application process.

23:01  
The Energy Works team plans to update the the FAQ section on the application page as well over time as more questions come in.

23:10  
So feel free to check that to see if questions are answered over the next few weeks, but also feel free to join us on December 1st if you have additional questions as you're completing your application and the the deadline for applications is currently December 8th at 5:00 PM Eastern Time.

23:29  
We are hoping to be able to finalize selections by the beginning of 2024 and hopefully be able to kick off the communities of practice by late January to last for a six month period.

23:46  
All right.

23:47  
And now we can move on to the questions and answers.

23:53  
Hold this up.

23:54  
OK, All right.

24:00  
The first question, Ariel, Even if it is not required, is it beneficial for applicants to list proposed core team members and their applications?

24:10  
I would say yes.

24:11  
I believe there are some questions included that may ask about networks or organizations who think may be good fits for for a core team.

24:22  
If that's not included, feel free to include that information if you have thoughts or ideas on who should be included.

24:29  
We're hoping that the Core Team development will be a collaborative process with the Community Practice Lead and DOE, so we're not expecting the the Community Practice Lead to be putting the Core team together completely on their own.

24:43  
But we would love to hear if you have relationships or ideas about who would be best suited to to work with you on the core team.

24:51  
So please feel free to include that in the application.

24:57  
Can you speak to energy works plan to ensure that DOV funding reaches lead orgs at the start of the project?

25:02  
DOV is often very slow of contracting.

25:05  
Thanks.

25:08  
I'm not sure Carla or Brad or even Ariel might want to take this one.

25:11  
I, yeah, I can just say really quickly and I'll pass it to you Brad that we've set up the project and we have this listed on the application page as well that funds will be transferred to the leads based on the completion of certain milestones.

25:27  
I believe the first milestone would be just putting together that core team, which can be done within the first few weeks of the project and then funds will be transferred as a percentage of the total 75,000 per community of practice based on the completion of milestones throughout the project.

25:44  
One thing I just realized, I forgot to mention is that folks can apply to leave more than one community practice if you feel like you have the qualifications for more than one.

25:52  
But I'll turn it over to you, Brad, if there's anything you want to add about that process.

25:57  
Yeah, well said, ma'am.

25:58  
Yeah.

25:58  
So just just an overarching statement.

26:00  
So this partnership intermediary agreement that we have, so energy works, the platform is meant to be an agile acquisition framework tool.

26:07  
So it is and to add speed, efficacy and agility into the DOE processes.

26:11  
So Yep, the the purpose of all that is the of all this is a move at the speed of innovation, not the speed of the bureaucratic process.

26:18  
So yet we're well aware and we will move expediently through the process with our DOE partners to make sure that hey, you getting the work done, you're getting the pay you deserve.

26:26  
So thanks.

26:32  
Perfect.

26:34  
Can you share more specific information on the types of applications you're looking for, particularly for the resilient storage and the grid Benefits COP?

26:44  
Yeah, that's a great question.

26:45  
So we are we're really looking for applicants who have expertise or some experience or knowledge working across the relationship between equity and solid deployment in these different areas.

27:02  
So for resilient storage and grid benefits, this would be looking for organizations who have some experience working on developing equitable micro grids thinking about low income solar and or community solar and storage and how we can make sure that we are scaling micro grids storage resilience in a way that will include low income and or historically disadvantaged communities in those solutions.

27:33  
So I will say this is an area that I think is a little bit less explored than some of the other areas in terms of what those solutions look like and how they are scalable.

27:46  
So we're also really looking for organizations that can be thought leaders on what the solution should be or how we should shape thinking around ensuring that equity is included within each of these areas, especially the resilience, storage and grid benefits.

28:02  
So in terms of applications, really looking for organizations that have some experience and knowledge around this area who have you know equitable solar expertise generally and or who have networks and or experience bringing folks together to be collaborative about identifying solutions and presenting those solutions to us.

28:27  
Thank you.

28:28  
Will there be a teaming partners list for identifying core team members outside of our network, IE increased diversity of thought, Yes, that's great.

28:38  
Yeah, we're we're going to be working with the community practice leads to really help build a diverse core team to support the project.

28:47  
So we would love to hear from folks on who you think should be included, but we're going to be collecting, you know that information and could even have a more open process too for folks to express interest in participating.

28:58  
But we want to make sure that the core teams are diverse and bringing in some great perspectives.

29:05  
I think this wasn't on the slides but also wanted to flag that for each of the core team members, I think we anticipated about 20 hours of of work for them attending monthly meetings and supporting the project and each would receive a $3000 stipend for their work participating on the project.

29:23  
So we want to make sure that you know organizations are compensated for their capacity and their participation and we want to bring in diverse perspectives and voices.

29:33  
So that'll be a joint effort that we'll we'll go through with you because the equitable solar communities are practice specific to an in geographic location.

29:43  
There is no info on location in the Energy Works website.

29:48  
Yes, I would say that it is geographically related to the full of the United States as well as the US territories.

29:58  
So we're really thinking about a national perspective, but we're looking for organizations that you know may have national and or regional perspectives that can be extrapolated to a more national perspective.

30:12  
But we really want to look at solutions that can be scaled nationally.

30:17  
I understanding that they may need to be a bit different in different parts of the country.

30:20  
Is that something we'd love to dig more into with you as a lead of a community of practice for this project?

30:29  
How are, how are you defining resources?

30:31  
What is and is not included?

30:33  
Oh, that just, oh, something else got uploaded before.

30:36  
So we'll do this one first.

30:37  
But trying to remember what that relates to.

30:43  
So, OK.

30:43  
So I think in terms of resources we're really trying to think expansively.

30:48  
So within each community of practice trying to identify both research but also tools and technologies and you know pathways that can be helpful to expand a community of practice.

31:03  
For example the Department of Energy in the national labs have developed a lot of tools to help assess you know solar sighting and permitting and things like that to to reduce barriers and increase access.

31:18  
So we'd we'd love to be thinking about what are resources that can really be helpful in scaling communities of practice, be them, be they technology, tools or resources, be them, be they technology or resources, a additional technical assistance or resources for folks or different things like that.

31:44  
So we really want to be thinking expansively.

31:49  
Are applicants able to include letters of support for potential partnering organizations in the appendix section?

32:00  
Yes, they should be able to do that.

32:03  
I'm not I'm not remembering now if we included that in the application but we would love to see if you have letters of support from partners that can be included.

32:12  
Sure are joint or partnership applications encouraged for this project?

32:24  
We're really looking for one organization to be the community of practice lead.

32:30  
The I I believe the funding from from Energy Works for the community practice lead will need to be going to one organization.

32:39  
So we would prefer one organization to be applying as the lead and then potentially could cite some additional staff or partners at other organizations who could be supporting.

32:52  
But we're looking for one main applicant.

32:58  
Can you further define what you mean by regional multi county or multi state?

33:04  
Yeah.

33:04  
We, we left regional up to be a little bit flexible.

33:10  
So I think probably looking more at a regional state level because again, we are trying to get that national perspective.

33:20  
But we do recognize that when we're thinking about equity and equitable deployment, there's a lot of really incredible knowledge at the local level, at the county level as well.

33:32  
So if you're an organization that works at a regional county level, we would love to include you as someone who is applying perfect.

33:45  
How important is national expertise exposure for the lead organization?

33:49  
We are a local organization of good connections.

33:51  
Not sure if that is disqualifying.

34:00  
I would say that applicants don't necessarily have to have national expertise if they have local expertise on the community of practice area.

34:13  
I think that's part of what the the goal of the the core team is and this community convening is to be able to bring in additional national perspectives from additional organizations as well.

34:24  
So if you're an organization that has a lot of expertise on equitable solar deployment, convening folks, synthesizing information and key takeaways, then I would definitely encourage you to apply and a lot of that knowledge we, we can, you know, continue to bring in through partners as well.

34:48  
Are you looking for communities of practice that are specific to a small number of communities, or should communities of practice be geographically broader?

34:58  
Yeah.

34:58  
So the communities of practice, again, we're really looking for each of these to be a kind of national focus or be able to be extrapolated to, you know, communities across the country.

35:12  
So for the communities of practice that we'll be putting together, we would love to make sure that the core teams are, you know, geographically representative of across the country.

35:21  
And when those community convenings are put together as well for each of the communities of practice, we'd love to make sure that we're bringing in folks from, you know, different perspectives in terms of local community perspectives, state, federal and from all parts of the country as well.

35:39  
What does knowledge of in working relationships with a diverse set of local or regional organizations mean in concrete terms?

35:49  
Yeah.

35:50  
I think in concrete terms, we're looking for organizations who have, you know, partnered with a lot of different types of organizations maybe that focus on equity focused work.

36:03  
And we want to see what those relationships look like, what that experience looks like.

36:08  
Because for a community practice lead, we're really looking for organizations who have experience kind of building coalitions of folks working on projects, working on solutions and organizations that have experience working with partners.

36:25  
Because we really see this is a very collaborative type of project.

36:29  
So I would say in the application feel free to flag the different types of organizations who you have you know worked with on similar projects or experience with diverse sets of organizations or or projects that you've worked on.

36:48  
Is there preference for organizations that have or have not directly received DOV funding?

36:55  
That's a great question.

36:56  
We don't have that included in the application that there's a preference either way.

37:02  
So I would say organizations who have received DODOE funding can apply and organizations who haven't can also apply.

37:09  
And Ariel, I'll add on that, that that is one of the questions that DOE is looking at just their engagement on all these opportunities and trying to understand who the outreach is.

37:21  
And so that's why that's included.

37:22  
It's not a qualifying question you.

37:28  
Is there any advantage for applying early rather than right before the deadline?

37:35  
No, there there won't be.

37:37  
We won't officially review the applications until after the deadline.

37:42  
So I would say there's not necessarily an advantage.

37:46  
There will be another opportunity as I said for office hours on December 1st.

37:51  
So if you had additional questions as you're completing your application, you could always join that meeting as well to get those questions clarified before submitting on the 8th.

38:06  
To be clear, funding the ESCP leads will be with a reimbursement methodology.

38:11  
Will this, will there be any initial funds be made available to help offset startup cost?

38:19  
I think Carla would be for helping with this one.

38:23  
So again we work on this basically with our DA partner here, you know this particular office, but we're going to follow what they put in the.

38:33  
SO ES generally speaking, we have a percentage format for paying the milestones.

38:41  
There are cases where depending on the need of the situation, there could be an early milestone to sort of help the process along.

38:51  
But generally this is a in arrears reimbursement scenario and generally it is approximately 30 days from when the invoice is submitted to when it has worked through the internal system at DOE and then Defense Works, which is our parent organization is able to then send the payment back out to the, you know, the person who submitted the payment request.

39:19  
So that is not something that we are working ahead.

39:22  
We don't generally do seed money on the front end.

39:26  
If that is something that is a case of need that DOE considers, then that will be part of the SOE that goes out the statement of effort.

39:38  
Yes.

39:38  
And the way that we've set up the reimbursement for the project, again we have 10% of the total funds.

39:46  
So that's 75,000 going to the lead organization after they identify the core team and have their kick off meeting which again can happen within the first few weeks of the project starting.

39:57  
So we were looking to have an early milestone to help folks have some funding as we kick off the project.

40:05  
And I believe the, yes, the different milestones are listed on the application.

40:09  
So you can see how the funding will be distributed across Perfect community solar and LMI rooftop development are two different animals.

40:21  
Should we focus on one or the other or both?

40:25  
Great question.

40:26  
We are.

40:28  
We, I think we we understand that they are both vast categories and we're looking for the community of practice to be able to focus on both of these to some extent.

40:38  
So we want to look at both low income rooftop and low income community solar access and this may mean bringing in different core team stakeholders and having more targeted conversations and that that convening.

40:54  
But as as was said we'll be putting together statement of efforts once we identify the core team leads and we can more closely scale out and identify what will be included at that time as well.

41:09  
Just want to confirm it is 375,000 funding available total for the five communities 75 pay each that is correct.

41:17  
So each Community of Practice lead will be awarded $75,000 for their work over the six months.

41:24  
Again, if an organization has expertise across multiple communities of practice and has the capacity to lead more than one, you can apply for more than one as well, and that's that's allowed in the application.

41:38  
There's also separate funding, $3000 per core team member, with up to six per community of practice as well, which is separate from this budget.

41:49  
Is there a hard cut off the number of team members allowed to work on this project?

41:53  
Does each organization count as one person?

41:57  
That's a good question, yes.

41:58  
So we do not have a hard cut off on how many people can support the project.

42:03  
In terms of core team organizations, we are thinking about those as an organization rather than an individual.

42:10  
So if an organization had multiple folks who they thought should be included, that would be fine if they have the capacity for those folks to be included.

42:19  
So I think a lot of the number of of folks will depend on organizations, budgets and capacities and ability to support the project.

42:26  
Based on the funding that's provided, you elaborate more on the community participants.

42:34  
What is their role?

42:36  
Yes, So we are aiming to have each of the communities of practice hold a community wide convening.

42:42  
We are hoping that the community practice leads will shape what this will look like to have it be as effective as possible.

42:48  
But we're envisioning this as an online convening that's open to community participants.

42:53  
So any members of the public who are interested in the topic and would like to participate and have it set up in a way where folks can be learning together, providing input, feedback, identifying gaps and really helping to hone in on those key questions for the community of practice around, you know, how should we scale, what are the best practices, etcetera.

43:17  
And we're aiming for these convenings to happen about halfway through the community of practice.

43:26  
Is our small businesses allowed to participate, participate.

43:31  
Sure, yeah, small businesses can participate.

43:34  
We're again looking for organizations who have some expertise or knowledge on low income solar access benefits etcetera and small businesses are are welcome to apply.

43:51  
Sorry I joined late.

43:51  
Can you provide the link to the opportunity We will put that in the chat right now.

43:56  
I believe it'll be there.

44:00  
Yes, that's been that's been placed in the chat.

44:04  
Thank you.

44:05  
We are a workforce development firm with training programs on a clear energy including solar and with equitable training platform.

44:12  
Can we be a lead organization?

44:18  
Yes, potentially.

44:20  
Yeah.

44:21  
So we are looking for for the workforce, community of practice.

44:25  
We're looking for organizations who have expertise on you know equitable solar and or community solar workforce development.

44:35  
You know thinking about those training programs as well as a number of other factors in workforce development.

44:41  
So if you feel like your organization would be well suited to convene folks on this topic to conduct that research to identify next steps and best practices, I I welcome you to to apply for the opportunity.

44:55  
If our organization is chosen for this might there might that open opportunities for us to apply for further funding to help deploy solar and LMI communities.

45:07  
Yeah.

45:07  
So we don't have any additional opportunities open at this time for low income of an equitable solar deployment and development.

45:21  
Likely there will be more things to come in the future.

45:25  
So, you know, I would say Ariel.

45:30  
Yes, Ariel, I think your mic is, I don't know if it ain't always experienced that, but your mic cut out for me.

45:37  
Oh, Yep, you're good, you're good, you're solid.

45:40  
OK, great.

45:42  
Yes.

45:42  
I would say that community practice leads are not necessarily, you know, guaranteed future funding.

45:50  
That would be my answer to that question.

45:55  
Are there any plans for continuation or follow on collaboration for the COPS after the six month?

46:03  
Yeah, I think similarly I'll say we haven't yet determined what the next steps will be in this process yet.

46:10  
I will say that the Workforce and Equitable Access team in the solar office is very committed to continuing to be innovative and find solutions for expanding equitable solar access.

46:22  
So TBD on what future plans will look like and we'll keep everybody informed and updated as those develop.

46:32  
Are you open to identification of regulatory barriers or proposed solutions?

46:39  
Sure, Yeah.

46:40  
Regulatory barriers definitely can be barriers for equitable solar and community solar deployment.

46:46  
I think that regulatory barriers likely should be included in terms of of things that different stakeholders can be looking at to ensure, you know, rapid and equitable deployment of solar.

46:58  
Sure.

46:59  
Yeah.

47:01  
I mean workforce development should be tied to all areas.

47:04  
Why is it a stand alone here?

47:06  
What academic institute should be preferred in this area?

47:11  
Yeah, so I think there's a lot of different elements of workforce development that of course ties in across all of the areas.

47:20  
I actually think all of the communities of practice are interrelated in different ways.

47:24  
And as we roll out these communities of practice, we do want the leads of the communities of practice to be in conversation with each other to make sure that the solutions are holistic and supporting the one another as they're being developed.

47:39  
I think there's a lot of key things to think about when it comes to workforce development such as how to develop training programs, how you know to work with unions, like all of these different things we have listed on that previous slide.

47:56  
So that's why we have it as a separate category to really dig into some of those key workforce specific challenges that are there in terms of academic institutions.

48:05  
Academic institutions can apply to lead communities of practice if if they feel that they meet the criteria that we've we've placed in the application.

48:16  
Will this work intersect with the rollout of solar for all and if so, how?

48:23  
Yeah, that's a great question.

48:25  
So this work will you know, be happening at the same time as you know, Solar for All will be announced and beginning to be rolled out.

48:37  
We're aiming to have these communities of practice kick off in January and end around July of next year.

48:45  
And you know, the knowledge that we gain from this will help the solar office in particular be able to think about and plan what some next steps could be around equitable solar deployment.

48:57  
So stay tuned For more information on that as well.

49:03  
Second question, is there any special focus on or interest in study and development on Native reservations, specifically across the country for this project?

49:13  
It's a great question.

49:14  
I think that definitely needs to be included across all of the categories.

49:18  
So we want the communities of practice to really be thinking holistically across the United States and that includes tribal territories as well.

49:28  
So that should be included in the conversations and the solutions that are developed.

49:37  
That is our last question.

49:38  
Right now.

49:38  
We still have about 10 minutes, so the slider link should be in the chat if there's any more last minute questions.

49:46  
Perfect.

49:47  
Yeah.

49:47  
And then continue to push them in if you have them.

49:49  
Thank you so much, Chrissy.

49:50  
Great job.

49:51  
And Ariel, thank you so much, man, for answering those questions.

49:53  
So at this point, I'm going to reintroduce Miss Carla Heron.

49:58  
She's the Director of Energy Works, the partnership.

50:01  
I'm the principal and again, sit on top of multiple different innovation hubs.

50:05  
So we're happy to be of service here.

50:07  
The Energy Works team is standing by to help and facilitate info at Energy Works and Carla will list all this stuff and how do you kind of ask questions and everything.

50:15  
So Carla, please, ma'am, over to you very much appreciate it.

50:19  
I I will note that we had two more questions come in while we were wrapping up.

50:25  
And so I don't know if we want to pop back over there very quickly.

50:30  
Absolutely.

50:32  
Thank you.

50:32  
Yes, thank you, Ariel, for taking your time today.

50:36  
Is if selected, are there requirements on how organizations report time spent on the COP?

50:43  
Yeah.

50:43  
So again, we've set this up to be based on milestone deliverables, so there won't be time reporting requirements, but as the deliverables are achieved, that would be the reporting requirements.

50:56  
Just to clarify, a community of practice is the lead organization plus 6 core team members, correct?

51:03  
That is correct.

51:05  
As well as just thinking about broadly the community participation through that convening as well.

51:10  
We want the community of practice to really be, you know, bringing in as many perspectives and stakeholders as possible.

51:17  
But the core community of practice will be the lead organization, plus six additional organization members as well.

51:26  
The 75 K would not cover the court team members.

51:29  
That funding is separate.

51:35  
Perfect.

51:37  
All right.

51:39  
And I think we've made it to the end of the questions once again.

51:42  
And thank you, Chrissy, for monitoring Slido and Ariel for working through the answers with us.

51:51  
The one thing we'll say about this is we will collect all of the information from today, both the recording of this particular session that will be available to download as well as a transcript, which many people find easier when they're trying to do a keyword search to go to one specific answer or topic that was brought up.

52:14  
And then all of these slider questions will also be consolidated into AQ and A that can be downloaded.

52:21  
And as pertinent questions come in that are important for all of these interested parties to be aware of, those are made available as an FAQ on the Opportunities website.

52:33  
For this, we'll post these links in the chat in just a moment, but the big thing to remember is that everything is easily available if you go to energyworks.org and from there you have an Opportunities page that will bring up both this opportunity as well as numerous others.

52:55  
And you're able to click the link to join the ecosystem so that you can be apprised soonest when similar opportunities are available or there are updates to this one that you might need to be aware of.

53:10  
A few reminders on some of the key things for this.

53:13  
As far as the end dates that are coming up, obviously as they've mentioned, there will be office hours that will be held again on Friday, December 1st and that's at 1:00 PM.

53:26  
And then we have the submissions deadline closing the following week on the 5th or sorry on the 8th of December at 5:00 PM.

53:35  
If you do have questions along the way, we encourage everyone to reach out to info@energyworks.org.

53:42  
That is a mailbox monitored by the entire Energy Works team.

53:47  
If there are simple questions that we can answer and point you to immediately, we'll do that.

53:54  
If they do require DOE to review and provide further input, we will be passing those over to the DOE team, to Ariel and to Anna to coordinate the formal answer to be brought back.

54:06  
And of course those questions and answers will be added to the FAQ so that everyone is aware of the information as well.

54:16  
We also want to remind you that there are links and and further details inside the opportunities page that you'll probably want to review.

54:25  
They will help you prepare for doing your application.

54:28  
And again, if there are questions, reach out to the team and we are able to help you to provide either direct answers or coordinate those as well.

54:41  
And if there are no other questions that came in, I actually do see no, that is the same one we had a minute ago, isn't it?

54:49  
Yes.

54:49  
So I think it's the same one I saw a second ago.

54:54  
We want to thank Ariel for your time and for the rest of the Energy Works team and Brad, the Defense Works Chief Technology and Innovation Officer for assisting us with this and have a good rest of your day.

55:15  
Thank you all.

55:17  
Thank you.