



Funding Research Memo: Bioenergy Facilities

Last updated: August 2018

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THIS MEMO WILL BE UPDATED PERIODICALLY. IF YOU HAVE ANY SUGGESTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDING RESOURCES, PLEASE CONTACT THE SNC FUND DEVELOPMENT TEAM sncfundingteam@sierranevada.ca.gov.

CAVEAT – Grant guidelines and deadlines are subject to periodic change. Please note the last date this memo was updated and check the program websites for new information. Most deadlines listed are projected from the last funding round and may be unreliable. Check the website!

Funding Summary Table

(*Hyperlinks to more complete information below, including links to program websites.)

Grant*	Funding Range	Funding Focus	Estimated Deadline (most recent deadline)	Eligible Costs
CAPACITY BUILDING AND OUTREACH FUNDING				
USDA Rural Community Development Initiative	\$50,000 - \$250,000. 1:1 match required	Develop the capacity and ability of rural nonprofits, low-income communities, and federally recognized Tribes to undertake housing, community facilities, or economic development projects.	Different each year (June 25, 2018)	Provide technical assistance and capacity building related to housing, community facilities, or community and economic development projects. Eligible costs include staff assistance, training, predevelopment consultations, and some computer and software expenses.
PG&E Foundation	Usually below \$5,000 but there are exceptions	Programs designed to promote energy sustainability, environmental conservation, and stewardship of land and resources.	Open March through October (October 5, 2018)	No specific limitations. PG&E gives out a lot of grants to a broad range of organizations for a variety of purposes. A good use might be for meetings and workshops about the proposed bioenergy project.
PROJECT PLANNING, FEASIBILITY STUDIES, AND OTHER PRE-DEVELOPMENT COSTS				
USFS Wood Innovations grant	Up to \$250,000, 50% non-	Expand and accelerate wood energy and wood products markets to support forest	January (January 22, 2018)	Pre-project development funding category can pay for environmental documentation and other planning tasks.

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	federal match required.	management needs on National Forest System and other forest lands.		
Sierra Nevada Conservancy Watershed Improvement Grant Program	Up to \$100,000 for planning grants. Match not required but adds to score.	Projects that will promote healthy forests and watersheds in the Sierra Nevada region. Includes both implementation (Category 1) and planning (Category 2) grants.	Varies (July 25, 2018 for pre-applications)	Category 2 grants can be used for pre-project activities necessary for a specific future on-the-ground projects that meets the Category 1 grant requirements. These include bioenergy facility development and fee title acquisitions for biomass utilization facilities that increase capacity to improve forest and watershed health. Eligible costs include CEQA and NEPA.
Local Air Districts	Usually about \$30,000, depends on program			Funding is often available for technologies that reduce air pollution such as bioenergy facilities. Such funding may include feasibility studies.
HUD Community Development Block Grants Planning/TA	Up to \$100,000. 5% local match required.	Planning and Research	Changes each year (December 1, 2017)	Research, analysis and planning for community needs for public improvements, community facilities, and local planning issues. Funding cannot be used for specific project feasibility study, but could analyze feasibility of a biomass business park, for example.
IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS				
Sierra Nevada Conservancy Watershed Improvement Grant Program	Up to \$500,000. Match not required but adds to score.	Site improvement and acquisition projects that support biomass utilization facilities which increase capacity to improve forest and watershed health.	Varies (July 25, 2018 for pre-applications)	Category 1 grants can be used for bioenergy facility development and fee title acquisitions that support forest products manufacturing and/or biomass utilization facilities that increase capacity to improve forest and watershed health.
HUD CDBG Enterprise Fund	Up-to \$500,000.	Create or retain private sector jobs principally for low-income and very low-income persons.	Changes each year (July 27, 2016)	Grants for publicly-owned infrastructure that will support business development and loans for private businesses.
HUD CDBG Over-the-Counter grants	\$300,000 – \$3 million.	Job generation.	Changes each year (July 27, 2016)	Financial assistance (loans) to a single business or multiple businesses served by common infrastructure.
HUD Indian Community Development Block Grants	\$605K – \$2.75 million based on Tribal population. No match	Several categories of funding, includes public facilities.	Changes every year (May 18, 2017)	For federally recognized Indian Tribes and Tribal organizations. One category of funding is public facilities.

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Grant*	Funding Range	Funding Focus	Estimated Deadline (most recent deadline)	Eligible Costs
	required but adds to points.			
EDA Economic Assistance Programs	No specific limit. 1:1 match usually required.	Funding is for assessments, infrastructure, or facilities that allow job-generating businesses to locate in the area. No direct funding for private businesses.	Ongoing	Feasibility assessments, infrastructure planning and implementation projects, including construction, non-construction, and revolving loan funds. Projects must be consistent with the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the region. Communities must demonstrate economic distress.
USDA Rural Development Community Facilities Grants	No specific limit. Grants are combined with loans and loan guarantees.	To assist in the development of essential community facilities	Ongoing	These grants/loans are to construct, enlarge, or improve community facilities for health care, public safety, and community and public services. But since this can include the purchase of equipment required for a facility's operation, it could possibly be used for biomass heating systems.
CA Energy Commission EPIC Funding Opportunities	Depends on solicitation	Technology demonstration and deployment projects.	Not yet set.	Can be for technology research or demonstration.



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U.S. Department of Agriculture Rural Community Development Initiative

<https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/rural-community-development-initiative-grants>

The objective of this program is to develop the capacity and ability of nonprofit community-based housing and community development organizations, as well as low-income rural communities, to improve housing, community facilities, and community/economic development projects in rural areas.

This grant provides funding to an intermediary organization which in turn provides the technical assistance to sub-grantees – the community organizations developing the housing, community facilities, or economic development projects. The intermediary can assist multiple sub-grantees as long as they all meet specific organizational requirements. Part of the scoring criteria is the income level for the community served by the organization, which is determined to be the area where the organization's office is located.

Rural Community Development Initiative grants may be used for a variety of activities, including:

- Providing technical assistance to sub-grantees on how to effectively prepare a strategic plan
- Providing technical assistance to sub-grantees on how to access alternative funding sources
- Building organizational capacity through board training
- Developing training tools, such as videos, workbooks, and reference guides to be used by the sub-grantee
- Providing technical assistance and training

The grants require 1:1 cash match; federal funding may be an eligible match in some cases.

Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) Foundation

<http://www.pge.com/en/about/community/grants/index.page?>

Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) gives small grants in a few areas, including 'economic and community vitality' and 'environment'. There is a preference for low-income and underserved communities. Grants applications are invited by PG&E employees, so the best idea is to contact local PG&E public affairs staff. Once invited to submit a grant, the application process is done online.

Grants are small, usually under \$5,000. However, the corporation gives out a lot of grants, so if you just need a few thousand dollars for events, training resources,

equipment, etc., this might be worth pursuing. The funding process is open for a period of about six months every year, but this period changes year to year.

USFS Wood Innovations Grants

<https://www.fs.fed.us/science-technology/energy-forest-products/wood-innovations-grants>

The Forest Service seeks proposals that significantly increase or stimulate markets for wood energy and wood products in a manner that has a measurable and meaningful long-term impact on National Forest System and other forest lands that need robust wood supply markets for low value wood. Priorities include:

- Reduce hazardous fuels and improve forest health on National Forest System and other forest lands
- Reduce costs of forest management
- Promote economic and environmental health of communities

Funding priorities are grouped into categories. In the past, categories have included pre-development funding for wood energy projects such as bioenergy facilities, which could include CEQA/NEPA and permitting costs.

Sierra Nevada Conservancy Watershed Improvement Program Grants

<http://www.sierranevada.ca.gov/other-assistance/prop1-grantprog>

The focus of this grant program is forest health projects that result in multiple watershed benefits, consistent with the following purposes:

- Implement fuel treatment projects to reduce wildfire risks, protect watersheds tributary to water storage facilities, and promote watershed health.
- Protect and restore rural and urban watershed health to improve watershed storage capacity, forest health, protection of life and property, and greenhouse gas reduction.
- Implement watershed adaptation projects to reduce the impacts of climate changes on California's communities and ecosystems.

Bioenergy projects have been funded in previous rounds. The program has two funding categories: Category 1 for implementation projects and Category 2 for project planning. Category 2 grants may include funding for completion of CEQA and NEPA requirements related to a specific future on-the-ground project. The maximum grant under Category 2 is \$100,000. Match is not required but leverage will add to point scores. Eligible applications include public agencies, qualifying nonprofit organizations and certain tribal organizations.

To be eligible to receive a grant award from the SNC under this program, projects must meet **all** the following criteria:

- Be located within a conifer or mixed-conifer forested area of the Sierra Nevada Region, or have a direct impact on forest lands and waters within the Region.

- Be consistent with the SNC mission and program areas as defined in the SNC Strategic Plan and the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program (WIP) as they relate to forest health.
- Meet the requirements of Propositions 1 or 68.
- Result in a clear and demonstrable public benefit.

Applicants are encouraged to meet with SNC Area Representatives (listed in the Grant Guidelines) to discuss their projects prior to submitting an application. The process is two-phase, with mandatory pre-applications.

Local Air District Funding

Many air districts have grant programs to explore the feasibility of technologies that reduce air pollution. You can find your local air district here: <http://www.arb.ca.gov/capcoa/dismap.htm>. Go to the district's website and look for a link to 'grants' or 'incentives'. Here is an example from the Placer County Air District's Technology Assessment Program:

The Placer County Air Pollution Control District sponsors a Technology Assessment Program (TAP) to provide financial assistance in the form of grants for the development and evaluation of technologies which have the potential to reduce air pollution in Placer County. The program's intent is to provide grant funding for studies and other analysis that would help to assess the emissions effects of projects and to foster projects that may result in emission reductions in future years.

HUD Community Development Block Grant program general information

<http://www.hcd.ca.gov/grants-funding/active-funding/cdbg.shtml>

The Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program has multiple categories of funding, all of which come out in a 'SuperNOFA'. (In addition to the funding categories below, you may be interested in Public Services and Public Facilities funding.) Application due dates change yearly. There are many technical requirements for submission of these applications so start early.

Incorporated cities under 50,000 in population and counties with an unincorporated area population of under 200,000 are eligible to participate in the State CDBG Program. These must be 'non-entitlement' jurisdictions, which is pretty much always the case in rural areas. These jurisdictions must be in compliance with the state and federal requirements of OMB Circular A-133, Single Audit Report. Other technical restrictions apply – see the NOFA. Since only incorporated cities and counties may be applicants, contact the appropriate planning or economic development department to work with you on the application.

There are set-asides for non-federally recognized Tribes in the standard CDBG program. For federally recognized tribal programs, applications should be made to the [Indian CDBG program](#).

HUD Community Development Block Grant program Planning/Technical Assistance grants *(see General CDBG information above)*
<http://www.hcd.ca.gov/fa/cdbg/EconDevelopment.html>

This CDBG funding category studies focuses on research, analysis and planning for community needs in regard to housing, public improvements, community facilities, public services and local planning issues. Planning study final products must show a connection to assisting with an eligible CDBG activity. A 5% match is required.

HUD Community Development Block Grant program Enterprise Fund *(see General CDBG information above)*
<http://www.hcd.ca.gov/grants-funding/active-funding/cdbg/cdbg-ed.shtml>

This CDBG funding category provides up to \$500,000 to provide loans to businesses, or as grants for publicly-owned infrastructure that will support business development. Individual project funding decisions are made by the jurisdiction.

HUD Community Development Block Grant program (non-entitlement) Over-the-Counter (OTC) grants *(see General CDBG information above)*
<http://www.hcd.ca.gov/grants-funding/active-funding/cdbg/cdbg-ed.shtml>

This CDBG funding program allows each jurisdiction to submit one or more project proposals with a maximum of \$3,000,000 per NOFA. An OTC project can consist of financial assistance to a single business or multiple businesses served by common infrastructure. The most common form of an OTC project is a single business with a single project where funds are provided as a loan to an eligible borrower. The more complex OTC project occurs when OTC funds are used to pay for infrastructure improvements in support of a commercial development (shopping center or industrial park) that has multiple businesses. All businesses associated with or served by the infrastructure must be underwritten and qualified as part of the CDBG OTC funding proposal. Incubator facilities and farmers markets may also be funded as an OTC project, which provides support for growing local businesses in the community. Financing may be used for the following:

- To cover any offsite public improvements required as part of project development
- For working capital to pay for marketing costs, operating expenses and inventory
- For furniture, fixtures and equipment, and purchase and installation of manufacturing equipment
- Interior and exterior repairs and property improvements

- Demolition and reconstruction or repair of blighted buildings where the business will operate
- Refinancing existing indebtedness

HUD Indian Community Development Block Grants

https://portal.hud.gov/hudportal/HUD?src=/program_offices/public_indian_housing/ih/grants/icdbg

This grant program is for federally-recognized Indian tribes or tribal organizations. Grant funding limits depend on the size of the tribe but are usually about \$600,000. Match is not required but adds to the scoring. At least 70 percent of the grant funds must be used for activities that benefit low and moderate-income persons. The proposed activities must benefit the neediest segment of the population and must be critical to the viability of the cultural, social and/or economic viability of the community.

Possible funding categories include Economic Development and Community Facilities projects. Economic Development projects can include a wide variety of commercial, industrial, agricultural projects which may be owned and operated by the recipient or a third party. Community Facilities include infrastructure construction, e.g., roads, water and sewer facilities; and single or multipurpose community buildings.

For economic development assistance projects applicants must provide a financial analysis prepared by an independent entity. The financial analysis must demonstrate that the project is financially feasible and the project has a reasonable chance of success. The analysis must also demonstrate the public benefit resulting from the ICDBG assistance.

Dept. of Commerce Economic Development Administration Economic Assistance Programs

<http://www.eda.gov/funding-opportunities/>

EDA makes construction, non-construction, and revolving loan fund investments under the Public Works and Economic Adjustment Assistance Programs. Grants made under these programs support the implementation of regional economic development strategies designed to create jobs, leverage private capital, encourage economic development, and strengthen America's ability to compete in the global marketplace.

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis. Eligible applicants include nonprofits, federally recognized Tribes, cities, counties, and state governments. These grants are for economically distressed communities, documented by unemployment rate, per capita income, or other special need. Economic distress can also be documented when communities which have gone through a severe economic location, such as a natural disaster, plant closure or a base closure.

Through the Public Works program, EDA provides catalytic investments to help distressed communities build, design, or engineer critical infrastructure and facilities that will help implement regional development strategies and advance bottom-up economic development goals to promote regional prosperity. Prior examples of EDA investments include water and sewer system improvements, industrial parks, business incubators and accelerators, brownfield development, technology-based facilities, and science and research parks. Planning projects have included a regional assessment of forest biomass project opportunities.

This program funds both planning and implementation grants. Projects must be shown to generate a significant number of jobs in the future. The funding for planning projects tends to be less than implementation projects, though no specific limit is set. A one-to-one match is usually required, though this can be reduced if the economic distress is high enough.

In order to obtain the EDA grants, your project must be listed in the regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). The CEDS is developed by the local Economic Development District. Some counties have their own districts, others are part of multi-county regional districts. For a list of these multi-county districts, see: <http://www.eda.gov/resources/economic-development-directory/states/ca.htm>. You can also contact your local county economic development or planning department.

Proposed project must be submitted by the EDA program officer for your region. Northern and Southern California projects are handled by different program officers in the Seattle Regional Office: <https://www.eda.gov/contact/>. Contact them about your project before starting on an application.

USDA Rural Development Community Facilities Grants

<https://www.rd.usda.gov/programs-services/community-facilities-direct-loan-grant-program>

This program provides a combination of loans, loan guarantees and grants to assist in the development of essential community facilities in rural areas and towns of up to 20,000 in population. Grants are authorized on a graduated scale. Applicants located in small communities with low populations and low incomes will receive a higher percentage of grants. Grants are available to public entities such as municipalities, counties, and special-purpose districts, as well as non-profit corporations and tribal governments. In addition, applicants must have the legal authority necessary for construction, operation, and maintenance of the proposed facility and must also be unable to obtain needed funds from commercial sources at reasonable rates and terms.

Grant funds may be used to assist in the development of essential community facilities. This can include the purchase of equipment required for a facility's operation.

The amount of grant assistance for project costs depends upon the median household income and the population in the community where the project is located and the availability of grant funds. In most instances, projects which receive grant assistance have a high priority and are highly leveraged with other loan and grant awards. Grant assistance may be available for up to 75% of project costs. Grant funding limitations are based on population and income, economic feasibility, and availability of funds.

For more information about this program, or to file an application, contact the local [Rural Development](#) office in your area:

Electric Program Investment Charge (EPIC) Grant Programs

<http://www.energy.ca.gov/contracts/epic.html>

The Electric Program Investment Charge (EPIC) Program was created by the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) in December 2011 to support investments in clean energy technologies that provide benefits to the electricity ratepayers of Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E), San Diego Gas & Electric Company (SDG&E), and Southern California Edison Company (SCE). Financed through a surcharge on utility bills, the EPIC program funds clean energy research, demonstration and deployment projects that support California's energy policy goals and promote greater electricity reliability, lower costs, and increased safety. Only projects that are located in the regions covered by these three utility companies can obtain EPIC funds.

The EPIC grants are developed through a triennial investment plan. Based on the objectives in that plan, the CEC develops funding initiatives. The last two investment plans included objectives related to demonstrating bioenergy projects. Interested groups should keep a close eye on the [CEC EPIC website](#). You can subscribe there for email notifications of all new EPIC grant opportunities.