



California Public Utilities Commission
505 Van Ness Ave., San Francisco

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Media Contact: Terrie Prosper, 415.703.1366, news@cpuc.ca.gov

PRESS RELEASE

Docket #: Res. M-4871

CPUC Champions Change with Award of First-Ever Equity and Access Grants

***\$1.7 Million Initiative Aims to Strengthen Tribal and
Community Engagement with CPUC***

SAN FRANCISCO, March 7, 2024 – The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) today awarded \$1.7 million in inaugural grants from its innovative [Equity and Access Grant Program](#), which is designed to increase participation of tribes and community-based organizations (CBOs) representing underserved communities in CPUC decision-making.

Grant Details

Awards from the Equity, Engagement, and Education Grant Account were made to support 21 counties in California, including \$725,000 specifically for tribal communities, with four recipients focusing solely on serving those communities.

Approved projects in this category may include:

- Community engagement and outreach related to proceedings;
- Hiring the expertise necessary to actively participate in decision-making;
- Creating education, training, and curriculum programs, or partnership; and,
- Coalition development to generate awareness of CPUC programs.

Details of the awards follows:

Recipients	Project
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<u>Barona Band of Mission Indians, San Pasqual Band of Mission Indians, and Southern California Tribal Chairmen's Association</u>	Collaborate to support and represent 25 tribes in CPUC policy analysis and engagement, and develop a database to track and communicate information about CPUC activities relevant to tribes.
<u>Chico State Enterprises: North State Planning and Development Collective</u>	Serve tribes in Butte, Colusa, Glenn, Lake, Lassen, Modoc, Plumas, Shasta, Siskiyou, and Tehama counties to provide resources, workshops, and training on CPUC broadband programs, along with targeted technical assistance for tribes applying to CPUC programs.
<u>Central California Asthma Collaborative</u>	Engage communities in Delano, Madera, Modesto, and Terra Bella to gather community input on affordable energy proceedings and increase awareness about the CPUC's role in energy and climate policy through an Energy Leadership training series for CBOs.
<u>Leadership Counsel for Justice and Accountability</u>	Provide experts to disadvantaged communities in the San Joaquin Valley and Eastern Coachella Valley to facilitate communication of complex information, refine policy priorities at community meetings, and enhance understanding of CPUC proceedings related to accessible and affordable clean energy and water.
<u>Self-Help Enterprises</u>	Training staff on CPUC matters and processes, create an Equity, Education, and Engagement Leadership Institute workshop series for local residents, and revitalize Community Energy Navigator Program in San Joaquin Valley communities.
<u>Climate Action Campaign</u>	Empower low-income communities of color in Orange County to lead the transition to a clean energy economy, including building internal expertise on the CPUC, developing in-language curriculum for community members, and forming a coalition with other Orange County environmental justice groups.
<u>California Forward</u>	Develop expertise on broadband mapping, data, technology, funding, public safety, affordability, and equity concerns to participate, collaborate, and assist other stakeholders across California.

El Sol Neighborhood Educational Center	Enhance community resilience and increase regulatory engagement among Latino and Black communities in San Bernardino counties, including staff training on CPUC matters, creation of educational materials and toolkits, and organization of community forums and information sessions on utility rate changes, environmental and social justice, and CPUC clean energy programs.
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“Today’s grant awards will support engagement with the CPUC by community-based organizations and tribes. This is an innovative, first-of-its-kind program. I look forward to seeing more grant awards distributed to diverse stakeholders as part of future rounds of funding,” said CPUC President Alice Reynolds.

“I am pleased to see this first decision awarding funds through the CPUC’s Equity and Access Grant Program. This decision awards funds to three tribal entities and five community-based organizations. With this funding and support, I hope to see increased participation in CPUC decision-making processes by grant recipients. In the long-term, the funding should assist in improving participation and meaningful input as to our clean energy programs and provide more accessibility for communities that have historically been left out of the process,” said Commissioner Darcie L. Houck.

Future Equity, Engagement, and Education Grant Account Opportunities

With approximately \$1.9 million remaining in the Equity, Engagement, and Education Grant Account, interested CBOs, tribes, and tribal entities are encouraged to apply for the second round of grants, open from May 1 to June 30, 2024.

Other Grant Opportunities

The Equity and Access Grant Program includes two other grant accounts in addition to the Equity, Engagement, and Education Grant Account:

1. **Public Participation Grant Account:** Open and accepting applications until funds are exhausted, it provides compensation to current participants in advisory boards, panels, working groups, and other CPUC events. This account has close to \$100,000 in available funding.

2. **Clean Energy Access Grant Account:** Available until April 30, 2024, it supports projects that educate communities and increase access to CPUC clean energy programs, and has close to \$5.8 million in available funding.

More Information

- To explore additional details about the grant recipients and their proposed projects, refer to [Resolution M-4871](#).
- For further information, please visit the Equity and Access Grant Program [website](#).

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About the California Public Utilities Commission

The CPUC regulates services and utilities, protects consumers, safeguards the environment, and assures Californians access to safe and reliable utility infrastructure and services. Visit www.cpuc.ca.gov for more information.