



Shine Award Program Guidelines 2026 – 2027 Program Year

Purpose of the program

The Shine award program ("Shine program") fosters inclusive community partnerships and provides equitable support to advance economic development across the Sacramento region. It prioritizes community-based nonprofits and supports our 2030 Clean Energy Vision by ensuring all communities can participate in a carbon-free future. Together we will improve local air quality, strengthen our local workforce and create a healthier region for all.

Shine applications will open June 1 and will close July 31 at 5 p.m. Awardees must deliver their project during the 2027 Calendar Year.

Eligible applicants

While the Shine program harnesses the ingenuity and leadership of forward-thinking individuals within our communities, only incorporated nonprofit organizations providing services within SMUD's service territory can apply. These include but are not necessarily limited to community-based non-profits, chambers of commerce, property-based improvement districts, neighborhood associations and homeowner associations.

Individuals interested in applying to SMUD's Shine program must collaborate with, and ensure the application is submitted by and through, an incorporated nonprofit organization. We will not review applications submitted directly by individuals.

Municipal organizations (cities, counties, special districts, school districts, etc.) may apply as co-applicants in collaboration with an incorporated nonprofit organization. For projects in which a municipal organization is applying as a co-applicant, the application must identify an eligible nonprofit as the fiscal agent for the project. Awarded project funds will be disbursed only to a project's identified fiscal agent.

Eligible projects

To be eligible for funding, an applicant must demonstrate that the proposed project has a direct connection to SMUD's public purpose, Strategic Directives and the 2030 Clean Energy Vision and Zero Carbon Plan. Proposals should also align with the Sustainable Communities funding priorities: zero carbon workforce, affordability and community resiliency, economic development and STEM Education to ensure the award has a greater collective community impact.

Community Impact

The proposed project must serve, and/or have a tangible and quantifiable impact on the community. This may include, but not necessarily be limited to:

- Revitalization of business areas to increase customer and community engagement
- Improving air quality and tree canopy
- STEM education and career exploration,
- Regional zero carbon workforce development (training and opportunities),
- Economic development
- Access and support for facility improvements that increase energy efficiency (including electrification measures such as converting gas equipment to electric).

These awards are not intended to fund events. For event sponsorship and applications, visit smud.org/Sponsorships.

Organizations and projects that are not eligible to apply

Based on SMUD policy and regulatory requirements, there are a number of organizations and activities for which the Shine program cannot provide funding.

Examples of these are as follows:

- Political or individual lobbying activities
- Religious activities, in whole or in part, for the purpose of furthering religious doctrine. Projects by faith-based organizations will be considered in regard to services provided to all clients regardless of denomination.
- Organizations that discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color, sex or national origin.
- General operating support, including labor or travel expenses.
- School-affiliated field trips, fundraisers, sports teams, graduations or performing arts events.
- Organizations that do not provide services in SMUD's service territory.

Our mission and key values

We're proud to give back to our community by supporting efforts that improve quality of life in our region. Through the financial support of programs like Shine, we eagerly seek collaborations with eligible applicants that support projects that make a difference and align with our four key values: Leadership, Integrity, Ingenuity and Community Vitality.

Funding Priorities

From all eligible projects, we will prioritize funding for those that include one or more of the following impact areas:

- Promotes 2030 Clean Energy Vision by practicing clean energy behaviors and solutions, particularly in diverse and under-resourced communities.
- Promotes energy efficiency, electrification, energy conservation and greenhouse gas reduction, particularly in diverse and under-resourced communities
- Involves clean energy education related to energy efficiency, renewable energy, or related Science, Technology, Engineering and Math ("STEM") fields.

- Offers economic development practices for small businesses and opportunities for entrepreneurship.
- Advances zero carbon workforce development with our under-resourced communities.

Types of award funding available

Applicants can apply for three (3) different types of award funding opportunities:

1. **Spark award** – awards of \$10,000 or less
2. **Amplifier award** – awards of \$10,001 to \$50,000
3. **Transformer award** – awards of \$50,001 to \$100,000

Spark award: Spark funds are for smaller, short-term projects ready in 3 – 6 months that can spark immediate positive change for the community. Projects may include seasonal, time-limited STEM education and/or career exploration, energy efficiency upgrades or outdoor shade structure materials.

Amplifier award: Amplifier funds will help launch projects that will begin and finish within 6 – 12 months and will have a measurable impact on the community. Projects of this type may include energy efficient upgrades, STEM education and greenhouse gas reduction. They may also include service-based programs that encourage inclusive economic development, including equitable access for under-resourced and underrepresented communities to promote zero carbon workforce development, STEM education and community resiliency projects.

Transformer award: Transformer funds are for projects that will be ready to launch and finish within 12 months. They will meet the program funding priorities in a way that address systemic community issues and generally occur over a longer-term timeline. In most cases, these projects will involve significant transformations of the community's infrastructure or other aspects of its built environment. Funding may be used by service-based programs for energy efficient equipment and other related physical infrastructure. Projects of this type may include an HVAC upgrade to an electrical HVAC system, water heat pump or induction stove upgrades.

Budget and Matching Requirements

Shine awards are funded with public funds.

Note: No portion of Shine funding may be expended for any wages, salary or labor-related costs for the proposed project.

The Shine program is a matching funding program. Matching funds may be provided as cash or a combination of cash and in-kind. Matching requirements for each award type are as follows:

- Spark award = 25% Match Required (e.g. \$1,250 match for a \$5,000 award)
- Amplifier award = 50% Match Required (e.g. \$10,000 match for a \$20,000 award)

- Transformer award = 100% Match Required (e.g. \$75,000 match for a \$75,000 award)
- The in-kind portion of the match may not exceed 50% of the match requirement.

In-kind contributions are defined as materials or labor that an organization commits to a project in-lieu of cash. In the case of donated labor, the value of that time must be calculated as that person's hourly rate of compensation based on their specialty or field, multiplied by the number of hours that will be contributed over the term of the project's implementation (e.g., Carpenter at a rate of \$60/hour x 20 hours of labor).

For materials, we request that applicants use the retail value of the goods or materials provided.

Insurance Requirements:

Once an organization is selected for a Shine award, they will be required to provide a Certificate of Insurance (COI) from their insurance broker in order to execute a funding agreement. The COI must demonstrate coverage that meets SMUD's minimum insurance requirements, including Commercial General Liability (CGL) coverage of \$1 million per occurrence and \$1 million aggregate, Business Automobile Liability coverage of \$1 million, Directors and Officers (D&O) Liability coverage of \$1 million, and Workers' Compensation coverage of \$1 million. The Workers' Compensation requirement may be waived for organizations that are fully volunteer-run with no paid employees. The COI must also include additional insured status, primary non-contributory endorsements, and waivers of subrogation as specified by SMUD.

Funding Disbursement

There will be two funding disbursements based on project milestones for all award levels. Disbursements will be 50% at the beginning of the project, and 50% at the end of the project.

Quarterly Program and Fiscal Reports

All Shine program awardees must submit quarterly performance reports that document progress toward accomplishing project milestones and achieving identified performance metrics, as well as fiscal expenditure of award funds, cash match and in-kind match. Sustainable Communities staff will email the Shine award contact with a link to the quarterly reporting platform when reports are due.

Quarterly reports will reflect the deliverables in the previous 3 months.

- Q1: Jan. to March 2027. Report due in April 2027.
- Q2: April to June 2027. Report due in July 2027
- Q3: July to Sept. 2027. Report due in Oct. 2027.
- Q4: Oct. to Dec. 2027. Report due in Jan. 2028.
 - The Q4 report will be a comprehensive end of year report on all deliverables from Jan. to Dec. 2027 due in Jan. 2028.
 - The project is expected to be finished before the end of the 2027 Calendar Year.

How to Apply

To apply for a Shine award, visit smud.org/shine during the application window of June 1 – July 31.

Please note: We use the SurveyMonkey Apply platform to manage the online submission form and application process. Applicants must create a user account prior to accessing the online application form. This will allow applicants to save application progress prior to submitting. Paper copies of the application are available by request.

Application submission is not a guarantee of a funding award. Applications submitted, but not funded in a given funding cycle, may be considered for a Shine award in a future cycle. However, to be considered the application will need to be resubmitted in accordance with the Shine program's most recently published program guidelines.