



Energizing Rural Communities Prize

Phase Two Kickoff

September 27th, 2023



Housekeeping

**This webinar is
being recorded
and will be made
available later.**

Questions:

- There will be time for a Q&A session at the end of the presentation
- You can type questions in the chat at any time.

Technical Issues:

If you experience technical issues, please check your audio settings under the “Audio” tab

Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Expectations and Requirements
3. Competitor Support
4. Q&A

Phase Two

Kickoff

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NETWORK

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Welcome Phase One Winners!

- 55 PARTNER Track and 12 FINANCE Track winners!
- Projects span 31 states and 1 territory, spanning from Alaska to Puerto Rico and from Hawai'i to Maine.
- 17 are led by or include direct contributions from tribal nations
- This will not be your only opportunity to take in this information and ask questions.
- We will provide this recording, slide deck, and be available for questions up through July 2024.

Energizing Rural
Communities Prize
TIMELINE

The Energizing Rural Communities Prize consists of two tracks, both following the same timeline:

**Partner
Track**

**Finance
Track**

PHASE



**Awards up to
\$200,000**

July 14, 2023

Phase 2 Opens
*Phase 1 winners implement their
partnership or finance plan*

Feb. 1, 2024

Deadline for Confirmation of Community:
*Competitors must resubmit their plan's location
of primary benefit at www.herox.com/rural-energy*

July 12, 2024

Phase 2 Submission Deadline
5 p.m. EDT

August 2024

Winner Announcements

All dates subject to change.

Expectations and Requirements

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February 1 Requirement: Confirmation of Community

- A successful submission must demonstrate that the proposed activity has benefitted a verified rural or remote area.
- **Requirement:** Competitors must re-submit the Location of Primary Benefits (nine-digit zip code and name of city, town, or unincorporated area [Census Designated Place]) on HeroX **by February 1, 2024.**
- The Location of Primary Benefits submitted on February 1, 2024 must match the submission on July 12, 2024, and verified as a qualifying location. No changes may be made after February 1. Submissions that do not satisfy this requirement will be considered ineligible and removed from further evaluation.

Unscored Submission Requirements

Primary Beneficiary (PUBLIC)

- Must match declaration in February for primary beneficiary
- Commitment letters required to verify engagement with the Location of Primary Benefits.
- Will be made public

Cover Page (PUBLIC):

- Title
- Competitor name
- Organization
- Location of primary benefits
- Short description of activities pursued in Phase Two
- Project members
- Other partners (if any)

Summary Slide (PUBLIC)

- One slide
- Introduces competitor and submission
- How you built upon/progressed from Phase One submission
- No template – present in desired format
- At least 14-point font, readable

Scored Submission Requirements

Pre-Recorded Presentation (PUBLIC)

- Up to 10 minutes in length
- Present team activities and impacts.
- Demonstrate success and significance of the project
- Will be made public, possibly used in outreach activities and public promotion
- Professional and polished!!

Project / Partnership Packet (NOT PUBLIC)

- Narrative format -- template available
- Address prize goals in Section 2.2 and be guided by the scoring criteria for your track
- Total word count not to exceed 5,000 words
- May include up to five supporting visuals/graphics
- Packet must also include evidence of community commitment (commitment letters, MOUs, etc) from community leadership to verify engagement
 - **Does not count toward word limit**

Scoring Process and Statements

0	1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

Criteria	Number of Scored Statements	Total Possible Points
Pre-Recorded Presentation	4	20
Project Packet	11	55
Criterion 1: Activities Pursued During Phase Two of the Prize	4	20
Criterion 2: Outcomes, Impacts, and Success Metrics	3	15
Criterion 3: Strategy for Achieving Community Energy Goals After Completion of the Prize	4	20
Reviewer Recommendation	1	15
TOTAL	17	90

Competitor Support

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Competitor Support

Categories of Competitor Support

1. Project Management & Prize Expectations
2. Permitting & Policy
3. Resource Assessment, Technology, and Tools
4. Finance
5. Communications & Outreach

Identify team member responsible for trainings and resources within each category and communicate that to the prize team.

Team Priority Activities: All Accessible on HeroX

October to December

Needs Assessment: Cadmus and/or Lundy Legacy

Virtual and recorded trainings and resources, by category

January to March

Watercoolers with Power Connectors

Office Hours

Potential in-person events*

Graphic Design Support

Peer-to-Peer Workshop Discussions

April to June

Individual team progress

Review provided materials and trainings

Prepare final deliverables for July deadline

**All activities are optional for teams. Update teams by November to confirm if in-person events will occur.*

Training and Resource Providers

- Graphic Design Support: UACI
- Water Cooler Discussions: CEBN
- Virtual Trainings in grant writing, RFPs, and stakeholder engagement: CEBN and AECOM
- In-depth topical workshops: Deloitte
- Regional Support Network Development: Lundy Legacy



Current Project Status

- You should have received your \$100,000. If not, let us know.
- You should be on track for your first quarter of work, in alignment with the timelines you all submitted.
- Your team should be clearly identified and already communicated with the prize administration team.

Next Steps

- Join optional office hours and attend training sessions relevant to your project.
- Review categories of competitor support and identify tracks of programming each of team member should attend.

Tips and Tricks for Success

Keep Your Contact Information Up-To-Date:

- Keep us informed of changes to your team and contacts for official emails. Email ruralenergyprize@nrel.gov
- Have your whole team sign up on HeroX

Know What's Coming Up:

- Take advantage of competitor support offerings
- Check the American Made Challenges Site:
<https://americanmadechallenges.org/challenges/rural-energy>
- Check in on the HeroX Site:
<https://www.herox.com/rural-energy/entries>
- Keep track of upcoming deadlines: Feb 1

Engage with the new community

- Networking with other prize teams
 1. **HeroX:** When you're logged in, you can message each other directly.
 2. **LinkedIn:** Join the [American-Made Network LinkedIn group](https://www.linkedin.com/groups/13917869) competitors: www.linkedin.com/groups/13917869
 - And comment on the Energizing Rural Communities Prize welcome post so you can find one another.
 3. **Peer-to-peer meetings**
- Knowledge sharing with the group
- Leverage DOE resources

Thank you / Q&A



Email: ruralenergyprize@nrel.gov



American Made: americanmadechallenges.org/challenges/rural-energy



HeroX Forum: www.herox.com/rural-energy

Extra Slides

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What is the Energizing Rural Communities Prize?

The \$15 million Energizing Rural Communities Prize challenges individuals and organizations to **develop partnership plans or innovative financing strategies to help rural or remote communities improve their energy systems and advance clean energy demonstration projects in rural or remote areas.**

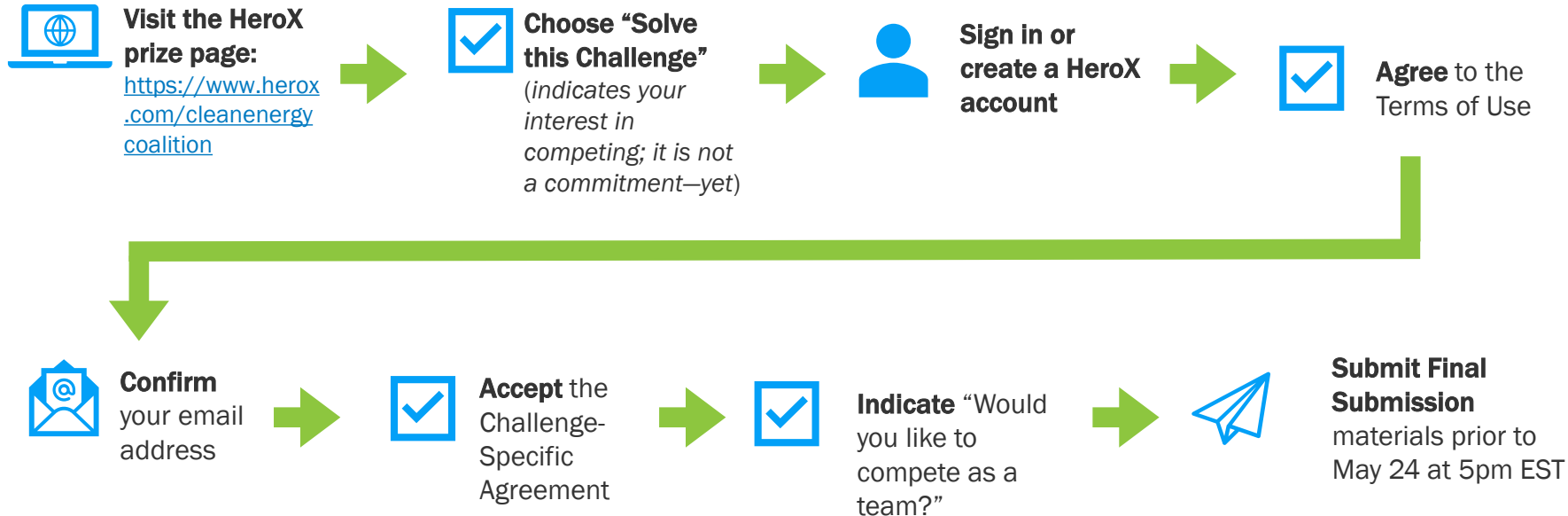
The term “rural or remote area” is defined as a city, town, municipality, or unincorporated area that has a population of not more than 10,000 inhabitants.

This prize:

- Contains **two** submission tracks – **PARTNER** and **FINANCE**
- Is made of **two** phases – **Phase One** and **Phase Two**
- Will award up to **\$15M in cash prizes and in-kind assistance**
- Will select up to **90 winners** in Phase One



Register and Compete



4. Finance

Training 1: Selecting an energy project ownership model

- Overview of possible ownership models
 - Customer-, community-, utility-owned, "flip" model
- Considerations for selecting the best ownership model
 - Utility regulatory framework
 - Size of project
 - Technology
 - Community characteristics
 - Access to capital
 - Desired economic impact
 - Ability to operate and maintain the project

Training 2: Financial planning around project management, development, permitting, operations and maintenance

- How to plan, develop and manage an energy project?
- Important considerations and steps to understand and plan for
- Applicable permits and regulations
- Identifying/estimating all development, permitting and O&M costs of a project over the anticipated project life
- Selecting the most cost-effective technology
- Financing considerations in technology selections

4. Finance

Training 3.1: Obtaining upfront capital / project finance

- Federal/state grants
- Project loans
- Tax credits (e.g. Investment Tax Credit, Production Tax Credit, ITC/PTC bonus adders)
- Tax equity investment
- Developing approaches and tools to finance multiple small-to-medium scale projects
- Developing local or regionally-specific capital stack options

Training 3.2: Recovering the investment

- PPAs/Offtake agreements
- Direct sale to customers
- Leveraging tax credits / private sources of capital (direct pay)
 - ITC/PTC (not direct pay)
- MACRS (Modified Accelerated Cost Recovery System) depreciation credit
- On-bill finance