

DISCLAIMER: This “Notice of Intent” is for informational purposes only. The Department of Energy is not currently accepting applications. Any information contained in this notice is subject to change.

**NOTICE OF INTENT NO. DE-FOA-0003203 TO ISSUE
FUNDING OPPORTUNITY ANNOUNCEMENT NO. DE-FOA-0003204**

Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL): Energy Auditor Training (EAT) Program

The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) Office of State and Community Energy Programs (SCEP) intends to issue a Funding Opportunity Announcement (FOA) entitled “Energy Auditor Training Program.”

Through this FOA, SCEP intends to provide grants to support the training of energy auditors by paying the costs associated with energy auditor trainings and certifications, for the purpose of conducting energy audits, or surveys, of commercial and residential buildings. This activity is pursuant to the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act section 40503(a),¹ which established the Energy Auditor Training program. DOE intends that the investments made through this competitive FOA will enhance the broader government-wide approach to support sustainable, clean energy auditing efforts in commercial and residential buildings. It is expected that this will be accomplished through the deepening of partnerships and collaborative initiatives across, and among States, agencies, organizations, and DOE.

I. Background

A. Energy Auditors and the Clean Energy Workforce

The Federal Government has made significant investments to establish initiatives that support residential and commercial clean energy. These investments have primarily advanced two overarching goals: (1) to save customers money on energy bills, and (2) to reduce pollution from building energy use. To pursue these goals and spur future demand for energy-saving technologies, the U.S. Department of Energy, state and local governments, and utilities are implementing energy efficiency policies and programs. Today, energy auditors are instrumental for inspecting buildings, assessing current energy use, and providing recommendations that optimize efficiency and minimize costs in residential and commercial buildings. After the energy auditors conduct the energy audits, or surveys, the energy auditors can advise on how to reduce energy usage, promote energy efficiency, and offer energy savings to the customer.

B. The Energy Auditor Training (EAT) Grant Program

Under BIL section 40503, DOE was appropriated \$40 million to award grants to eligible States² to train individuals to conduct energy audits or surveys of commercial and residential buildings.

¹ Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (more commonly known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL)), Public Law 117-58 (November 15, 2021), section 40503(a), is codified at 42 U.S.C. 18793.

² Under section 40503(a)(2), an “eligible State” means a State that – “has a demonstrated need for assistance for training energy auditors; and [] meets any additional criteria determined necessary by the Secretary.” 42 U.S.C. 18793(a)(2).

Eligible applicants seeking a grant through this program, must demonstrate a need for assistance for training energy auditors and submit a proposed training curriculum for energy audit trainees; an identification of the covered certification that those trainees will receive on completion of that training curriculum; the expected per-individual cost of training; a plan for connecting trainees with employment opportunities; and any additional information required by FOA.³ The covered certifications: (1) The American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) Building Energy Assessment, (2) The Association of Energy Engineers (AEE) Certified Energy Auditor, (3) The Building Performance Institute (BPI) Home Energy Professional Energy Auditor, (4) The Residential Energy Services Network Home Energy Rater, (5) any other third-party certification recognized by the Department, and (6) any third-party certification that the Secretary determines is equivalent to the aforementioned certifications.⁴ To date, DOE has determined that the following certification(s) meet this standard:

- Building Performance Institute's Building Analyst Professional
- Journey Card from a Relevant Registered Apprenticeship Program

DOE intends for the EAT Program to support workforce development efforts that recruit and train residential and commercial energy auditors. As energy regulations and standards continue to evolve, the increase in energy auditors, and professionals with energy auditing skills, will allow for more audits to be completed so more buildings will be retrofitted to meet current and future energy requirements.

SCEP anticipates publishing a FOA with the following application requirements:

- Identify Training Curriculum for the Present & Future:
 - List residential and commercial training curriculum that align with industry, association, state, and Federal standards.
 - Utilize trainings that leverage existing programs and established best practices; and programs that prepare workers for future trends in the clean energy industry.⁵
- Determine Certifications:
 - Select certifications that clearly align with established program standards and industry needs.
 - Justify the connection between the program requirement for standard certifications and the inclusion of any third-party certifications not enumerated in BIL section 40503.⁶
- Outline Expected Cost & Benefits of Training:
 - Calculate the expected per-individual cost of training⁷.
 - Describe the benefits that the trainee receives through participating in the program.

³ 42 U.S.C. 18793(c). The training plan must also include the expected per-individual cost of training, a plan for connecting trainees with employment opportunities, and any additional information required by DOE.

⁴ 42 U.S.C. 18793(a)(1).

⁵ 42 U.S.C. 18793(c)(2)(A)(i).

⁶ 42 U.S.C. 18793(c)(2)(A)(ii).

⁷ 42 U.S.C. 18793(c)(2)(B).

- Indicate actual, and projected/forecasted training needs.
- Include resource and staffing plans that to ensures effective program management, implementation, and sustainability.⁸
- Plan for Connecting Trainees to Employment Opportunities:
 - Create plans for connecting trainees with employment opportunities.
 - Showcase how individuals will transition from participant to new hire.
 - Secure letters of support or memorandum of understanding with employers to hire participants, as permitted by the relevant state law.
 - Connect trainees with pre-apprenticeships, apprenticeships or other on-the-job paid experiences.⁹
- Strategize Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA) Activities:
 - Plan for creating or expanding a pipeline for diverse talent through program implementation.
 - Leverage unique marketing avenues, such as digital and social media advertising as well as translation services, to promote the program to participants in an inclusive and intentional manner.
 - Offer creative training initiatives, like wraparound or supportive services, to provide holistic support for workforce preparation.¹⁰
- Submit a Community Benefits Plan:
 - Describe how the proposed training program(s) will benefit the community.
 - Explore meaningful community and labor engagement.
 - Explain how the program is investing in America’s workforce.
 - Offer advancement of diversity, equity, inclusion, and accessibility opportunities. Develop a plan that contributes to the President’s goal that 40% of the overall benefits realized from the program flow to “disadvantaged communities. (Justice40 Initiative).

II. Topic Areas

DOE/SCEP anticipates that the future FOA *may* include the following Topic Areas:

Topic Area One: Commercial Energy Auditors

Through this proposed topic area, DOE will provide funding to State Energy Offices to recruit, train, or enhance the training of commercial energy auditors. DOE intends that these trained energy auditors will be able to conduct energy audits prior to, and after, the investment of building energy efficiency improvements. Solutions may include, for example: training on building efficiency technologies that support the continued performance of commercial energy efficiency upgrades; alignment of training curriculum with Federal, state, association, and

⁸ 42 U.S.C. 18793(c)(2)(B).

⁹ 42 U.S.C. 18793(c)(2)(C).

¹⁰ 42 U.S.C. 18793(c)(2)(D).

industry goals; collaborative partnerships that refine business cases for green building construction and development of net-zero commercial buildings.

State Energy Offices may explore opportunities for collaboration with the National Association of State Energy Officials (NASEO), the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE), the Association of Energy Engineers (AEE), the DOE Better Buildings Alliance, DOE Better Buildings Accelerators, the DOE State and Local Energy Efficiency Action Network, labor-management training programs, or any association or organization that supports the training and development of commercial energy auditors according to accepted local, regional, and national policies or standards. DOE expects these collaborations will support the certifications identified by BIL section 40503 and other certifications recognized by the DOE as an equivalent to these certifications. These collaborations will advance energy efficiency solutions and technologies; and should seek to advance innovative commercial building technologies and solutions, with the goal of producing significant energy savings, reducing greenhouse gas emissions, and saving businesses money.

Anticipated technical areas of interest include energy audits for compliance with commercial building codes and building performance standards; energy audit strategy and plan development, including to support a state's BIL Revolving Loan Fund Capitalization Grant Program funds; energy use analysis; data collection and analysis; lighting systems; economic analysis; heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems; commercial applications of building science; green building rating systems; net-zero building and energy audits; ENERGY STAR management; compressed air systems; building envelope; energy efficiency, commercial building electrification, and energy management; and commissioning/measurement and verification after building energy efficiency improvements.

DOE anticipates the Federal funding available for new awards under Topic Area One will be \$18,000,000. DOE anticipates making approximately eight (8) - 10 awards under this FOA Topic Area One. DOE may issue one, multiple, or no awards. Individual awards may vary between \$200,000 and \$2,000,000. The estimated period of performance will be thirty-six months covering fiscal year 2025 to fiscal year 2028. While there is no cost-share or cost-match requirement, SCEP does envision a selection process that incentivizes proposals that leverage non-federal resources to maximize the impact of Federal funds. Eligibility is limited to eligible States that have demonstrated need for assistance for training energy auditors, per BIL section 40503(a)(2)(A).¹¹

Topic Area Two: Residential Energy Auditors

Through this proposed topic area, DOE would provide funding to State Energy Offices to recruit, train, or enhance the training of residential energy auditors. DOE intends that these trained energy auditors will be able to conduct energy audits prior to, and after, the investment of residential building improvements for energy efficiency. Solutions may include, for example: training on building efficiency technologies that support the continued performance of residential

¹¹ 42 U.S.C. 18793(a)(2)(A).

energy efficiency; the continued alignment of Federal, state, association, and industry goals/standards through the offering of standardized certifications; the training, development, and advancement of the residential energy auditors/surveyors through new or existing collaborative partnerships between States and organizations or associations.

State Energy Offices may explore opportunities for collaboration with NASEO, ASHRAE, AEE, the Building Performance Institute (BPI), the Residential Energy Services Network, community colleges, labor-management training programs, or any association or organization that supports the training and development of energy auditors according to accepted local, regional, and national policies or standards. DOE expects these collaborations to support the certifications identified by BIL section 40503, to include the Building Energy Assessment, Certified Energy Auditor, Home Energy Professional Energy Auditor, Home Energy Rater, or any third-party certification recognized by DOE as an equivalent to these certifications. These collaborations could integrate energy auditor training as a stackable credential for energy efficiency professionals. It can also promote grassroots-level impact within local communities and among diverse populations. These collaborations should deepen cross-organization/agency coordination of training efforts, with the goal of creating better training processes and curriculum, transparent communication, and improved workforce development efforts.

Anticipated technical areas of interest include energy auditors for compliance with residential building codes; energy audit strategy and plan development; energy use analysis; data collection and analysis; lighting systems; economic analysis; heating, ventilation, and air conditioning systems, including air-source and ground-source heat pumps; residential hot water systems; building envelope; clean energy management and administration; energy efficiency, residential building electrification, and energy management; and commissioning/measurement and verification after residential building energy efficiency improvements.

DOE anticipates the Federal funding available for new awards under Topic Area Two will be \$18,000,000. DOE anticipates making approximately eight (8) - 10 awards under this FOA Topic Area Two. DOE may issue one, multiple, or no awards. Individual awards may vary between \$200,000 and \$2,000,000. The estimated period of performance will be thirty-six months covering fiscal year 2025 to fiscal year 2028. While there is no cost-share, or cost-match requirement, SCEP does envision a selection process that incentivizes proposals that leverages non-federal resources to maximize the impact of Federal funds. Eligibility is limited to eligible States that have demonstrated need for assistance for training energy auditors, per BIL section 40503(a)(2)(A)¹².

III. Additional Information

This Notice is issued so that interested parties are aware of DOE's intention to issue a FOA in the near term. All information contained in this Notice is subject to change. DOE may issue a FOA as described herein, may issue a FOA that is significantly different than what is described herein, or may not issue a FOA at all.

¹² 42 U.S.C. 18793(a)(2)(A)

SCEP plans to issue the FOA “Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL): Energy Auditor Training (EAT) Program” around the December 2023 timeframe via the Infrastructure EXCHANGE website at <https://infrastructure-xchange.energy.gov/>. When the FOA is released, applications will be accepted only through the Infrastructure eXCHANGE.

In anticipation of the FOA being released, applicants are advised to complete the following steps, which are required for application submission:

- Register and create an account in Infrastructure eXCHANGE at <https://infrastructure-xchange.energy.gov/>.
 - As part of the Infrastructure eXCHANGE registration process, new users are directed to create an account in Login.gov. Please note that the email address associated with Login.gov must match the email address associated with the Infrastructure eXCHANGE account. For more information, refer to the Infrastructure eXCHANGE Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) Quick Guide in the Manuals section of Infrastructure eXCHANGE. It is recommended that each organization or business unit, whether acting as a team or a single entity, use only one account as the contact point for each submission.
 - Questions related to the registration process and use of the Infrastructure eXCHANGE website should be submitted to: InfrastructureExchangeSupport@hq.doe.gov.
- Register with the System for Award Management (SAM) at <https://www.sam.gov>.
 - Designating an Electronic Business Point of Contact (Ebiz POC) and obtaining a special password called an MPIN are important steps in SAM registration. Please update your SAM registration annually.
 - Upon registration, SAM will automatically assign a Unique Entity ID (UEI). NOTE: Due to the high demand of UEI requests and SAM registrations, entity legal business name and address validations are taking longer than expected to process. Entities should start the UEI and SAM registration process as soon as possible. If entities have technical difficulties with the UEI validation or SAM registration process they should utilize the HELP feature on SAM.gov. SAM.gov will work entity service tickets in the order in which they are received and asks that entities not create multiple service tickets for the same request or technical issue. Additional entity validation resources can be found here: [GSAFSD Tier 0 Knowledge Base – Validating your Entity](#).
- Register in FedConnect at <https://www.fedconnect.net>.
 - To create an organization account, your organization’s SAM MPIN is required. For more information about the SAM MPIN or other registration requirements, review the FedConnect Ready, Set, Go! Guide at: https://www.fedconnect.net/FedConnect/Marketing/Documents/FedConnect_Ready_Set_Go.pdf. For additional questions, email support@fedconnect.net or call 1-800-899-6665.

- Register in Grants.gov at (<http://www.grants.gov/>) to receive automatic updates when Amendments to a FOA are posted. However, please note that applications will not be accepted through Grants.gov. All applications must be submitted through the Infrastructure eXCHANGE.

IV. Teaming Partner List

DOE is compiling a Teaming Partner List to facilitate teaming among multiple stakeholders across government, academia, industry, community-based organizations (CBOs), labor unions, and all technical disciplines. (The Teaming Partner List allows organizations who may wish to participate on an application to express their interest to other applicants and to explore potential partnerships.) Updates to the Teaming Partner List will be available in the Infrastructure eXCHANGE website. The Teaming Partner List will be regularly updated.

Any organization that would like to be included on this list should submit the following information to energyauditor@hq.doe.gov with the subject line “Energy Auditor Teaming Partner List Request”:

1. Organization Name;
2. Organization Type;
3. General Business Email Address specifically used for this Teaming Partners List;
4. Area of Technical Expertise;
5. Brief Description of Capabilities; and
6. Area of Interest (including interest in Topic Area One and/or Topic Area Two above).

By submitting a request to be included on the Teaming Partner List, the requesting organization consents to the publication of the above-referenced information. By enabling and publishing the Teaming Partner List, DOE is not endorsing, sponsoring, or otherwise evaluating the qualifications of the individuals and organizations that are self-identifying themselves for placement on this Teaming Partner List. DOE will not pay for the provision of any information, nor will it compensate any applicants or requesting organizations for the development of such information.