



Municipal Investment Fund (MIF) Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Last updated: January 29th, 2025

Note: This document will be updated frequently. Any questions and answers provided since the initial posting on January 13th will be noted with an asterisk (). Amendments will also be marked with an asterisk and noted with red text and strikethroughs.*



Appendix

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Where to Find More Answers:

Questions: If you have questions about this program, reach out to your membership advisor or iclei-usa@iclei.org for non-members.

Office Hours: ICLEI USA will also host multiple Office Hour sessions featuring a live question-and-answer session with program staff in a shared learning environment. These sessions are designed to clarify the MIF application process and answer questions you have after reading the Request for Proposals (RFP). Registration is required.

Session 4: January 30th, 2025. 10-11 AM PST

- Register here:
https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/ZB_6jMQdSKWnVGlvwUIRnA

Session 5: February 3rd, 2025. 1-2p PM PST

- Register here:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/ywDcyaBCSju6JG1kt5dGMg>

Session 6: February 6th, 2025. 12-1 PM PST

- Register here:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/TIV4rfD5R2-K7UkZVBvxjw>

Session 7: February 11th, 2025. 1-2p PM PST

- Register here:
https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/6ky-j4qpQMWPVoo_5DziNA

Session 8: February 13th, 2025. 12-1 PM PST

- Register here:
https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/D2_eaGbfQnu1GzwY1o1LFQ

Session 9: February 18th, 2025. 1-2p PM PST

- Register here:
https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/I5_qDxf1QIWUmnfP_YUL7g

Session 10: February 20th, 2025. 12-1 PM PST



- Register here:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/yGuVkJFqeTXqyDkmfPQTM0A>

Session 11 February 25th, 2025. 1-2p PM PST

- Register here:
https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/_nk1tulcSHq2YP6wR_fGCg

Session 12: February 27th, 2025. 12-1 PM PST

- Register here:
https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/zg5jcVdqR9Szh_6z368TIA

Session 13: March 4th, 2025. 1-2p PM PST

- Register here:
<https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/GKXp9yg3RaKLZdiTn9UXVw>

Application Process

***Question:** How can I check my LIDAC eligibility now that the CEJST tool is not available?

***Answer:** A copy of the CEJST tool can be found on this website:
<https://edgi-govdata-archiving.github.io/j40-cejst-2/en/#3/33.47/-97.5>

***Question:** Are appendices B, C, and D required in phase I?

***Answer:** Appendices A and B are not required for phase I. For appendix C (project budget) please only submit your proposed budget for the \$250,000 Market Building Activities Grant.

***Question:** Within the application, do both the municipality and nonprofit need to fill out an organizational profile?

***Answer:** Yes, all co-applicants need to fill out an organizational profile within the application tool.



***Question:** Is there the expectation that all the tabs in the spreadsheet for Appendix C are completed for Phase 1?

***Answer:** Please complete at least the Detailed Budget Table and Appendix I to the best of your ability. The budget will be evaluated according to whether it clearly categorizes expenses, is directly related to the project narrative, and includes activities that can be accomplished within the 6-month grant term.

***Question:** Can all co-applicants fill out the same application?

***Answer:** Within the application, the entity that created the draft submission must make the other entity a "Lead Applicant" within the "Collaboration" section.

Question: How can I apply for Predevelopment funding?

Answer: To be eligible for a Predevelopment subgrant through the Municipal Investment Fund, you must first respond to the Municipal Investment Fund RFP and be among the 104 Qualified Communities selected for a Market-Building subgrant of up to \$250,000. Municipal Investment Fund Predevelopment subgrants are available to up to 10 Qualified Communities that apply for Phase II and who are selected to join the Municipal Investment Fund cohort. Qualified Communities selected for the Municipal Investment Fund cohort must identify a project that has been given a good faith indication that it will be financed by CGC or one of CGC's network partners capitalized by the NCIF Award.

CGC has additional financing in the form of largely senior debt and junior debt available for developed NCIF Qualified Projects through RFP One Participation in RFP One does not require participation in the Municipal Investment Fund. You may submit proposals at any time in response to RFP One.

<https://coalitionforgreencapital.com/request-for-proposals-one/>.

CGC's network partners are listed on this webpage:

<https://coalitionforgreencapital.com/about-us/our-network/>

Question: Do we need to apply for both Phases, or can we choose just one?

Answer: You must apply for Phase I in order to be considered for Phase II. All 104 Qualified Communities selected in Phase I will submit a short application, including a list



of potentially fundable NCIF Qualified Projects, to CGC in June 2025 for consideration to join the Municipal Investment Fund cohort (i.e., Phase II). Up to 10 communities will be awarded additional funding in Phase II. Future funding rounds are anticipated for the 104 Qualified Communities.

Question: How does RFP One relate to the Municipal Investment Fund?

Answer: Applying to RFP One is a separate funding program from the Municipal Investment Fund application. The Municipal Investment Fund will prepare local governments to identify projects within their community to apply for RFP One, accelerating their clean energy transition. The Municipal Investment Fund provides subgrants and technical assistance for activities necessary to develop public-private partnership plans and supportive policies that will accelerate the deployment of capital to NCIF Qualified Projects.

RFP One is an ongoing solicitation process allowing clean energy developers, commercial partners, community lenders, and investors—including private credit and equity firms—to submit investment proposals for Qualified Projects located in the United States. Find more information, here:

<https://coalitionforgreencapital.com/request-for-proposals-one/>

Eligible Activities/Costs

***Question:** What indirect cost rate should we use?

***Answer:** If you do not have a federally approved rate, please use the de minimis indirect cost rate.

***Question:** Can grant funds be used for staffing of both the municipality and the not-for-profit partner?

***Answer:** Market Building Activities can be implemented by any applicant partner. Personnel expenses of staff from application partners or contractors implementing market building activities are eligible costs.



Local governments and tribes are the intended beneficiaries of the Municipal Investment Fund. All market-building activities through this grant must support the development of public-private partnership plans that will accelerate the deployment of capital to NCIF Qualified Projects within the identified community. A not-for-profit co-applicant is not a requirement but is strongly encouraged to be the identified recipient of funds to enable an expedited subgrant agreement signing process within the required 30-day window.

***Question:** Would the \$250,000 be awarded to the community or would it just be awarded through equivalent technical assistance from ICLEI USA?

***Answer:** Phase I awards of up to \$250,000 will be awarded to the local government, Tribe, or not-for-profit partner, depending on the preference of the applicant, as identified in the application. **A not-for-profit co-applicant is not a requirement but is strongly encouraged to be the identified recipient of funds to enable an expedited subgrant agreement signing process within the required 30-day window.** This funding may be used for eligible Market-Building Activities identified by the applicant within their submission to the MIF Request for Proposals. In addition to the award, Qualified Communities will receive relevant training, network building opportunities, **and** assistance with creating new Clean Energy Plans ~~or GHG inventories, and assistance in applying for the Phase II Municipal Investment Fund cohort.~~ All Qualified Communities will be invited to a free and exclusive regional workshop featuring expert speakers, consultations, and peer networking. ICLEI USA will offer a group of qualified service providers to assist Qualified Communities with their Market-Building Activities as needed. All Qualified Communities will benefit from wrap-around support for developing the market for NCIF Qualified Projects.

Additionally, ICLEI USA will onboard local governments and Tribes to Clearpath 2.0 at no cost. Clearpath 2.0 is an online software platform for local governments to complete greenhouse gas inventories, forecasts, climate action plans, and monitor at the community-wide or government-operations scales, supporting data-informed decision-making, stakeholder engagement, and transparent climate action.

The identified funding recipient must meet the following stipulations:

- Have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)
- Be registered in the Federal System for Award Management (SAM) and be in good standing with the Federal government
- Be able to enter into a subgrant agreement with ICLEI USA within 30 days of ICLEI USA's notification to the applicants of an intended award. The standard subgrant agreement will be made available on the ICLEI USA MIF webpage: <https://icleiusa.org/iclei-cgc/>



Question: Can you provide a few examples of the types of Market Building Activities eligible for funding?

Answer: The Environmental Protection Agency defines Market-Building Activities as:

"(1) building the market for financeable Qualified Projects, (2) not tied directly to Qualified Projects grantees intend to finance, and (3) being necessary and reasonable for the deployment of financial assistance to Qualified Projects."

Market-Building Activities include activities to generate market- wide demand for Qualified Projects, including (but not limited to) marketing, customer education and engagement, community outreach, contractor engagement, workforce development, and other non-financial market-building activities.

Market-Building Activities also include activities to build more supportive financial markets for financing Qualified Projects, including (but not limited to) standardization of documentation, development of new financial products, and other financial Market-Building Activities."

Additional examples include and are not limited to the development of clean energy and climate action plans, streamlined regulations and permitting processes, clean energy supply- and demand-side policies, clean energy aggregation, land use policies, and programs to partner with developers and financial institutions so long as these activities meet the three requirements of the definition of Market-Building Activities.

All market-building activities through this grant must support the development of public-private partnership plans that will accelerate the deployment of capital to NCIF Qualified Projects. Awardees will describe how funding was used to encourage and build a roadmap for public-private partnerships necessary to achieve community-wide clean energy goals.

Question: Do the projects have to be shovel-ready or can the local government apply for projects at any stage of project development?

Answer: Local governments do not need "shovel-ready" projects to apply. If a local government already has "shovel-ready" projects, it should submit a response to RFP One. <https://coalitionforgreencapital.com/request-for-proposals-one/>.



Funding in Phase I of the Municipal Investment Fund program is available for Market-Building Activities, as defined within the MIF RFP, to develop and generate demand for NCIF Qualified Projects. Phase II of the MIF program includes up to \$2,000,000 per awarded community in Predevelopment funding and additional Market-Building Activities funding.

Question: For the Municipal Investment Fund, do we need to have an application that addresses all three types of NCIF Qualified Projects? Should we focus on one type of NCIF Qualified Project?

Answer: Please note that applications for Market-Building Activities should not be tied directly to any Qualified Projects that applicants intend to finance. Applicants are not required to focus on all three types of NCIF Qualified Projects. Applicants may consider Market-Building Activities related to one, two or all three of distributed energy generation and storage, zero emissions transportation, or net zero buildings. Refer to the MIF RFP 'Defined Terms' for definitions of these types of NCIF Qualified Projects.

Question: Can Phase I funds be used to support Market-Building Activities not linked to an application to the Phase II Municipal Investment Fund cohort?

Answer: All market-building activities through this grant must support the development of public-private partnership plans that will accelerate the deployment of capital to NCIF Qualified Projects. Awardees will describe how funding was used to encourage and build a roadmap for public-private partnerships necessary to achieve community-wide clean energy goals.

Question: Can this funding be used to match other federal funding?

Answer: There are no restrictions from CGC or ICLEI USA on matching MIF funding with that of other sources.

Question: Would it be ok to have multiple types of Market-Building Activities in a single application?

Answer: Applicants may focus on multiple Market-Building Activities and NCIF Qualified Project types. Refer to the MIF RFP Section h: Defined Terms for definitions of these types of NCIF Qualified Projects.



Question: Are there any cost share requirements for this subgrant?

Answer: There is no cost share requirement for Phase I or Phase II Municipal Investment Fund subgrants.

Question: Is the Phase 1 award intended to fund the creation of the public-private partnership plan and/or some component of it, or should these activities be viewed as complementary to the development of the plan?

Answer: Phase I Market-Building Activities subgrants are intended to develop public-private partnership plans that will accelerate the deployment of capital to NCIF Qualified Projects, in preparation of direct project assistance and further plan development in Phase II.

General activities that build the market for financeable qualified projects, including generating market-wide demand, are encouraged.

Eligible Applicants

***Question:** Is the applicant to the subgrant the Not-for-Profit or the municipality?

***Answer:** ~~A local government or Tribe must be the lead applicant, though a~~ While a local government or Tribal applicant is required, any co-applicant can submit the Municipal Investment Fund application to ICLEI USA.. Any eligible applicant can be the recipient of the award, depending on the preference of the applicants, as identified in their application. ~~A not-for-profit co-applicant is not a requirement but is strongly encouraged to be the identified recipient of funds to enable an expedited subgrant agreement signing process within the required 30-day window.~~ If a local government requires a public approval process to enter into a subgrant agreement with ICLEI USA, they may wish to begin said process soon, utilizing the standard agreement template that ICLEI USA will post on its website.

The identified funding recipient must meet the following stipulations:

- Have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)



- Be registered in the federal System for Award Management (SAM) and be in good standing with the federal government
- Be able to enter into a subgrant agreement with ICLEI USA within 30 days of ICLEI USA's notification to the applicants of an intended award. The standard subgrant agreement will be made available on the ICLEI USA MIF webpage: <https://icleiusa.org/iclei-cgc/>

***Question:** Our state doesn't have a green bank. How should we proceed?

***Answer:** CGC strongly encourages Municipalities and Tribes to partner with a green bank so local governments and tribes can leverage their expertise in public-private partnership development and accessing finance for NCIF Qualified Projects. If there is another entity with that expertise, they would be excellent partners on this application. This could include a CDFI or another not-for-profit lender.

***Question:** Our City and County is a combined jurisdiction, and as a county, encapsulates more than 750,000 people, but as a city, has less than 750,000. Are we eligible to apply?

***Answer:** The 750,000 population limit is a strict limit. However, city-county consolidated governments may consider the population of just the city, according to the 2020 census, when determining eligibility to the MIF program. In this case, the applicant must concentrate the application within the city, including when qualifying using LIDAC census tracts.

Question: Are only 501(c)(3) organizations eligible to partner with Tribes or local governments on an application?

Answer: No, not-for-profit entities that meet the following definition are eligible to apply, in partnership with an eligible government entity, for the program:

"a Not-For-Profit organization is any corporation, trust, association, cooperative, or other organization, not including Institutes of Higher Education, that: (1) is operated primarily for scientific, educational, service, charitable, or similar purposes in the public interest; (2) is not organized primarily for profit; and (3) uses net proceeds to maintain, improve, or expand the operations of the organization. Organizations classified as a 501(c)(4) do not qualify."



Question: Are Federal Territories permitted to apply?

Answer: Yes.

Question: Are regional governments or special districts eligible to apply for the MIF program on behalf of our local jurisdictions?

Answer: Submissions to the MIF program must come from a single local government or Tribe along with any not-for-profit partner they wish to include. For the purposes of this program, local government refers to counties, municipalities, territories, the District of Columbia, and their respective departments, agencies, or offices. Entities granted land use authority and policy functions relevant to the NCIF (e.g., special districts) may also qualify.

Government entities can work together to implement eligible subgrant activities.

Question: Can the same not-for-profit support two cities in the same state?

Answer: Yes, there are no limits on the number of applications a not-for-profit partner can be included on.

Question: Can multiple municipalities join together to submit an application?

Answer: Coalitions of local governments are not eligible applicants to the MIF program. Submissions to the MIF program must come from a single local government or Tribe along with any not-for-profit partner they wish to include.

However, government entities can work together to implement eligible subgrant activities.

Question: Can a not-for-profit partner with local governments across different states?

Answer: Not-for-profits can submit different applications with local governments located in different states, though coalitions of local governments are not eligible applicants. There are no limits on the number of applications a not-for-profit partner can be included on.



Question: Is there a list of green banks we can use to see if there is someone working in our community?

Answer: CGC's network partners are listed on this webpage:

<https://coalitionforgreencapital.com/about-us/our-network/>

If you are interested in being introduced to a green bank, complete this interest form:

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdazqZ-xKGO6PqpsCrwBfwFsSHw8HUvL-0CWPHE6jOw368ixw/viewform>

If a green bank operating within your area has expressed interest in partnering on applications, ICLEI USA will facilitate an introduction.

Question: What if we do not have a local green bank?

Answer: While partnering with a green bank is encouraged, Tribes and local governments are eligible to apply on their own or with another identified not-for-profit partner.

Question: Could a council of governments apply on behalf of 2-3 cities?

Answer: Coalitions of local governments are not eligible applicants to the MIF program. Submissions to the MIF program must come from a single local government or Tribe along with any not-for-profit partner they wish to include. However, government entities can work together to implement eligible subgrant activities.

Local Governments refers to counties, municipalities, territories, the District of Columbia, and their respective departments, agencies, or offices. Entities granted land use authority and policy functions relevant to the NCIF (e.g., special districts) may also qualify.

Question: Do we need to be an ICLEI member to participate in this opportunity?

Answer: No. Non-members can apply to the Municipal Investment Fund and there is no preferential treatment of ICLEI USA members.



Subgrant Agreement Details

***Question:** Will the funding be on a reimbursement basis?

***Answer:** Tentatively, yes, funding will be provided based upon cost reimbursement. CGC and ICLEI USA are currently seeking EPA approval to make block grants and there is no guarantee approval will be granted.

***Question:** Do local governments have to be able to execute a subgrant agreement within 30 days?

***Answer:** ~~Yes,~~ All selected communities must execute a subgrant agreement with ICLEI USA within 30 calendar days of being notified of their potential award.

Cities and Tribes must be the primary applicant, but they can apply with a not-for-profit partner and are encouraged to apply with a green bank. The contractual recipient of the funds may be the Local Government, a tribe, or a Not-For-Profit partner. **A not-for-profit co-applicant is strongly encouraged to be the identified recipient of funds to enable an expedited subgrant agreement signing process within the required 30-day window.**

ICLEI USA will post a subgrant agreement template to its program webpage:
<https://icleiusa.org/iclei-cgc/>

***Question:** Who will receive awarded funds- the local government or the not-for-profit partner?

***Answer:** Subgrant funding will be awarded to the local government, Tribe, or not-for-profit partner, depending on the preference of the applicant as identified in the application. **A not-for-profit co-applicant is not a requirement but is strongly encouraged to be the identified recipient of funds to enable an expedited subgrant agreement signing process within the required 30-day window.**

The identified funding recipient must meet the following stipulations:

- Have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI)
- Be registered in the federal System for Award Management (SAM) and be in good standing with the federal government



- Be able to enter into **contract** with ICLEI USA within 30 days of ICLEI USA's notification to the applicants of an intended award. The standard subgrant agreement will be made available on the ICLEI USA MIF webpage: <https://icleiusa.org/iclei-cgc/>

Question: Is this program a loan?

Answer: No. Municipal Investment Fund subgrants are provided as a grant and are not loans.

Question: What is the period of performance for Phase 1 subgrants? When must the Market-Building Activities be completed by?

Answer: In Phase I, funds must be obligated and projects on their way to completion within six months of signing a subgrant agreement with ICLEI USA. Applications will be evaluated on whether activities can be accomplished within the 6-month grant term.

Low-Income and Disadvantaged Communities (LIDACs)

***Question:** How can I access the White House Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST)?

***Answer:** A copy of the CEJST can be found at this link: <https://edgi-govdata-archiving.github.io/j40-cejst-2/en/>

***Question:** If our community does not have an identified LIDAC census tract based on the mapping tool provided, can we still qualify through other mapping tools?

***Answer:** A community must have at least one Low-Income and Disadvantaged Community (LIDAC) census tract ~~according to the White House Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST)~~ in order to be eligible for the Municipal Investment Fund. **A census tract can qualify as a LIDAC through the following manners:**

- At least one LIDAC census tract according to the White House Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST)
 - *Note: a copy of the CEJST can be found at this link:*
<https://edgi-govdata-archiving.github.io/j40-cejst-2/en/>
- An equivalent definition used for LIDACs in the U.S. EPA NCIF program. To check eligibility under these alternative criteria, download the NCIF NOFO and review the “D. Competition Terminology” definition for LIDAC (page 8) and follow instructions on checking LIDAC status using these alternate criteria.
 - *Note: If relying upon one of these alternate criteria, applicants will be asked to upload a written explanation of their LIDAC eligibility (100 words maximum).*

Question: For the LIDAC requirement, is it acceptable to have a project that benefits our LIDAC community, even if it isn't physically located in a LIDAC tract?

Answer: To qualify for Phase I of the MIF program, communities must have at least one low-income and disadvantaged community (LIDAC) census tract according to the White House Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool (CEJST).

In Phase II, applicants will submit a pipeline of financeable NCIF Qualified projects with a goal of at least 50% being located in LIDACs.

Phase II: Municipal Investment Fund Cohort

Question: How far along should a project be in order to make the Appendix B list? Do all columns need to be complete in order to list the project? Can these be in an idea phase, or should only projects already under design be included?

Answer: All Qualified Communities awarded in Phase I will prepare a project pipeline, identifying NCIF Qualified Projects across various stages of development. Projects selected in Phase II will propose eligible Predevelopment Activities and make a case for how your community will use public-private partnerships to accelerate the deployment of capital to NCIF Qualified Projects in distributed energy generation and storage; zero emissions transportation, net zero buildings; and financial and technical support.



Question: Should Appendix B only include projects being carried out by the local government itself, or should applicants seek to include projects they may be aware of occurring at third party locations within their jurisdiction?

Answer: Phase II focuses on Implementing public-private partnership plans and developing and financing NCIF Qualified Projects. Partnerships between public and private entities are encouraged.

Procurement

***Question:** Are the MIF grants considered federal subgrants or procurement contracts?

***Answer:** MIF grants are considered federal subgrants. All funds awarded through the Municipal Investment Fund are considered federal subgrants subject to applicable procurement rules.

***Question:** Does CFR 200 apply to the recipient's expenditure of the funding?

***Answer:** Yes, CFR 200 applies to the recipient's use of the subgrant award.