DEED GRANTS

A UTILITY GUIDE FOR PROJECT FUNDING

DEED
Public Power™
RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT
American Public Power Association

ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The American Public Power Association's Demonstration of Energy & Efficiency Developments (DEED) program is dedicated to improving the operations and services of public power utilities by supporting research and innovation through DEED grants. Grants provide financial support to DEED members for the development and demonstration of new, innovative technologies and techniques, and the creation of useful products and tools for the betterment of public power utilities and their customers.

DEED members are encouraged to apply for grants (up to $125,000) to help finance innovative ideas to improve their utility by increasing efficiency, reducing costs, investigating new technologies, offering new services, and improving processes and practices to better serve customers. Grants may support pilot projects, new technology demonstrations, early commercialization projects, and the development of best practices. DEED grants have been used to improve reliability, safety, security, efficiency, and lessen environmental impact at electric utilities.

Who?

Only DEED members may apply for grant funding. Only electric utilities, state associations, and agencies that are APPA members may join DEED. A member list is posted on the website.

When?

There are two application cycles each year. Deadlines are February 15 and August 15. The DEED Board makes its funding decisions 60 to 90 days following the deadline.

How Much?

Grant amounts can range from as little as $1,000 up to $125,000, but are typically $25,000-$75,000.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Web
www.PublicPower.org/DEED

Grants
http://tinyurl.com/APPAGrants

Email
DEED@PublicPower.org

Phone
202-467-2942
202-467-2960

HOW CAN I APPLY?

New Applicants

First time users of the web-based system must:

1. Contact DEED@PublicPower.org to obtain login information for the application website.

2. Log in to the grant application site, select the appropriate application, and proceed.

   We also recommend first-time users review the funding area of the website (www.PublicPower.org/DEED) for program updates and Grant Requirements.

Applicants with existing login credentials may begin new applications as soon as the funding cycle opens.

1. Login to the grant application site at www.tinyurl.com/appagrants. It will open to your "home" page (titled Application Status).

2. Review your contact and organization information and make any necessary updates.

3. To start a new application, select "Apply" in the left hand navigation bar.

4. Read the application instructions, select the appropriate application process and proceed.

LOOKING FOR A PROJECT PARTNER?

LET THE DEED IDEA EXCHANGE HELP!

The Idea Exchange facilitates partnerships between DEED members and APPA corporate members to create innovative projects with potential funding support via a DEED grant.

DEED members submit their project ideas and DEED staff pass the idea on to APPA corporate members, and vice versa.

Visit www.PublicPower.org/DEED and choose the DEED Idea Exchange to submit your ideas.

APPLICATION PROCESS AND TIMELINE

Applications submitted by the due date will be reviewed for completeness. Applications are open May 1st – August 15th (Fall cycle) and November 1st – February 15th (spring cycle). Those who submit incomplete applications will be notified. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed by the DEED board.

Complete applications are forwarded to Association staff for review and evaluation. Next, the DEED Board reviews all the applications and staff evaluations submitted. The DEED board meets twice a year, in the spring and fall, to discuss and vote on applications. DEED board decisions are final. Applicants are notified of the board's decision by phone within seven business days of the board meeting. Prior to receiving any grant funds, organizations are required to complete, sign and return a grant agreement.

TIPS

The web-based application system works best with Google Chrome or Internet Explorer.

Select the Tab key on your keyboard to move on to the next question, not Enter. Enter saves your application and takes you to a save confirmation page.

DEED Grant Application Questions

General Questions
- Project Title
- Project Description
- Geographic Region
- Project Category

Project Manager Contact Information— Subcontractor/Other Participant Information (If applicable)
- Project Manager Name, Title, Email Address, Phone Number
- Utility Name
- Utility Address
- Subcontractor Name
- Subcontractor Company Name, Phone, Address
- Other Project Personnel Name, Title, Phone, Address, Email Address

Project Term
- Proposed Start Date (mm/dd/yyyy)
- Proposed Completion Date (mm/dd/yyyy)

Project Funding
- Amount of DEED Funding Requested
- Other Sources/Types of Funding
- Itemized Total Budget
- Total Project Budget
- What contingencies have been planned for any shortfalls in funding?

Application Questions
- Short project description
- Statement of the problem
- Project objectives
- Methodology
- Description of equipment/hardware/system to be used
- Anticipated benefit, including deliverable(s) to DEED
- Anticipated relevance and transferability of project results
- Itemized tasks to be completed and time schedule
- Literature or product search
- Software as a deliverable?

Documents to Upload
- Itemized budget
- Any additional documents

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

If I already have a grant, can I apply for another grant before my first project is completed? Can I apply for two grants in the same funding cycle?

Yes and yes. The board has flexibility to provide funding to the projects it feels are the most innovative, transferable, cost-effective, etc. However, depending on the total amount of funds available and the strength of the other proposals submitted in the same funding cycle, priority may be given to utilities that do not have a current project.

If my utility has started our project, can we still apply for a DEED grant?

Yes, however the scope of the project is normally expanded due to the expectation of funding from DEED.

How often should my utility apply for funding?

As frequently as you have an innovative and transferable project that meets the values of the DEED program.

Will grant money be paid up front?

Once signed grant agreements have been returned to the Association, the grantee may submit an invoice for up to 25 percent of the grant to initiate work on the project. All other payments will be made on a cost-as-incurred basis. Twenty-five percent of the grant monies will be held until the utility's final report, summary abstract, and any other promised project deliverable have been accepted by the Association.

Can joint action agencies apply for a grant on behalf of a joint project that its member utilities are considering?

Yes, a joint action agency may apply for the DEED funding, as long as the member is not applying for the same project. Grant applicants must decide which entity will manage each project and handle invoicing and reporting. The entity managing the project should be the project applicant. Other utilities may be listed as in-kind contributors to the project in the Project Funding/Budget area of the application under "Other Sources/Types of Funding."

How long does the approval/denial process take?

It takes two to three months from the date of the application deadline for DEED staff to get in touch with an applicant regarding the board's funding decisions.

How much indirect costs can I include in the funds requested from DEED?

The preference is for a DEED grant to support direct project costs. Indirect costs can cover a maximum of 10 percent of the total funding request. Direct costs are those for activities or services that specifically benefit the DEED project., e.g., salaries for project staff for actual hours worked on a DEED project and materials required for the DEED project. These costs should be easily traced to the DEED project and should be tracked accordingly.

Indirect costs are those for activities or services that benefit more than one project. Their precise benefits to a specific project are often difficult or impossible to trace. For example, facility and administration charges are considered indirect costs.

APPLICATION FAQS

What is the "Dashboard"?

The Dashboard is the area on the web-based application system that allows grant recipients to see the status of applications and contact information we have for you on file.

Is there a spell checker in the application software?

There is no spell checker, but the Google Chrome browser has spell check.

If I do not have a scanner to upload my authorized signatures, what do I do?

In the left hand navigation, you will see a button for "Fax to File." This allows you to attach additional documents directly to your online application via a fax machine. By choosing this option you will be given a personal fax number to send your documents to. This fax number is associated directly and solely with your online application. The documents you fax will then be available to download to your computer and then uploaded as either "Additional Documents" to your application or in an upload field within the application.

When I select "Save as Draft" it ejects me from the application. What do I do?

Every time you save an application you will be taken to a save confirmation page. This confirmation page verifies that your work was saved. You may return to work on your application at any time before submitting. If you wish to return immediately to your application, select "Continue" on the save confirmation page.

My documents are not uploading or are taking a long time.

After saving your work, log off the system and then log back in. Sometimes there is a delay, or there appears to be a delay, with document uploads. Once you log back in, everything will be there.

Can I retain formatting in my documents (numerical lists, bullet points, etc.)?

Convert documents to PDF format before uploading so your formatting will be retained.

TOP 10 TIPS FOR WRITING A SUCCESSFUL DEED GRANT APPLICATION

We've kept the grant application simple so even small utilities with minimal staff resources can easily apply for project funding. The key to receiving any grant, whether it is through DEED, or EPA, DOE, etc., is in the writing of the grant application. Here are some tips for writing a successful DEED grant application:

1. Understand how your project will be evaluated.
Your application will be evaluated on the following categories:

Encourages or promotes energy efficiency, lowers costs, improves service or value to utility customers, or improves utility operations

- Demonstrates innovation and new technology
- Demonstrates adequate background research
- Project uniqueness
- Transferability to other public power electric utilities
- Contribution of other resources (time, money, in-kind)
- Probability of producing stated result

2. Identify your project.
This is the most important step. The project itself needs to be well defined, identifying not only the problem, but also how this project will provide a solution. Be very clear.

3. Is your project unique in some way?
DEED aims to support projects that are different from those previously funded. Look for the unique aspects of your project that make it stand out from similar ones that have been done before. If your utility wants to slice bread, and the project will perform the task faster, more efficiently, and with fewer crumbs, then it's got possibility.

4. Perform sufficient background research.
Ask yourself: Has anyone done this before? Am I recreating the same wheel, or will it be a better designed, more efficient wheel? If your project is very similar to a project that the DEED program has supported before, it is not as likely to receive funding.

To avoid this pitfall previous DEED projects can be looked up easily via the on-line, keyword searchable, DEED Project Database. Visit www.publicpower.org/DEED, Project Database. You should also complete an Internet search to see if the project you are considering has been done by some other entity and the results are already available.

5. Focus on project application, not project conception.
The focus of the DEED grant program is to help fund the development and demonstration of new technologies and techniques which promise to improve efficiencies, lower costs or add service or value in the provision of electricity or energy services. Although DEED has gotten involved in some true research studies in the past, the focus has been on assisting utilities to apply new processes and technological developments rather than creating the theory itself. If your grant application requests funds to perform a large amount of theoretical lab work, rather than the implementation of the lab output itself, the board may grade the grant application lower.

6. Bring others to the table.
The DEED program does not like to be the only, or the largest pot of money funding a project. DEED grants were designed to help utilities fund projects that demonstrate new and innovative methods. When a grant application is received for a project that requests >50% DEED funding, the application is not likely to be approved. However, if the requested DEED grant is part of an overall project funded partially by the utility(s), or as part of a project funded by various grant sources, or R&D organizations, the application score will be higher. DEED's focus is not to be the main force behind an R&D project, but rather part of a larger joint effort.

7. Highlight the project's transferability to other public power utilities.
This can make or break your grant approval. If the project you propose will only benefit your utility, and the outcome is not transferable to other municipals throughout the U.S., then the likelihood of approval is diminished. Funds are collected from hundreds of American Public Power Association members who have decided to join the DEED program, and the ultimate project should benefit a large number of those members. Knowing that this may not be true with each and every project, all grant proposals should strive to benefit the typical municipal, especially those which are smaller in size. When writing the grant, clearly identify key attributes of the project that can be utilized by other utilities interested in the same technology.

8. Try to provide a useful deliverable beyond the final report.

Often a final report with some tweaking could turn into a best practice manual, white paper or a technical resource that the Association could publish. A video, software or web page that could be used by the membership, on top of the normal final report that DEED requires, can make your project stand out. Create a slide show to deliver project results to a city council or other audience. Turn any document or resource you created, as part of the project, into a template that staff at other utilities could customize and use. Offer to speak at one or more American Public Power Association conferences to inform your colleagues about the project, present a DEED webinar, write a blog or article about the project for the DEED Digest or Public Power Magazine.

9. Contact American Public Power Association staff and your regional DEED board director for help.

The Association has a pretty good overview of what is hot, and what is not, in the world of technology. We also have a history of all projects to date, and can assist a utility very early in the grant process. If your project idea has been completed by a DEED grant previously, let us tell you that up front in order to prevent you from wasting time applying for a grant that has little chance of being funded. Your regional DEED Board Director is also an excellent resource. Contact details can be found on the Website or email DEED@PublicPower.org.

10. Don't get discouraged.

Not all grants will be approved. Don't let one grant rejection change your attitude on R&D, or the DEED program itself. Never give up! Your next submission could be a winner. Over the last 15 years, more than 60% of applications submitted were approved for funding.