



Funding Opportunity Announcement

Streetlight and Outdoor Lighting Efficiency 2024 Grant Program

Program Description: The Streetlight and Outdoor Lighting Efficiency (SOLE) program makes grants available to eligible entities to defray the cost of replacing less efficient pole-mounted fixtures used for the illumination of streets, parking lots, parks, athletic fields and other outdoor spaces, along with implementing certain lighting controls.

Type of Grant Program: First-come, first-served. Grants will be issued to eligible projects until program funding is depleted. The SOLE program is divided into two areas of interest (AOI), with each AOI focused on a different type of lighting:

Areas of Interest	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AOI.1: Pole-mounted street lighting for any vehicular or pedestrian rights-of-way, as well as parking lots • AOI.2: Exterior pole-mounted lighting for athletic fields or parks
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Application Deadline: **March 8, 2024 at 5:00 PM ET.** Interested parties are encouraged to apply as soon as possible to have the best chance for funding.

Funding: A total of \$1,000,000 is anticipated to be available for the SOLE FY24 program; however, the total amount awarded under the program may be more or less depending on the quantity and quality of applications received. Awards will be capped at \$250,000 per organization.

Eligible Applicants: Maryland non-profit organizations, state agencies, local governments and incorporated cities, public and private schools, and community colleges. Non-governmental applicants must be in Good Standing with the Maryland State Department of Assessments and Taxation (SDAT).

Eligible Activities:

Light fixtures and controls eligible for funding per this FOA must be (1) located in the State of Maryland; (2) owned by Maryland-based entities, limited to non-profit organizations, county or local governments, public school systems, private schools, community colleges, or State agencies; (3) cost-effective, with the anticipated simple payback of the project being less than the anticipated life of the equipment; (4) limited to pole-mounted lighting fixtures and controls intended for outdoor illumination of roads, pedestrian pathways, parking lots and service roads, and athletic fields; (5) include LED (or other technologies) that consume less power while providing comparable levels of illumination, compared to the older technologies that they replace, such as mercury vapor (MV), metal halide (MH) or high pressure sodium (HPS); (6) not funded by previously encumbered funds; (7) not included in a scope for which a purchase order, or contract was issued prior to the filing of this application; (8) not subject to concurrent funding from other MEA loan or grant sources; and (9) dark-sky certified. If no dark-sky certified products are available, applicants may petition, with justification, for a waiver as part of their application or before finalizing their project scope. In general, cost alone will not be justification for a waiver. To find qualifying fixtures, visit this [directory](#). Upgrades of utility-owned fixtures of any kind are not eligible for finance under this program's FOA. Funding will not be provided to replace pre-existing LEDs.

Additionally, this grant opportunity offers additional incentives for SOLE-eligible lighting projects that involve solar-powered lamps as well as dimming or motion controls;

MEA grant funds may be used to defray the cost of fixture acquisition and installation plus installation-related fees imposed by electric utilities. Non-eligible costs include the cost of project design or feasibility studies, administrative costs related to procurement management, and any remediation and repair costs related to light poles or similar mounting hardware, fuses, and other hardware distinct from the light fixtures themselves.

Minimum Criteria:

A complete application will:

1. include a scope of work for the project (Project) indicating:
 - a. the number, lamp (bulb) type, and wattage of existing, or incentive applications, and documentation that the pole-mounted fixtures proposed for replacement through the SOLE program;
 - b. the number, lamp (bulb) type, and wattage of the replacement LED or other fixture type(s) with increased efficiency; and
 - c. a description of the location(s) of the proposed lighting

upgrades. See “Documentation of Project Locations” under “Required Application Documents,” below.

2. affirm that applicant has not already entered into a contractual obligation for the proposed lighting replacement;
3. be signed by an individual with the authority to enter into a grant agreement with MEA to execute a lighting replacement project;
4. if applicable, provide completed copies of utility rebate or incentive applications, and documentation that the rebates or incentives have been applied for;
5. provide a summary of anticipated funding sources to be secured for the proposed project in addition to this grant (e.g., bond funding, utility incentives, energy performance contracting); and
6. demonstrate a capital investment commitment to the proposed project by the applicant that is equal to 15% or more of the total cost, net of any utility rebates or other funding sources.

Selection Process & Award Amounts:

Selection Process

Applications will be evaluated by a review panel to determine whether minimum qualifications are met. Qualifying projects will be awarded in the order received.

If an incomplete application is received while SOLE program funding remains available, MEA will give the applicant an opportunity to update the application for completeness. The application will then be reviewed based on the date that MEA receives the complete application, not the date that the incomplete application was submitted.

Award Calculation

This table shows the grant value awarded per fixture type, differentiated by area of interest (AOI) and by wattage of lamp type being replaced.

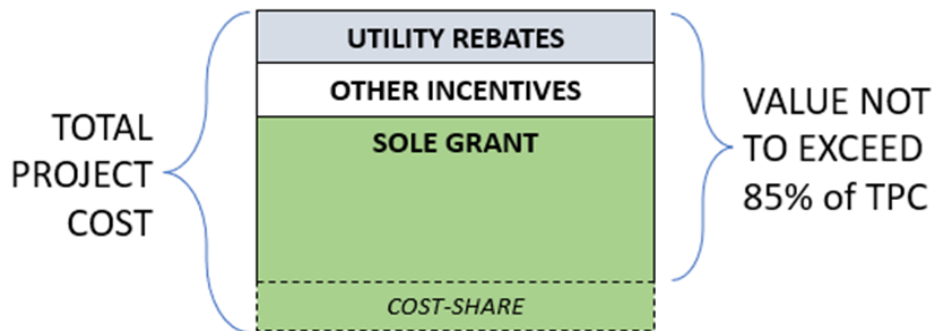
MAXIMUM GRANT AWARD AMOUNTS PER LUMINAIRE REPLACED		
	AOI.1	AOI.2
UTILIZATION CATEGORIES, POLE-MOUNTED FIXTURES ONLY:	Vehicular or pedestrian rights-of-way, as well as parking lots	Athletic Fields
REPLACING EXISTING MV, MH or HPS LUMINAIRE UNDER 250 WATTS:	\$200	\$100
REPLACING EXISTING MV, MH or HPS LUMINAIRE AT OR OVER 250 WATTS:	\$300	\$150
BONUS INCENTIVES		
FOR SOLAR POWERED LAMPS:	\$100	\$100

FOR DIMMING OR MOTION CONTROL (NOT INCLUDING PHOTOCELLS):	\$50	\$50
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Total Award Amount

This grant is intended to incentivize the installation of light fixtures for which no prior procurement initiative is in force as of the date of grant application. Applicants are required to provide a minimum 15% cost-share of the net total proposed project cost (i.e., the total project cost minus the value of any expected utility rebate or incentive). While a single applicant may submit applications for multiple projects, the aggregate maximum award per applicant is capped at \$250,000. MEA is targeting projects of a certain minimum size and therefore does not intend to award projects valued at less than \$20,000.

The Applicant’s SOLE award combined with any utility incentives, state, federal or other grant or rebate funds shall not exceed 85% of the total Project costs (inclusive of equipment, materials, and labor); in a circumstance where the 85% threshold would be exceeded if the maximum SOLE incentive were used, the MEA SOLE incentive will be lowered to make the combined SOLE plus utility incentive total 85% of total project costs.



Partial awards

Partial awards may be awarded under this program, depending on the number of complete proposals received and associated total grant funds requested. Grant awards will be issued for the amounts requested by eligible applicants for eligible projects on a first-come, first-served basis until grant funds are exhausted. If program funding is depleted by awards so that remaining funds are insufficient to fully fund a grant request, the last applicant prior to exhaustion of funds may be offered a partial award. If the applicant declines, MEA will offer partial grant funding under this same structure to the next qualified applicant until all funding has been expended or all remaining projects have rejected the offer.

Required Application Documents: To be considered complete, an application to the SOLE Program must include the following documents. Failure to submit any of the required documents may

result in the application being considered incomplete. Applications deemed incomplete by MEA will not be considered for award until any necessary missing documentation is provided by the applicant.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Complete and accurate FY24 Streetlight and Outdoor Lighting Efficiency Program Application Form.</u> This application, along with any potential award, must be signed by an individual with signatory authority for the applicant (i.e., executive director, mayor, city administrator, etc.). This signature indicates the recipient’s intent to use the grant award in compliance with all program requirements, as outlined in this FOA.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Documentation of Project Location.</u> Include information that clearly describes the location of the proposed Project’s scope of work, as described below. A map of the location is recommended for projects that involve multiple locations. <input type="checkbox"/> If for one or more individual properties, provide the street address for each location <input type="checkbox"/> if for street lighting, a list of the streets receiving upgrades, or a description of the area that will be receiving upgrades (e.g., all streets bound by North, South, East, and Main Streets). A map showing the affected area, depicting street names and segments, is recommended.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Defined Scope:</u> Description of project scope including the number and type of lamps that are expected to be replaced under the project. The scope should clearly describe the lamps to be installed, including the number and wattage of each type, their style, and location. The scope should also provide an inventory of lamps being replaced, indicating the type, number, and wattage of each. MEA, at its discretion, may review and request additional information to verify.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Example Products.</u> Attach to the grant application cut sheets or sample specifications for the anticipated replacement luminaires.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Utility Rebate Applications.</u> Attach to the grant application any completed utility rebate application for the proposed project.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Electric utility bills.</u> Attached to the grant application a sample bill for all electricity accounts representing meters that serve the street lighting or outdoor lighting fixtures contained in the scope of this project.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>IRS Form W-9</u> for the Applicant organization. The applicant name on the application and the name on the W-9 form must match.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<u>Maryland SDAT Certificate(s) of Good Standing OR PDF(s) of the SDAT Business Entity Search entry/entries indicating Good Standing status.</u> This is required for the Applicant organization only if the applicant is a non-governmental applicant.

Notice: All information submitted in a CECD Grant Program application is subject to the Maryland Public Information Act (PIA). If the submitter of the Application believes information in the Application is confidential and therefore should not be disclosed, the submitter shall clearly mark this information and identify it by page and section or line number. Upon request for information from a third party, MEA is required to make an independent determination whether the information must be disclosed under the PIA. Designating information as confidential does not guarantee that it will be withheld from disclosure.

Grant Program General Provisions: MEA grant programs are covered by general requirements (“General Provisions”) that will be made part of the grant agreement between MEA and a grantee. The General Provisions are available for review on [MEA’s website](#)¹. These General Provisions, Version 3.0, will be incorporated into all MEA FY24 grant agreements. In addition, the following provisions apply to the SOLE Program:

Other Program Provisions:

- **Limitations on multiple funding sources.** Funding from other MEA grant programs, such as the Maryland Smart Energy Communities program (MSEC), cannot be combined with funding in this program for the same energy measures (i.e., the same streetlight cannot be incentivized under both the SOLE program and MSEC). However, applicants may pursue funding from MEA’s Lawton Loan program to help finance a SOLE project.
- **Prior Expenses Restriction:** Funds awarded by this Program cannot be used to offset costs that were incurred prior to the issuance of an award by MEA, or a purchase order issued for a defined set of streetlights issued before an award by MEA.
- **Alternative Technologies:** MEA may consider alternative technologies, however the energy savings must be equal to or greater than a comparable light emitting diode lamp of the same lumen output.
- MEA may, at its discretion, obligate all or none of the SOLE FY24 program budget, based on the eligibility of applications submitted to MEA.
- In the case of an incomplete application (as determined by MEA), MEA may ask an applicant to provide additional information. An applicant will be allowed up to 7 business days to provide the requested information. If MEA does not receive the requested information within 7 business days, the applicant may be requested to reapply and will lose its position in the queue.
- Participation in MEA grant programs is voluntary. If selected for award and to ensure the secure transmission of grant funds, grantee recipients of MEA funding are generally required to receive electronic payments from the State of Maryland. Electronic payments are set up through the State of Maryland’s Comptroller’s Office. Grantee must fill out and submit the “ACH/Direct Deposit Authorization for Vendor Payments Form X-10” to the Comptroller’s Office via the submission

¹ <https://energy.maryland.gov/SiteAssets/Pages/all-incentives/General%20Provisions%20v3%202.11.22.pdf>

methods outlined on the X-10 form. ACH/Direct Deposit Authorization for Vendor Payment Form X-10 should not be sent to MEA.

Failure to submit ACH/Direct Deposit Authorization Form X-10 may result in award reimbursement being delayed.

If an applicant is unable to receive ACH/Direct Deposit payments, MEA may provide an exception to this requirement on a case-by-case basis, at the sole discretion of MEA.

Submission Instructions: Applications are due by **March 8, 2024 at 5:00 PM Eastern time.**

MEA recommends that Applicants submit files electronically in PDF format; all electronic files should be submitted to lighting.mea@maryland.gov. MEA encourages the use of electronic communication, including applications, to streamline processing and reduce environmental impacts. If an applicant chooses to “opt out” of electronic communications for this program, please contact MEA no later than five (5) days prior to the application deadline to claim a place in the sequence of applications are received and to establish an alternative method to apply. All applications, regardless of submission method, must be received no later than **March 8, 2024, 5:00 P.M. Eastern time.** However, the program may close early if funding is fully committed.

Questions can be directed to Briggs Cunningham, Energy Program Manager, at lighting.mea@maryland.gov or (410) 537-4070.