Policy+Innovation Coordinating Group
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December 3, 2020

Policy Direction: Equity in EPIC

CEC Chair Weisenmiller, in a letter to CPUC President Peevey, announced the CEC's commitment to advance diversity and equity in EPIC.

AB 523 codified the recommendation in the SB 350 Barriers study and added additional requirements to increase equity in EPIC.

2016

2018

2013

2017

SB 350 Low Income Barriers Study recommends a minimum of 25% of EPIC TD&D funds go to projects located in and benefitting a disadvantaged community.

CPUC Decision 18-10-052 requires the administrators to conduct at least two workshops for the purpose of providing training about EPIC, and related technical support, to *Disadvantaged Communities* and interested *community-based organizations*.
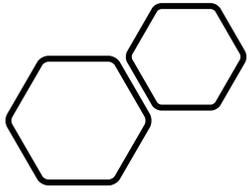
CEC Equity Strategy

Increase awareness of EPIC and the opportunities it provides to vulnerable communities

Participated in ~100 outreach and community events.

Conducted two public workshops focused on equity as part of the public process to develop the 2018-20 EPIC Investment Plan;

Created and distributed funding materials translated for non-English speakers

Created and published a "How to Apply for Research Funding" video for new applicants.

Encourage technology/project developers to seek out project sites in vulnerable communities

29 CEC EPIC Competitive Solicitation have included a set-aside or bonus points

~65% of TD&D funds have gone to project located in and benefitting disadvantaged- and low-income communities.

$7.6 million have gone to projects located in and benefitting a tribal community, including the world-renowned microgrid at the Blue Lake Rancheria.

Scope solicitations around specific issues facing ratepayers in vulnerable communities

A 2018 solicitation targeted projects that could overcome barriers to energy efficiency upgrades in low-income multi-family housing sector.

Provide public forums for environmental justice stakeholders and community leaders to articulate communicate issues and discuss lessons learned from EPIC projects in a DAC/LI community..
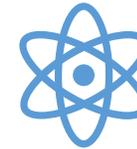
Embed equity in clean energy entrepreneurship

Ensure clean energy entrepreneurs in every part of the state have access to incubator/accelerator programs and testing facilities.

Require CalSEED to target a minimum amount of funding to underrepresented groups.

The Entrepreneurial Ecosystem has secured ~$4 million in federal funding to expand entrepreneurial assistance for underrepresented geographic locations and businesses.

Lessons Learned

Issue/Lesson Learned	CEC Action Taken/Planned
Communities felt like an afterthought in projects	- Scoring criteria to better assess the potential for projects to benefit disadvantaged- and low-income communities - All AB 523 projects require a CBO on project team and funding for engagement - Training for CEC staff to better evaluate project benefits for DAC/LI communities
Information overload/ receiving information not relevant to their interests	- Centralize and curate information on Equity Opportunities. - Provide visibility into who the technology solution providers are
Need to actively cultivate relationships and partnerships	- Longer lead times for project/technology developers and communities to build relationships - Take a more active role in creating opportunities for networking
Need for additional training on EPIC	Events will provide targeted training on how to participate.

Empower Innovation
Equity Objectives

- Centralize and curate equity opportunities
- Create a directory of support services and technology solution providers to potentially partner with.
- Enable organizations to communicate their community's cleantech priorities.
- Enable organizations to profile host sites within their communities for clean energy technology projects.

Empower Innovation Events

Communities
- How can we share our clean energy priorities with technology innovators?
- How do we vet technology/project developers that approach us?
- What is involved in participating in a RD&D project?
- What are potential benefits and what are the risks?

Technology/Project Developers
- How do we identify what the community's "pain points" are, and determine whether our solution is a good fit?
- What are site-specific requirements?
- How do we approach communities that we may want to partner with?
- How can we meaningfully engage communities throughout project development and implementation?

CEC
- What are the specific needs of individual communities?
- To what extent are these needs reflective of communities throughout the state?
- Are there emerging technology solutions that can address these needs?

Get timely leads on funding and new connections to accelerate your work and advance a clean economy for all.

JOIN NOW

Empower Innovation is an initiative of the California Energy Commission

EMPOWER INNOVATION BY THE NUMBERS

522 ORGANIZATIONS

1,783 MEMBERS

179 OPPORTUNITIES

$1.4B AVAILABLE FUNDING

Empower Innovation Event Objectives
- Provide an opportunity for parties to come together, network, and form partnerships
- Expand access to grant funding through training, outreach, community engagement, and enhanced collaboration
- Provide the opportunity for communities to define their clean energy priorities
- Onboard users onto the EIN platform provide demonstration of key features

Empower Innovation Events Timeline

CEC seeks stakeholder input to the following questions on the Empower Innovation Events:

- How should we evaluate whether an event was successful? What would be considered positive outcomes?

- How do we get the right representation at Empower Innovation Events? What are specific channels we can leverage to get the word out?

- How can we shape the events so that they are meaningful for all parties?

- What would be an effective way to leverage these events to inform our research in meaningful ways? Are there specific questions we should be asking attendees? (i.e. surveys, report outs from small groups, etc.)

- Are their other reasons people would want to participate or get from the events that we have not considered?

- Are there specific topics we should explore or should these remain more broad?

Please submit responses to Katrina Leni-Konig at Katrina.Leni-Konig@energy.ca.gov by December 10, 2020.

Milestone/Activity	Date
PICG Equity Workstream	December 3, 2020
Stakeholder input on Empower Innovation Events due	December 10, 2020
DACAG EPIC Subcommittee	December 2020
Empower Innovation Event: Built Environment	January 28, 2021
Empower Innovation Event: EPIC 4	March, 2021 (Tentative)

For more information on Empower Innovation Events, please contact:
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