Traditional Community Solar Webinar and Support, Batching Updates and Support, and Equity Eligible Contractor Designee Applications

October 28, 2022

Program News

- **Traditional Community Solar (TCS) & Batching Webinar Held Monday, October 24, 2022**

  Ability for Approved Vendors to submit Community Solar project applications will open on November 1, 2022, at 8:00 a.m. CPT. In support of the application opening, a webinar was held on October 24, 2022, to share information about project requirements, clarifications, use of scoring in the case of the TCS category capacity being exceeded, application submission, batching, payment, and additional support available from the Program Administrator. The Agency and Program Administrator appreciate all of the thoughtful questions stakeholders provided during the webinar. A video recording of the webinar, presentation slides, and a list of answered questions are now available for review on the Program website. In support of the TCS application opening and the October 27, 2022 release of batching capability in the portal, the Program Administrator is continuing to offer resources for stakeholders, including the following:

  - A package of resources related to Traditional Community Solar:
    - Final Scoring Guidelines
    - TCS Scoring Rationale
    - TCS Clarifications #1
    - TCS Clarifications #2
  - Portal Help Guides, including a Part I Application Guide and a Batching Guide. Please be aware that the Guides are updated periodically, so please visit the Portal Help Guides page to ensure you are accessing the most current versions
  - TCS Informational Webinar on October 24th:
    - Webinar Recording
    - Presentation Slides
  - Extended Office Hours (See schedule below)
  - Updated Project Application Reports to include a column with County location.

- **Reminders – EECs, CS Projects, and the TCS Category**

  Use of Non-EEC Subcontractors/Nested Designees – The Program Administrator clarified on October 21st through the TCS Clarifications #1 document that in order to receive points for the commitment to utilize EEC Designees within scoring *Section 3 – Equity Eligible Contractors*, the use of non-EEC certified subcontractors or nested Designees is prohibited. This requirement is not extended to projects submitted to the EEC category. This is simply a requirement for the points that can be awarded under Section 3 of the scoring criteria for the TCS category. Requirements for submission to the EEC category can be reviewed in the Program Guidebook.

  Community Solar Projects in EEC and Public Schools Categories – With the opening of the Traditional Community Solar category on November 1, 2022, the ability to submit Community Solar projects into the EEC category and Public Schools category will become available as well. Scoring criteria as outlined in the Final Scoring Guidelines are only applicable to the Traditional Community Solar category; CS projects submitted to the EEC or Public Schools categories do not need to and should not submit any materials as it relates to the scoring criteria. Finally, Community-Driven Community Solar (CDCS) applications have been available since September 1, 2022 and the 90-day application window for these projects ends on November 30, 2022.

- **Batching Released in Portal on October 27, 2022**

  Batching functionality in the portal was released on October 27, 2022, at 8:00 a.m. CPT. The Program Administrator has published technical documentation in support of the batching release and other portal

support resources, which are all available at https://illinoisabp.com/portal-help/. Extended office hours were offered on October 27 and October 28, 2022 to support this release. Please see the Office Hours section below for future sessions offered.

- **Equity Eligible Contractor Designee Application and Attestation Now Available**
  Approved Vendor Designees can now register as Equity Eligible Contractor Designees. This registration does not qualify projects from those Designees to be eligible for the Equity Eligible Contractor ("EEC") category. Such Designees need to work with an Approved Vendor that is EEC certified in order for their project to be eligible for the EEC category. EEC certified Designees may also work with an Approved Vendor that is not EEC certified, but all projects submitted by non-EEC certified Approved Vendors are ineligible for the EEC Category. The application process for Designees will use the same criteria as described in Section 2.B of the Program Guidebook. An application and attestation form is available via the EEC page of the program website and directly at: this link. https://forms.office.com/r/dB5pp59Mhx

- **Ongoing Program Portal Updates**
  The Program Administrator continues to update and optimize the new Program portal, provide new and updated supporting documents, as well as additional Office Hours for support, with updated sessions outlined in the Transition Updates section below. Ongoing portal updates will now be published on the Program website at https://illinoisabp.com/portal-updates/ . Recent updates include the following:
  - **New Feature Functionality** - Batching functionality for all project categories other than Traditional Community Solar became available in the portal beginning at 8:00 a.m. CPT on Thursday, October 27, 2022
  - **New Feature Functionality** - Traditional Community Solar Part I application submission will be available in the portal beginning at 8:00 a.m. CPT on Tuesday, November 1, 2022
  - **Feature Improvement** - AVs with multiple Vendor IDs now have ability to view any of their Vendor IDs' Disclosure Forms or Applications. As part of the November 1, 2022 re-opening of TCS applications, Community Solar AVs will be able to select any of their Vendor IDs in order to create a Part I application.
  - **Issue Reports and Bug Fixes** – The Program Administrator continues to investigate and address reported issues and bug fixes, including modification of an application field for REC value calculation, changing it from an editable status to a fixed field using an established calculation, which is expected to be resolved shortly.
  - **Future Functionality** – The Program is aiming for availability of Part II application in November 2022, with more information to follow.
  - **Future Functionality** – The Program is aiming for availability of the Disclosure Form API for Community Solar Disclosure Forms before the close of the calendar year.

  A growing library of technical documents and portal help guides has been added to the Program website. Stakeholders can access the latest technical support tools at: https://illinoisabp.com/portal-help/

- **Ongoing Operations Updates**
  The Program Administrator continues to work diligently to ensure that Program operations and processes are functioning efficiently and effectively to ensure ongoing Program success and stakeholder support. Recent and forthcoming operational updates include:
  - Processing of project applications submitted prior to July 1, 2022, and transition to the new Program Administrator is nearly complete, and the Program Administrator will soon begin reviewing applications submitted in the new portal, in the order in which they were received.
  - Part II applications are currently being processed in the order that they were received.
  - The Program Administrator is making continued progress on Community Solar subscriber verification, currently working on curing start-date discrepancies with AVs.
  - Data has been collected for the November REC invoicing, and AVs will soon receive generated invoices.
  - Annual reports are being finalized to share with utilities by the end of October.

Transition Updates

- **Program Administrator Office Hours**
  To support AVs and Designees experiencing technical difficulties with use of the Portal or in resolving other challenges, the Program Administrator is pleased to continue offering open office hours to answer questions, provide support, and gather feedback. Sessions are held with individual AV or Designee points of contact, via Zoom, utilizing a waiting room for individual appointment privacy. Please remain in the waiting room until the Administrator admits you. Upcoming office hours are planned for the following dates and times, including added availability around the November 1, 2022 opening for TCS applications, with more dates expected to follow:
    - Special Support for Traditional Community Solar release on 11/1 - Tuesday, November 1 – 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. CPT - Join link: https://energy-solution.zoom.us/j/95588710302
    - Special Support for Traditional Community Solar release on 11/1 - Tuesday, November 1 – 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. CPT - Join link: https://energy-solution.zoom.us/j/95588710302
    - Special Support for Traditional Community Solar release on 11/1 - Wednesday, November 2 – 8:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. CPT - Join link: https://energy-solution.zoom.us/j/95588710302
    - Special Support for Traditional Community Solar release on 11/1 - Wednesday, November 2 – 12:00 p.m. – 2:00 p.m. CPT - Join link: https://energy-solution.zoom.us/j/95588710302
    - Wednesday, November 9 – 10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. CPT - Join link: https://energy-solution.zoom.us/j/95588710302

REMINDER: All transition updates can be found on the ABP Transition Hub webpage.

CONTACT US: For Portal, application, or Program-specific questions and inquiries, please contact admin@illinoisabp.com or call 877-783-1820.

Requirements and Reminders

- **Upcoming and Recorded Equity Accountability System Webinars, and Additional Resources**
  In accordance with Chapter 10 of the Final 2022 Long-Term Plan, the Agency and Program Administrator are leading introductory webinars to the Equity Accountability System (EAS), providing an overview of the EAS, discussion of key elements, future opportunities and requirements for Approved Vendors and Designees, and available support from the Program Administrator. The first webinar was held October 4, 2022, and questions and answers have now been posted to the Equity Accountability System page of the Program website, along with a recording of the webinar, presentation slides, and an attestation form that stakeholders are asked to complete following viewing of the webinar.

  On **November 15, 2022, at 10:00 a.m. CPT**, the Program Administrator and Agency is holding a second webinar on the EAS, to provide more information on annual compliance plan submission and assessment with more education and training to follow in early 2023. Participants are encouraged to ask questions during the Question & Answer section of the webinar. **Attendees can join the webinar via Zoom at this link:** https://energy-solution.zoom.us/j/95834352530

- **Expanded Consumer Protection Working Group Meeting on November 4, 2022**
  The next meeting of the Expanded Consumer Protection Working Group will take place on Friday, November 4, 2022 at 10:00 a.m. CPT via Zoom, in an unrecorded session scheduled for 1.5 hours. The Agency's intent is to use the October and November meetings to solicit stakeholder input on potential adjustments to Program policies and requirements, to inform proposals that will then be put out for written public comment later this calendar year. Zoom information for this meeting will soon be sent via calendar invitation. More

information including agendas and notes, including the agenda for the November 4th meeting, are available at https://illinoisabp.com/cp-working-group/ .

- **Illinois Department of Labor (IDOL) Prevailing Wage Training Webinars**
  As noted in the 2022 Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan, most Adjustable Block Program projects must comply with the Illinois Prevailing Wage Act, which requires that employees engaged in construction activities related to a project be paid prevailing wage; minimum compensation levels are set by the Illinois Department of Labor. Information regarding prevailing wage can be found on the Program's Prevailing Wage Hub. IDOL is hosting informational webinars on prevailing wage requirements and will answer questions as time allows during scheduled webinars, which will be held via WebEx at the following upcoming dates and times.
    - Wednesday, November 16 at 3:20 p.m. CPT – Join link:
      https://illinois.webex.com/illinois/j.php?MTID=mbcef9ff65828f936043500c4b3a33d26
- **Program Year 2022-2023 Resources Available for Stakeholders**
  On September 1, 2022, the launch of the Program Year 2022-2023, a variety of resources were released for Prospective and Approved Vendors and Designees. Resources are available at the following links:
    - Approved Vendor Application (includes Equity Eligible Contractor application)
    - Welcome to Program Year 2022-2023 Webinar
    - Program Year 2022-2023 Resource Guide
    - Program Year 2022-2023 Webinar Q&A
    - Designee Equity Eligible Contractor Application