



Galvanizing Energy Transition: Solar (G.E.T. Solar) – Round 3

Request for Proposal (RFP) from Non-profit Organizations Seeking Solar in Pennsylvania

Non-profit organizations located in Pennsylvania are invited to submit applications to go solar through Round Three of the G.E.T. Solar initiative. Selected organizations will receive a preliminary solar assessment, assistance selecting a qualified solar developer and financial savings projections.

WHY NOW? Tax-exempt organizations can utilize Power Purchase Agreements (PPA) to partner with a financier to take advantage of the 26% federal investment tax credit for solar this year before it drops to 22% in 2021 and accelerated depreciation, allowing them to enjoy the financial savings from solar in just a few years. Organizations located in **Allegheny, Chester, Lehigh, Lawrence, Lebanon, Philadelphia, Northampton, and Wayne** counties can take advantage of Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) programs offering low-interest, no-money-down loan financing with 20 year terms or more that are paid through the property tax bills and stay with the property. Organizations outside of these counties are eligible to apply to *G.E.T. Solar* but will not have access to PACE loans yet.

The process to go solar with the best savings is time sensitive, as the federal tax credit for solar projects will continue to decline in January 2021. *G.E.T. Solar* is assisting non-profit organizations willing to take advantage of this opportunity and to install solar before the end of 2020.

The Pennsylvania Solar Center is a project of our fiscal sponsor, The New Sun Rising (NSR), a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. The purpose of the Solar Center is to inspire the adoption of solar energy in the state by educating the Pennsylvania public about solar energy technology, resources, and policies that advance solar energy and by offering technical assistance and programs in an effort to power people's lives with clean electricity. The *G.E.T. Solar* initiative is made possible through generous funding from The Hillman Foundation.

Date RFP Released	Monday, June 8, 2020
Application Due Date	Friday, July 31, 2020 5:00 PM
Eligible Applicants	Non-profit organizations located in Pennsylvania that own their building or property and are interested in going solar; see page 9 for more requirements.
Application Questions	Email questions to Leo Kowalski at leo@pasolarcenter.org

Table of Contents

- Overview of *G.E.T. Solar* for Non-Profits Initiative** 3
 - Program Summary 3
 - Goals 4
 - About *G.E.T. Solar* Team and Partners..... 4
- Solar Energy Financing** 5
 - Financing Overview..... 5
 - Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) Overview 5
 - Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy..... 6
 - Solar Installer Selection Process 8
- Timeline and Process** 8
- Eligibility** 9
- Application Requirements** 10
- Evaluation Process** 11
 - Key Criteria..... 11
 - Application Scoring 12
 - Final Proposal Designation..... 12
- Fees** 13
- Questions**..... 13
- Appendices** 14
 - Appendix 1 – Letter of Commitment Template 14
 - Appendix 2 – Questions Appearing on the Applicant Survey 15
 - Appendix 3 – Power Purchase Agreement Overview – Additional Information 16
 - Appendix 4 – Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) – Additional Information..... 18

Overview of *G.E.T. Solar* for Non-Profits Initiative

Program Summary

The Pennsylvania Solar Center team started the Center because we know firsthand the excitement and desire of people all across the country and the state to go solar for many different reasons, including concern for the environment and seeking more stable, predictable and lower energy prices. We also understand that once that decision to explore solar is made, the steps to get the equipment installed are sometimes difficult and cumbersome and not knowing who to trust along the way makes the process even more challenging.

The Pennsylvania Solar Center through a grant from the Hillman Foundation, will address these and other obstacles for organizations by assisting them to go solar through the second round of our *G.E.T. Solar* Initiative. The *G.E.T. Solar* initiative is a streamlined process that will inspire members and staff to go solar. We will infuse confidence in the process with the use of trusted tools and resources that connect organizations to qualified professionals to make the process of going solar straightforward.

For Round 3 of *G.E.T. Solar*, the PA Solar Center invites tax-exempt organizations to complete a prequalifying survey to assess their potential benefit from and obstacles to installing a solar PV system. Qualifying organizations will be encouraged to submit applications through the PA Solar Center website to participate in the *G.E.T. Solar* initiative. Selected organizations will receive technical assistance and a menu of financing options that will include the cost of a full, outright purchase of the solar system as well as low-interest loan programs and financing mechanisms such as Power Purchase Agreements or C-PACE funding. Each scenario will include the projected savings and costs to the organization. The PA Solar Center will assist organizations in issuing an RFP to select a qualified Pennsylvania-based solar contractor to install the solar project.

The *G.E.T. Solar* team hopes to select at least ten (10) projects to receive technical assistance to install solar over a six-month process with the goal of installation before December 31, 2020.

G.E.T. Solar is Straightforward and Simple

- 1.) Complete a short pre-screening survey to determine if your organization qualifies for a solar PV system.**
- 2.) Complete the application requirements:**
 - Submit a commitment letter from your organization
 - Provide your last month's electric bill
 - Download the PDF application at www.pasolarcenter.org/get-solar
 - Provide a letter from your municipality (preferred but not required)
 - Pay \$50 application fee
- 3.) Assign an internal Solar Committee to work with our *G.E.T. Solar* team.**
- 4.) Review with our team potential financing options and qualified solar contractors.**
- 5.) Sit back and watch your solar system be installed.**

Goals

The goals of the *G.E.T. Solar* initiative are to:

- 1) Install 1,000 kilowatts (kW_{dc} or 1 megawatt) or more of solar generating capacity on *at least* ten (10) solar projects that are a minimum of 100 kW_{dc} each in size.
- 2) Provide opportunities for organizations to acquire solar that minimizes upfront capital and/or maximizes total return on investment and to secure a long-term, stable electricity price below current grid prices.
- 3) Demonstrate that providing trusted resources, streamlined technical assistance, and pre-identified financing decreases solar decision-making time and increases confidence for customers to go solar.
- 4) Increase the amount of clean, solar energy on the Pennsylvania electric grid.
- 5) Decrease the use of carbon-intensive, air-polluting fuels in Pennsylvania that are attributing to climate change, air pollution and to health and environmental impacts in our communities.
- 6) Increase economic development in Pennsylvania by supporting solar businesses and resources located within the Commonwealth that will increase job opportunities.

About *G.E.T. Solar* Team and Partners

Pennsylvania Solar Center, Pittsburgh, PA – The PA Solar Center is a statewide project that provides a centralized hub of resources and information for anyone who is seeking to power their home, business, house of worship or community organization with clean solar power. The PA Solar Center offers technical assistance to tax-exempt organizations and to businesses to go solar by connecting them with trusted professionals and financing. The PA Solar Center will also work to organize solar supporters and empower them to enact decisions which will promote robust solar policies on the state, regional and local levels. The New Sun Rising is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that is the fiscal sponsor for the PA Solar Center and the project is managed by Hot Earth Collaborative LLC, the founder of the PA Solar Center and a clean energy consultancy based in Pittsburgh, PA. The PA Solar Center can be found online at www.pasolarcenter.org.

New Sun Rising, Millvale, PA – New Sun Rising (NSR) is the fiscal sponsor for the Pennsylvania Solar Center. NSR builds vibrant communities by increasing the capacity of organizations which strengthen culture, promote sustainability, and build opportunity. As a nonprofit 501(c)(3) charitable organization, NSR supports leaders to enhance their impact through planning, connectivity, and resources for neighborhood-scale innovation. Their focus is on underserved communities and how regenerative growth strategies can be utilized for equitable development. www.newsunrising.org

Hillman Foundation and the Heinz Endowments, Pittsburgh, PA – The PA Solar Center is grateful for the generous support from the Hillman Foundation and the Heinz Endowments.

Solar Energy Financing

Financing Overview

The *G.E.T. Solar* Initiative will educate selected applicants about various financing options that may benefit their organization.

Now is the Time to Go Solar: Tax Benefits Will Decline Next Year

Tax-exempt organizations may be able to enter into a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) to greatly reduce the overall cost of their solar installation by working with a third-party that can take advantage of the federal tax credit and accelerated depreciation of the solar equipment, **which may reduce the cost of the system by 50% or more in the first five years.**

Organizations in participating counties (see below) can take advantage of Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) to receive a **no-money-down, fixed payment and interest loan** in the form of a voluntary tax assessment, compatible with a PPA.

Used in conjunction, a PPA and C-PACE loan provide an eligible organization a reduced-cost loan with no up-front payments.

Organizations in Pennsylvania have creative financial tools available to help fund their solar:

- 1) **A Power Purchase Agreement** connects non-profit organizations with a third-party who can take receive the 26% Federal Investment Tax Credit (ITC), available until December 31, 2020 and accelerated tax depreciation, resulting in another 25% or more of cost recovery.
- 2) **C-PACE Financing** that allows you to pay back an energy loan on your property tax bill.
- 3) **Partnership with Mission-Aligned Non-Profit/For-Profit Entities.** The PA Solar Center collaborates with a variety of organizations capable of providing funding or financial resources to a limited number of non-profits through loans, grants, and marketing partnership.

Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) Overview

The *G.E.T. Solar* Initiative will link non-profit organizations to a financing tool called a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA). Because tax-exempt/non-profit organizations cannot take advantage of the tax benefits enjoyed by businesses, a PPA can help non-profit organizations purchase electricity generated from solar by significantly reducing their overall investment. The third-party will own the solar system and build that system on the non-profit property (roof or ground). The non-profit will then pay the third-party for the electricity that the solar array generates just as they now pay the utility for energy for an agreed-upon term—**shorter term (5-7 years) PPAs require a buy-out payment from the non-profit, either at the beginning or end of the term.** Longer-term (10-20 years) PPAs may eliminate any buyout payment from the non-profit, though their benefit from the installation over that term will only come in the form of a reduced, fixed electricity rate.

At the end of the PPA term, the non-profit/tax-exempt organization **assumes full ownership** and full benefit of the solar energy for the remaining life of the installation, which can be as long as 25 years, depending on the PPA term.

The benefits of a solar PPA for non-profit organizations may include:

- **REDUCED OVERALL AND/OR UP-FRONT INVESTMENT** The third-party owner of the installation is able to leverage the ITC federal tax credit and accelerated depreciation to reduce the overall investment by the non-profit. For longer-term PPAs, up-front costs for the system may also be removed entirely or replaced with a reduced buyout cost at the end of the term.
- **LOWER COST OF ELECTRICITY & PREDICTABLE ENERGY PRICES** The PPA can cover up to 100% of project cost and the price of power purchased through the third-party is often less than the retail rate for electricity.
- **PREDICTABLE ENERGY PRICES** PPAs lock-in energy prices at an agreed-upon rate, protecting the customer from unpredictable utility rate fluctuations, especially with longer term (10-20 year) agreements. They typically have a small price escalator each year.
- **PAY FOR SOLAR ENERGY JUST LIKE A UTILITY BILL** The non-profit will receive a monthly bill for the amount of solar energy used each month for the duration of the PPA. [NOTE: The organization will still receive a bill from their utility for any fixed charges or any non-solar energy that is used.]
- **REDUCE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT** Many non-profit organizations are concerned about the environment and are seeking ways to reduce their carbon footprint and ecological impact
- **DEMONSTRATE LEADERSHIP** Many non-profits use their solar installation as an educational tool to educate their constituents, clients and community about clean energy; solar energy also helps many non-profits fulfill their mission; solar is also viewed favorably by donors.

Find more information about PPAs in Appendix 3.

Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy

As of 2019 organizations can take advantage of **Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) loans**, which are voluntary assessments attached to property assessment programs designed to help streamline the process of making capital improvements for energy efficiency upgrades and clean energy infrastructure.

C-PACE financing is only available in counties or municipalities that have adopted the program and have selected a program administrator. Currently, C-PACE has been adopted in Allegheny, Chester, Lawrence, Lebanon, Lehigh, Northampton, Philadelphia and Wayne counties (see <http://pennsylvaniacpace.org/> for more information).

The benefits of utilizing C-PACE financing for solar include:

- + **NO DOWN PAYMENT** The entirety of the solar installation, including “soft” costs, is capitalized under one loan repayment schedule, off the balance sheet, with no upfront investment required.
- + **PRESERVES LINES OF CREDIT** As C-PACE financing works through tax assessment, it has no impact on an organization’s credit availability. The loan stays with the property if it’s sold.
- + **FIXED RATES AND REPAYMENT SCHEDULE** Occurring as a special tax assessment means C-PACE financing is quite secure, proving an opportunity for competitive, fixed rates over the repayment term.
- + **LONG-TERM FINANCING** C-PACE loans can be structured over the useful life of the improvement. Solar modules come with 20 to 25-year warranties, providing the opportunity for longer term repayment options through C-PACE.
- + **COMPATIBLE WITH POWER PURCHASE AGREEMENTS** Organizations may enter into a PPA and utilize C-PACE financing. Combining these tools would reduce the overall cost of the installation through the PPA terms and the non-profit would be responsible for the fixed C-PACE loan payments. The reduced cost of the system should ensure that the payments are first mitigated by the lower electricity payment and then completely offset by the full benefit of the solar electricity at the end of the PPA term.
- + **IMMEDIATE IMPACT ON ELECTRICITY BILL** C-PACE is a no upfront cost option that also returns 100% of the solar benefit directly to the organization (unless used in conjunction with a PPA as described above).

Find more information about C-PACE in Appendix 4.

Timeline and Process

Monday, June 8, 2020	Launch <i>G.E.T. Solar</i> round two application process. The PA Solar Center will prescreen your project, if you desire, to indicate if you might consider filing a full application. Prequalification survey available at www.pasolarcenter.org/get-solar .
Wednesday, July 1, 2020 at 1:00 pm	<i>G.E.T. Solar</i> team hosts video conference info session to discuss the program and answer questions (will be taped for future viewing). Join the online meeting at https://join.freeconferencecall.com/216-021-751 with Online meeting ID: 216-021-751 Join via phone: (515) 604-9094, Access code: 216-021-751#
Thursday, July 9, 2020 at 1:00 pm	<i>G.E.T. Solar</i> team hosts video conference info session to discuss C-PACE financing with experts. Webinar information is not yet finalized. All applicants who submit pre-screening answers will be notified in advance. Check the PA Solar Center events page for updates as well.
Friday, July 17, 2020 at 5:00 pm	PRE-SCREENING: Provide us with a small amount of information and we will provide recommendations about moving forward with a full application. The deadline to receive a pre-screening is Friday, July 17 . After that date, we will not be available for a pre-screening, but organizations can still submit full applications (see appendix 2 for the pre-screening survey questions).
Friday, July 31, 2020 at 5:00 pm	Applications are due at 5:00 pm. Download a PDF application form at www.pasolarcenter.org/get-solar . Submit application and additional materials to getsolar.pa@gmail.com
Wednesday, August 5, 2020	Tax-deductible application fee of \$50.00 due at Pennsylvania Solar Center (see instructions).
Friday, August 7, 2020	First phase selections determined by <i>G.E.T. Solar</i> team and selected projects move to next round. All participants will be notified via email.
Friday, August 14, 2020	<i>G.E.T. Solar</i> team completes a preliminary feasibility analysis, solar production and cost estimates, provides feedback to organization.
Friday, August 21, 2020	Selected applicants provide structural and electrical documentation in digital format for developer review.
Monday, August 31, 2020	<i>G.E.T. Solar</i> team and applying organization issue an RFP to select a qualified solar contractor for final design & construction of the project.
September, 2020	<i>G.E.T. Solar</i> Team helps organization review proposals from solar contractors.
November/December 2020	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financing and/or PPA terms/contract are finalized between organization and financing partner. • Qualified solar contractors selected for each project site. Contracts with financing partners are signed. • Selected projects will be announced to media communications by <i>G.E.T. Solar</i> team in collaboration with organization's communications staff.

Solar Installer Selection Process

The *G.E.T. Solar* team will assist each selected organization in issuing a Request for Proposal (RFP) to choose the solar installation developer for their project. The *G.E.T. Solar* team will provide organizations assistance evaluating solar developers and proposals by using an apples-to-apples comparison method to compare all relevant information provided in the proposals. Recommendations of solar contractors will be made on the following criteria:

- NABCEP certification – at least one member of the solar development company will have a current certification from the North American Board of Certified Energy Providers ([NABCEP](#));
- Relevant experience of the solar developer and its staff to install commercial-scale solar systems;
- Overall quality and value of the proposed services and equipment;
- Pricing proposal offers good value and is based on reasonable assumptions;
- References – The *G.E.T. Solar* team will check at least three references for commercial scale projects completed by the solar developer;
- Geographic location of the solar developer’s staff and offices; developers located in near the proposed sites will be given selection preference and other Pennsylvania-based developers will be given preference over out-of-state contractors.

Eligibility

The *G.E.T. Solar* Team will consider tax-exempt organizations located in Pennsylvania, if they meet the following criteria:

- The organization owns their building or the property/land where the solar will be installed;
- If the solar is intended for the property’s roof, the roof is less than 10 years old or the organization is currently renovating its roof. Roofing will need to be completed before solar is installed;
 - If the roof requires upgrades or replacement, organizations eligible for C-PACE financing may choose to bundle these costs with the solar installation as one project proposal.
- If the solar is intended to be a ground-mounted system, the property/land is suitable for development (e.g., it is located on relatively flat, stable ground that is clear of obstacles and shading; the property is not located in a floodplain and there is access to an electric meter nearby. Essentially, the property is “shovel-ready” to build solar);
- The organization has reserve funds available to purchase a solar system OR organization is amenable to acquiring solar through a Power Purchase Agreement, commercial loan, C-PACE financing, or fundraising campaign (guided by the *G.E.T. Solar* team and managed by the organization through existing customer or member outreach apparatus);
- Designate an internal Solar Committee comprised of at least two or more representatives (staff or board members) with decision-making power who will be able to serve as a point of contact to the *G.E.T. Solar* Team;
- Complete all application requirements by the dates indicated below under Application Requirements.
- **PREFERRED** – Organization is located in one of the preferred C-PACE counties: Allegheny, Chester, Lehigh, Lawrence, Lebanon, Philadelphia, Northampton, and Wayne. **[We will consider organizations in other counties as well or who are not using C-PACE funding]**

Because the *G.E.T. Solar* timeline is rather succinct, we are seeking organizations that are nimble in their decision-making capabilities and can abide by the timeline outlined in this RFP document.

Application Requirements

Organizations are encouraged to complete a brief pre-screening survey online at www.pasolarcenter.org/get-solar. The survey will help our team and yours gauge your organization's basic qualification to participate in the program and host a solar PV system on site. We will provide feedback about moving forward with a full application. The **deadline to receive a pre-screening is Friday, July 17**. After that date, we will not be available for a pre-screening, but organizations can still submit full applications (see appendix 2 for survey questions).

To apply to G.E.T. Solar: Round 3, the organization must submit the following by **Friday, July 31, 2020 at 5:00 pm**:

1. **Completed G.E.T. Solar Application**, which can be downloaded as a PDF from www.pasolarcenter.org/get-solar. To enter data into the application fields, you must use the Fill and Sign feature in Adobe Acrobat ([Go Here](#) to quickly learn how to use Fill and Sign)

OR use DocHub to fill in the form online (This requires you to have a free Gmail or DocHub account)

2. **Recent electricity bill (in PDF format) showing electricity usage for the past 12 months** as well as costs for distribution, transmission and generation or electricity, demand charges and other fees for each building involved in the project.
[Please name PDF file as: NAME OF ORGANIZATION_Electric Bill_DATE]
3. **Letter from the municipality** where the organizational property is located stating that the proposed solar site or building is located in a zoning district that would permit a solar energy project. **This is a preferred request**, but if the organization does not have time to acquire the letter, it should not prevent submission of the application.
[Please name PDF file as: NAME OF ORGANIZATION_MUNI LETTER_DATE]

The **Application Fee of \$50** is due by Wednesday, August 5, 2020. Checks can be made payable to The New Sun Rising (with *Pennsylvania Solar Center* in the memo) and mail to: PA Solar Center, 1435 Bedford Avenue, Suite 140, Pittsburgh, PA 15219 or pay online at New Sun Rising project portal at: <https://www.newsunrising.org/project/pennsylvania-solar-center/> (click on donation and pay via credit card). The PA Solar Center is a project of our fiscal sponsor, The New Sun Rising, a 501c3 non-profit organization. This fee is tax-deductible according to IRS rules and helps us to provide you with services to go solar.

Evaluation Process

The *G.E.T. Solar* team will evaluate applications based on the following key criteria and will score each project as described below.

Key Criteria (bulleted items describe the element of the key criteria that will be evaluated):

Leadership and Community Commitment

- Demonstration of commitment by organization to the project as evident by assignment of key staff and decision makers to their Solar Committee
- Support letters from municipality indicating awareness of the potential project and that their zoning and permitting practices will permit solar energy in the zoning district of the proposed project (preferred requirement)

Community Benefit

- The quality and/or contribution of the organization's mission and services as well as their impact and benefit to the community, their employees and clients that they serve.

Commitment to Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency

- The organization's plans to demonstrate to employees, community members, clients, etc. that the building/property has solar (for example, displays about the solar system posted in prominent space in the building, computer monitor in the lobby that shows daily energy projections, signs in the front lawn indicating solar is onsite, and/or description on the website, etc.)
- Stated intention of leveraging the installed solar system to educate employees, members, clients, other community leaders, etc. about the opportunities and benefits of solar energy and energy efficiency
- Past and current sustainability initiatives that demonstrate ongoing commitment and leadership to clean energy and sustainability in the community.

Physical Properties of the Project

- The potential of the project to maximize solar generation, taking into account orientation of the building and/or roof to maximize efficiency of the solar panels (e.g., the building or roof is situated so that solar panels can be positioned to face south or near south)
- Lack of obstruction and/or shading on the site
- The amount of usable space available for solar installation
- Roof age and condition of roof [the organization may consider replacement through reserve funds or C-PACE financing], any engineering or structural changes required OR land condition for ground-mounted solar systems
- Need to upgrade electrical service or other physical structures on the site or run electrical lines underground for ground-mounted systems
- The visibility of the proposed solar system to the outside public space (e.g., from the street or sidewalk) would be of particular interest to the *G.E.T. Solar* team
- Unique safety precautions that will need to be considered for installation such as very steep roofs, difficulty accessing roof, etc.

Financial Qualities of the Project

- The potential size of the solar system [The size impacts that cost of the system; the larger the system, the greater the economies of scale and more attractive to investors; however, *G.E.T. Solar* is not just seeking the largest systems; other qualities of the project are equally important.]
- The current cost of electricity being paid by the client (organizations paying higher electricity costs will benefit the most from solar with greater savings).

Application Scoring

Each application will be evaluated against the Key Criteria listed above using this valuation system: Low = 1 point, Medium = 2 points, and High = 3 points. Total scores will be used to rank the applications.

The scoring results will only be available to the *G.E.T. Solar* Team and will not be revealed publicly nor will they be shared with the applicant. Regardless, each applicant will be provided detailed feedback about their application.

The actual number of projects chosen will be determined by the *G.E.T. Solar* team and will likely depend upon the number and quality of applications received. **The team will attempt to select as many viable projects as possible and will use the ranking system to choose the highest scoring applications only if necessary.**

Final Proposal Designation

All applicants will receive a definitive response from the *G.E.T. Solar* team **by Friday, August 7, 2020**. The designation will be noted as one of the following:

- 1) Application Selected. The organization was selected to receive technical assistance as part of Pennsylvania Solar Center's *G.E.T. Solar Initiative*, Round 3.
- 2) Invitation for custom technical assistance. The applicant's project has unique circumstances that require technical assistance outside the scope of the *G.E.T. Solar* project, but the project team sees value and offers additional assistance.
- 3) Invitation to receive future technical assistance. The project did not qualify for assistance during this round of assistance or needs to be waitlisted. The applicant is invited to be included in a future round of assistance.
- 4) Application declined. The application did not meet the requirements for project assistance or was not suitable for solar or to receive assistance from the Pennsylvania Solar Center. A reason for declining inclusion will be provided.

Fees

The PA Solar Center requires an application fee of \$50.00 from tax-exempt organizations submitting a formal application by Friday, July 31, 2020. If an organization is selected into the program **and their solar project is contracted*** the Solar Center will require an assistance fee of either a donation of 10% of the solar renewable energy credits (SRECs) generated annually by the installed array or a one-time fee of \$0.01 per installed watt_{dc} (\$10.00/kilowatt_{dc}).

Our research shows that that customer acquisition costs for solar developers ranges from \$37/kilowatt_{dc} to \$50/kilowatt_{dc}. The Solar Center is essentially providing “shovel-ready” projects to developers so we are saving them money and time educating the client. Our fee for service is very reasonable. This assistance fee will allow the Solar Center to continue to provide vital support for organizations seeking solar for many years to come, while reducing overall costs to solar developers and customers.

It is important to note that the Solar Center’s assistance fee can be bundled into loans provided through C-PACE financing under the one umbrella repayment schedule.

**A project is considered contracted when a signed agreement is reached between the applying organization, the selected solar developer, and the financing entity, if applicable. The assistance fee should be included in the contract between the organization and the solar developer.*

Questions

All questions should be directed to Leo Kowalski, Consulting Program Manager of the Pennsylvania Solar Center at leo@pasolarcenter.org (preferred communication) or if necessary, via phone at 412-742-0019.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Letter of Commitment Template

[LETTER SHOULD BE ON ORGANIZATIONAL LETTERHEAD AND NO MORE THAN 2 PAGES IN LENGTH]

[INSERT DATE]

Pennsylvania Solar Center
c/o Energy Innovation Center
1435 Bedford Avenue, Suite 140
Pittsburgh, PA 15219

RE: G.E.T. Solar Application for [NAME OF ORGANIZATION]

Dear G.E.T. Solar Team:

On behalf of the board and staff of [NAME OF ORGANIZATION], we are pleased to submit our application for Round Two of the G.E.T. Solar Initiative.

[Include brief statement explaining the organization’s mission and work and how it benefits its clients that it serves and the local community where it is located.]

[NAME OF ORGANIZATION] is interested in going solar, because [add brief explanation about why the organization is interested in going solar].

If we are chosen to be a part of the G.E.T. Solar initiative and install a solar system on our property, we intend to [describe what the organization will do to show their client, employees, members, and community about the existence of the solar array on their property and the plan to use the solar array for educational purposes to further encourage the use of solar energy]

We have selected the following people to serve on our Solar Committee as liaisons between our organization and the G.E.T. Solar Team [list all members of your committee, two are required]:

- List Name, phone number, and email
- List Name, phone number, and email
- List Name, phone number, and email

We, the undersigned agree to abide by all the requirements and timelines specified in the G.E.T. Solar Initiative RFP document.

Sincerely,

Signature of lead staff member of the organization (President, CEO, CFO, general manager, , etc.)

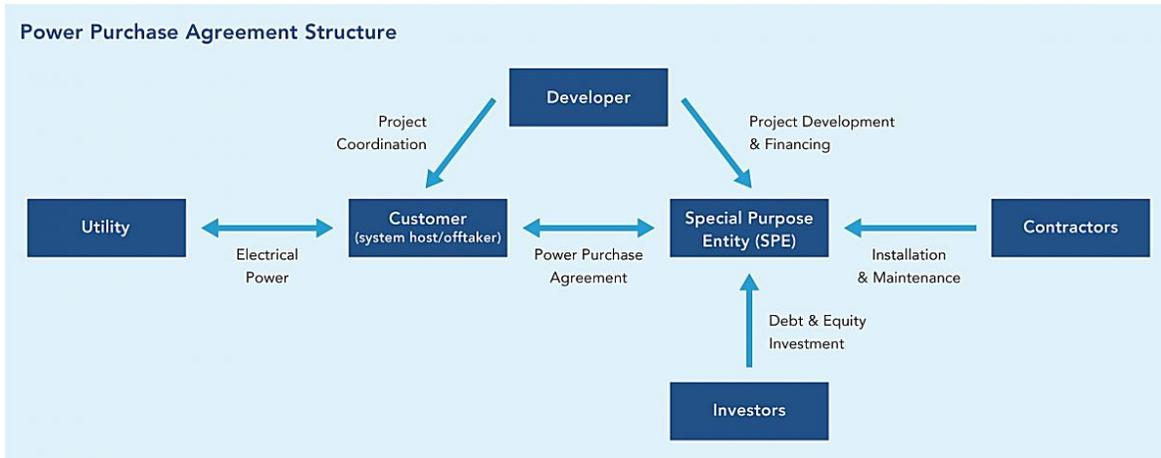
Appendix 2 – Questions Appearing on the Applicant Survey

These questions will be included on the online pre-screening form at www.pasolarcenter.org/get-solar; they are provided so that you can prepare them in advance of answering the survey online:

- Name of Organization
- Primary Contact Name
- Title, Telephone Number, Email Address
- Address of all properties to install solar: Street Address, City, State Zip code, Name of Municipality
- If you intend to install solar on your organization's roof:
 - How old is your roof (if known, when was it installed or last reroofed or replaced?)

Appendix 3 – Power Purchase Agreement Overview – Additional Information

The U.S. Department of Energy has a [helpful illustration of the structure and description of a Power Purchase Agreement](#) that includes the following (see Note boxes for information specific to Pennsylvania):



A Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) is an arrangement in which a third-party developer installs, owns, and operates an energy system on a customer's property. The customer then purchases the system's electric output for a predetermined period. A PPA allows the customer to receive stable and often low-cost electricity with reduced or no upfront cost, while also enabling the owner of the system to take advantage of tax credits and receive income from the sale of electricity.

Under a PPA, the customer signs a contract with a third-party developer to purchase power generated by solar panels or other forms of energy generation on a facility's roof or nearby location. The customer is therefore also known as the off-taker, or the purchaser of power.

The developer and its investors own the equipment for the duration of the PPA. The developer typically provides initial project coordination services such as design of the system, communication and permits with the utility and the municipality with little-to-no cost to the customer. Equipment installation may be completed in-house by the developer or by a contracted installer.

NOTE: In the case of G.E.T Solar, the design, financing, and installation of the system will be arranged with an independent solar contractor by the G.E.T Solar team and applying organization.

The electric output generated by the energy system is then purchased by the customer at a rate that is generally lower than the utility's retail rate, generating immediate cost savings. The PPA rate usually increases by 1-3% each year for the contract term (i.e. a price escalator) to account for gradual decreases in system operational efficiency, operating and maintenance costs, and increases in the retail rate of electricity. PPAs are generally long-

NOTE: Most PPAs are long-term but it has become increasingly common for Non-Profit to take ownership of the solar system after the investors have claimed their tax benefits after approximately 5-7 years after the purchase of the system.

term agreements of 10-25 years. At the end of the contract term the customer may be able to extend the term, purchase the system from the developer, or have the equipment removed from the property.

The utility serving the customer provides an interconnection from the energy system to the power grid and will continue service if the system does not produce enough power to meet the customer's electrical needs. When the system produces excess power, it can be sold to the utility, at the retail electricity rate. This process is called net metering.

NOTE: In Pennsylvania, customers who have solar and are tied into the grid, will be credited on a month-to-month basis for any excess energy that is placed onto the grid and not used onsite. Any excess will roll over into the following months and credited to the bill at full retail rate including generation, transmission and distribution rates) until it's utilized. At the end of the year – May 31 - the customer is paid at the price-to-compare rate (generation and transmission part of the electricity bill only)].

There are tax credits available at both the federal level for renewable energy projects, including the Solar Investment Tax Credit and accelerated depreciation. These incentives can be used by the developer and investors to reduce costs and make projects more attractive for potential investment.

The system owner will generally retain all environmental benefits of putting clean energy onto the grid, such as [Renewable Energy Certificates \(RECs\)](#). RECs are tradable, non-tangible energy commodities that are issued when one megawatt-hour (MWh) of electricity is generated from a renewable energy source and delivered to the grid. These certificates are a way for businesses to verify carbon reductions from specific projects and count towards organizational targets for renewable energy use.

NOTE: In Pennsylvania, the Alternative Energy Portfolio Standards (AEPS) require that the utilities acquire at least 8 percent of our energy from clean, renewable sources of energy such as solar and wind and 0.5 percent must come from solar energy. The utilities purchase solar Renewable Energy Credit (SREC) as mentioned above to fulfill this requirement under the law.

NOTE: Solar RECs earned under PPA projects in the GET Solar initiative (Round 1) will stay with the investor or project team unless the non-profit gains ownership of the system at the end of the PPA.

Appendix 4 – Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) – Additional Information

Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy Program, or C-PACE, launched in Pennsylvania in 2018 to, as the DEP website says best, provide “business property owners access to low-interest, long-term loans for clean energy and clean water projects that are repaid as property tax to benefit the community.” C-PACE clears many of the hurdles usually impeding organizations from making these types of significant upgrades:

- Voluntary tax assessments stay with the property, not the owner, providing for longer term lending options and a reasonable fixed rate (usually between six and nine percent interest).
- Loans can be structured around the useful life of the improvements, which is great for solar systems that are usually warranted for up to 25 years.
- Multiple improvements can be bundled under a single loan. Should an organization want to upgrade their lighting system, **replace their roof**, and install solar, it can do so with a single C-PACE project and thus a single loan and repayment schedule.
- C-PACE loans have **no up-front costs** to the organization, which includes design and consultation fees that can be rolled into principle loan.

The Sustainable Energy Fund has a [website providing general information about C-PACE financing specific to Pennsylvania](#) including the helpful guide below:

HOW C-PACE WORKS



Where is C-PACE available?

In Pennsylvania individual counties or municipalities are able to pass an ordinance to declare an energy and water improvement district, otherwise known as a C-PACE district. The county or municipality selects a program administrator for their C-PACE program. The program administrator then curates a roster of qualified private lenders with whom they connect prospective projects. C-PACE has been adopted in the following eight counties:

County	Program Admin.	County	Program Admin.
Allegheny	Sustainable Energy Fund (SEF)	Lehigh	Sustainable Energy Fund (SEF)
Chester	Sustainable Energy Fund (SEF)	Northampton	Sustainable Energy Fund (SEF)
Lawrence	Sustainable Energy Fund (SEF)	Philadelphia	Philadelphia Energy Authority
Lebanon	Sustainable Energy Fund (SEF)	Wayne	Sustainable Energy Fund (SEF)

As C-PACE is new to Pennsylvania, there is not an exhaustive list of C-PACE lenders available to peruse. The PA Solar Center will work with applicants and partner organizations to identify qualified financiers. Though C-PACE is brand new to Pennsylvania, it has been successfully implemented across the country, including our next-door neighbor, Ohio, which as of 2019 has enjoyed more successfully completed C-PACE projects than any state besides California. Let's keep *pace* with Ohio!

[Join our video conference to learn more about C-PACE](#)

The PA Solar Center will be hosting a video conference for prospective applicants of the *G.E.T.* Solar initiative to speak with a C-PACE expert to ask questions and help determine project eligibility. Information will be posted soon on our website at www.pasolarcenter.org/get-solar, but please feel free to contact our Program Manager, Leo Kowalski (leo@pasolarcenter.org) in advance.

More information about C-PACE can also be found at the website of the [PA Department of Environmental Protection](#), the [Sustainable Energy Fund](#), the [Philadelphia Energy Authority](#), or at www.pensylvaniaCPACE.org.