



Energy Transition Advisory Committee (ETAC) – February 10, 2026

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

State Competitiveness Fund (SCF) Matching Funds

Round 5+ Request for Proposals (RFP) open – rolling basis until funds are reserved

The Minnesota Department of Commerce (“Commerce”) is seeking applications for the Minnesota State Competitiveness Fund (SCF), [Minn. Stat. § 216C.391](#), which provides matching funds for eligible entities applying for eligible federal funding opportunities requiring a match.

This legislatively created program is intended to increase the competitiveness of Minnesota in securing federal funding. The SCF Matching Funds Program will enhance the ability of eligible entities, defined in [Minn Stat. 216C.391](#), and Tribal Governments sharing geography within the borders of Minnesota to successfully compete for federal funds by providing matching funds.

Pursuant to [Minn Stat. 216C.391](#) Commerce is soliciting proposals from eligible entities applying for federal funding opportunities requiring matching funds or applying for federal funding opportunities not requiring a match but for which a match would enhance the likelihood of the federal grant being funded. This new round reflects an expanded amount of eligible federal awards, beyond the previous restriction of only accepting federal programs funded through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA, also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, or BIL) and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA). Projects selected for SCF Matching Funds must demonstrate that the project will help meet the state's clean energy and energy-related climate goals through renewable energy development, energy conservation, efficiency, or energy-related greenhouse gas reduction benefits.

The legislation stipulates the following:

- No single entity may receive grants totaling more than \$15,000,000; and,
- At least \$75,000,000 of the fund must be allocated for grant awards of less than \$1,000,000.

There is approximately \$40 million available. Applications are accepted on a rolling basis until funds are fully reserved. The full Request for Proposals (“RFP”) and required forms are available for download on Commerce’s RFP website at <https://mn.gov/commerce/business/rfp.jsp>. Applications must be submitted through Commerce’s grant submission portal. A link to the portal and instructions for submitting applications can be found in the RFP.

For more information on the SCF Matching Program: [State Competitiveness Matching Funds / Minnesota Department of Commerce - Energy](#) or contact Lori Brown: lori.brown@state.mn.us or SCFMatchProgram.COMM@state.mn.us.

Minnesota Energy Storage Incentive Program

Funds available - rolling basis until funds are reserved

Incentives are currently available for battery storage systems up to 50kWh paired with solar energy systems, outside of Xcel service territory. As of December 25, 2025, approximately \$1.2M remains. Customers are eligible for \$250 per kWh (up to \$7,000). The income-qualified program allows for \$1,000 per kWh (up to \$15,000). Funds are available on a rolling basis until the funding has been fully distributed or by June 30, 2027, whichever comes earlier. Note that the program can be tied with other utility incentive programs.

For more information, contact storageincentive.comm@state.mn.us or Jay Berken at jay.berken@state.mn.us.

Electric School Bus Equipment Grants

Next round of funding expected to open later this year

This grant program funds the purchase of up to three electric school buses and associated charging infrastructure. Eligible entities include school districts and Tribal contract schools, as well as bus contractors or utilities working with them. Funding depends on the district's financial need and other district prioritization criteria; Commerce can cover between 80% and 90% of bus costs, and 65% and 95% of other eligible expenses. The most recent funding round closed late 2025, and another round is expected to open in 2026.

For more information, contact Anna Crouch at anna.crouch@state.mn.us.

Solar for Schools Grant Program

Next round of funding expected to open early this year

This program provides Minnesota schools funding to install solar energy systems and integrate renewable energy into their curricula. Eligible entities include Public K-12 schools and Minnesota State colleges and universities. Funds are available for the cost to purchase and install a solar energy system. There are two funding pools: one for within Xcel service territory and another for outside Xcel service territory. Commerce anticipates the next round to launch early 2026.

For more information, contact SolarForSchools@state.mn.us.

Energy Assistance Program (EAP) and Weatherization Assistance Program (WAP)

Funding still available – apply now

Funding is currently available for both EAP and WAP. The EAP helps income-qualified households with their home energy costs, averaging a benefit of approximately \$550. The deadline to apply is **May 31, 2026**. For more information on EAP, please visit the [website](#) or fill out the [feedback form](#). For more information on WAP, visit [this website](#).

OTHER PROGRAMS

Community Solar Gardens (CSGs)

Commerce administers the Low- and Moderate-Income Accessible CSG program within Xcel service territory. CSGs offer Minnesotans the opportunity to benefit from solar energy without installing a system at their home. For more information on CSGs and how to get connected, please [visit the website](#) or contact CommunitySolar@state.mn.us.

Direct Pay Tax Consultation with Deloitte

Deloitte has contracted with the State of Minnesota to provide Minnesota-based tax-exempt entities (local govt, co-ops, municipal utilities, Tribal govt, schools, nonprofits, etc.) that are filing for Direct Pay tax credits with technical assistance from tax experts, at no cost for the entity.

The 1-on-1 technical assistance can include:

- Consultation on project eligibility
- Advice on filing procedures
- General Q&A on Direct Pay

For more information, contact: Contact: StateofMnIRATaxComplianceSupport@Deloitte.com

Deloitte is also hosting an **Office Hours session on February 17, 2:30-3:30 p.m. Central Time** via Microsoft Teams. The session, entitled “Tax Filing Process and Building a Support File,” will focus on the IRS tax credit filing process as well as best practices for building a project file to guard against future audit. Eligible Minnesota entities are also able to register with Deloitte for one-on-one consultations at no cost! Send any additional questions to stateofmnirataxcompliancesupport@deloitte.com.