



Illinois Finance Authority/Climate Bank

NOTICE FOR FUNDING OPPORTUNITY

Illinois Climate Pollution Reduction Grant: Community Geothermal Planning and Pilots Phase One Planning Grants

CSFA# 560-03-3784

Issued: December 1, 2025

Applications Due By: February 13, 2026, by 5 PM CDT

Illinois Finance Authority (IFA), in its capacity as the Illinois Climate Bank (ICB), issues this **NOTICE FOR FUNDING OPPORTUNITY (NOFO)** to announce the opening of the phase one of competition for grants under the Illinois Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) Community Geothermal Planning and Pilots Program.

This NOFO will **not** commit the State of Illinois or IFA/ICB to any contracts for any supplies or services or any grant or funding awards. All costs associated with responding to this NOFO are at the applicant's expense.

This NOFO constitutes a Request for Proposals. With this NOFO, IFA/ICB invited eligible entities to apply for funding under this program through www.grants.illinois.gov/portal in compliance with the terms of this NOFO by the indicated deadline. Responses misdirected or otherwise received late, or corrupted or not legible files, may not be reviewed. Please submit your applications via the AmpliFund system. Submission via AmpliFund is the only acceptable method of delivery. Fax, mail, and courier delivery shall not be accepted, unless special accommodation is granted by the IFA/ICB. Responses misdirected or otherwise received late, or corrupted or not legible files, may not be reviewed.

Proprietary information: Any information obtained in response to this NOFO may be used by the IFA/ICB and the State of Illinois for program planning on a non-attribution basis. All submission materials become State property and will not be returned. The State will accept requests from any interested party to keep the information in its submission confidential and will agree to confidentiality, if reasonable, in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations. Any material within a response to this NOFO identified as confidential must be clearly marked and will be handled in accordance with applicable rules and regulations. Any response marked as confidential or proprietary in its entirety may be rejected without further consideration or recourse. The State may publicly post a summary of the responses received.

Contact for inquiries:



CPRG COMMUNITY GEOTHERMAL PLANNING (PHASE 1) NOFO, WINTER 2025

Claire Brinley, IFA/ICB Program Manager

phone: 312-651-1319

email: climatebank@il-fa.com

UNIFORM NOTICE FOR FUNDING OPPORTUNITY (NOFO)

Summary Information

	Data Field	
1.	Awarding Agency Name:	Illinois Finance Authority (IFA), in its capacity as the Illinois Climate Bank (ICB)
2.	Agency Contact:	Claire Brinley, climatebank@il-fa.com , 312-651-1319
3.	Announcement Type:	☒ Initial announcement ☐ Modification of a previous announcement
4.	Type of Assistance Instrument:	Grant
5.	Funding Opportunity Number:	IFA-CPRG-05
6.	Funding Opportunity Title:	Illinois Climate Pollution Reduction Grant: Community Geothermal Planning and Pilots Phase One Planning Grants
7.	CSFA Number:	560-03-3784
8.	CSFA Popular Name:	Community Geothermal Planning and Pilots Phase One Planning Grants
9.	Assistance Listing (formerly CFDA Number):	Enter "not applicable" if Source of Funding does not include Federal or Federal pass-through funds
10.	Anticipated Number of Awards:	4-6
11.	Estimated Total Program Funding:	\$1,000,000
12.	Award Range (per project)	\$100,000-\$250,000
13.	Source of Funding:	☒ Federal or Federal pass-through ☐ State ☐ Private / other funding
14.	Cost Sharing or Matching Requirement:	☐ Yes ☒ No
15.	Indirect Costs Allowed Restrictions on Indirect Costs	☒ Yes ☐ No ☒ Yes ☐ No If yes, provide the citation governing the restriction: US EPA General Terms and Conditions, Sec. 18; Assistance Amendment and Intergovernmental Agreement between IL Finance Authority and IL EPA through an agreement with US EPA (limiting budget to 10% de minimus rate).
16.	Posted Date:	December 1, 2025
17.	Application Range:	Applications will be accepted until February 13, 2026
18.	Technical Assistance Session:	Session Offered: ☒ Yes ☐ No Session Mandatory: ☐ Yes ☒ No



A. Program Objectives	5
1. Illinois Community Geothermal Planning and Pilots Program Overall Objectives	5
2. Phase One Planning Grants Subaward Objectives.....	5
3. Relationship With Phase Two Pilot and Project Deployment Grants	6
B. Funding Information.....	6
C. Project Deliverables and Application Guidance	7
4. Evaluation Focus.....	7
5. Completion of Community Geothermal Project Plan	7
6. Required Application Components.....	7
I. Applicant Information and Qualifications (Attachment A, Table 1)	8
II. Project Alignment and Progress to Date (Attachment A, Table 2).....	8
III. Proposed Use of Phase One Funding and Remaining Tasks (Attachment A, Table 3)	8
IV. Project Milestones and Deliverables (Attachment B)	9
7. Brief Project Narrative (Optional).....	9
8. Geographic Priority.....	9
9. Eligible Activities	10
10. Non-eligible activities	10
11. Indirect Cost Rate.....	11
D. Application Submission Information	12
12. Contact to Request Application Package and Accommodations.	12
13. Submission Approach.....	12
14. Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), SAM.gov & GATA registration.....	12
15. Mandatory Forms & Attachments	12
16. Grant Administration and Compliance Requirements	13



E.	Review and Selection Criteria	15
F.	Award Administration Information	16
17.	Schedule	16
18.	Anticipated Announcement and Award Notices	17
19.	Reporting	17
20.	State Awarding Agency Contact(s)	17
21.	Other Information	17



Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO)

A. Program Objectives

NOFO Purpose: Illinois Finance Authority (IFA), in its capacity as the Illinois Climate Bank (ICB), invites project proposals under Illinois' award for the Illinois Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) Community Geothermal Planning and Pilots Phase One Planning Grants (Program). With this NOFO, IFA/ICB invites eligible entities interested in applying for funding under this program to file their application proposals in compliance with the terms of this NOFO and in alignment with the [Community Geothermal Planning and Pilots Plan](#) published on November 4, 2025.

IFA/ICB reserves the right to revise any part of this NOFO by issuing addendum(s) at any time. Issuance of this NOFO, or subsequent addendum(s), if any, does not constitute a commitment by IFA/ICB or the State of Illinois to fund any project. In addition, IFA/ICB may cancel this NOFO at any time, without incurring any liability from responders or potential responders.

Illinois Community Geothermal Planning and Pilots Program Overall Objectives

In July 2024, Illinois was announced as one of the recipients of an award under the [Climate Pollution Reduction Grant](#) program, created by the [Inflation Reduction Act](#). The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA) awarded \$430,251,378 to the State of Illinois to implement a variety of programs over the five-year grant period (2024-2029). Community Geothermal Planning and Pilots are one of these programs.

The Community Geothermal Planning and Pilots program is designed to accelerate the deployment of community scale geothermal energy systems as defined in the Scope and Scale section of the [Community Geothermal Planning and Pilots Plan](#). These systems are intended to serve multiple buildings or clusters of homes rather than individual buildings or campuses. The program emphasizes projects that demonstrate measurable greenhouse gas reduction, and specifically, this initiative aims to:

- Reduce carbon pollution by 15,099 metric tons of CO₂ equivalent (mt CO₂e) by 2030,
- Achieve cumulative reductions of 128,562 mt CO₂e by 2050, and
- Serve 1,100 Illinois households with community geothermal systems by 2030.

Through a two-phase approach consisting of Phase One Planning Grants and Phase Two Pilot and Project Deployments, the IFA/ICB will fund planning, design, and construction of community scale geothermal systems that demonstrate replicable, cost effective, and community driven models for decarbonized community or shared geothermal systems.

Phase One Planning Grants Subaward Objectives



Administered by IFA/ICB, the Community Geothermal Phase One Planning Grants will fund planning and design activities for projects that have already begun preliminary development and can demonstrate early progress toward community-scale geothermal deployment.

Phase One Planning Grant projects must support the goals of the Community Geothermal Planning and Pilots Program, in alignment with the [Community Geothermal Planning and Pilots Plan](#).

Funding is intended to help applicants move from early feasibility to full project readiness by producing deliverables that meet the technical, financial, and other criteria required for future Phase Two Pilot and Project Deployment Grant applications. Funding will not support conceptual ideas that lack a defined community, partners, or early engagement. The final deliverable of Phase One projects is to produce a complete, actionable Community Geothermal Project Plan.

Relationship With Phase Two Pilot and Project Deployment Grants

Phase One funding is designed to support projects that ultimately meet the Phase Two eligibility criteria described in the Plan and that demonstrate strong potential to advance to implementation. However, receipt of Phase One funding does not guarantee selection or funding under Phase Two.

Phase Two funding will be issued through a separate, competitive solicitation. Participation in Phase One will not confer priority status, but the information and deliverables developed during Phase One may strengthen an applicant's ability to compete successfully in that subsequent round.

B. Funding Information

This award is utilizing federal funds. The total target funding distribution for the Community Geothermal Phase One Planning Grants program is \$1,000,000.

- **Expected amounts of individual State awards:** Awards are expected to range from \$100,000 to \$250,000 per project, depending on project size and scope.
- **Type of assistance instrument:** Grant
- **Award structure:**
 - **Payment Method:** Funding will be provided on a reimbursement basis for actual, documented costs incurred and approved through AmpliFund.
 - **Allowable Costs:** All reimbursement requests will be reviewed by IFA/ICB and must be prudent, reasonable, allowable, and allocable in accordance with applicable federal cost principles (2 CFR Part 200, Subpart E).
- **Anticipated start dates:** Q1-Q2 2026
- **Period of performance:** Twelve (12) months from the date of grant execution
- **Cost match requirement:** None
- **Indirect costs allowed:** Based on applicants annually negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (see Section C below for further information).

C. Project Deliverables and Application Guidance

Evaluation Focus

The Phase One Community Geothermal Planning Grants provide funding to help advance community-scale geothermal projects from early-stage concept to full implementation readiness.

Phase One Planning Grants are designed for applicants that have already initiated pre-development work such as community engagement, technical feasibility, or financial modeling, and can complete all elements of a Community Geothermal Project Plan within twelve (12) months of award.

IFA/ICB will evaluate applications on the following high-level criteria:

- Applicants' ability to achieve all required Phase One final deliverables including the actionable Community Geothermal Project Plan within the funding period;
- Applicants' alignment with Phase Two project eligibility and the overall goals of the Community Geothermal Planning + Pilots Program; and
- How Phase One funds will accelerate completion of outstanding planning and technical feasibility tasks necessary for deployment.

IFA/ICB will evaluate each applicant's readiness and capacity to use grant funding efficiently to close remaining planning gaps and deliver a complete actionable Community Geothermal Project Plan by the end of the twelve-month period.

IFA/ICB provides further detail on the project review and section criteria in Section E of this NOFO.

Completion of Community Geothermal Project Plan

The grant award may not cover all costs associated with completing every component of the required deliverables. Regardless of which activities are supported through grant funds, each grantee is responsible for completing all deliverables identified in Attachment A and B and the [Community Geothermal Planning and Pilots Plan](#) necessary to produce a full, actionable Community Geothermal Project Plan within the twelve-month period of performance. Applicants must clearly identify in their submissions how they will complete all required deliverables, including those not supported directly through grant funds, within this timeframe.

Required Application Components

Applicants must include all of the following components in their application submission through AmpliFund in accordance with Section D of this NOFO. IFA/ICB has provided templates for specific application components. Applicants must use the provided templates; no substitute formats will be accepted. These templates must be completed and uploaded to AmpliFund along with all other required

application materials. Incomplete or missing information may result in lower scoring or deem the application ineligible for review.

Applicants are encouraged to provide concise, targeted responses using the templates provided in Attachment A. Attachment A replaces long-form narratives and is the primary source of information for evaluating project eligibility, readiness, and alignment with the [Community Geothermal Planning and Pilots Plan](#).

I. Applicant Information and Qualifications (Attachment A, Table 1)

The applicant must provide organizational and contact information for the lead applicant and any key partners, including a brief summary of qualifications and relevant experience implementing community-scale energy or infrastructure projects, particularly those involving federal or state funding.

Applicants must also describe the project team assembled to complete the Community Geothermal Project Plan, including internal staff, consultants, contractors, and partner organizations. The description should clarify each team member's role, area of expertise, and specific responsibilities in achieving the required deliverables. Résumés, statements of qualifications, or organizational charts may be uploaded as supporting documentation.

II. Project Alignment and Progress to Date (Attachment A, Table 2)

Applicants must describe how their project aligns with the overall Community Geothermal Planning + Pilots Program objectives and Phase Two eligibility requirements, as outlined in the [Community Geothermal Planning and Pilots Plan](#).

Responses should summarize:

- The project's alignment with core program components (technology, community scale, minimum household commitment, community engagement, technical and engineering design, financial feasibility, ownership structure, permitting compliance, workforce compliance, and geographic priority);
- Work completed to date; and
- Whether supporting evidence (e.g., letters of commitment, preliminary designs, budgets, or agreements, etc) is included with the application (Yes/No).

Applicants are expected to upload all supporting documents and materials to AmpliFund to support IFA/ICB review. Applicants should provide concise responses (2–5 sentences or bullets) for each component and ensure clarity on current project status.

III. Proposed Use of Phase One Funding and Remaining Tasks (Attachment A, Table 3)

Applicants must identify how Phase One funds will be used to complete remaining tasks and deliverables necessary to produce a final Community Geothermal Project Plan within twelve (12) months of award.

The application must also describe how any remaining or unfunded tasks will be completed using other resources, partnerships, or in-kind contributions to ensure that all required deliverables are achieved within the twelve-month performance period.

Responses should specify:

- Tasks and activities that Phase One funding will support;
- How remaining work will be completed if program funds are not used; and
- Key milestones and anticipated completion dates that align with the 12-month grant performance period.

Applicants should provide concise responses (2–5 sentences or bullets) in each section of the table.

IV. Project Milestones and Deliverables (Attachment B)

Applicants must fill out Attachment B in alignment with the key milestones in Attachment A, Table 3 and the deliverables of the community geothermal project plan within the [Community Geothermal Planning and Pilots Plan](#).

Brief Project Narrative (Optional)

Applicants may provide a brief project narrative to supplement their responses in Attachment A and Attachment B.

The narrative should be no longer than one-half page in 11- or 12-point font and may be used to describe key aspects of the project that align with the goals of the Community Geothermal Planning + Pilots Program but are not fully represented in the applicant's Attachment A or B responses.

Submission of a project narrative is elective and not required. Narratives that exceed the stated length limit may be excluded from consideration during the IFA/ICB review and selection process described in Section E.

Geographic Priority

Priority will be given to applicants that meet one or more of the following criteria:

- a. One or more census tracts designated as [Equity Investment Eligible Communities](#) under Climate and Equitable Jobs Act (CEJA). These include the Restore, Reinvest, and Renew (R3) Program's [R3 Areas](#) map, which includes areas where residents have historically been excluded from economic opportunities, as evidenced by rates of child poverty, unemployment, gun injuries, and incarceration, among other factors; and/or
- b. Projects located in areas with leak-prone or aging gas distribution infrastructure or that can demonstrate that the proposed geothermal system will replace or offset the need for reinvestment in such gas systems.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to align their proposed project footprints with these priority geographies. Geographic eligibility and evaluation criteria are further described in Attachment A: Application Components under the “Geographic Priority” section.

Eligible Activities

Funding awarded under this solicitation is limited to Phase One planning and design activities that advance community-scale geothermal projects toward implementation readiness. Projects funded under this phase must demonstrate early progress toward development and will use Phase One funds to complete technical, financial, and community planning deliverables necessary to prepare for future construction under Phase 2. Eligible activities may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Technical and Engineering Studies:** Activities that support project siting, design, and engineering analysis, including feasibility studies, system design and modeling, site and subsurface assessments, mechanical and civil drawings, and permitting pathways.
- **Community and Stakeholder Engagement:** Engagement with residents, community-based organizations, local governments, and potential customers to define project boundaries, secure participation commitments, and incorporate community input into project design.
- **Financial and Ownership Modeling:** Development of project-level financial models or pro formas and ownership structures and customer bill savings estimates for typical participating buildings, including analysis of available federal, state, and utility incentives, tax credits, and other funding sources.
- **Workforce and Compliance Planning:** Identification of strategies to meet federal and state labor and construction requirements, including the Davis-Bacon and Related Acts (DBRA), Build America, Buy America (BABA) provisions, the Illinois Works Apprenticeship Goals, and the Illinois Prevailing Wage Act. This may include the development of draft Project Labor Agreements (PLAs) and plans for apprenticeship participation and workforce training partnerships.
- **Legal and Participation Documentation:** Preparation of legal and contractual documents needed to support project participation and implementation readiness, including draft or template customer participation agreements, MOUs, partnership agreements, and other documentation necessary for Phase Two deployment
- **Preparation of the Final Community Geothermal Project Plan:** Compilation of all required technical, financial, community, and compliance deliverables into a complete, actionable plan ready for competitive submission under Phase 2.

Non-eligible activities

A subaward to an eligible entity under this grant Program **may not** be used for:

- Activities that do not support the overall goals of the Community Geothermal Planning + Pilots Program, including projects that are not consistent with the objectives of advancing community-scale geothermal deployment, equity, and greenhouse-gas reduction outcomes under the

Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG), including planning activities for projects where geothermal is not the primary thermal energy source or where geothermal constitutes only an incidental or secondary component of a broader non-geothermal project;

- Construction-related activities, including installation of geothermal equipment, drilling, trenching, site preparation, or any other physical deployment activities;
- Equipment purchases or rental;
- Activities that support measures, activities or projects outside the boundaries of the ten US EPA regions;
- Costs of acquiring “intangible property,” as defined in [2 CFR 200.1](#), or
- Lobbying activities or union organizing.

Indirect Cost Rate

To charge indirect costs to a grant, the applicant must have an annually negotiated indirect cost rate agreement (NICRA). There are three types of NICRAs:

Federally Negotiated Rate. Organizations that receive direct federal funding, may have an indirect cost rate that was negotiated with the Federal Cognizant Agency. Illinois will accept the federally negotiated rate. The organization must provide a copy of the federally negotiated NICRA.

State Negotiated Rate. The organization may negotiate an indirect cost rate with the State of Illinois if they do not have a Federally Negotiated Rate. If an organization has not previously established an indirect cost rate, an indirect cost rate proposal must be submitted through State of Illinois’ centralized indirect cost rate system no later than three months after receipt of a Notice of State Award (NOSA). If an organization previously established an indirect cost rate, the organization must annually submit a new indirect cost proposal through CARS within six months after the close of the grantee’s fiscal year.

De Minimis Rate. An organization that has never negotiated an indirect cost rate with the Federal Government or the State of Illinois is eligible to elect a de minimis rate of 10% of modified total direct cost (MTDC)¹. Once established, the De Minimis Rate may be used indefinitely. The State of Illinois must verify the calculation of the MTDC annually in order to accept the De Minimis Rate.

All grantees must complete an indirect cost rate negotiation or elect the De Minimis Rate to claim indirect costs. Indirect costs claimed without a negotiated rate or a De Minimis Rate election on record in the State of Illinois centralized indirect cost rate system may be subject to disallowance.

¹ MTDC is defined at [2 CFR 200.1](#).



D. Application Submission Information

Contact to Request Application Package and Accommodations.

The full application is available through the www.grants.illinois.gov/portal. If any assistance is needed in accessing application materials or submitting an application due to limited Internet access or other limitations, the potential applicant should email climatebank@il-fa.com or schedule time with the Illinois Climate Bank AmpliFund Support Desk. Support sessions can be scheduled using this [link](#).

Submission Approach

This NOFO is a competitive process to solicit project applications from interested entities to meet the funding objectives of this program. This process has been designed to reduce the burden on entities seeking to apply for funding and ensure alignment on funding objectives with respondents.

1. **Initial application window.** The initial application process will provide respondents with an accessible, easy-to-navigate method for outlining their proposed project to IFA/CB for selection.
2. **Candidate selection.** IFA/CB will evaluate projects submitted under the application process on their likelihood and ability to meet program objectives, as described further in Section E below. Based on a review of applications, projects will be identified for funding and award.

Unique Entity Identifier (UEI), SAM.gov & GATA registration

To submit an application, the applicant must register and pre-qualify through the Grant Accountability and Transparency Act (GATA) Grantee Portal, www.grants.illinois.gov/portal. Registration and pre-qualification are required annually. Selected applicants must also register with the federal SAM.gov and must have a Unique Entity Identifier (UEI) assigned in SAM.gov. Applicants included in the SAM.gov Exclusion List and status on the Illinois Stop Payment List will not be eligible for an award. The Grantee Portal alerts the entity of “qualified” status or informs how to remediate a negative verification (e.g., missing UEI Unique Entity Identifier assigned in SAM.gov, not in good standing with the Secretary of State). Inclusion on the SAM.gov Exclusion List cannot be remediated.

Mandatory Forms & Attachments

All project submissions must include the following mandatory forms and attachments:

- a. Uniform State Grant Application (accessible through the Grantee Portal);
- b. Budget using the [Uniform Budget Template](#);
- c. Attachment A (available at the IFA/ICB website [here](#));
- d. Supporting project documents or materials uploaded as evidence for information provided in Attachment A (documents);

- e. Attachment B including the key deliverables and milestones (available at the IFA/ICB website [here](#)); and
- f. Brief project narrative (Optional)

Grant Administration and Compliance Requirements

- a. **Project costs breakdown.** Respondents should fill out the budget in their application response through the www.grants.illinois.gov/portal. All expenditure must be allowable, allocatable, and reasonable in accordance with the applicable federal cost principles. For more information, see [2 CFR Part 200 Subpart E](#) - Cost Principles as well as applicable provisions of [2 CFR Part 1500](#).
- b. **Performance measurement.** Grantees will be responsible for ensuring all reporting requirements associated with the federal funding are met. This includes providing timely and accurate reporting to the IFA/ICB in compliance with all federal and programmatic obligations. The IFA/ICB will ensure that reporting processes are adjusted as necessary to meet updated or additional requirements issued by US EPA. Reporting will include, but is not limited to, project financial and activity report, and assistance in developing sample project case studies.

Reporting will include semi-annual reports to assist the IFA/ICB in showing progress on achieving this program's purpose. These semi-annual progress reports will be due to US EPA within 30 calendar days of the end of the semi-annual reporting period. Consequently, to allow time to compile reports from multiple grantees, reports may be due to the IFA/ICB within as few as 3 calendar days of the end of the semi-annual reporting period, which run from October 1 to March 31 and from April 1 to September 30 of each year.

- c. **Funding Compliance Requirements.** In responding to this NOFO, applicants must acknowledge compliance with the requirements related to this US EPA subaward:
 - i. **Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and other Federal statutes and regulations** prohibiting discrimination in Federal financial assistance programs apply, including provisions protecting free speech, religious liberty, public welfare, and the environment per [200 CFR 200.300\(a\)](#), as well as regulations, including [2 CFR 200.300\(b\)](#) prohibiting discrimination based on sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity.
 - ii. **Consultant Cap.** Grant funds available for salary paid to individual consultants is limited to the maximum daily rate for Level IV of the Executive Schedule.²

² For more information, see [US EPA General Terms and Conditions](#), effective October 1, 2024, Section 8.7.

- iii. **Management Fees.** Management fees or similar charges in excess of the direct costs and approved indirect rates are not allowable.³
- iv. **Foreign Work and Materials.** IFA/CB must obtain written consent from US EPA prior to awarding a subaward that will be performed in a foreign country. Alert the IFA/CB in the proposal if any portion of the project will be performed in a foreign country.⁴
- v. **Reporting Executive Compensation.** Certain subrecipients receiving federal funding may be required to report executive compensation. For more information, refer to [US EPA General Terms and Conditions](#), section 15.3 and 15.4.⁵
- vi. **Conflicts of Interest.** Applicants must have systems in place to address, resolve, and disclose conflicts of interest and must disclose conflicts of interest to IFA/CB, as described in [US EPA's Conflicts of Interest policy](#).⁶
- vii. **Utilization of Disadvantaged Business Enterprises.** US EPA requires that subrecipients make good faith efforts to utilize Disadvantaged Business Enterprises when procuring services and supplies, and retain documentation of doing so. The specific six good faith efforts can be found at [40 CFR Section 33.301\(a\)-\(f\)](#).
- viii. **Other Ineligible Activities.** Certify that the requested funding will not be used to encourage or support political activities such as the collection and dissemination of information related to potential, planned, or pending legislation or directly or indirectly support or oppose union organizing.⁷
- ix. **Refreshments.** IFA/CB has not received advance permission from US EPA to fund light refreshments or meals served at meetings, training workshops, or outreach events. Thus, applicants may not use funds from this grant for these purposes.⁸
- x. **Procurement Standards.** The procurement standards in [2 CFR Part 200](#), including those requiring competition when the subrecipient acquires goods and services from contractors (including consultants), and Domestic preferences for procurements at [2 CFR 200.322](#) will apply to grant awardees.

³ [US EPA General Terms and Conditions](#), effective October 1, 2024, Sec. 9.

⁴ [US EPA General Terms and Conditions](#), effective October 1, 2024, Section 8.11.

⁵ [US EPA General Terms and Conditions](#), effective October 1, 2024, Sec. 15.3, 15.4.

⁶ [US EPA General Terms and Conditions](#), effective October 1, 2024, Sec. 23.2.

⁷ [US EPA General Terms and Conditions](#), effective October 1, 2024, Sec. 13 (union organizing) and Sec. 45 (lobbying).

⁸ See [US EPA General Terms and Conditions](#), effective October 1, 2024, Sec 35.

NOTE: Applicants selected for funding under this Program will be subject to the terms and conditions of the Illinois Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (FAIN 00E03862) and US EPA's [General Terms and Conditions](#), as they apply to subgrantees.

E. Review and Selection Criteria

Minimum Requirements: To be eligible for funding, the proposed project must be located in Illinois and align with the objectives of the CPRG Community Geothermal Planning + Pilots Program.

Selection Criteria: Applications will be reviewed by IFA/ICB and scored using the criteria below. Evaluations will focus on how well each applicant demonstrates a credible pathway to achieving the required Phase One deliverables and producing a complete Community Geothermal Project Plan within twelve (12) months. Reviewers will assess both the applicant's current progress and their plan to achieve all deliverables required in the Community Geothermal Project Plan as outlined in the [Community Geothermal Planning and Pilots Plan](#).

Each Application will be scored on a 100-point scale.

- **Eligibility, Program Alignment, and Applicant Capacity:** The extent to which the project demonstrates that it aligns with the goals of the Community Geothermal Planning + Pilots Program; uses geothermal as the primary thermal source; supports the overall CPRG objectives for community-scale development; and demonstrates sufficient organizational, technical, and managerial capacity to complete Phase One activities successfully.
- **Community Scale and Footprint:** The ability of the project to demonstrate that the project is designed to serve multiple buildings or customers within a defined neighborhood or census block, and reflects true community scale (~100 households or equivalent units) connecting multiple residential, mixed income, and other community serving properties.
- **Minimum Household Commitment and Community Engagement:** The projects commitment and intent to secure participation from at least 25% of households or equivalent customer units within the footprint and clearly outlines a plan to achieve this goal. The ability of the project to demonstrate meaningful community engagement and partnerships throughout planning and design.
- **Technical Feasibility, Design, and Engineering Readiness:** The ability of the project to demonstrate that it will complete all required technical and engineering deliverables including feasibility studies, mechanical and civil drawings, engineering report, permitting plan, and pre-construction cost estimate in alignment with the deliverables required in the Community Geothermal Project Plan.
- **Financial Feasibility and Ownership Structure:** The project demonstrated a clear plan to develop robust financial models covering pre- and post-construction phases, identify available incentives and tax credits, and establish a sustainable ownership and operations structure that maximizes available funding, maintains long-term viability, and provides consumer savings relative to other heating fuel sources.

- **Workforce and Federal Compliance Planning:** The project demonstrates how it will establish a clear plan to comply with DBRA, BABA, and Illinois Works requirements; integrate apprenticeship participation; and prepare any necessary draft Project Labor Agreements or workforce training partnerships.
- **Use of Phase One Funding and Milestones:** The project effectively allocates grant funds to support the completion of all deliverables required in the Community Geothermal Project Plan, with a clear 12-month timeline and Attachment B identifying key milestones and deliverables.

Project Benefits Assessment: A successful project must score at least 60 points out of a maximum of 100 points. The selection criteria will be evaluated as follows:

Program Objectives Category	Maximum Points	Poor	Fair	Strong
Eligibility, Program Alignment, and Applicant Capacity	15	0-7	8-11	12-15
Community Scale and Footprint	15	0-7	8-11	12-15
Minimum Household Commitment and Community Engagement	15	0-7	8-11	12-15
Technical Feasibility, Design, and Engineering Readiness	15	0-7	8-11	12-15
Financial Feasibility and Ownership Structure	10	0-4	5-7	8-10
Workforce and Federal Compliance Planning	10	0-4	5-7	8-10
Use of Phase One Funding and Milestones	20	0-9	10-15	16-20
Total Points	100			

Each category will be evaluated in the Poor, Fair, or Strong bracket based on the description of the benefits in the project application and the likelihood of the applicant's ability to achieve them as a consequence of the proposed project activities and to successfully measure these benefits.

IFA/ICB may exercise discretionary prioritization in awarding grants based on geographic considerations, as well as other priority factors outlined in Section C.

F. Award Administration Information

Schedule

IFA/ICB reserves the right to deviate from this schedule at any time and without notice.

Activity/Event



Public Notice of Round 1 NOFO
Deadline for Receipt of Applications:

December 1, 2025
February 13, 2026

Anticipated Announcement and Award Notices

IFA/ICB will aim to notify applicants of the selection decision within 45 days after the deadline for application submission.

Projects may require review and approval from the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) and US EPA. **NOTE:** Any notice of selection is not an authorization to begin performance of the project or incur costs. Costs incurred before entering into a subaward agreement with the IFA/ICB will not be recoverable.

Reporting

The awarded projects will be required to report project metrics semiannually. IFA/ICB may post these reports on the IFA/ICB's public website(s). In addition, the applicant will be required to submit project management reports quarterly throughout the life of the project.

State Awarding Agency Contact(s)

Contacts for questions and assistance: climatebank@il-fa.com

Other Information

No Funding Commitment. The State is not obligated to make any award as a result of this NOFO. This NOFO will **not** commit the State of Illinois or IFA/ICB to any contracts for any supplies or services or any grant of funding awards. All costs associated with responding to this NOFO are at the applicant's expense.

Confidential and Proprietary Information: Any information obtained in response to this NOFO may be used by the IFA/ICB and the State of Illinois for program planning on a non-attribution basis. All submission materials become State property and will not be returned. The State will accept requests from any interested party to keep the information in its submission confidential and will agree to confidentiality, if reasonable, in accordance with state and federal laws and regulations. Any material within a response to this NOFO identified as confidential must be clearly marked and will be handled in accordance with applicable rules and regulations. Any response marked as confidential or proprietary in its entirety may be rejected without further consideration or recourse. The State may publicly post a summary of the responses received.

Appeal Process: IFA/ICB will follow the appeal process under 44 ILL. Adm. Code 7000.350. IFA/ICB intend to give the applicants that were not selected in this round of solicitation sufficient opportunities to develop their application further, and resubmit their projects in the future rounds of project solicitations as they open.