



Solar Access for Nationwide Affordable Housing

U.S. EPA Solar for All



GRID's Coalition Awarded Nearly \$250m to Advance Solar For All

GRID's national coalition, the Solar Access for National Affordable Housing (SANAH) team, was one of only five multistate applications to be awarded under the EPA's Solar For All (SFA) Competition. The SANAH program, slated to launch by May 1, 2025, will expand equitable access to solar, storage, and enabling upgrades to drive savings, jobs, entrepreneurship opportunities, resilience, and ownership across America's low-income and disadvantaged communities served by affordable housing.

The Inflation Reduction Act of 2022 (IRA) contains ambitious investments to support an equitable transition to clean energy that benefits *all* Americans. Its largest non-tax funding program is the EPA's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Fund (GGRF), of which \$7 billion is dedicated to SFA. Under SFA, the EPA awarded sixty entities between \$25 million and \$250 million to run programs nationwide through 2029. Each award will enable financial assistance, technical assistance, and program planning and administration, with contracting initiated as of May 2024. EPA expects awardees to be under contract by September 2024 and for programs to start in 2025. Read GRID's press release [here](#) and the EPA's press release [here](#), featuring a GRID Alternatives success story, the kind EPA hopes awardees will replicate nationwide.

Equitable Solar+ for Affordable Housing is What We Do

GRID Alternatives envisions a rapid, equitable transition to a world powered by renewable energy that benefits everyone. Our mission is to build community-powered solutions to advance economic and environmental justice through renewable energy.

Over the last 20 years, GRID Alternatives has become the nation's leading nonprofit solar energy provider serving low-income and environmental justice communities through direct installation, program administration, and policy analysis and advocacy across 18 states and on a national basis. GRID partners with federal, state, and local governments, utilities, industry, and communities to design, administer, and implement solar, battery storage, and clean mobility programs serving low-income and EJ communities. We bring a unique, communities-first approach that maximizes benefits for underserved communities who need and deserve clean, affordable energy.



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A Leading Coalition of Trusted Nonprofits and Affordable Housing Providers

GRID is pleased to partner with the following nation-leading organizations to expand equitable access to the benefits of solar energy via the coalition's Solar For All SANAH Program.



Broad Reach, Meaningful Benefits

The SANAH team has a national reach and proposes to serve the benefits of solar+ technologies to American families across the country, including in hard-to-serve states and territories with less supportive or developed solar markets. While the SANAH application will propose specific states and territories for definite operations¹, the team will explore pathways with the US EPA for serving families within and outside of disadvantaged communities and Tribes across the nation.



¹ 29 proposed states for priority operations: Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Illinois, Iowa, Massachusetts, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, Nevada, New Jersey, New Mexico, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Puerto Rico, South Dakota, Texas, Washington, and Wisconsin.



Single-family Solar



In 2009, GRID Alternatives led the nation's first low-income solar program for single-family households under the California Solar Initiative. Successor programs, like GRID's "Disadvantaged Communities - Single-Family Solar Homes (DAC-SASH) Program and others across the country, have helped relieve the energy burden of tens of thousands of income-qualified families. In service to their mission "to build homes, communities, and hope," GRID's transformative partnership with [Habitat for Humanity](#) is poised to provide benefits of solar energy to tens of thousands of low-income partner families who reside in all 50 states and several US territories via over 1,100 Habitat affiliate offices nationwide. Supplementing Habitat's leadership, NeighborWorks America's network of affiliates, in providing homeownership counseling to tens of thousands of Americans annually is well positioned to ensure SFA resources assist new homeowners in avoiding energy burden in their new homes.

The SANAH team proposes two primary pathways for participation to provide the necessary flexibility to serve partner families across differing solar market contexts: 1) a direct installation program with centralized engineering, procurement, and construction and; 2) an open technical assistance and grant program wherein a partner family or eligible home can participate via a qualifying contractor of their choosing. In partnership with HFHI and NeighborWorks, the SANAH team will leverage the stacking of program grants and incentives and proceeds from the investment tax credit (ITC), including bonus credits, with the goal of offering a no- or ultra-low-cost system, ensuring meaningful savings for the life of the system.



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Multifamily Solar



With multifamily housing making up nearly a third of all homes nationally, Solar for All must also benefit renters. That's why GRID's partners at NeighborWorks America, National Housing Trust, Housing Partnership Network, Enterprise Community Partners, and National Equity Fund are so important to SANAH's Solar for All strategy. The SANAH team's deep bench has expertise in designing, administering, providing, and leveraging incentive programs and cost-effective financial solutions, including low-interest loans for renewable energy and energy efficiency projects within the complex, hard-to-serve multifamily affordable housing sector.

- **[NeighborWorks America](#)** is a congressionally chartered organization that creates opportunities for people to live in affordable homes, improve their lives, and strengthen their communities. NeighborWorks will work through its nearly 250 strong, vetted, and prepared network organizations in every state, DC, and Puerto Rico for outreach, capacity building, and community engagement.
- **[National Housing Trust](#)** brings resident services, lending, policy, sustainability, and development under one roof to equip communities for a sustainable and equitable future. NHT will leverage its 10+ years of experience in providing a portfolio-level solar program that assists owners across the entire spectrum of solar deployment services.
- **[Housing Partnership Network](#)** is an award-winning collaborative network of more than 100 of the nation's leading housing and community development nonprofits, facilitating peer-to-peer learning based on proven experience and successes. HPN leverages its Green & Healthy Communities initiative to co-create solutions to facilitate the sector's progress toward science-based climate targets and equitable health outcomes via sustainability efforts like solar and energy efficiency.
- **[Enterprise Community Partners](#) and [Loan Fund](#)** has invested \$64 billion and created 951,000 homes across all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico and is dedicated to building resilient futures, creating sustainable communities, and connecting health and housing. Enterprise members participate in the National Community Solar Partnership, DOE's Better Buildings Initiative, and the Multifamily Affordable Housing Collaborative to leverage peer networks and technical assistance resources to address persistent barriers to solar access.
- **[National Equity Fund](#)** has invested more than \$22.7 billion, which represents 231,500 new affordable homes for individuals, families, and communities in need across the country with a mission to create and deliver innovative, collaborative financial solutions to expand the creation and preservation of affordable housing.

GRID and its partners have navigated the complexities of the affordable housing ecosystem and overcome the "split incentives" barrier, installing hundreds of multifamily solar energy systems. For over 15 years, GRID



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Alternatives has provided program design and administration, as well as low-cost technical assistance, in-house solar design, and installation services, to affordable housing provider partners that serve low-income and environmental justice communities. Through programs like the Multifamily Affordable Solar Homes Program (MASH) and the nation's largest solar program benefiting renters in history, SOMAH, the Solar on Multifamily Affordable Housing Program, GRID has unparalleled experience ensuring the benefits of solar, from savings to job opportunities, reach renters.

To financially support the multifamily sector, the SANAH team proposes a market-responsive capacity-based incentive covering up to 50% of the total project cost, adjustable by ITC levels, LIHTC support, and other stackable funding sources. The incentive will also be designed with tested best practices to require that no portion of the project cost is passed along to tenant units, to provide more financial support to tenant-serving capacity than common area-serving capacity, and to prevent rent increases or any other harms, ensuring 100% tenant economic benefits. Where the SANAH MF incentive stacked with the ITC results in a net cost to the property owner, SANAH will provide applicants access to GGRF-supported low-interest bridge and gap loan products and services, as well as financial technical assistance from across the SANAH multifamily team's in-house experts on making solar work for the complex multifamily affordable housing sector, along with the Energy Resilience Fund (a wholly owned subsidiary of GRID Alternatives).

Community Solar

Not all sites are ideal for on-site solar, so the SANAH vision extends beyond the rooftop to empower historically underserved communities to take ownership of their energy future through community solar. Building on GRID's deep experience in equitable community solar in Colorado, the project pictured below is California's first low-income community solar project, built through a collaborative partnership between GRID Alternatives' Inland Empire (IE) Office, the Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians, and Anza Electric Co-Op.



As a trusted technical assistance provider for the [U.S. Department of Energy's National Community Solar Partnership](#), GRID is a national leader in ensuring community solar projects can be structured to provide energy burden relief to income-qualified families. The SANAH team will propose providing capacity-based incentives, adjustable by project characteristics and incentivizing ownership and workforce development, to support community solar development benefiting households nationwide, co-leveraging other GGRF-supported programs providing low-interest loans and other enabling finance.



Workforce Development & Wealth Building Opportunities

Each one of GRID's nearly 30,000 installations to date has provided hands-on training opportunities for volunteers, fellows, and new solar workers. GRID's [Installation Basic Training \(IBT\) Program](#) is unparalleled in providing a competency-based curriculum designed to develop the skills that are most relevant to entry-level solar installation jobs and related construction employment fields. GRID's nation-leading [SolarCorps Fellowship Program](#), funded in part by AmeriCorps, has provided workforce training opportunities across all job functions on and off the rooftop, with a focus on hands-on learning across an 11-month paid training program. With tailored programming for women, tribal communities, veterans, and people with barriers to employment such as those impacted by the criminal justice system, GRID's workforce programming, supported in part by the US Department of Labor, has resulted in thousands of full-time, family-supporting careers in solar and related trades. The SANAH team will require job training on 100% of incentivized projects, and explore partnerships and collaboration with Youthbuild, American Job Centers, workforce development boards, and extend the reach of GRID's IBT and SolarCorps models via direct training opportunities as well as a train-the-trainer program to reach a wider audience.



SANAH also holds immense wealth-building potential for communities across America via contracting opportunities for small and disadvantaged business enterprises (DBEs) via both GRID's Mission-Aligned Contractor Network (MACN) and an open incentive program design. GRID's primary focus for the MACN is on BIPOC-owned, woman/non-binary-owned, returning citizen-owned, and/or veteran-owned

residential electrical companies that can implement solar, EVSE, battery storage, and other climate equity projects. Some of GRID's contractors even got their start through GRID's workforce development programming. For example, Kenneth Wells (pictured above at left) got his start with GRID through our re-entry training partnership with Homeboy Industries and went on to start his own solar business. The SANAH team is poised to grow the reach of the MACN and opportunities for local wealth-building via the historic SFA funding source, supporting American success stories like Ken's nationwide.

Battery Storage

The addition of batteries to solar energy systems makes an already good technology even better. Battery storage technology offers a safe alternative to diesel and other fossil-fuel-based generators during power outages, including critical loads like medical equipment or refrigeration. They also provide a service to the electric grid by alleviating the "duck curve" problem that solar alone can pose and helping to defer new generation and distribution system upgrades. With electric rates on the rise and load growth projected to soar, batteries are critical for supporting grid reliability amid a tsunami of building and transportation electrification investments coming down the pipeline from federal and other funding.

In addition to battery storage for single—and multifamily residential applications, GRID's energy storage work extends to the community scale, such as our advanced solar and storage microgrid project at Soboba Fire Station, which, in partnership with the California Energy Commission, serves the wildfire-impacted community of Soboba Band of Luiseño Indians.



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The SANAH Program Administrators will propose cost-effective strategies for robust battery storage attachment benefitting as many households as practical. Notwithstanding available, stackable programs in some geographies, and where program funding alone may limit the share of homes that receive program-supported batteries, some potential conditions to be explored can include homes that:

- Require storage attachment to ensure financial viability/substantive savings;
- Are located in the lowest-ranking areas for electricity reliability (for example, as through scoring within the System Average Interruption Duration Index (SAIDI) or System Average Interruption Frequency Index (SAIFI) scores); and/or
- Include medical baseline customers or customers with life-threatening illnesses requiring electricity.

Co-Leveraging Equitable Access to Electrification and Clean Mobility

By pairing solar and storage with home, appliance, and vehicle electrification access, GRID and its coalition partners are multiplying savings as well as pollution reductions where they're most needed.



Crucially, the breadth and depth of the SANAH team's experience is far from limited to solar and storage, and the upgrades specifically necessary to enable them. As part of its overall vision of a transition to clean, renewable energy that benefits everyone, GRID has partnered with state agencies, utilities, and other partners on hundreds of millions of dollars in transportation electrification investments benefiting tribal and environmental justice communities. This work spans program development, design, administration, and implementation of "scrap and replace" EV rebate and grant programs; equitable at-home charging programs at both the single- and multi-family scale; subsidized public charging programs; and community-centered shared and micro-mobility programs. While SFA does not directly fund such non-solar initiatives, the SANAH team will explore cost-effective opportunities to support program stacking and co-leveraging across federal, state, and utility programs to ensure single- and multifamily residences are aware of funding opportunities supporting clean transportation options.

Likewise, the SANAH team brings great expertise in pairing renewable energy with home and appliance electrification and efficiency to compound the benefits of solar. Where jurisdictions allow, solar can be sized to account for future electrification, while SFA-supported enabling upgrades for solar may have co-benefits for new electrical load replacing fossil fuel furnaces, water heaters, and appliances, as well as EVs. SANAH's nationwide network of trusted partner relationships, including with [Rewiring America](#), will support necessary outreach, education, technical assistance, and referrals of solar clients to complementary resources.



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Under Construction & Stay Tuned!

GRID is in the early stages of working with the EPA to make its SANAH program concept a reality, so lots of details have yet to be finalized. The content above reflects proposed approaches and is subject to EPA approval and change across the program planning phase. We're committed to and invite robust stakeholder engagement and input and look forward to more intensively engaging stakeholders across the country once we're under contract and have stated the planning phase in earnest, slated for later in 2024. Meanwhile, our door is open and we invite you to reach out to our team via solarforall@gridalternatives.org. Thank you for your interest in SANAH, and we look forward to partnering with and serving a community near you soon!

- Your friends at GRID Alternatives

