

SOLAR FORWARD APPLICATION

WHAT IS SOLAR FORWARD?

The Solar Forward program is a grassroots approach, relying mainly on community participation, to stimulate solar growth in a region. Solar Forward empowers community groups who are interested in growing their solar markets by providing them with a dedicated adviser to provide consulting on solar initiatives. The adviser will assist communities every step of the way in the program planning and implementation processes.

The goal of the project is to use increasingly more affordable solar technology to strengthen the economies, resilience, and independence of Colorado communities and rural areas. The key to the project is the experience that Solar Energy International (SEI) has accumulated implementing solar energy in its rural home base, and the work it has done locally in cooperation with its local rural electric cooperative, Delta Montrose Electric Association.

SEI is an industry-leading solar training facility, and the core of our mission is the belief in a world powered by renewable energy. With over 60,000 trained alumni and extensive technical curriculum, in addition to experience establishing all of these programs in our home base of Delta County, we want to keep this momentum growing and spread the success throughout the state of Colorado!

WHO CAN PARTICIPATE?

SEI will partner with a community group who wishes to manage a solar-related program in the region in which they are located. This community group can be a neighborhood coalition, a non-profit group, a local governing body or a local rural electric cooperative.

WHY PARTICIPATE?

<p>Benefits of solar</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Reduce or eliminate your electricity bill• Long-term savings• Increase the value of your home• Decrease your carbon footprint• Take advantage of available tax credits• Low maintenance• Cost of solar continues to drop	<p>Community program benefits</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increase jobs in solar in your community• Diversify local tax base through bolstering a new economic contributor• Encourage energy independence and sustainability• Strengthen sense of community• Increase renewable energy awareness
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THE SOLAR FORWARD TEAM

Solar Energy International (SEI), is one of the most established renewable energy training organizations in the world. Founded in 1991 as a 501(c)3 educational non-profit, our mission is to provide industry-leading technical training and expertise in renewable energy to empower people, communities and businesses worldwide. Our vision is a world powered by renewable energy.

- SEI was named the 2015 Accredited Clean Energy Training Provider of the year by the Interstate Renewable Energy Council (IREC). Our PV curriculum was one of the first programs in the United States to be certified by IREC, which is the premier resource for credentialing and best practices regarding renewable energy.
- Our textbooks, Photovoltaic Design and Installation Manual (over 75,000 copies have been sold; also available in Spanish) and our newly published Solar Electric Handbook: Photovoltaic Fundamentals and Applications are used in hundreds of colleges and training programs around the world.
- We have 10 instructors who are IREC Certified Master or Affiliated Trainers and 37 instructors who are NABCEP Certified Photovoltaic Installation Professionals — more than any other solar training organization in the US.
- SEI was also selected by the US Department of Energy to pilot Solar Ready Vets, which provides intensive solar training to transitioning military members who want to work in the solar industry.
- SEI's training counts for NABCEP educational hours and is a Registered Provider for the NABCEP PV and Solar Heating Associates Exams.



*SEI has trained
over 60,000
people in
renewable energy
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Local solar development milestones:

SEI started their Economic Revitalization Through Solar efforts in 2015 with the help of AmeriCorps VISTAs. Since 2015 SEI has launched three Solarize programs, created a high school trade-training program Solar in Schools, advanced the passage of C-PACE, and was awarded a bronze designation through the Department of Energy's SolSmart program recognizing solar positive communities.



SEI/Delta County Milestones:

1. Three Solarize programs amounting to 400 kW of installed solar, \$1.5 million invested in solar, 60 new PV systems, and local solar installation company doubling their capacity
2. Delta County Commissioners adoption of C-PACE, C-PACE contractor training
3. As the result of a C-PACE outreach program centered on agricultural business, first Agricultural C-PACE project in Delta County
4. Alpine Bank signing onto being a C-PACE provider, allowing smaller projects (under \$100,000) to be funded, making the program more accessible to rural communities
5. Partnership with DMEA to install 5, 10 kW solar systems on area high schools part of the Solar in Your Community Challenge, DMEA pledging \$150,000 of unused capital credits for this program
6. Jared Polis Foundation grant for teacher training in solar at SEI's Paonia Campus
7. SolSmart Bronze Designation for Delta County
8. Colorado Solar Energy Industries Association (COSEIA) 2018 Solar and Energy Storage Award for Delta County efforts in solar

Mary Marshall, Program Manager

Mary is currently working at Solar Energy International (SEI) as a Marketing and Communications Manager, as well as leading Solar Forward, a program with the goal of growing solar on a local level in Colorado communities. As a former AmeriCorps VISTA at SEI, Mary worked on community outreach efforts in Delta County aimed at diversifying the local economy through solar, including spearheading Solarize Delta County Farms, a campaign which brought resources on renewable energy and energy efficiency to agricultural producers and rural businesses in Delta County. During her time as a VISTA, Mary also worked with the local County governing body to apply for, and receive, a bronze SolSmart designation as a part of the Department of Energy's SunShot initiative. This award recognizes communities who have taken positive strides toward fostering a strong solar market. Mary has been through SEI's PV trainings and has completed the Solar Business and Technical Sales Certificate Program, and she has her Associate NABCEP (a test from the certifying body, North American Board of Certified Energy Practitioners). Mary has past experience in television news working at shows such as NBC's Dateline, Nightly News with Lester Holt, MSNBC Live with Thomas Roberts and working with Tom Brokaw in his research unit.

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Please print this application, fill it out and scan it to mary@solarenergy.org within **three weeks** of receiving this document. Please feel free to reach out to Mary Marshall, program manager, at 630-607-4352 with any questions. Expect to hear back with follow up questions, and application results, within a week after the submission deadline.

COMMUNITY DATA

Community Applying:

State:

Community Website:

Community Population:

(Approximate) Number of installed solar in kW in community:

Has your community received any recognition for solar friendly practices in the past? Yes No

Describe your community's interest in growing solar:

SELECTED REGION(S) FOR PROGRAM

Please list the neighborhood(s)/town(s)/cities in which you would like to implement this program, and population in each:

Does your community group plan to partner with other groups within the County to increase the outreach of your program? If so, please list other groups and their locations (please fill in who you plan to partner with, even if it is not confirmed via documentation at this time):

Do you know the utility provider for your selected regions? If so, please indicate below:

COMMUNITY GROUP

What group will be implementing this program? _____

What type of group?

- Non-profit Organization
- Community Coalition/Organized Community Group
- Governing body
- Rural Electric Cooperative
- Community group with a non-profit partner

When and how often does your community group meet?

COMMUNITY GROUP CAPACITY

The primary points of contact for this program will serve as the leading program coordinators for your chosen solar initiatives. Please attach a resume for every point-of-contact listed.

Who will be the primary point(s) of contact for this program? Please list their names, roles, and available weekly hours to dedicate to Solar Forward on the lines below:

Point of Contact 1

Name:

Best time to contact:

Affiliation/position in group:

Phone:

Email:

Address:

Point of Contact 2

Name:

Best time to contact:

Affiliation/position in group:

Phone:

Email:

Address:

Point of Contact 3

Name:

Best time to contact:

Affiliation/position in group:

Phone:

Email:

Address:

How many members are in your community group?

How many hours per member do you plan on dedicating to this program?

Will you need assistance in increasing your community group capacity i.e. assistance in applying for an AmeriCorps VISTA? Yes No

More information on the AmeriCorps program:

<https://www.nationalservice.gov/programs/ameriacorps/ameriacorpsvista>

Do you have a budget for this program? Yes No

If yes, what is your budget? _____

Do you have plans to secure financing or need assistance in fundraising?

Describe your plans to secure financing, or outline assistance that you might need:

Do you have at least 6 months to dedicate to this program? Yes No

When do you plan on starting your program?

COMMUNITY NEEDS

Why does your community need assistance in implementing a solar program?

What is needed most in your community? (residential solar, commercial solar, solar financing and education, low-income solar, solar education for youth, etc.) Explain:

COMMUNITY GOAL

What is the main goal you wish to accomplish through participation in the Solar Forward program?

What challenges do you feel your community might face during the duration of the program?

- Geographic
- Lack of solar installers
- Affordability of solar systems
- Community support
- Utility/net metering policies
- Community group capacity to implement program

Please explain or provide additional challenges not mentioned above:

PROGRAM OPTIONS

What would you like Solar Forward program assistance on?

- Solarize Program
- Solar in Schools (a program, utilizing SEI’s curriculum to provide trade training in solar to high schools)
- Commercial-Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) Outreach Program
- SolSmart, Solar-Friendly Communities Designation Achievement
- Rural initiatives
- AmeriCorps VISTAs to increase capacity

AVAILABLE ASSISTANCE

What areas does your community group most need guidance/assistance?

- Technical- Technical solar guidance such as interpretation and application of net metering and utility policy in relation to a Solarize program. Design of a database/lead management system, advice on gauging competitiveness of offered tiered rebates from installers. Documentation including: RFPs (requests for proposals) to send to installers, and MOUs (memorandums of understanding) issued to selected installers and program partners.

- Marketing and Outreach- Marketing materials: logos, flyers, graphics, banners, promotional materials. Event planning- launch event, promotional events for the program, boothing. Marketing outreach- social media, website, press releases, media contact.
- Program Management- overseeing database, communication with installers, community members, and community group/team implementing program.

Other/Elaborate on above:

PROGRAM TIMELINE

The following is a timeline of a typical Solarize program for reference. This is the timeline that would be used upon participation in the Solar Forward program:

Objective:

Task:

Month	Objective	Task
1	Create Solarize website or webpage on existing website	Create a landing page for your program that includes program information and a place to register for the Solarize program
	Build Customer Service Database	Set up protocol for processing customers between project managers and installers. Create a form on your website for registrations.
	Recruit Installer Selection Committee	Personalize your selection process, and decide if that includes an RFP. Define role of Installer Selection Committee and outline specific review criteria for your solar installers
	Gather materials/Logo	Start branding materials with Solarize logo, and start process of ordering banners/signs/etc
	Plan Launch Event	Find a popular venue, get the word out to strategic attendees. Secure band to play, ask for food/drink donations
	Plan Other Events	Strategize stacking events, multiplying events, places to host, audiences to address, subjects to cover, people to present
	Define an Energy Efficiency aspect to your program, if desired	Include an energy audit in your solarize process, or contact your local utility to plan energy efficiency education events. Collect resources on EE to add to your Solarize website
	Survey Net Metered Customers and Host Focus Groups/ Group Discussions	Build a survey, and conduct focus groups to determine what people want the most out of a Solarize program (what barriers do people believe are preventing them from going solar? What form of outreach is most effective for people?)
	Lock down community partners and define roles	Engage community partners who can share the responsibility of marketing to their networks and hosting events. Make sure roles are outlined before the program begins.
	Create a Solarize newsletter	Create one email list for program partners to give them updates on program happenings to promote. Create one mailing list to develop for event attendees, and eventually create a list for program registrants Personalize the RFP you plan to issue to installers with community-specific criteria, and send out with at least a month for installers to complete

	<p>Create RFP</p> <p>Issue RFP</p>	<p>Send RFP to installers</p>
		<p>GOAL: Gather input, issue RFP, recruit committees, set up enrollment process!!</p>
<p>Month 2</p>	<p>Recruit an Outreach Committee</p> <p>Identify Solar Ambassadors</p> <p>Promote Launch Event</p> <p>Select Installer</p> <p>Website Ready to go</p> <p>Plan Other Events</p> <p>Finalize Financing Packages</p>	<p>Define outreach committee roles, create materials to guide them</p> <p>Enlist/ identify early solar adopters in the community that you can use for testimony/ future home tours</p> <p>Update blog, blast on facebook/social media, write articles about solarizing, and submit press releases to local media</p> <p>Interview installers, and select installer for program</p> <p>Finalize website and procedures for enrolling participants via email/website</p> <p>Finalize plans for other solarize events, create calendar to release and post to website</p> <p>Design matrix to qualify customers for various programs, rebates, incentives, and figure out way to present. Add financial matrix to website and incorporate financing options in presentations.</p>
		<p>GOAL: Hype Solarize Launch Event & Program, Select Installer, Finalize Details!</p>
<p>Month 3-4</p>	<p>Host Launch Event</p> <p>Gather Interested Contacts</p> <p>Other Events</p> <p>First Installation Event</p>	<p>Introduce program, and promote other events! Collect event attendees for newsletter</p> <p>Start designated enrollment process, manage customer relations, start site assessments</p> <p>Roll out educational campaign, promote, promote, promote</p> <p>Get media involved, other residents, watch the first panel go up!</p> <p>Continue to send out newsletters and engage your partners with updates on events to make sure they keep spreading the word</p>

	Continued outreach	
		GOAL: Get People Off the Fence and Signing Solar Contracts
Month 3-6	Installations Continue	Continue Installs and updating customer database
Month 6-7	Installations Complete	Celebrate! And reflect! Survey participants and drum up support for expanded renewable energy offerings before businesses, banks, county representatives and the local utility and community.

AGREEMENT

I, _____, applying on behalf of the community group, _____, hereby pledge our interest in participating in the Solar Forward Program. _____ (community group) will work with the resources and guidance provided by Solar Energy International’s Solar Forward Program Manager to implement a community outreach solar program in _____ (region).

SIGN:

DATE: