# American-Made Community Power Accelerator Prize Narrative Template

# Team Name: (Team Name)

# Four Question Written Narrative Instructions

Answer each of the following four questions:

1. **Organization and Team –** Describe your organization, past experience, and team, and how your team would benefit from participation in the Community Power Accelerator Prize.
2. **Portfolio Plan and Goals –** What is your plan to implement a portfolio of at least 1 MW of community solar projects in the next three years?
3. **Community Engagement and Partnerships –** What is your plan to engage with and work with the communities in which you plan to develop community solar projects?
4. **Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Plan –** How will your work provide benefits to and serve disadvantaged communities?

For convenience, these questions are provided in the headings of the tables on pages 2-9 along with suggested content (and corresponding judging statements) to help guide your responses. You decide where to focus your answers.

You should answer each of the questions in the four areas listed below. The content bullets are only suggestions to guide your responses; you decide where to focus your answers. The individual answers to the four areas do not have a word limit; however, the aggregate response to these four areas must not exceed 3,000 words, not including captions, images, figures/graphs, and references. A word count must be included at the end of your submission (see template for details). You may also include up to ten supporting images, figures, or graphs. The reviewers will score the questions based on the content you have provided.

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| **1. Organization and Team – Describe your organization, past experience, and team, and how your team would benefit from participation in the Community Power Accelerator Prize.**  *24 points possible* | |
| **Suggested content you provide**   * A description of your organization’s mission and goals and how they align with the overall prize goal of developing a (minimum) 1-MW community solar portfolio with the five meaningful benefits.[[1]](#footnote-1) * A description of any current challenges or barriers that are preventing your organization from developing community solar with the five meaningful benefits.12 * A description of how the specific activities[[2]](#footnote-2) and benefits[[3]](#footnote-3) of the prize would help you overcome your identified barriers to either become a community solar project developer or build upon existing experience to expand development with the five meaningful benefits.12 * A description of your current level of experience as a solar developer or co-developer. Alternatively, you can explain that you are new to community solar development or that you are an established developer seeking to expand. * Specific examples of previous solar project development experience (or other relevant development experience) in your organization or team. Describe how you led or supported solar development and whether that experience is specific to community solar.   + If you have no relevant solar development experience, highlight any experience you have that could be leveraged to make you a successful community solar developer. * A description of your team who would be participating in prize activities,13 including a description of each team member’s relevant expertise and ability to participate in the prize. Please also identify any skills or expertise that are currently missing on your team and your plan to fill these gaps, or any additional support your team may need to be successful. | **Judging criteria (1–6 points per statement):**   * The competitor has identified specific barriers that participation in the prize would help them overcome and has a clear and actionable vision for how the prize activities13 and benefits12 will strategically position the team to either become community solar project developers or build upon existing experience to expand solar development with the five meaningful benefits.12 * The competitor demonstrates a high level of previous experience that could be leveraged for community solar development. * The competitor demonstrates that they have a strong team with relevant skill sets, expertise, and experience and the dedication to fully participate in all Community Power Accelerator prize activities.13 * The team has adequate capabilities and resources available to dedicate to learning the skills and acquiring the knowledge of the unique challenges and attributes of community solar to be able to successfully secure financing for their proposed community solar project portfolio. |

**Response to Question 1:**

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| **2. Portfolio Plan and Goals – What is your plan to implement a portfolio of at least 1 MW of community solar projects in the next three years?**  *24 points possible* | |
| **Suggested content you provide**   * Your current solar portfolio as it is today (number of projects, MW, year built, etc.) and your role in project development (lead, co-lead, supporter, community involvement, etc.).   + Teams may reference their “Portfolio Questionnaire” document for specific details regarding their current portfolio.   + If you have no relevant solar development projects, highlight any projects that show you have experience that will make you a successful community solar developer. * Your plans for how you would like to see your community solar portfolio grow over the next three years. What support do you need to get more projects with the five meaningful benefits12 financed? * Your plans for developing a portfolio of at least 1 MW of community solar projects with the five meaningful benefits.12   + Please identify the town and state for each project. If multiple locations are under consideration and have not been narrowed down, please indicate this and describe how you plan to identify specific locations in Phase 2 of the prize. * Your plan to incorporate at least two of the five meaningful benefits12 into each project of your portfolio. In addition to describing them in your projected portfolio, explain previous efforts to include similar benefits in your prior development, including barriers and solutions reached.   + How can you leverage your existing solar or other relevant experience to develop solar that will provide at least two of the five meaningful benefits to subscribers? * Your plan to incorporate any additional meaningful benefits12 into your portfolio. | **Judging criteria (1–6 points per statement):**   * The submission shows that the team is well positioned to develop solar projects with the five meaningful benefits12 because of their strong history with solar development or other development experience that could be pivoted to solar. * The submission clearly describes how the competitor’s community solar project portfolio is expected to grow over the next three years in a way that indicates success is likely. The competitor has identified the specific support they would need to develop more projects with the five meaningful benefits.12 * The submission clearly describes how the project portfolio will incorporate at least two of the five meaningful benefits12 into each project and appears poised for success. * The submission clearly describes how the project portfolio will incorporate any additional meaningful benefits12 into each project.   *Note:* Individual projects within the same portfolio can have different sets of meaningful benefits, as long as each project has at least two. |

**Response to Question 2:**

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| **3. Community Engagement and Partnerships – What is your plan to engage with and work with the communities in which you plan to develop community solar projects?**  *24 points possible* | |
| **Suggested content you provide**   * Describe your team’s past experience with community engagement, including the strategies and lessons learned that will support your future success with community solar development. * Describe your community’s current disposition toward community solar. What are their top concerns and priorities? What barriers do you expect that you might encounter? What factors might support your future success?   + If you do not currently have specific communities identified, you may describe the attitudes, concerns, priorities, etc. that you might expect to commonly encounter within a community. * Describe the specific strategies, events, and activities[[4]](#footnote-4) that you plan to use to engage, gain trust, and obtain buy-in from the communities where your projects will be located. How will you leverage these strategies to ultimately attract community members to become subscribers or owners of your envisioned community solar projects? * How are you planning to provide support and direct benefits[[5]](#footnote-5) to the communities where your projects will be located? What metrics will you use to measure success? How will you measure these metrics? How will the benefits and impact of your projects be communicated to communities? | **Judging criteria (1–6 points per statement):**   * The competitor has relevant experience with community engagement and the strategies and lessons learned from previous experiences indicate a high likelihood of future success. * The competitor has a clear understanding of the community’s concerns and priorities as related to community solar. * The competitor has a well-articulated and credible plan to effectively engage communities and gain buy-in and trust from community members as well as to attract community members to become subscribers or owners of the planned projects. * The submission clearly identifies how the planned community solar projects are directly benefitting communities, what metrics are required to measure the success of community-realized benefits, and how the metrics will be measured and communicated back to community members. |

**Response to Question 3:**

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| **4. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Plan – How will your work provide benefits to and serve disadvantaged communities?**  *24 points possible* | |
| **Suggested content you provide**   * Identify the disadvantaged communities where your planned community solar projects will be or may be located. * Describe how your proposed community solar project portfolio could provide specific, direct benefits16 to [disadvantaged communities](#_9_Key_Terms) and other underrepresented populations.[[6]](#footnote-6) * Describe how your planned projects might impact disadvantaged communities. How will your team minimize or address any negative impacts (such as land use, community aesthetic, construction, etc.) on these communities?   + If no project locations have been identified, please describe how you plan to address impacts to disadvantaged communities generally within your proposed portfolio. * Describe the specific activities and partnerships that would build trust and strengthen relationships with disadvantaged communities and support socially and economically disadvantaged individuals (SEDIs)[[7]](#footnote-7) and SEDI-owned businesses. * Describe your plan to encourage and support disadvantaged community members specifically (as opposed to communities generally) to become subscribers or owners of your envisioned community solar projects. | **Judging criteria (1–6 points per statement):**   * The competitor has clearly articulated how their planned project portfolio would provide specific benefits to disadvantaged communities and underrepresented populations. The benefits identified are credible and would support disadvantaged communities. * The competitor has clearly and credibly identified how their projects would impact disadvantaged communities. The competitor has also described a realistic plan to minimize or address any identified negative impact(s). * The competitor has a well-considered and credible plan to deeply engage and build trust with disadvantaged communities, organizations, and individuals, such as SEDIs and SEDI-owned businesses. * The competitor has a well-considered and credible plan to attract members to become subscribers or owners of the planned projects. |

**Response to Question 4:**

## Four question narrative word count: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_ total words

**Please read and comply with submission requirements in the** [**Official Rules**](https://www.herox.com/CommunityPowerAccelerator/resource/1159)**.**

**COMPETITORS THAT DO NOT COMPLY WITH THESE REQUIREMENTS MAY BE DISQUALIFIED.**

1. The five meaningful benefits include: low- and moderate-income household access, greater household savings, increased resilience and grid benefits, community ownership, and equitable workforce development. For additional details, please see [Section 2.2](#_Community_Solar_Meaningful_1). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Prize activities include participation in the Learning Lab (Phase 2, one individual per team), working with technical assistance providers (Phases 2 and 3) to complete the [Credit-Ready Checklist](#_Appendix_4:_Credit-Ready) (Phase 2), and meeting with financiers (Phase 3). For more information, see [Section 1.2](#_Prize_Phases_and). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Specific benefits of the prize include increasing organizational knowledge of community solar and the five meaningful benefits via the Learning Lab, increased confidence and skills from technical assistance, ability to leverage cash awards to seek additional funding for planned projects, and access to the Community Power Accelerator platform to identify and work with potential investors. For more information, see [Section 1](#_Executive_Summary). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Example activities could include door-to-door canvasing, utilizing local online social networks such as Nextdoor, posting signage and communication materials at the proposed sites, collecting feedback from local community members, engaging the local government, and attending city council meetings, providing notice, etc. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Direct benefits could include workforce development, community ownership, economic development, or other [meaningful benefits](#_Community_Solar_Meaningful_1). [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Teams may view statistics related to their identified project communities by using the following tools: EPA Environmental Justice Screening and Mapping Tool (EJScreen): <https://www.epa.gov/ejscreen>

   Tribal Energy Atlas: <https://maps.nrel.gov/tribal-energy-atlas/>

   Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool: <https://screeningtool.geoplatform.gov/en/#3/33.47/-97.5>

   # Transportation Disadvantaged Census Tracts (Historically Disadvantaged Communities): <https://usdot.maps.arcgis.com/apps/dashboards/d6f90dfcc8b44525b04c7ce748a3674a>.

   [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
7. “SEDI demographics-related business” means a business owned and controlled by individuals who have had their access to credit on reasonable terms diminished compared to others in comparable economic circumstances. For more information, see [Key Terms](#_9_Key_Terms). [↑](#footnote-ref-7)