



# REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL

For

**Ava Community Energy Authority**

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**Clean Energy Jobs and Training for Youth Awareness  
Community Investment Grants (2023-2026)**

**RESPONSE DUE**

by

**6:00pm PT**

on

**February 15, 2024**

For complete information regarding this project, see RFP posted at [avaenergy.org](https://avaenergy.org) or contact the Ava representative listed below. Thank you for your interest!

Heidy Ramirez | [hramirez@avaenergy.org](mailto:hramirez@avaenergy.org)

# AVA COMMUNITY ENERGY

## REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL SPECIFICATIONS, TERMS & CONDITIONS

### Clean Energy Jobs and Training for Youth Awareness Grant Community Investment Grants (2023-2026)

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## **GRANT DESCRIPTION**

Ava Community Energy (Ava) invites proposals for a Clean Energy Jobs and Training for Youth Awareness Grant aimed at empowering young individuals through education and exposure to employment opportunities and hands-on training in clean energy technologies. This initiative seeks to bridge the gap between education and employment, fostering a skilled workforce for the ongoing energy transition. This program is specifically designed to reach youth (ages 15-24) including recent high school graduates, college students, and young professionals.

The selected grant recipient will lead efforts to connect young professionals to Clean Energy Job opportunities and or Training programs such as those provided by Rising Sun, Cypress Mandela, and others responsible for developing and implementing comprehensive youth training programs focused on clean energy jobs. By recommending enrollment at the various organizations, this initiative aims to equip young individuals with the skills and knowledge needed to thrive in the evolving clean energy sector, addressing both current and future workforce demands.

One recipient will be awarded a grant of up to \$300,000.00, over three years, to enhance Clean Energy Jobs and Training Awareness for young people. Funds may be used for the purposes of, yet not limited to, procuring resources and materials necessary to meet goals and objectives outlined in Section 3.

### **1. BACKGROUND**

Ava is a not-for-profit public agency that operates a Community Choice Energy program for Alameda County and cities in San Joaquin County with sixteen incorporated cities, serving more than 640,000 residential and commercial customers throughout the counties. Ava initiated service in June 2018 and is one of 24 community choice aggregation (CCA) programs operating in California. CCAs are expediting the climate action goals of their communities and the state of California. Ava is committed to providing clean power at competitive rates while reinvesting in our local communities. For more information about Ava Community Energy, visit <https://avaenergy.org/>

Ava Community Energy serves as provider of electric generation service to over 1.5 million people in Alameda County and the City of Tracy. The cities of Stockton and Lathrop will begin taking electricity service from Ava in January 2025. To understand and effectively prepare the workforce for the evolving clean energy sector it is important to understand Ava's service population:

Alameda County	San Joaquin County
33% of Alameda County residents are foreign born, with 46% of households reporting speaking a language other than English at home. <sup>1</sup>	23% of San Joaquin County residents are foreign born, with 41% of households reporting speaking a language other than English at home. <sup>1</sup>
Population Demographics <sup>2</sup> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Asian (non-Hispanic) 31%</li> <li>• White (non-Hispanic) 31%</li> <li>• Hispanic 22%               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Other Hispanic 11%,</li> <li>• White Hispanic 7%,</li> <li>• Multiracial Hispanic 3%</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Black/African American (non-Hispanic) 10%</li> <li>• Multiracial (non-Hispanic) 5%</li> <li>• Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander(non-Hispanic) 0.8%</li> <li>• Other (non-Hispanic) 0.4%</li> <li>• American Indian/Alaska Native (non-Hispanic) 0.3%</li> </ul>	Population Demographics <sup>2</sup> : <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hispanic 42%               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• White Hispanic 21%,</li> <li>• Other Hispanic 10%,</li> <li>• Multiracial Hispanic 10%</li> </ul> </li> <li>• White (non-Hispanic) 31%</li> <li>• Asian (non-Hispanic) 16%</li> <li>• Black/African American (non-Hispanic) 7%</li> <li>• Multiracial (non-Hispanic) 4%</li> <li>• Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander(non-Hispanic) 0.6%</li> <li>• Other (non-Hispanic) 0.3%</li> <li>• American Indian/Alaska Native (non-Hispanic) 0.2%</li> </ul>
Of Ava’s total customer base, about 20% of residential customers are on <a href="#">CARE</a> , California Alternate Rates for Energy rates, representing a total 2020 usage of 524 MWh. Low-income customers that are enrolled in the CARE program receive a 30-35 percent discount on their electric bill and a 20 percent discount on their natural gas bill. <sup>3</sup>	

Alameda County	San Joaquin County
Youth Population: 191,814	Youth Population: 109,742
Ages 15 to 19: 96,036 20 to 24: 95,778	15 to 19: 58,004 20 to 24: 51,738
# of Schools: 54 # of Colleges/Uni: 30	# of Schools: 29 # of Colleges/Uni: 5
<b>Approximate Population of Youth, Ages 15 to 24: <u>301,556</u></b> Number of High Schools: 83 Number of College/Universities: 35 (within Ava Service Territories)	

Source: data.census.gov

Formed by local governments (i.e. cities, towns, and counties) as a Joint Powers Authority (JPA), CCAs are governed by locally elected public officials and have a unique relationship with our customers. CCAs have contact information of our customers and develop unique customer programs that help meet local community and environmental goals.

Multiple cities in Ava’s service area have adopted local Reach Code ordinances pushing for all-electric new construction; a ripe opportunity for the recipient of the grant to encourage community development of the green energy workforce to meet these new construction and electrification demands.

## 2. TERM OF GRANT

One recipient will be selected to receive a grant of up to \$300,000.00, over three years, to conduct an initiative that raises awareness of career opportunities for youth in Clean Energy and Training Programs for the Energy Transition.

Funds may be used for the purposes of, yet not limited to, hiring and training personnel, developing and delivering education and awareness trainings, purchasing equipment and materials necessary to meet goals and objectives outlined in Section 3. Proposals should clearly outline how the funds will be utilized, ensuring cost-effectiveness and maximum impact on enrollment in youth training for clean energy jobs.

Proposed Payment Schedule:

Date	Amount
April 2024	Up to \$100,000.00
January 2025	Up to \$100,000.00
January 2026	Up to \$100,000.00
Total Amount Awarded:	Up to \$300,000.00

## 3. STATEMENT OF REQUIREMENTS

Interested organizations should submit their proposals by 6:00PM Thursday, February 15, 2024. Proposals must include a detailed project plan, budget, organizational qualifications, and relevant experience.

The successful proposal submittal(s) must demonstrate that the grant recipient has the appropriate professional and technical background as well as access to adequate resources to fulfill the stated scope of work.

Proposals should describe how the grantee will increase awareness and enrollment in local clean energy job training programs, such as:

- Design and delivery of a curriculum that covers key aspects of clean energy technologies, sustainability, and relevant job skills.
- Information regarding hands-on training opportunities, including workshops, simulations, and site visits to clean energy facilities when necessary.
- online materials to support ongoing learning and skill development
- presentations at job fairs and high school career day
- tracking enrollment in job training programs
- Collaboration with local educational institutions, industry partners, and workforce development organizations.
- Career counseling and mentorship programs and information to guide participants in exploring clean energy career pathways.
- Integration of diversity, equity, and inclusion principles to ensure equal access to opportunities.

- Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess the impact of the program on participants' skills and employability.

### **3.1. Program Goals:**

The grant should support increased awareness of clean energy jobs and training opportunities as a pathway to employments.

Key outcomes and success measures include:

- Engaging with a significant proportion of youth across Ava's service territory during the course of the grant.
- Reaching diverse participants representing various backgrounds, languages, and geographic regions within Ava's service area
- Expanding professional development offerings
- Developing a catalog of organizations and scalable program models that provide pathways towards future growth or career development for young adults in the energy transition
- Clearly outline vocational pathways grounded in sustainability and equity
- Tighter connections and active cross-pollination across green energy jobs and training programs for youth such as:
  - Developing at least one major collaboration / partnership to expand the reach for training program or job opportunities
  - Consistent participation among local community-based organizations, experts, employers, and educators
- Utilize engagement surveys, interviews, and additional open feedback loops to actively improve satisfaction, reduce turnover, enrich workforce

## **4. QUALIFICATIONS**

### **4.1. Minimum Qualifications**

Ava Community Energy welcomes proposals from organizations that demonstrate a commitment to empowering youth in the clean energy sector, fostering skills development, and contributing to the broader goals of the energy transition.

Applicants may include community, charitable and civic organizations, health and social service agencies, membership associations, social clubs, schools and educational institutions, faith institutions and other entities.

Organizations are required to provide tax filing status documents along with proposal.

- If applying as a nonprofit, please provide a determination letter for your organization or fiscal sponsor
- If working with a fiscal sponsor, your fiscal sponsor organization will need to provide a letter taking responsibility for your organization's fiscal administration

## 5. GRANT AGREEMENT

Ava Energy intends to award one Grant Agreement based upon the highest-ranked score for each area described in Section 4.

## 6. SCHEDULE

Date	Activity
December 22, 2023	<b>Issuance of RFP</b> Request for Applications issued and posted to Ava website.
January 22, 2024	<b>Deadline for Questions/clarifications</b>
February 15, 2024	<b>Proposal Submission Deadline</b> Applications are due 6PM PDT on Thursday, February 15, 2024. Submit applications to <a href="mailto:hramirez@avanergy.org">hramirez@avanergy.org</a>
March 1, 2024	<b>Proposal Evaluation Completed</b>
March 4-22, 2024	<b>Interviews and Finalist Selection</b> Ava will schedule interviews with selected parties
April 2024	<b>Award Notification</b> Ava will notify the selected grantee(s) of award  <b>Grant Agreement Execution</b> Ava receives approval to execute Grant Agreement with grantee at April Board of Directors meeting
May 1, 2024	<b>Program Initiation</b>

## 7. PROCEDURES, TERMS, AND CONDITIONS

### GENERAL

#### *Form of Proposals*

Proposals must be submitted electronically by e-mail to [hramirez@avaenergy.org](mailto:hramirez@avaenergy.org).

#### *Late Responses*

To be considered, proposals must be received electronically by email and (optional) in person or via courier/mail or to the place specified by 6:00 p.m. **Thursday, February 15, 2024. No late responses will be considered.**

#### *California Public Records Act (CPRA)*

All proposals become the property of Ava, which is a public agency subject to the disclosure requirements of the California Public Records Act (“CPRA”). If Applicant(s) proprietary information is contained in documents submitted to Ava, and Applicant(s) claims that such information falls within one or more CPRA exemptions, Applicant(s) must clearly mark such information “CONFIDENTIAL AND PROPRIETARY,” and identify the specific lines containing the information. In the event of a request for such information, Ava will make best efforts to provide notice to Applicant(s) prior to such disclosure. If Applicant(s) contends that any documents are exempt from the California Public Records Act (CPRA) and wishes to prevent disclosure, it is required to obtain a

protective order, injunctive relief, or other appropriate remedy from a court of law in Alameda County, before Ava's deadline for responding to the CPRA request. If Applicant(s) fails to obtain such remedy within Ava's deadline for responding to the CPRA request, Ava may disclose the requested information.

Applicant(s) further agrees that it shall defend, indemnify, and hold Ava or its agents, harmless against any claim, action, or litigation (including, but not limited to, all judgments, costs, fees, and attorney's fees) that may result from Ava's assertion of an exemption or privilege as a basis for withholding any information marked confidential by the Applicant(s). **DO NOT MARK YOUR ENTIRE PROPOSAL CONFIDENTIAL. ONLY MARK THOSE PAGES THAT YOU BELIEVE CONTAIN PROPRIETARY INFORMATION.**

### ***Confidentiality***

All data and information obtained from or on behalf of Ava by the Applicant(s) and its agents in this RFP process, including reports, recommendations, specifications, and data, shall be treated by the Applicant(s) and its agents as confidential. The Applicant(s) and its agents shall not disclose or communicate this information to a third party or use it in advertising, publicity, propaganda, or in another job or jobs, unless written consent is obtained from Ava.

Generally, each proposal and all documentation, including financial information, submitted by Applicant(s) to Ava is confidential until a grant agreement is awarded, when such documents become public record under State and local law, unless exempted under CPRA.

### ***Electronic Mail Address***

Most of the communication regarding this procurement will be conducted by electronic mail (e-mail). Potential Applicants agree to provide the Contact with a valid e-mail address to receive this communication.

### ***Ava Rights***

Ava and its Contact reserve the right to do any of the following at any time:

- a. Reject any or all proposal(s), without indicating any reason for such rejection;
- b. Waive or correct any minor or inadvertent defect, irregularity, or technical error in a proposal or the RFP process, or as part of any subsequent grant agreement negotiation;
- c. Request that Applicants supplement or modify all or certain aspects of their proposals or other documents or materials submitted;
- d. Terminate the RFP, and at its option, issue a new RFP;
- e. Modify the selection process, the specifications or requirements for materials or services, or the contents or format of the proposals;
- f. Extend a deadline specified in this RFP, including deadlines for accepting proposals;
- g. Negotiate with any or none of the Applicants;
- h. Modify in the final agreement any terms and/or conditions described in this RFP;



### **Supplier Diversity**

Pursuant to California Senate Bill 255, Community Choice Aggregators (CCAs) are required to report to the California Public Utilities Commission on their diverse suppliers, as defined by CPUC General Order 156. Consistent with the California Public Utilities Code and California Public Utilities Commission policy objectives, Applicants that execute a grant agreement with Ava will be required to complete a Supplier Diversity Questionnaire. Ava will not consider race, sex, color, ethnicity, or national origin in procurement decisions; providing such information will not impact the selection process or good standing of executed grant agreements.

Ava encourages all eligible parties to get certified with the CPUC as women, minority, disabled veteran and/or LGBT owned business enterprise (WMDVLGBTBE).

For overview information on the CPUC Supplier Diversity Program, please visit the program homepage (<https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/supplierdiversity/>). For information on the certification process and requirements, please visit the Certifications page (<https://www.cpuc.ca.gov/Certifications/>).

### **EVALUATION CRITERIA**

Evaluations will be based upon the information provided in the proposals and such other information requested by Ava, or as deemed appropriate by Ava. Proposals must provide clear, concise information and sufficient detail to enable reviewers/evaluators to evaluate the responsiveness and quality of the proposals to all RFP requirements. Evaluators will also review the proposals for format to ensure conformance with the RFP requirements. Proposals that fail to meet RFP requirements could be rejected. The Contact or Ava may waive minor irregularities in proposals if doing so would be in the best interest of Ava. Evaluators may recommend discontinuing evaluation of any proposal that is considered not in compliance with the RFP requirements.

The review team will select the proposal that offers the greatest value to Ava's Community goals based on an analysis of the following criteria:

Technical Evaluation Criteria	Weight
<b>Quality of Proposed Plan: Meeting Grant Program Goals</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Achieve goals, requirements, and deliverables.</li><li>• Detailed examples of proposed opportunities, events, educational content and quantity of events or programs.</li><li>• Plan for community involvement and awareness-building activities.</li><li>• Expected number of youth reached and enrolled in job training programs.</li></ul>	35%
<b>Organizational Capacity: Budget &amp; History of Meeting Grant Deliverables</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Proposed budget and workplan are reasonable and sufficient to achieve proposed outcomes. Budget considerations for equipment, events, or grant deliverables are justified, demonstrating cost-effectiveness.</li><li>• List of all FTE existing and/or proposed additional staff.</li><li>• Experience in developing and implementing similar programs.</li></ul>	20%
<b>Demonstrated Capacity of Delivering: Local Community Benefits</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Includes demonstrated experience and impact conducting outreach in Ava's service territory with target populations identified in the proposal.</li></ul>	20%

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding of energy transition job opportunities and training institutions</li> <li>• Demonstrated ability to engage young adults and partner organizations effectively.</li> </ul>	
<b>Prioritizing Equity Priority Communities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preference for outreach plans focused on historically marginalized populations or geographic regions.</li> <li>• Preference for youth from LMI households.</li> </ul>	12.5%
<b>Ava Energy Special Procurement Preferences</b> The following four categories will receive extra points in Ava’s evaluation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organization sited within Service Territory or employing at least 25% of the workforce residing in <u>Ava’s territory (5%)</u></li> <li>• Organizations sited within CalEnviroScreen 4.0 <u>Disadvantaged Community (2.5%)</u></li> <li>• Organizations employing <u>Union Labor (2.5%)</u></li> <li>• Disabled-Veteran Owned Business (2.5%)</li> </ul>	12.5%

As reflected in the Evaluation Criteria, the grant award will not be based solely on cost, but on a combination of factors as determined to be in the best interest of Ava’s Community.

After evaluating the proposals and discussing them further with the Finalists or the tentatively selected Applicant(s), Ava reserves the right to further negotiate the proposed work and/or method and amount of compensation. Ava further reserves the right to consider the changes make to the Grant Agreement in its evaluation and selection.

## **INSTRUCTIONS TO APPLICANTS**

### **AVA CONTACT**

The evaluation phase of the competitive process will begin upon receipt of proposals until a Grant Agreement has been awarded. Applicants must not have any contact with Ava personnel nor should they lobby evaluators or any member of the staff or Board of Directors during the evaluation process. Any communications outside of the procedures set forth in this RFP may result in disqualification of Applicant.

All questions regarding these specifications, terms and conditions are to be submitted in writing, via e-mail, by 6:00 p.m. PST on Monday, January 22, to:

Attn: Heidy Zohar Ramirez, Programs Reporting Analyst  
Ava Community Energy  
E-Mail: [hramirez@avaenergy.org](mailto:hramirez@avaenergy.org)

The Ava website will be the official notification posting place of all Requests for Interest, Proposals, Quotes and Addenda. Go to <http://www.avaenergy.org/solicitations> to view current opportunities.

### **SUBMITTAL OF PROPOSALS**

All proposals must be received at Ava Community Energy by 6:00 p.m. on Thursday, February 15, 2024. Proposals will be received only at the addresses shown below any proposals received after that time and date or at a place other than the stated address will not be considered and will be returned to the Applicant unopened. **Electronic proposals must be submitted in a non-alterable format such as a .pdf.**

1. Applicants **must** submit an electronic copy of their proposal via email to the following:
  - a. Heidy Zohar Ramirez, Programs Reporting Analyst - Ava:  
[hramirez@avaenergy.org](mailto:hramirez@avaenergy.org)
2. Applicants are responsible for all of their costs required for the preparation and submission of a proposal.

### **RESPONSE FORMAT**

1. Proposal responses are to be straightforward, clear, concise and specific to the information requested.
2. **Objections for the form of Grant Agreement:** Applicants must provide any and all specific objections to the Grant Agreement in order for any changes to be considered. Stating an objection does not guarantee that Ava will accept such changes.

## Attachment A Required Response Information

*All of the specific documentation listed below is required to be submitted in order for a proposal to be deemed complete. Applicants shall submit all documentation, in the order listed below and clearly label each section with the appropriate title (i.e. Table of Contents, Letter of Transmittal, Key Personnel, etc.). Please provide the following:*

- 1. **Table of Contents:** Responses shall include a table of contents listing the individual sections of the proposal/quotation and their corresponding page numbers. Tabs separating each of the individual sections.
  
- 2. **Letter of Transmittal:** Proposals shall include a description of Applicant's capabilities and approach in providing its services to the Ava and provide a brief synopsis of the highlights of the Proposal and overall benefits of the Proposal to the Ava. This synopsis should not exceed one page in length and should be easily understood.
  
- 3. **Organizational Description and Qualifications:**
  - a. Applicants general size, resources, and organizational structure with respect to the proposal.
  - b. **Key Personnel:** Proposal responses shall identify the lead contact and include a complete list of all key personnel associated with the RFP. This list must include all key personnel, and a description of their qualifications, who will provide services/training to Ava staff and all key personnel who will provide maintenance and support services. For each person on the list, the following information shall be included:
    - i. The person's relationship with Applicant, including job title and years of employment with Applicant;
    - ii. The role that the person will play in connection with the RFP;
    - iii. Address, telephone, fax numbers, and e-mail address;
    - iv. Person's educational background; and
    - v. Person's relevant experience, certifications, and/or merits
  - c. Listing of three (3) similar engagements with reference information.
  - d. Four (4) page maximum.
  
- 4. **Description of the Educational Approach and Work Plan:**
  - a. Work plan
  - b. Description of curriculum and educational outreach and engagement plan
  - c. Expected number of schools, programs and students that will be reached annually through this grant
  - d. Four (4) page maximum.
  
- 5. **Schedule with Key Milestones or Benchmarks**  
*Along with required levels of Ava staff time requested (if any).*
  - a. One (1) page maximum.

- 6. **Grant Funding:** Please describe how grant dollars will be spent during the term of the Grant along with a list of existing funders (if any).
  - a. Staff salaries
  - b. Administrative fees
  - c. Direct and reimbursable expenses if any
  - d. Costs for grant implementation and operations
  - e. List of top three largest, or current, funders and funding amounts
  - f. Three (3) page max
  
- 7. **References:**
  - a. Please include up to three references for similar scope of work to this grant.
  - b. Include name and contact number for Ava to follow up with.
  
- 8. **Ava Local Procurement Preferences:**
  - a. Does your organization have an office located in Ava's service territory or does at least 25% of your workforce reside in Ava's service territory?
  - b. Will your organization use union labor or union contractors for these services if selected?
  - c. Is your organization registered as a Disabled Veteran Business Enterprise with the California Department of General Services?
  - d. Is the office where work will primarily be conducted on behalf of Ava for these services be located in a Disadvantaged Community as identified by the California Environmental Protection Agency's CalEnviroScreen Tool?