



# SOLAR FORWARD APPLICATION

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## WHAT IS SOLAR FORWARD?

The Solar Forward program provides no-cost technical consulting and a toolkit for rural Colorado communities to kick start residential and small commercial solar markets. Solar Energy International (SEI), an industry-leader in solar technical training empowers nonprofits or local sustainability departments to coordinate a Solarize program within their community, or coordinate the adoption of our Solar in Schools program. Solarize is a community outreach campaign that involves partnering with local installers who offer a limited-time discount to incentivize solar adoption.

Our program is specially designed to meet the unique challenges that face rural communities and transitioning coal mining communities. Solar growth in rural communities supports resilience and local economic development, as well as job creation.

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## 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.

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## WHY PARTICIPATE?

Has your community (City, Town or County) committed to a Climate Action Plan, or Climate goals? The Solar Forward program can help you meet those goals through our free technical consulting and Solar Forward toolkit.

### Benefits of solar

- 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

### Community program benefits

- 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 70,000  
people in  
renewable energy  
since 1991.***

### Solar Forward Milestones:

1. Six Solarize programs amounting to 2.2 MW of installed solar, 328 new PV systems
2. As the result of a C-PACE outreach program centered on agricultural business in Delta County, first Agricultural C-PACE project in Delta County
3. 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
4. Partnership with Delta Montrose Electric Association (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
5. Jared Polis Foundation grant for teacher training in solar at SEI's Paonia Campus
6. Colorado Solar Energy Industries Association (COSEIA) 2018 Solar and Energy Storage Award for Delta County efforts in solar



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## APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Please send this application to SolarForward @solarenergy.org . Please feel free to reach out to Ellen Ross, program manager, at 970-527-7657 x116 with any questions.

### 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

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**Describe your community's interest in growing solar:**

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### 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:**

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**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):**

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

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#### COMMUNITY GROUP

**What group will be implementing this program?** \_\_\_\_\_

**What type of group?**

- ☐ Non-profit Organization
- ☐ Community Coalition/Organized Community Group
- ☐ Government Employee or Department
- ☐ Rural Electric Cooperative
- ☐ Community group with a non-profit partner

**When and how often does your community group meet?**

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#### 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:

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**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:**

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**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/ameriCorps/ameriCorpsvista>

**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:

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**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, solar workforce development, low-income solar, solar education for youth, policy education, 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:

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## 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
- Becoming a [SolSmart](#) Community (national recognition as a community that fosters solar energy development)
- 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:

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## 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:

Month 1	Build Customer Service Database	Set up protocol for processing customers between project managers and installers
	Recruit RFP Committee	Define role of RFP Committee and recruit widely for position
	Gather materials/Logo	Start branding materials with Solarize logo, and start process of ordering banners/signs/etc
	Update Website	Create personal financing tools
	Plan Launch Event	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
	Negotiate Energy Efficiency Deals	Incorporate use of C-PACE
	Survey Net Metered Customers	Finalize survey, build survey, set dates for focus groups, find location, ask for food/drink donations, send mailers
	Host Focus Groups/ Group Discussions	Survey net metered customers, open up discussion about barriers, successes, identify solar ambassadors
	Survey Businesses and Residents	Speak with Chamber, RMFU, DCED, CO Department of Energy, Delta County Conservation District, VOGA, Valley Food Partnership

	Create RFP  Issue RFP	Send RFP to installers
		<b>GOAL: Gather input, design RFP, recruit committees, set up enrollment process!!</b>
<b>Month 2</b>	Recruit Outreach Committee  Identify Solar Ambassadors  Promote Launch Event  Select Installer  Website Ready to go  Plan Other Events  Finalize Financing Packages	Define outreach committee roles, create materials to guide them  Set up Solar Home Tours, figure out incentives for ambassadors  Update blog, blast on facebook, write articles about solarizing  Interview installers, and select installer for program  Finalize website and procedures for enrolling participants via email/website  Finalize plans for other solarize events, create calendar to release  Design matrix to qualify customers for various programs, rebates, incentives, figure out way to present, add to website
		<b>GOAL: Hype Solarize Launch Event &amp; Program, Select Installer, Finalize Details!</b>
<b>Month 3 -5</b>	Host Launch Event  Gather Interested Contacts  Other Events  First Installation Event	Introduce program, and promote other events!  Start enrollment process, manage customer relations, start site assessments  Roll out educational campaign, promote, promote, promote  Get media involved, other residents, watch the first panel go up!

		<b>GOAL: Get People Off the Fence and Signing Solar Contracts</b>
<b>Month 3 -6</b>	Installations Continue	Continue Installs and updating customer database
<b>End</b>	Installations Complete	Celebrate! And reflect!

## 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:**