



**TRIBAL ENERGY
ALTERNATIVES**
— A GRID AFFILIATE —

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2025 Tribal Solar Accelerator Fund (TSAF) Gap Funding Grant Request for Proposals (RFP)

Tribal Energy Alternatives - Tribal Solar Accelerator Fund aims to catalyze the growth of solar energy and expand solar job opportunities in tribal communities across the United States.


TSAF Background

For the past six years, the Tribal Solar Accelerator Fund (TSAF), a tribal-led sustainability program has partnered with over 65 tribes and over 120 tribal individuals to support renewable energy infrastructure development and job training goals in Indian Country. The TSAF awards grants for solar projects that clearly focus on building renewable energy infrastructure and are feasible, cost-effective, and engage broader tribal community participation.

Energy leadership, educational scholarships, workforce development, and training are also at the forefront of TSAF-funded projects and programs to ensure that tribal members from the communities we partner with have equitable access to career pathways and the economic benefits of renewable energy.

The Tribal Solar Accelerator Fund works in partnership with tribes and funders to bring technical, financial, and cultural resources to support their projects and address their unique challenges and opportunities.

At its core, TSAF is about mobilizing and developing tribal solar projects and integrating workforce development and training, nation-building, and strengthening the energy resilience of tribal communities with visions for a clean



energy outlook for generations to come. The TSAF supports tribes in asserting control over their energy resources and focuses on making solar implementation feasible by leveraging state and federal programs, philanthropic dollars, and partnerships with other tribes across Indian Country.

The TSAF remains one of the only grantmaking programs specifically designated for tribal solar projects and cultivating the next generation of tribal energy leaders. Through our grants, fellowships, and scholarships, we are strengthening the capacity of Indian Country to lead the way to a renewable energy future.

We are doing three key things to create a tribal renewable energy community that enhances and strengthens energy resilience and energy sovereignty by:

1. Increasing access to funding for tribal communities to achieve their renewable energy goals;
2. Supporting tribal leaders and youth in renewable energy transform their communities
3. Supporting tribal partners build capacity to address their community's energy needs and achieve their renewable energy visions.

Please read about the past TSAF grantees at tribalalternatives.org.

TSAF Grant Priorities

- The TSAF will provide necessary capital to support the development of new solar demonstration projects in tribal communities around Indian Country
- The TSAF supports and encourages solar education, training, and workforce development in tribal communities
- The TSAF prioritizes the development of long-term energy plans to increase tribal energy security and resiliency.

The TSAF, in collaboration with tribes and tribal leaders, aims to address challenges and opportunities related to energy sovereignty, climate resilience, and resource sustainability.

The TSAF is excited to share our mission, vision, and goals through grantmaking with tribal communities across Indian Country by engagement and communication, advocacy, technical assistance, collaboration, and a commitment to build capacity in tribal energy sovereignty.

TSAF Funding Areas

Solar Project “Gap” Funding Solar projects of any type that require a tribal cost-share (ex. federal or state grant programs) or are leveraging funding from other grant opportunities, or initiatives are encouraged to apply for up to \$250,000.

Gap Funding Priorities:

- These projects should be positioned to deploy solar energy with an existing funding gap (cost share) which prevents the project from being completed.

Gap Funding Objectives:

- To enhance and strengthen tribal solar energy development and infrastructure inclusive of other impactful renewable energy technologies (battery storage, clean mobility/charging stations, etc.).
- To provide funding for larger scale solar projects that benefit many tribal community members.
- To initiate new solar demonstration project systems that will strengthen tribal community energy resilience.


TSAF Grant timeline and reporting

RFP – INVITE TO APPLY NOTIFICATION	July 2, 2025
GRANT AWARD/DENIAL NOTIFICATIONS	By August 29, 2025
GRANT TIMELINE (PROJECT FISCAL YEAR START/END)	September 1, 2025 - August 31, 2026
GRANTEE CHECK-INS WITH TSAF STAFF	Q1 September 2025, Q2 Jan 2025, Q3 May 2026, Q4 August 2026
GRANTEE FINAL REPORT DUE	September 30, 2026

TSAF review and selection criteria

Upon receipt of a TSAF application, the following funding criteria should be met:

- Solid and concrete matches between project purpose and funding priority area

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- Clear focus on building renewable energy infrastructure in the tribal community
 - Demonstrated ability and/or experience necessary for a successful project
 - Clear plan of action, including specific goals and measurable objectives
 - Feasible, cost-effective, and sustainable budget
 - Partnerships that engage broad tribal community participation and support
 - Potential for application and replication in other tribal communities


The TSAF will provide a knowledgeable, experienced, and strategic review, scoring, and selection of TSAF grant applications.

TSAF Eligibility

The TSAF is committed to serving, supporting, and strengthening American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) tribal communities by investing in solar energy development and sustainability.

The TSAF eligibility criteria is as follows:

- Federally recognized tribal governments in the lower 48 states and Alaska (tribal government programs, such as tribal housing authority, cultural departments, economic development entities, etc.)
- Tribally led 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations fiscally sponsored tribal community organizations, tribal community organizations without a 501(c)(3) nonprofit status may submit an application through a sponsoring organization if the sponsor has IRS 501(c)(3) status and can provide written authorization confirming its willingness to act as the fiscal sponsor.
- Schools that are tribally controlled 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations and schools that are tribally-operated such as tribal colleges and universities (TCUs), any public or Bureau of Indian Education (BIE) schools.
- The definition of "tribal led" is an organization in which a majority (>51%) of the board of directors and leadership team are American Indian or Alaska Native. Organizations that are not tribal led are not eligible to apply (with or without a fiscal sponsor).

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- The community served for your project must be designated low-to-moderate income (LMI) as demonstrated by eligibility for federal, state, or tribal low-income programs, or with Census data.

TSAF Application Site and Submission Guidelines

The TSAF application must conform to the following requirements:

- All applicants will need to secure a tribal resolution or a letter of support from your tribal council or board of directors acknowledging the application for the proposed project. We understand that it may not be possible to submit at the time of application. Please upload/provide a placeholder letter and state when the signed letter will be submitted. If your tribe/organization prefers to submit via Microsoft word document, please contact the TSAF directly at tribalgrants@tribalalternatives.org to discuss this process. All applications that pass eligibility and initial review will undergo a comprehensive review and will be scored according to the 7 criteria identified in the RFP.

PLEASE READ THOROUGHLY

Considerations for Communications and Receipt of Funding


Participation in communications that acknowledge TSAF funders' support is a requirement for grants through the Tribal Solar Accelerator Fund.

All applicants will need to secure a tribal resolution or a letter of support from your tribal council acknowledging the application for the proposed project.

Tribal Energy Alternatives and TSAF understand that tribes have distinct cultural values, expectations, and traditions around communications, as well as ethical and moral principles when it comes to accepting financial resources. The following are Tribal Energy Alternatives commitments to and expectations of tribal partners participating in TSAF projects.

Our Commitments to You (TSAF grantee):

1. Tribal Energy Alternatives will provide you with a single point of contact for all TSAF-related communications activities.

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2. Tribal Energy Alternatives will collaborate with your designated communications representative to develop a set of communications activities appropriate for the project and your tribe. Activities may include one or more of the following:
 - Press release announcing receipt of TSAF grant for local, regional, or national audience
 - News item on Tribal Energy Alternatives' website(s), press releases, and/or newsletter about the project
 - Groundbreaking or other public event with speaking opportunities and/or branding for TSAF funders
 - Project video produced by Tribal Energy Alternatives or other approved partners
 3. Tribal Energy Alternatives will give you the opportunity to review and approve all external-facing communications assets and their intended use before their release.

Our Expectations of You:

1. You will provide a single point of contact for all TSAF-related communications activities who are authorized to provide and or/secure permissions on behalf of the tribe.
2. You will collaborate with us in good faith to identify appropriate communications activities to promote the project and acknowledge TSAF support.
3. You will provide a timely review of external-facing communications assets and not withhold approval.
4. All grantees must respond to the award letter within 30 days of notification to receive their grant agreement. Failure to do so will void the award letter and forfeit the funding opportunity.
5. All grantees and organizations awarded will be required to send a representative to the annual Tribal Sustainability Summit hosted by the Tribal Energy Alternatives Team in August. There will be a stipend to assist with the costs of travel (not all travel costs covered) after the event is attended and completed.