

CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

Pilot Project Submission Form Summary

March 2023

Contents

Overview.....	2
Strategic Alignment.....	4
Feasibility.....	4
Impact.....	5
Eligibility.....	5

Overview

TVA is excited to announce a funding opportunity to improve quality of life and equity for communities in our service territory through innovative community-driven solutions. With 14 pilot projects currently in the field, TVA is looking to expand the scope and geography of communities working to leverage technology- and data-related solutions. The pilot projects are intended to help communities gain expertise and test approaches that will jump-start their progress toward improving access to digital services, creating a healthy natural and built environment, scaling economic opportunities and preparing for natural disasters and cyberthreats. These projects will create benefits for the communities that lead them and serve as examples for others seeking to follow in their footsteps.

Focus Areas

The focus areas of this initiative include:

1. Expanding **broadband and digital literacy** through broadband and online platforms
2. Promoting **economic empowerment** for the workforce within TVA's service area
3. Advancing **energy and environmental justice** in our communities
4. Supporting **enhanced community resiliency** in preparation for natural disasters, cyberthreats and other evolving challenges

Project Eligibility Elements

Proposals are due June 30, 2023

Proposed pilot projects must demonstrate an **emerging technology or a new approach** to connect communities to resources that will directly and measurably have a positive outcome on two or more areas:

- Equitable access to services and innovative, sustainable, connected technologies
- Energy burden or energy poverty
- Access to quality science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education
- Environmental health, including indoor environmental health/justice
- Enhanced resiliency for vulnerable populations
- Access to better employment, career or entrepreneurial opportunities

WE ARE FUNDING

\$2M
in total
awards

\$750K
maximum
per project

4-8
projects
total



Overview (CONTINUED)

Evaluation Categories

Pilot projects should address the following evaluation categories:

STRATEGIC ALIGNMENT

Pilot projects should be connected to one of the four Connected Communities focus areas (e.g., broadband and digital literacy, economic empowerment, energy and environmental justice and enhanced community resiliency), have clear learning objectives and align with TVA's commitment to equity.

FEASIBILITY

Pilot project teams should have a lead organization with the resources and authority to implement a project, a clear approach for a community engagement plan and evidence of potential success for the underlying project goal. Evidence may look like prior implementation of a similar project in another region of the country or research supporting the intervention approach. Well-defined plans to build capacity to pursue a project will also be considered.

IMPACT

Pilot projects should demonstrate clear benefits to communities within TVA's service territory with the potential for long-term or transformative impact.

REQUIRED CRITERIA

Pilot projects must follow the **project eligibility elements** as noted on page 2 and be located within TVA's service territory. The project team must include a community partner and contribute 30% of total project costs via direct financial contribution or in-kind services. The lead organization must be able and willing to accept federal funding.

More Information

You can find more information about this initiative at tva.gov/ConnectedCommunities

Questions? You can find FAQs, detailed evaluation criteria, and definitions of key terminology on TVA's website. Need something else? Email: ConnectedCommunities@tva.gov.

What You Need to Apply

Please ensure you have the following information on hand to complete your application:

- Detailed project plan including key milestones and proposed timeline
- Proposed budget documentation, clearly listing the requested amount from TVA separately from the total project cost
- Maps and / or photos of the site (if applicable)
- Supporting documentation of community engagement (optional)
- Supporting documentation related to any prior implementations of the proposed pilot project (optional)

Application Questions

Application questions are on the following pages, and this document is intended to serve as a reference while you prepare your application. **If any elements of your application are uncertain or still in development at the time of submission, you are still encouraged to apply.** Well-defined plans to build capacity to pursue a project will be also considered.

Brevity is encouraged in your responses. Word counts provided are intended to be a maximum.

Maximum total word count: 4,000
(~8 single spaced pages)

Strategic Alignment

- Please describe the idea, tool, technology or approach being tested. Include why the proposed pilot project is innovative or transformative.
(max. 250 words)
- What are you hoping to learn / solve with this pilot? Include what the ideal outcome of your pilot project would look like, how other communities will be able to use the lessons learned and how your pilot project works to enhance the community's ability to pursue emerging technologies in the future.
(max. 250 words)
- How does your proposed pilot project meet the **project eligibility elements** shown on page 2?
(max. 250 words)
- How will your proposed pilot project address issues related to diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI)?
(max. 250 words)
- How does your proposed pilot project align with larger strategic goals, including community or regional priorities and your organization's mission?
(max. 150 words)
- What has your team done in the community to validate the need for this pilot project? If your team has not validated the need for this pilot project, what is the engagement plan to do so (e.g., community meetings, direct outreach, webinars)?
(max. 150 words)
- How will your team remain accountable to the intended beneficiaries and the community in which the pilot project is taking place? What is the team's plan to involve representatives of the community in governance and oversight of the pilot project?
(max. 250 words)

Feasibility

- Please describe your team, including who the team leads are, what each team member brings to the pilot project and the team's relevant experience in the pilot project area.
(max. 250 words)
- Describe the project plan and approach / methodology to implement the pilot project, including key milestones (e.g., procurement, design, pre-construction, construction, monitoring, closing) and proposed timeline.
(max. 500 words)
- Describe how the pilot project team will contribute the required 30% of the total project cost. This can include direct monetary or in-kind contributions such as staff hours or materials and equipment. If your team is leveraging other grants or funding outside of your organization, please include that information here.
(max. 250 words)
- Please upload the proposed budget in an Excel spreadsheet (.xlsx). Ensure the budget clearly shows the requested amount from TVA separately from the total project cost and cost breakdown for each partner organization and task / milestone within the project plan. If you have multiple files, please save them in a .zip folder for upload.
- Please describe examples (if any) of this or similar pilot projects being implemented in other places, including references where possible.
(max. 150 words)
- Are there any potential risks that may impact the team's ability to complete the pilot project as planned? How do you plan to mitigate the potential risks?
(max. 500 words)

Impact

- Who are the intended beneficiaries for this pilot project?
(max. 100 words)
- What is the scope / scale of the project benefits? How long are the benefits of the pilot project expected to last? This can be described both qualitatively and quantitatively (e.g., number of households impacted, benefits to specific populations, proportion of the community that will benefit, level of impact for project participants).
(max. 250 words)
- What do you anticipate would be needed to support the pilot project beyond the initial implementation? What is your team capable of providing? Please include a description of how the pilot project could be maintained or expanded beyond the initial grant award.
(max. 250 words)
- What key performance indicators (KPIs) will be used to track the progress of the pilot project and its outcomes, and how will you measure them?
(max. 100 words)

Eligibility

- Where will this pilot project take place? Please include if the location is a rural or disadvantaged community. If you are unsure if your location qualifies, the Council on Environmental Quality's Climate and Economic Justice Screening Tool can be accessed [here](#). Additional information about disadvantaged community designation can be found in our FAQs. If applicable, please upload maps / photos of the site.
(max. 50 words)
- Does your team have the legal authority to conduct this pilot project? If not, please explain.
(max. 150 words)
- Does your team have the necessary permissions to access any sites or assets required for the proposed pilot project? (e.g., right of way permissions, permit approval, owner permissions) If not, how do you plan to obtain them?
(max. 150 words)
- Are there any federal, state or local ordinances that will impact pilot project implementation? If so, what are they?
(max. 150 words)