



REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

Residential Solar Financing Program

Q&A

1. **On page 3 in the introduction to the C3 Fund, it notes that 40% of the C3 Fund must be invested in low-income households and communities throughout Maryland. Can you please share Maryland's definition of low-income households and communities?**
 - a. In order to adhere to C3 Fund's commitment under the Maryland Climate Solutions Now Act to deploy at least 40% of fund capital to qualified projects in low- and moderate-income (LMI) communities defined as census tracts with average median income at or below 80% of the state average.
2. **On page 4 under program objectives, the RFI notes there is the stated goal of achieving private-to-public leverage consistent with peer LLR programs." Can you share MCEC's desired leverage ratio?**
 - a. The goal is to ensure that the funds will be able to reach as many homeowners as possible and ideally generate a return that will allow the program to be self-sustaining.
3. **Future Deployment Partnerships: Does MCEC envision future participation opportunities for renewable energy developers, contractors, deployment intermediaries, program administrators, workforce development organizations, and community-based organizations that can support statewide program implementation and customer engagement?**
 - a. Yes.
4. **Solar PV and Battery Storage Integration: Is MCEC evaluating financing structures that would support Solar PV, Solar PV + Battery Energy Storage Systems (BESS), battery-ready installations, and resilience-oriented home energy solutions as part of future program deployment?**
 - a. This RFI is focused on residential solar and battery storage financing. MCEC supports a broader range of clean energy project types through its existing financing programs, which may include solar PV, battery energy storage, affordable multifamily housing, and community solar:

Maryland Clean Energy Capital: Provides conduit tax-exempt and taxable financing for large-scale clean energy projects, helping organizations reduce costs and emissions while boosting Maryland's green economy.

Climate Catalytic Capital (C3) Fund: Invests capital into climate and resilience projects, focusing on innovation, equity, and accelerating Maryland's path to a sustainable future.

Strategic Revolving Fund: Revolving loan fund that provides financing for development stage costs for solar installations on affordable multifamily properties in Maryland.

Bridge Finance Facility: Revolving loan fund that provides short-term loans to close pre-construction financing gaps for community solar and affordable multifamily solar projects.

As the solar market and policy environment evolve, MCEC will evaluate opportunities to broaden program eligibility and financing structures accordingly.



5. Community Solar and Multifamily Housing: Beyond single-family residential applications, is MCEC considering future program expansion involving multifamily housing, affordable housing developments, community solar participation models, and shared clean energy programs?

- a. This RFI is focused on residential solar and battery storage financing. MCEC supports a broader range of clean energy project types through its existing financing programs, which may include solar PV, battery energy storage, affordable multifamily housing, and community solar:

Maryland Clean Energy Capital: Provides conduit tax-exempt and taxable financing for large-scale clean energy projects, helping organizations reduce costs and emissions while boosting Maryland's green economy.

Climate Catalytic Capital (C3) Fund: Invests capital into climate and resilience projects, focusing on innovation, equity, and accelerating Maryland's path to a sustainable future.

Strategic Revolving Fund: Revolving loan fund that provides financing for development stage costs for solar installations on affordable multifamily properties in Maryland.

Bridge Finance Facility: Revolving loan fund that provides short-term loans to close pre-construction financing gaps for community solar and affordable multifamily solar projects.

As the solar market and policy environment evolve, MCEC will evaluate opportunities to broaden program eligibility and financing structures accordingly.

6. Contractor Qualification and Workforce Development: Does MCEC anticipate establishing contractor qualification standards, workforce development requirements, or preferred participation frameworks involving NABCEP-certified installers, Minority and Women-Owned Business Enterprises (MWBE), apprenticeship programs, and local workforce partners?

MCEC anticipates that contractor qualification will be a component of this program, with approval parameters developed in collaboration with the selected program vendor. Rather than establishing standalone workforce development frameworks, MCEC's preferred approach is to incorporate existing standards and partner with organizations already operating in this space including those focused on installer certification, MWBE participation, apprenticeship programs, and local workforce development. The specific criteria and approval process will be defined as program design progresses.

7. Equity and Geographic Prioritization: Is MCEC considering geographic deployment targets or enhanced incentives for environmental justice communities, disadvantaged communities, rural counties, and low-to-moderate-income households beyond traditional income-based eligibility criteria?

- a. Yes, equity-focused deployment is a core requirement of this program. As a condition of the C3 Fund's commitment under the Maryland Climate Solutions Now Act, at least 40% of fund capital must be deployed to qualified projects in low- and moderate-income (LMI) communities, defined as census tracts with an average median income at or below 80% of the state average. This requirement directly shapes program eligibility and deployment priorities, ensuring meaningful capital access for underserved households and communities.



8. Energy Storage and Grid Resilience: How does MCEC envision residential battery storage contributing to grid resilience, peak demand reduction, emergency preparedness, and future Virtual Power Plant (VPP) opportunities within Maryland?

- a. MCEC recognizes the growing role of residential battery storage in supporting grid resilience, peak demand reduction, and emergency preparedness. While this program's current focus is on residential solar and solar-plus-storage financing, MCEC acknowledges that battery storage can provide meaningful benefits to both homeowners and the broader grid. MCEC will monitor the evolution of Virtual Power Plant (VPP) frameworks and utility programs in Maryland and will look to align future program structures with emerging grid modernization opportunities where appropriate.

9. Public Sector and Institutional Opportunities: Is MCEC evaluating future program structures that could support residentially oriented deployments associated with public housing authorities, municipal housing programs, colleges, universities, and community institutions serving low-to-moderate-income populations?

- a. This RFI is focused on residential solar and battery storage financing. MCEC supports a broader range of clean energy project types through its existing financing programs, which may include solar PV, battery energy storage, affordable multifamily housing, and community solar:

Maryland Clean Energy Capital: Provides conduit tax-exempt and taxable financing for large-scale clean energy projects, helping organizations reduce costs and emissions while boosting Maryland's green economy.

Climate Catalytic Capital (C3) Fund: Invests capital into climate and resilience projects, focusing on innovation, equity, and accelerating Maryland's path to a sustainable future.

Strategic Revolving Fund: Revolving loan fund that provides financing for development stage costs for solar installations on affordable multifamily properties in Maryland.

Bridge Finance Facility: Revolving loan fund that provides short-term loans to close pre-construction financing gaps for community solar and affordable multifamily solar projects.

As the solar market and policy environment evolve, MCEC will evaluate opportunities to broaden program eligibility and financing structures accordingly.

10. Capital Stacking and Program Coordination: Does MCEC anticipate encouraging financing structures that combine Climate Catalytic Capital resources with federal, state, utility, philanthropic, green bank, and private-sector funding sources to maximize deployment and affordability?

- a. Yes, MCEC actively encourages financing structures that leverage multiple capital sources. The Residential Solar Financing Program is funded through the C3 Fund, which is designed to be complementary to federal, state, utility, philanthropic, and private-sector funding. MCEC views capital stacking as an important tool for maximizing program reach and affordability and anticipates that respondents with experience structuring layered financing will be well-positioned to support program goals.



- 11. Program Scalability and Future Procurement Opportunities: Following completion of this RFI process, does MCEC anticipate future RFIs, RFQs, RFQLs, RFPs, pilot programs, partnership solicitations, or implementation procurements related to residential solar deployment, solar-plus-storage deployment, contractor networks, community engagement, workforce development, or program administration services?**
- a. This RFI is intended to inform program design and future procurement decisions. MCEC may issue follow-on solicitations as the program develops, and interested parties are encouraged to monitor MCEC's website for future announcements.
- 12. Long-Term Maryland Clean Energy Market Development: As MCEC evaluates the future evolution of this program, what additional market barriers does MCEC view as the highest priorities for industry stakeholders to address in order to accelerate equitable residential solar and energy storage adoption across Maryland?**
- a. MCEC views several market barriers as priorities for the industry to address in order to accelerate equitable residential solar and storage adoption in Maryland, including: the upfront cost and financing access gap for LMI households; consumer awareness and trust, particularly in underserved communities; contractor availability and quality in rural and low-income areas; and the complexity of navigating utility interconnection and permitting processes. MCEC welcomes respondents' perspectives on these and other barriers as part of this RFI process.