

**Launch Date:** April 7, 2025

**Pre-applications Submission Deadline:**  
May 1, 2025

**Amount of Funding:** \$4 million

**Minimum Grant:** \$10,000

**Maximum Grant:** \$1 million

**Ideal Grant Size:** \$150,000 – \$300,000

**Average Grant Size:** \$250,000

**Award Announcement Date:** September 11, 2025

**Program Officers:**

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**Important Notes:**

The Iowa Energy Center Grant Program's administrative rules can be found in Iowa Administrative Code section 261.404. You may also request a copy of the administrative rules by sending an email to [iecgrants@iowaeda.com](mailto:iecgrants@iowaeda.com).

If an applicant does not have an IowaGrants or State of Iowa A&A account, **the applicant will need to register for an account no later than April 17, 2025** to ensure the grant application can be completed prior to the grant submission deadline.

The preferred browser for IowaGrants is Google Chrome. If an applicant uses Microsoft Edge, compatibility mode must be enabled in order to complete the application.

Applicants must first complete a pre-application and be invited to complete a full application to be considered for funding.

## PURPOSE

The IEC Grant Program is funded by Iowa utility ratepayers. Funds will be used for projects that aid in the implementation of the key focus areas of the Iowa Energy Plan and provide a benefit to the Iowa ratepayers. For the purposes of this program, a ratepayer is defined as a customer who pays for an electric or natural gas utility service in the state of Iowa.

Eligible projects will have a focus on one or more of the following areas:

- **Energy workforce development:** Projects should aim to assist Iowa in attracting and training professionals to meet the state's future energy needs.
- **Technology-based energy research and development:** Projects should aim to develop and bring to market energy technologies through collaborative state and private partnerships.
- **Biomass conversion:** Projects should help Iowa realize the value-added attributes of biomass in the development of bioenergy, biofuels and biochemicals.
- **Natural gas expansion in underserved areas:** Projects should support the expansion of natural gas buildout to rural communities where its absence is a limiting factor to economic development.
- **Support for rural and underserved areas:** Projects should support rural and underserved areas and vulnerable populations through opportunities for greater access to energy efficiency expertise, training and programs.
- **Electric grid modernization:** Projects should assist electric grid stakeholders in establishing a vision for what the modernized grid should look like for Iowa.
- **Alternative fuel vehicles:** Projects should support the growing biofuels and electric vehicle markets in Iowa, including the buildout of its charging and biofuels infrastructure.
- **Carbon management:** Projects should create carbon value through research, agricultural stewardship and energy generation.

## ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Iowa businesses, colleges and universities, and private nonprofit agencies and foundations are eligible to apply for IEC grant funds.

- An eligible applicant may submit an application that includes one or more subrecipients.
- An eligible applicant may apply individually or jointly with another eligible or other eligible applicants.
- A principal investigator will be allowed to submit one application per funding announcement. An applicant who has applied as the principal investigator for a funding announcement may also be named as a co-investigator on additional applications submitted but may not be named as a principal investigator on additional applications.
- Please note that the review committee may consider the diversity of applicant organizations during the review process. If applicant organizations plan to submit more than one application, internal vetting should be completed prior to application submittal.
- An eligible applicant may apply jointly with ineligible applicants, but the applicant cannot act solely as a passthrough to the ineligible entity.
- A business will be considered an Iowa business if the business is incorporated in the state of Iowa or authorized to do business in the state of Iowa.
  - A business that is authorized to do business in the state of Iowa must provide a certificate of authority during the full application phase.
  - The applicant organization must have a physical location within Iowa at the time of application. The majority of funds (51% or more) used for salaries and wages must be used for Iowa-based employees of the applicant organization.

## PROJECT PARTNERS

A relevant project partner is required, though cost share from that partner is not.

## ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Requirements for IEC grant awards include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Applicants shall demonstrate a benefit for ratepayers.
- Applicants shall demonstrate that they are eligible candidates.
- Applicants shall demonstrate the capacity for grants administration.
- Applicants who have previously received IEC awards shall have demonstrated acceptable past performance, including the timely expenditure of funds.

- Applicants shall demonstrate the feasibility of completing the proposed activities with the funds requested.
- Applicants shall identify and describe any other sources of funding for the proposed activities.

## INELIGIBLE PROJECTS

The following projects are ineligible for funding:

- Relocation of a business
- Expansion of a business
- Funding for existing training programs
  - If the application is to continue a training program that is ending or expanding a training program to include new technologies/fields of study, it may be eligible. Prior approval by the program manager must be obtained prior to application submission.
- Improvements to a building, including energy efficiency and energy generation projects
- Pipeline, transmission line and distribution line construction
- First-generation ethanol
- Cellulosic ethanol

## ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

Only expenditures directly related to the implementation of the funded grant activity will be reimbursed. Examples of eligible expenses include, but are not limited to:

- Salaries/wages
- Supplies and materials
- Domestic travel
- Tuition
- Equipment purchases, which must be an integral part of the funded grant activity and must be approved by the board at the time the award is made
- Vehicle purchases, which are eligible only when the purchase of the vehicle is an integral part of the funded grant activity and must be approved by the board at the time the award is made

## INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

Only expenditures directly related to the implementation of the funded grant activity will be reimbursed. Vehicle and equipment purchases are eligible only when the purchase is an integral part of the funded grant activity and must be approved by the board at the time the award is made. Ineligible expenses include, but are not limited to:

- Purchase or rental of buildings
- Office equipment
- Furniture and fixtures
- Intangible assets
- International travel
- Insurance
- Phone expenses

## OTHER BUDGETARY REQUIREMENTS

Other budget requirements include the following:

- Indirect costs shall not exceed more than 20% of the IEC grant award request.
- IEC grant funds shall not be used as cost share to a federal grant award.
- Vehicle and equipment purchases or other expenses related to vehicles or equipment are not eligible if the purchase or expense supports the proposed grant activity but is not an integral part of the proposed grant activity. If a vehicle or equipment purchase is an integral part of a grant activity but a recipient fails to obtain board approval prior to the purchase, then the vehicle purchase is ineligible.

## COST SHARE

- Cost share is required to apply for IEC grant funds
  - Minimum cost share is 5%.
  - Minimum cost share for Iowa-based business depends on the type of project. If you are a private business, you must contact the program manager to determine cost share requirements.
    - After reviewing information provided, the program manager will provide a cost share requirement form, which will detail the cost share requirements for that project by line item.
    - Cost share requirements depend on many factors, including whether the budget items could be used by the applicant following grant completion, or for activities outside the scope of the grant. For example, if equipment or supplies are purchased in order to commercialize a product, the applicant must provide a minimum 50% cash cost share on those line items.

- In-kind donations can be used as cost share for some budget line items.
- If cost share requirements are not met, the application will be disqualified.
- Applicants do have the opportunity to obtain extra points if they provide or secure additional cost share.
- Unrecovered indirect costs cannot be used as cost share. However, matching indirect costs can be counted as cost share (not to exceed 20% of the cost share).
- Points awarded for cost share will be based on the total grant award request.

## PRE-APPLICATION PROCESS

- The Iowa Economic Development Authority (IEDA) will release an open call for grants on its website and via email to stakeholders.
- The pre-application will be completed via IowaGrants.
- Once the pre-application window has closed, all pre-applications received will be reviewed by the program manager for eligibility and completeness. IEDA staff will then review the pre-applications and prepare recommendations for the grant committee. IEDA staff in the review may include:
  - Grant program manager
  - Other Iowa Energy Office program managers
  - Team leader
  - Legal counsel
- The grant committee will then review the pre-applications and select which will move forward in the application process. The grant committee will evaluate and record the collective answers on a single review sheet with a numerical score and comments. The grant program manager, on behalf of the grant committee, will invite selected applicants to submit a full application.
  - The invitation will be sent to the point of contact as provided in the pre-application.

## HOW TO APPLY

- Pre-applications will only be accepted during the established application period, as identified in IowaGrants and at [iowaeda.com](http://iowaeda.com).
- Pre-applications are available and accepted through [IowaGrants.gov](http://IowaGrants.gov).
- Applicants planning to apply must use an IowaGrants account.
  - If the person completing the application already has an IowaGrants or a State of Iowa A&A account, this same account will be utilized.
  - If the applicant does not have an IowaGrants or A&A account, **the applicant will need to register by April 17, 2025** to ensure the registration can be completed prior to the submission deadline.

## INFORMATION NEEDED TO APPLY

### Applicant Information

- Name
- Address
- Phone number
- Email
- Program manager/contact
- Title of project
- Website
- State of incorporation
- Application approval/certification document

### Project Information

- Project summary and goals (250-character limit)
- Description of ratepayer benefit (250-character limit)
- Focus area alignment and explanation (100-character limit for each focus area)
- Project duration (in months)
- Dissemination or post-grant plan (250-character limit)
- Budget

## PRE-APPLICATION REVIEW CRITERIA

### Pre-application Screening Criteria

- Applicant is an eligible candidate.
- Funding request meets eligible project and expense requirements.
- Request is for no less than \$10,000 and no more than \$1 million.
- Initial grant duration does not exceed three years.
- Application is complete and submitted through IowaGrants.
- Principal investigator/applicant is not named as principal investigator/applicant on any other applications — they can, however, be named as co-investigators or subrecipients on additional applications.

### Pre-application Review Sheet

Pre-applications will be evaluated on a yes-or-no basis; no numerical score will be given. To move forward, an application must receive a yes on four of the five evaluation criteria.

Criteria	Evaluation Criteria	Yes/No
Focus Area and Ratepayer Benefit	Does the project provide a benefit to Iowa ratepayers?	
	Does the project align with at least one key focus area of the Iowa Energy Plan?	
Budget	Does the budget seem reasonable?	
Project Goals	Do the project goals align with a key focus area and aid in the implementation of the Iowa Energy Plan?	
Post-Grant Plan	Does the application describe a reasonable plan post grant completion?	

## PRE-APPLICATION AND APPLICATION PROCESS OVERVIEW

- April 7, 2025 – IEDA will release an open call for grants at [iowaeda.com](http://iowaeda.com) and via email to interested stakeholders.
- May 1, 2025 – Pre-applications will be due via IowaGrants.
- Once the pre-application window has closed, all pre-applications will be reviewed by the program manager for eligibility and completeness.
- IEDA staff will then review the applications and prepare recommendations for the grant committee.
- The grant committee will evaluate the pre-applications together and record the collective answers on a single review sheet. The grant program managers will invite selected applicants to submit a full application and will also notify applicants that were not selected to move forward.
- Pre-applicants selected to submit a full application will complete and submit their applications via IowaGrants prior to the submission deadline. The program manager will communicate application submission information to selected applicants via the email address provided during the pre-application process.
- Once the application submission window closes, IEDA staff will review the applications and prepare recommendations for the grant committee.
- The grant committee will review the applications and prepare recommendations for the IEC Board, who will then review the recommendations.
- Upon review of the recommendations of the grant committee, the IEC Board may approve grant awards.
- September 2025 — Applicants selected to receive grant funding will be notified in writing of the board's decision. Applicants not selected will receive a denial letter.