

# Application Manual



## PowerForward: ZEV Battery Manufacturing Grant Program

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**POWER** **FORWARD**

# Acknowledgments

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# Definition of Key Words

Term	Definition
Applicant	Respondent to this solicitation
Application	Formal written response to this document from Applicant
Battery Passport	GBA's Battery Passport Program is a global reporting framework to increase transparency across the battery value chain.
<b><u>Card Check Neutrality Agreement</u></b>	<b><u>An agreement where an employer recognizes a union as the official bargaining agent of its employees after a third party verifies that a majority of employees have signed union membership cards.</u></b>
CEC	California Energy Commission
Disadvantaged Community (DAC)	Disadvantaged communities are the top 25 percent highest scoring census tracts in the California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool (CalEnviroScreen Version 4.0). For more information, please see: <a href="https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/report/calenviroscreen-40">https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/report/calenviroscreen-40</a>
Executive Order (EO)	A signed, written, and published directive from the governor of California.
GAAP	Generally Accepted Accounting Principles
Global Battery Alliance (GBA)	Public-private collaboration platform dedicated to fostering a circular, responsible, and just battery value chain.

<p>Initiative for Responsible Mining Assurance (IRMA)</p>	<p>Principles for sustainable and environmentally responsible mining practices. <a href="https://responsiblemining.net/">https://responsiblemining.net/</a></p>
<p>Job Quality</p>	<p>Refers to jobs that supports family-sustaining wages by paying its employees at or above a living wage (as established by the living wage calculator published by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, using the living wage rate for a household of two working adults with two children, or at local or regional prevailing wage standards for the applicable occupations), provides employer-paid health insurance, paid family and sick leave, and retirement options for all full-time employees, and includes a certification statement that all workers are properly classified pursuant to Ca. Lab. Code § 2705.5. The use of project labor agreements for all construction and maintenance work that ensure payment of prevailing wages and benefits and use of a skilled and trained workforce.</p>
<p>Justice40</p>	<p>The Federal government’s goal that 40 percent of the overall benefits of certain Federal climate, clean energy, affordable and sustainable housing, and other investments flow to disadvantaged communities that are marginalized by underinvestment and overburdened by pollution.</p>
<p>Low-Income Community (LIC)</p>	<p>Low-Income Communities are the census tracts and households, respectively, that are either at or below 80 percent of the statewide median income, or at or below the threshold designated as low-income by the California Department of Housing and Community Development.</p> <p>For more information, please see:  <a href="https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/report/calenviroscreen-40">https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen/report/calenviroscreen-40</a></p>
<p>Manufacturing</p>	<p>Refers to manufacture, assembly, or production of a product for commercial sale.</p>

NOPA	Notice of Proposed Award
Operations and Maintenance	Refers to the performance of routine, preventive, and scheduled/unscheduled action and activities required to maintain and operate manufacturing facility/equipment.
Priority Populations	Priority populations include residents of (1) census tracts identified as disadvantaged per Senate Bill 535, (2) census tracts identified as low-income per Assembly Bill 1550, or (3) a low-income household per Assembly Bill 1550. For more information, please see: <a href="https://www.arb.ca.gov/cci-communityinvestments">https://www.arb.ca.gov/cci-communityinvestments</a> .
Recipient	An Applicant awarded a grant under this solicitation
Solicitation	Grant Funding Opportunity, which refers to this entire solicitation document and all its attachments and exhibits
Subsidiary	For the purposes of this solicitation is a company that belongs to another company, which is usually referred to as a parent company or the holding company. The parent or holding holds a controlling interest in the subsidiary company meaning it has or controls more than half of its stock.
Supply Chain	Refers to the network between the Applicant and its suppliers that manufacture a product for commercial sale.
Technological Readiness Level (TRL)	Technological Readiness Levels are a method for estimating the maturity of technologies during the acquisition phase of a program.
Tribal Lands	Lands located in the State of California that are tribally owned lands, buildings, or facilities.
Workforce	Refers to the direct labor, staff, or employees of the Applicant
Zero-Emission Vehicles (ZEVs)	Refers to a vehicle that produces zero exhaust emissions of criteria pollutants or greenhouse gases.



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3. Budget Forms
4. California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Worksheet
5. Localized Health Impacts Information Form
6. Past Performance Reference Form
7. Risk Assessment Form
8. Sample Agreement
9. Sample Invoice
10. Sample Certificate of Status
11. Terms & Conditions

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Background

PowerForward is California's equity-first, market-accelerating, ZEV (Zero Emission Vehicle) battery manufacturing infrastructure grant program implemented by CALSTART in partnership with New Energy Nexus, Lawrence Berkeley Labs, and Yunev. The California Energy Commission (CEC) has made available to CALSTART \$35 million for grant awards for new and existing facilities to expand battery manufacturing in the State of California.

PowerForward is designed to attract and retain manufacturing of batteries for zero-emission vehicles (ZEV) in California, create positive economic impacts that benefit local communities and priority populations, foster a California battery supply chain ecosystem, and contribute to California's goal of zero-emission transportation.

## 1.2 Objectives & Priorities

PowerForward aims to lead the just transition to a green economy by setting a standard for domestic battery manufacturing that focuses on environmental impact, community engagement, and workforce development. By seeding funding in critical elements of the battery supply chain, PowerForward aims to grow supply chain clusters in California to increase battery manufacturing in the state. The structure of this opportunity sets companies up to be competitive for federal support and funding.

PowerForward staff and the CEC are committed to inclusion, diversity, equity, and access, and ensuring that manufacturing projects are developed with communities in mind. To meet these and other equity objectives, PowerForward staff conducted industry outreach, held workshops, and incorporated public feedback throughout the design process. PowerForward also held an advisory committee during the development of the solicitation to get feedback from public sector experts in areas such as battery manufacturing, labor and workforce, and environmental justice.

## 1.3 Available Funding

There are two possible categories and a total of \$35 million in funding available for awards under this solicitation. Both categories have a minimum possible award of \$5 million and a maximum possible award of \$17.5 million. Projects are eligible for awards up to 50 percent of total project costs. Therefore, a total allowable project cost (i.e., the sum of reimbursable share and Recipient's match share) of at least \$10 million is required to apply. The highest scoring project, which receives a passing score, in each category will be proposed for funding. If funding remains after the highest scoring passing project in each category is awarded, then the next highest scoring passing project, regardless of category, will be proposed for funding. Additional passing projects, regardless of category, in order of highest scoring proposal will be considered for award until funding is exhausted.

CALSTART, in consultation with the CEC, reserves the right to increase or decrease the amount of funds available under this solicitation. If the funds available under this solicitation are insufficient to fully fund a grant proposal, CALSTART reserves the right to recommend partially funding that proposal. In this event, the proposed Applicant/Awardee and CALSTART staff shall meet and attempt to reach agreement on a reduced scope of work commensurate with the level of available funding.

## 1.4 Key Activities Timeline

Key activities, including dates and times for this solicitation, are presented below. An addendum will be released if the dates change for the asterisked (\*) activities.

Table 1. Key Activities and Dates

Activity	Date
Solicitation Release	4/5/24
Pre-Application Workshop 10:00 a.m. (Pacific Time) *	4/19/24
Deadline for Written Questions by 5:00 p.m. (Pacific Time) *	4/30/24
Anticipated Distribution of Questions & Answers	<b>5/17/24</b> [ <del>5/14/24</del> ]
Deadline to Submit Applications by 5:00 p.m. (Pacific Time) *	7/1/24

Anticipated Notice of Proposed Awards Posting	August 2024
Anticipated CEC Business Meeting	September 2024

### 1.4.1 Pre-Application Workshop

Registration and Information for the Pre-Application Workshop will be available on the PowerForward website [powerforwardgrant.org](https://powerforwardgrant.org).

## 1.5 Questions and Contact Information

During the solicitation process, questions for clarification about this solicitation must be directed to the CALSTART staff listed below. You may ask questions at the Pre-Application Workshop, and you may submit written questions via email. You may schedule a call with the CALSTART staff listed below. However, all questions must be received by 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time on April 30, 2024.

Questions received after the deadline may be answered at CALSTART's discretion. Non-technical questions (e.g., questions concerning application format requirements or attachment instructions) may be submitted to CALSTART at any time prior to 5:00 p.m. of the application deadline date.

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## 2. Administration

### 2.1 Agreement and Subcontract Execution

An Applicant to this solicitation that receives an award shall commit to executing its grant agreement with CALSTART within 60 days after CEQA approval of the award at a CEC business meeting. Additionally, projects recommended for funding must execute all subcontracts within 90 days of the executed agreement with CALSTART. CALSTART reserves the right to cancel proposed awards that do not meet the agreement execution deadline, and without limitation of any other rights may cancel an awarded agreement for failure to meet the subcontract execution deadline.

### 2.2 CEQA Compliance Timeline

Agreements must be encumbered by June 30, 2025.

Prior to CEC approval of the CEQA compliance of a proposed PowerForward award, the CEC must comply with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), and other applicable environmental review requirements. In general, the CEC is required to make its own independent CEQA determination, and the level of review required by CEQA depends on the facts of the specific project.

To comply with CEQA, the CEC must have CEQA-related information from Applicants and sometimes other entities, such as local governments, in a timely manner. Applicants recommended for funding in the PowerForward NOPA must submit pertinent information within six (6) months after the PowerForward NOPA is posted or risk having their projects not funded. Unfortunately, even with this information, the CEC may not be able to complete its CEQA review prior to the encumbrance deadline for every project. If, for example, a project requires an Environmental Impact Report, the process to complete it can take many months. For these reasons, it is critical that Applicants organize project proposals in a manner that minimizes the time required for the CEC to comply with CEQA, and other applicable environmental review requirements, and provide all related information to the CEC in a timely manner such that the CEC is able to complete its review in time for it to meet its encumbrance deadline. If another agency has already made a CEQA determination as the lead agency, that may expedite the CEC's review. For this reason, in the proposal package, it may be helpful for Applicants to include already received permits

and associated CEQA determinations from other agencies (e.g., a local agency where the project will take place). Otherwise, to maintain the schedule for a grant agreement to be approved at the business meeting, it is recommended that Applicants submit all CEQA documentation including a CEQA determination already made by a lead agency to the CEC as soon as possible and **no later than 6 months after the PowerForward NOPA is posted.**

## 2.3 Reservation of Right to Cancel Proposed Award

In addition to any other right reserved to it under this solicitation or that it otherwise has, if CALSTART determines, in collaboration with the CEC, that CALSTART or other environmental review associated with a proposed project would not likely be completed prior to the encumbrance deadline referenced above, and that CALSTART's ability to meet its encumbrance deadline may thereby be jeopardized, CALSTART may cancel a proposed award and award funds to the next highest scoring Applicant, regardless of the originally proposed Applicant's diligence in submitting information and materials for CEQA or other environmental review.

## 2.4 Data Collection

Applicants that are awarded funds will be required to collect and submit operation and performance data to CALSTART for a minimum of six (6) months after the proposed project becomes operational. Additional data collection and reporting requirements are described in Attachment 01. Awarded projects will also be asked to track and trace material flows for select value chains, integrated with consistent reporting as outlined by the Global Battery Alliance Battery Passport project <https://www.globalbattery.org/battery-passport/> to establish the battery carbon footprint and the child labor and human rights indices. More information on the Battery Passport is included in the [Resources](#) section at the end of this document.

## 2.5 Payment Schedule

Award payment schedules will be finalized in the agreement process and disbursements will be contingent upon reaching specified workforce, community benefit, and project deliverable milestones.

## 2.6 Cost Eligibility

### 2.6.1 Eligible Project Costs

a. Project costs incurred for the following activities are eligible for reimbursement or as the Applicant's match share:

- Re-equipping, expanding, or establishing a manufacturing facility that manufactures, produces, and/or assembles eligible products.
- Manufacturing, production, and/or assembly line processing methods, design, engineering, testing, and compliance with manufacturing, production, and/or assembly line certification standards.
- Acquisition of manufacturing, production, and/or assembly tools and equipment.
- Acquisition of software for manufacturing equipment. Eligible software acquisitions are capped at 10 percent of the award amount.
- Building and facility modifications that support the manufacturing, production, and/or assembly process.
- Workforce training and development. Eligible workforce training and development costs are capped at 10 percent of the award amount. Applicant executive officers and board members are not eligible for workforce training and development activities.
- Raw materials and components used in eligible manufactured products are eligible as Applicant cash match share, but *not* as reimbursable share.
- Manufacturing facility lease or purchasing costs are eligible as Applicant cash match share, but *not* as reimbursable share.

b. Costs incurred for the following labor activities are also eligible for CALSTART reimbursement or as the Applicant match share:

- Labor required to manufacture, produce, and/or assemble eligible products.
- Labor required for installing, testing, and certifying manufacturing tools and



equipment.

- Labor required in pre-production, including non-recurring engineering.

### 2.6.2 Ineligible Project Costs

The following project costs are **not** eligible for reimbursement but may be eligible as match:

- Labor costs for software, firmware, or hardware prototypes.
- Technology research, technology development, or technology demonstration activities.
- Analytical or feasibility studies (e.g., manufacturing, funding, product engineering, workforce, environmental, economic, strategic planning).
- Manufacture of pilot, prototype(s), demonstration, sample product(s) or service(s).
- Surveys, research and development, case studies, or market assessments.
- Building permits, zoning, and site approvals.
- Planning and policy studies.
- Secondary data gathering and reporting activities.
- Marketing and promotion activities or public outreach/education.
- Ongoing utility or facility maintenance costs.
- **Costs to manufacture micro-mobility devices such as e-bike, electric scooters, electric skateboards, etc.**
- *Note: Costs incurred prior to executing an agreement with CALSTART will not be reimbursed.*
- *Note: Repurposing of activities or expenses from an existing CEC-funded project is not an eligible project cost. (However, projects may co-locate at an existing CEC-funded project site if it will not reduce the existing project's performance. If the proposed project is to scale up an existing CEC-funded manufacturing facility, the new funding must increase, enhance, or expand what was expected from the original previously funded project.)*

## 2.6.3 Match Funding Requirements

### 2.6.3.1 Total Match Share Requirement

Applications must include a minimum 50 percent match share of the total allowable project costs (i.e., the sum of CALSTART reimbursable share and Recipient's match share).

“Match funding” or “match share” means cash or in-kind (non-cash) contributions provided by the Applicant/Recipient, subcontractors, or other parties that will be used in performance of the proposed project. Match share percentage is calculated by dividing the total match share contributions by the total allowable project cost. “Total allowable project cost” is the sum of the reimbursable share and Recipient's match share of the project costs. Match share expenditures have the following requirements:

- a. At a minimum, total match share must conform to the “Cash Match Share Requirement” contained in this solicitation.
- b. All match share expenditures must conform to the terms and conditions of this solicitation and the resulting agreement (see Attachment 11).
- c. Applicants must disclose the source and provide verification and documentation for the match share funding committed to the project. (For any match share committed by a third party (i.e., other than match share committed by the Applicant), Applicants must submit a letter from each match share partner identifying the source(s) and availability of match funding.)
- d. During the term of the agreement, Recipients will be required to document and verify all match share expenditures through invoices submitted to CALSTART.
- e. Match share funding may be in the form of cash or in-kind contributions such as donated labor hours, equipment, facilities, and other property.
- f. Match share funding may be in the form of loans, grants, and other incentives provided by the California state government, federal government, or local governments. However, these are not considered cash match. Additionally, see “Ineligible Match Share Sources” below regarding certain public funds that are not eligible as match share.
- g. Equipment, facilities, and property may count as match funds as long as the value of the contribution is based on documented market values or book values,

prorated for its use in the project, and depreciated or amortized over the term of the project using generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP).

- h. Match share expenditures (cash and/or in-kind) must be documented, reasonable, allowable, and allocable to the project as determined by CALSTART.
- i. Match share expenditures are allowable under an agreement only if they are incurred after CALSTART notifies the Applicant that its project has been proposed for an award through the release of a NOPA. Match expenditures incurred prior to the approval and execution of an agreement are made at the Applicant's own risk. CALSTART is not liable for Applicant's match share costs if the grant is not approved, if approval is delayed, or if the match share expenditure is not allowable under the terms and conditions of the grant or this solicitation. Please note that non-match expenditures incurred prior to agreement execution are not reimbursable from funds.

### 2.6.3.2 Cash Match Share Requirement

Applications must include a minimum **cash** match share contribution equal to at least 10 percent of funding. For example, Project A, requesting \$10 million in CALSTART funding and contributing \$10 million in match funding, must dedicate at least \$1 million as cash match. On the other hand, Project B, requesting \$10 million in CALSTART funding and contributing \$20 million in match funding, still must dedicate at least \$1 million as cash match.

Cash match means the net of any funds actually expended by the Applicant for the project. Net means after any sort of discount or rebate is applied. Expenditures for Applicant's compensated labor hours, including allowable fringe benefit and overhead rates, travel, materials, supplies, equipment, subcontractor costs, and other miscellaneous expenditures may be claimed as cash match if the expenditures are included in the approved agreement budget, paid in full with funding sources other than grant funds, and supported with appropriate documentation, including proof of payment. For indirect overhead, backup documentation, such as a cost allocation plan based on actual expenditures incurred and paid, is required. Cost allocations must be reasonable and allocable to the proposed project.

### 2.6.4 In-Kind Match Share

The balance of the total match share requirement beyond the cash match share requirement (if any) may be met through in-kind match share contributions.

In-kind match share contributions are: 1) non-cash contributions provided by the Applicant; 2) cash or non-cash contributions provided by a subcontractor; and 3) cash or non-cash contributions provided by other third parties. Applicant in-kind match share can be in the form of volunteer labor, real property, existing equipment, existing supplies, services provided by a third-party or subcontract, and other expendable property. The value of in-kind match is based on the fair market value of the goods and services provided at the time it is claimed as match. In-kind match share must be included in the approved agreement budget and supported with appropriate documentation. Cost allocations must be reasonable and allocable to the proposed project.

#### 2.6.4.1 Match Share Restrictions

- a. **Other Sources of CEC Funding** – Other sources of CEC funding, either directly from the CEC or indirectly from the CEC via a third party, may not be used as match share.
- b. **Ineligible Match Share Sources** – Ineligible match share sources include:
  - Funds available from the State of California, regional, or local public entity's public incentive programs designed to support the construction and installation of electric vehicle supply equipment or hydrogen refueling station equipment.
  - Funds available from the State of California, regional, or local public entity's public incentive programs for workforce training and development programs and sales and use tax exclusion on manufacturing equipment.
- c. **Property Not Owned by the Applicant** – Donated property may be claimed as match based on the fair market value of renting or leasing the property. Fair market value is based on rental costs of comparable property (if any), market conditions in the area, alternatives available and the type, life expectancy, condition, and value of the property.
- d. **Existing Property Owned by the Recipient** – Applicants may use the property's

depreciation expense as a method to allocate the value of the property to the project. Valuation will need to be documented to support the initial acquisition costs as well as the method of depreciation.

- e. **Valuation of Land** – Land cannot be depreciated. If the value of land is claimed as match, the Applicant must provide documentation to support a fair market value for the use of the land (i.e., rent or lease cost) for the time period it is used. Appraised value of land cannot be used since this represents the full value of the land if it is sold which includes value beyond the term of the proposed project.
- f. **Property Owned by a Related Party** – Related parties are individuals or other entities that are able to control or substantially influence the actions of the Applicant and includes spouses, board members, family members of principals or employees of the Applicant as well as property owned by principals/employees of the Applicant. Because agreements between related parties are “less than arms-length” transactions, Applicants must disclose to CALSTART the relationship and be able to support the fair market value of property that is claimed as match.

If CALSTART funds are used to reimburse lease/rental payments for property owned by a related party, the Applicant can only claim the **lesser** of fair market value or actual lease payments, regardless of lease agreement terms.

- a. **Prorated Value of Property** – The allowable claimed value of property must be prorated based on the percentage the property is used for the proposed project. For example, if only half of a building is being used for the proposed project, then only 50 percent of the monthly fair market value of the entire building can be claimed as match while the building is being used for the project.
- b. **Documentation** – If selected for an award under this agreement, all claimed match share expenditures must be adequately documented to CALSTART during the agreement invoicing process which may include but is not limited to: the fair market value of existing property, methodology to allocate existing property on a prorated basis, lease agreements, and other appropriate documentation.

### 2.6.5 Unallowable Costs (Reimbursable or Match Share)

For an item of cost to be allowable, it must be included in the approved agreement budget and allowable per the terms and conditions of the resulting agreement. The following are examples of unallowable costs under an agreement resulting from this solicitation. This list is not comprehensive and additional items of cost may be unallowable in accordance with the terms and conditions.

- a. **Forgone Profit** – For example, if a company usually charges 10 percent profit but only charges 4 percent to CALSTART the unclaimed difference is not an allowable item of cost.
- b. **Forgone Rent** – For example, rent that is not paid is not an allowable item of cost.
- c. **Discounted or Refunded Equipment Costs** – For example, a claim that equipment costs \$10,000 but recipient only pays \$6,000 due to some “special” discount. The difference of \$4,000 is not an allowable match share expense. Another example is if the recipient actually pays \$10,000 but the vendor refunds \$4,000 – only the net \$6,000 is an allowable item of cost.
- d. **Forgone Salary, Fringe, Indirect or Other Types of Cost** – For example, a person normally charges or is paid \$100 per hour but will only charge \$50 per hour towards the award. Only actual costs incurred and paid to the employee are allowable. Therefore, if an employee is **actually** paid \$100 per hour and CALSTART only reimburses at \$40 per hour, then the unreimbursed \$60 per hour is an allowable match share cost because this is an actual payment as opposed to a foregone salary amount. Volunteer labor (i.e., labor from a person who does not receive any compensation for their labor) may be an allowable in-kind match share expense if the value of the labor is reasonable and justified.

## 3. How to Apply

### 3.1 Eligibility

This solicitation is open to only private, for-profit businesses as the primary respondent. Not-for-profit and educational institutions may be included on a project team. To be eligible,

projects must be located in California.

Applicants are only eligible to submit one application under this solicitation.

### *3.1.1 Terms & Conditions*

Each grant agreement resulting from this solicitation will include terms and conditions that set forth the recipient's rights and responsibilities. By providing the required authorizations and certifications, each Applicant agrees to enter into an agreement, if awarded, with CALSTART to conduct the proposed project according to the terms and conditions that correspond to its organization, without negotiation: (1) University of California terms and conditions; (2) U.S. Department of Energy terms and conditions; or (3) standard terms and conditions. Please refer to Attachment 11 for the standard terms and conditions.

### *3.1.2 California Secretary of State Registration*

All corporations, limited liability companies (LLCs), limited partnerships (LPs) and limited liability partnerships (LLPs) that conduct intrastate business in California are required to be registered and in good standing with the California Secretary of State prior to its project being recommended for California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) approval at a CEC Business Meeting. If not currently registered with the California Secretary of State, Applicants are encouraged to contact the Secretary of State's Office as soon as possible to avoid potential delays in beginning the proposed project(s) (should the application be proposed for funding). For more information, contact the Secretary of State's Office via its website at [www.sos.ca.gov](http://www.sos.ca.gov). Sole proprietors using a fictitious business name must be registered with the appropriate county and provide evidence of registration to CALSTART prior to their project being recommended for CEQA approval at a CEC Business Meeting.

### *3.1.3 Project Categories*

This solicitation includes two application categories. Category 1 is for the production of cathodes and cathode active materials and Category 2 is open to a variety of activities in the battery manufacturing lifecycle listed in the table below. Applicants will be asked to designate one primary category that is most applicable to their project. A duplicate project may not be submitted under both categories. Products manufactured from the project must have demonstrated at a technological readiness level (TRL) of 9 to be eligible under this solicitation. **TRL 9 is defined as “a technology that is in its final form and operated under**



the full range of operating mission conditions” by the Technology Readiness Assessment Guide published by the U.S. Government Accountability Office (Table 11: DOE Technology Readiness Levels, Page 119), included in the [Resources](#) section.

To be an “Eligible Project” under this solicitation, projects must be located in California and all products to be manufactured, produced, and/or assembled must be used primarily for commercial-scale ZEV transportation applications and fit into one or more of the product categories listed in Table 2. **For this solicitation, eligible ZEVs include complete light-, medium-, or heavy-duty zero-emission vehicles. The ZEV can be an on-road or off-road battery-electric vehicle. Additionally eligible ZEVs include cars, trucks, motorcycles, rail, and aircraft such as electric vertical take-off and landing (eVTOL).**

Table 2. Eligible Project Categories

Category #	Eligible Project Activities	Description
1	Cathode Production	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The manufacturing of cathodes for cells and batteries for zero-emission vehicles.</li> </ul>
	Cathode Active Materials Processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The processing of precursor materials for cathodes for cells and batteries for zero-emission vehicles</li> </ul>
2	Materials Processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The processing of precursor materials for batteries from raw material (graphite, lithium, etc.) for cells and batteries for zero-emission vehicles.</li> </ul>
	Cell Component Manufacturing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The manufacturing of separators, electrolyte, or electrodes for cells and batteries for zero-emission vehicles.</li> </ul>
	Cell Manufacturing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Production of lithium-ion, sodium-ion, or solid-state cells for light, medium, or heavy duty zero-emission vehicles.</li> </ul>
	Module, Pack, and Battery Management System (BMS) Manufacturing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Production of modules, packs, and BMS for light, medium, or heavy duty zero-emission vehicles.</li> </ul>



	Remanufacturing & Recycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The processing of faulted or damaged batteries to like-new conditions for re-use in light, medium, or heavy duty zero-emission vehicles.</li> <li>• Processing of end-of-life cells and batteries to recover critical battery materials (lithium, cobalt, manganese, nickel, etc.) for re-use in the production of new batteries for zero-emission vehicles.</li> </ul>
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## 3.2 Application Format

All applications submitted under this solicitation must be typed using a standard 11-point font, single-spaced and a blank line between paragraphs. Pages must be numbered, and sections titled.

The table below describes the order in which the application documents must be submitted. All items listed below are required as part of the application package. Failure to provide any attachments may result in disqualification of the application. Attachment requirements are expanded and explained below in this section. The items that have “N/A” reflected in the “Attachment Number” column are required to be submitted as part of the application package, but do not have an associated attachment provided in the solicitation package.

Table 3. Application Attachments

Item	Attachment Number (if applicable)	Action Needed by Applicant
Table of Contents	N/A	Create referenced document
Executive Summary	N/A	Create referenced document
Project Operations Narrative	N/A	Create referenced document
Project Design Narrative	N/A	Create referenced document
Project Impact Narrative	N/A	Create referenced document
Scope of Work Template	Attachment 1	Create document from supplied template

Schedule of Products and Due Dates	Attachment 2	Create document from supplied template
Budget Forms	Attachment 3	Complete form
Resumes	N/A	Create referenced document
Letters of Support/Commitment	N/A	Create referenced document
CEQA Worksheet	Attachment 4	Complete form
Manufacturing Facility Layout	N/A	Create referenced document
Localized Health Impacts Information Form	Attachment 5	Complete form
Confidential Volume (if applicable, see <a href="#">Section 3.3.13</a> )	N/A	Create referenced document
Past Performance Reference Form	Attachment 6	Complete Form
Risk Assessment Form	Attachment 7	Complete Form
CA Secretary of State Certificate of Status	Attachment 10	Provide completed form <i>if awarded</i>

## 3.3 Application Content

### 3.3.1 Application Form

Applicants must register and make an account on the PowerForward website and complete the application form in the PowerForward website application portal.

All Applicants must authorize CALSTART to make any inquiries necessary to verify the information presented in the application. Further, all Applicants must authorize CALSTART to obtain a credit report on the Applicant's organization.

All Applicants must certify under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that:

- All confidential information submitted (if allowed under the solicitation) has been properly identified.

*NOTE: CALSTART reserves the right to determine whether confidential*

*information submitted adheres to the confidentiality requirements contained in the solicitation and state law, including CEC regulations. Applicants purposely or erroneously designating information as confidential beyond what is allowable in accordance with the solicitation and state law may lead to rejection and disqualification of the application.*

- All information in the application is correct and complete to the best of the Applicant's knowledge.
- The Applicant has read and understands the terms and conditions and will accept them without negotiation if awarded.
- The Applicant has received any required licenses (such as copyrights or trademarks) applicable to the submitted application.
- The person electronically submitting the application through the PowerForward website application portal is an authorized representative of the Applicant.

For Applicants submitting through the PowerForward application portal, checking the "I Agree" box, and clicking the "I Agree & Submit" button provides the required authorization and certification

### *3.3.2 Table of Contents*

Each application must include a Table of Contents that allows for easy navigation and location of relevant information. This will not count towards the page limitation.

### *3.3.3 Executive Summary*

Each application must contain an Executive Summary that, at a minimum, includes: a project description, project goals, and quantitative and measurable objectives to be achieved. The maximum length of the Executive Summary is one (1) page. This will not count towards the page limitation.

### *3.3.4 Project Narratives*

The Project Narratives consist of 3 sections: Operations, Design, and Impact. The Narratives must include a table of contents (which will not count towards the page limitations) and a detailed description of the proposed project, its operational goals and objectives, and an explanation of how these will be implemented through the tasks described in the Scope of

Work.

Applicants must address each of the scoring criteria described in this solicitation by providing sufficient, unambiguous detail so that the evaluation team will be able to evaluate the application against each scoring criterion.

The maximum page limit for the cumulative narrative sections is 25 pages.

### **3.3.4.1 Project Operations Narrative**

The first narrative section will detail matters of operations of the project, including the Applicant's financials, manufacturing operations, project implementation and budget. Narratives should be between 3-5 pages and respond directly to the criterion with the headings as titled below and must include the following information. The Project Operations narrative is worth 45 points, further points breakdown is established in Section 4.0 Evaluation Process and Criteria.

Table 4. Project Operations Narrative

Section	Criterion
Manufacturing Operations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe the Applicant's manufacturing line(s), from inventory to shipping. Provide facility layout map(s) and photographs that identify workstations and workflow. The layout should include the workflow process from materials receiving/intake to product shipping, administrative and technical staff areas, and each workstation. Describe the Applicant's compliance with ISO 9000 and 14001 standards.</li> <li>2. Provide photographic evidence of the Applicant's existing or proposed manufacturing facility and layout.</li> <li>3. Describe the Applicant's efforts to track their carbon footprint, track record of policies and procedures around reducing emissions, and goals to reach carbon-neutral manufacturing practices or other scope emission goals.</li> <li>4. Describe the processes in analyzing deficient materials or returned products under warranty, customer service, and/or other lessons learned that can inform product design and development and reduce costs.</li> <li>5. Describe the product validation processes, quality control systems and culture relevant to the proposed project.</li> <li>6. Describe the procedures for safe handling and storage of all hazardous materials, and the Applicant's workplace safety procedures for employees handling hazardous materials.</li> <li>7. Describe market barriers and provide details of effective sales strategies, customer service approaches, and other solutions to overcome those barriers. Include some description of dedicated off-take and provide any calculations or assumptions.</li> <li>8. Discuss the ability (via patents, intellectual property developed or owned by the Applicant, or other means) to manufacture the proposed product(s) and any steps the Applicant has taken to validate this ability.</li> <li>9. Discuss the Applicant's supply chain and long-term supply agreements.</li> </ol>

<p>Project Implementation</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe how the tasks in the Scope of Work and the dates in the Project Schedule and Due Dates are complete, sequential, and will lead to successful and timely completion of the proposed project.</li> <li>2. Demonstrate site control for the proposed project.</li> <li>3. Discuss progress in identifying and obtaining permits for the proposed project.</li> <li>4. Discuss progress towards achieving compliance under the CEQA.</li> </ol>
<p>Project Budget</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Discuss why the proposed budget is cost-effective and appropriate to the purpose of this solicitation.</li> <li>2. Demonstrate and document that the source, type, and amount of Match Share funds that are committed to the proposed project.</li> <li>3. If relevant, describe any overcommitted match share.</li> </ol>
<p>Financials</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide three (3) years of financial statements of the Applicant and third-party financial assessments. Financial statements should be of the entity that manufactures the product(s) and not of the parent or holding company.</li> <li>2. Provide pro forma information and assumptions for 3 years post-project that are reasonably supported by previous company investments, staffing levels, established supply chains, and market share trends for the company's product(s).</li> </ol> <p style="text-align: center;">OR</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Provide a non-confidential Limited Business Plan for 3 years post-project for the products and operations resulting from the proposed project. This should be included in the non-confidential Project Narrative.</li> </ol>

**3.3.4.2 Project Design Narrative**

The second narrative section will focus on the design of the process, including the team qualifications, and workforce plan. Narratives should be between 3-5 pages and respond directly to the criterion with the headings as titled below and must include the following information. The Project Design Narrative is worth 30 points, further points breakdown is established in Section 4.0 Evaluation Process and Criteria.

Table 5. Project Design Narrative

Section	Criterion
Team Experience and Qualifications	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe how the project team's manufacturing qualifications and experience are suitable for the tasks described in the proposed Scope of Work.</li> <li>2. Describe how the team can support manufacturing products, increasing sales, securing capital, and establishing a reliable supplier network.</li> <li>3. Describe the team's previous history of successful grant management, if any.</li> <li>4. Describe how the team can respond to and mitigate proposed project delays, manage cash flow, leverage capital, and address supplier delays.</li> </ol>

<p style="text-align: center;">ZEV Workforce Plan</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe how the proposed project will result in a net increase in the number and quality of direct and indirect jobs created in California and provide the related calculations and assumptions.</li> <li>2. Describe how the proposed project promotes job quality. Applicant must provide at a minimum the estimated total number of workers to be trained and/or hired; job classifications or titles; job classifications' specific role(s) in the project; wage rates and benefits; share of jobs that are short-duration positions (less than 18 months) and long-term positions (18 months or more). For the purpose of this solicitation, a quality job shall be one that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports family-sustaining wages by paying its employees at or above a living wage as established by the living wage calculator published by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, using the living wage rate for a household of two working adults with two children, or at local or regional prevailing wage standards for the applicable occupations.</li> <li>• Provides employer-paid health insurance, paid family and sick leave, and retirement options for all full-time employees.</li> <li>• Includes a certification statement that all workers are properly classified pursuant to Ca. Lab. Code § 2705.5.</li> <li>• The use of project labor agreements for all construction and maintenance work that ensure payment of prevailing wages and benefits and use of a skilled and trained workforce.</li> </ul> </li> <li>3. Describe staffing plans and comprehensive workforce training and development programs to support manufacturing operations and projected growth. Include how the proposed project promotes training and upward mobility.</li> <li>4. Describe job recruitment and job-placement strategies developed to provide fair access and support to the hiring of individuals facing employment barriers, including but not limited to residents from disadvantaged and/or low-income communities and individuals whose income is below poverty, as well as workers displaced from jobs in the fossil fuel industry, and provide opportunities for upward mobility.</li> <li>5. A submission of the incidences of serious workplace injuries or illnesses reported to the Division of Occupational Safety and</li> </ol>
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	<p>Health during the two years preceding the application's filing date, and evidence the Applicant has adopted an injury and illness prevention program consistent with Section 3203 of Title 8 and the California Code of Regulations.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="488 344 1490 604">6. Demonstrate consistent compliance with workplace laws and regulations, including proactive efforts to remedy past problems, as measured by proof of internal procedures for investigating and responding to complaints of inappropriate workplace conditions and a narrative description of any charges or lawsuits filed by employees against the Applicant during the two years before the application's filing date.</li><li data-bbox="488 625 1490 735">7. Describe the mechanisms, such as labor peace agreements or collective bargaining agreements to include worker voice and agency in the proposed project.</li></ol>
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### 3.3.4.3 Project Impact Narrative

The third narrative section will focus on the impacts of the project for the market, the community, and California, as well as the scale of the project. Narratives should be less than or equal to 10 pages and respond directly to the criterion with the headings as titled below and must include the following information. The Project Impact Narrative is worth 45 points, further points breakdown is established in Section 4.0 Evaluation Process and Criteria.

Table 6. Project Impact Narrative

Section	Criterion
Market Impact	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Discuss how the proposed project will advance battery manufacturing efforts in California and contribute to a domestic battery supply chain for ZEVs. Include any calculations or assumptions.</li> <li>2. Discuss how the proposed projects will contribute to California's goals of zero-emission transportation and reduced greenhouse gas emission. Include any calculations or assumptions.</li> <li>3. Discuss how the proposed project will result in a positive economic impact at the local and state level. Discuss how this project contributes to battery production scale and expanding California's supply chain ecosystem.</li> <li>4. Discuss how the proposed project uses innovative approaches in its manufacturing process to scale production, increase efficiency, reduce costs, or reduce emissions and waste.</li> <li>5. Likelihood that manufacturing activities would not have otherwise occurred in-state either in terms of the entity's presence in California or at the scale that may not otherwise be achieved without the manufacturing grant.</li> </ol>

Domestic Supply Chain	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Discuss how the project will expand opportunities for domestic (ZEV battery related) supply chain partners by incorporating and/or using domestic content as opposed to foreign mined minerals/content, and where possible domestic customers for products.</li><li>2. Discuss how the project will expand opportunities for California-based (ZEV battery related) supply chain partners by incorporating and/or using California-produced content as opposed to other mined minerals/content such as that produced in "Lithium Valley," and where possible, California-located customers for products.</li><li>3. Discuss how the proposed project will support California supply chain clusters by establishing connections with state-based labs, universities and colleges, and state and regional clean transportation and industry organizations.</li><li>4. Discuss how the proposed project sources from sustainable sources, and where possible, companies that have committed to sustainable sourcing practices (IRMA Principles or equivalent).</li></ol>
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<p style="text-align: center;">Community Benefits</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Describe how the proposed project includes specific and measurable benefits to local communities and workers from priority populations, DACs (Disadvantaged Community), low-income communities, and tribal lands in accordance with CalEnviroScreen 4.0 Tool. Applicants are encouraged to develop their own Justice40 and Community Benefit Plan. (Please see the <a href="#">Resources Section</a> for more information on Justice 40 and Community Benefit Plans)</li> <li>2. Describe the partnerships or commitments to partner with local community-based organizations, workforce development boards, and/or high road training partnerships.</li> <li>3. Describe the Applicant's meaningful and inclusive engagement with local community-based groups and organizations on the environmental and employment impacts of the proposed project.</li> <li>4. Describe how this project aims to partner with local educational systems (Universities of California, California State Universities, community colleges, etc.) to build job training curriculums.</li> </ol>
<p>Federal Funding</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Discuss the federal funding the Applicant has applied to or received in the proposed project's timeline.</li> </ol>

### 3.3.5 Scope of Work

Applicants must include a completed Scope of Work utilizing the template contained in Attachment 1. Instructions for completing the Scope of Work as well as a sample are included in Attachment 1. The description of activities proposed in the Project Narrative must conform to the Tasks described in the Scope of Work.

Applicants must present a comprehensive and credible scope of work which includes (presented in a logical manner) comprehensive and sequential tasks, products resulting from the individual tasks, and how the tasks are related to or are dependent on each other.

### 3.3.6 Schedule of Products and Due Dates

Applicants must include a completed Schedule of Products and Due Dates (Attachment

2). All work must be scheduled for completion by no later than July 2, 2027, to allow timely processing of final invoices before the liquidation date (June 30, 2028) of the funds. Instructions for the Schedule of Products and Due Dates are included in Attachment 2. Electronic files for the Schedule of Products and Due Dates must be in MS Excel.

### *3.3.7 Budget Forms*

The Applicant must submit information on all tabs of the budget forms. The salaries, rates, and other costs entered must reflect the salaries, rates, and other costs the Applicant would include if selected as a grant recipient. A separate set of complete budget forms is required for the Applicant and for each subaward containing \$100,000 or more of award funds. Detailed instructions for completing these forms are included at the beginning of Attachment 3.

### *3.3.8 Resumes*

Applicants must include resumes for key personnel identified in the proposal. Resumes are limited to a maximum of two pages each.

### *3.3.9 Letters of Support/Commitment*

Applicants must include appropriate letters of support/commitment. Letters must include sufficient contact information, so CALSTART is able to efficiently contact the letter writer, as necessary. Letters must be limited to two pages each.

- **Key Project Partners (if applicable):** Key project partners identified in the application must provide letters demonstrating their commitment to the proposed project and their ability to fulfill their identified roles.
- **Third-party Match Share Contributors (if applicable):** Any third-party match share contributors must identify the intended amount of match, the funding source(s), and state that the match share contributor will provide the identified match funding. Letters of commitment from third party match share contributors must contain a telephone number to allow CALSTART to contact the match share partner or representative to confirm their authority to commit matching funds to the proposed project. Applicants are encouraged to submit additional documentation, both public and confidential (see Section III.E), to further substantiate the commitment from each match share partner. Examples include past projects funded, with contacts.

Any match funding pledged in Attachment 3 must be consistent with the amount or dollar value described in the commitment letter(s) (e.g., if \$5,000 “cash in hand” funds are pledged in a commitment letter, Attachment 3 must match this amount). Only the total amount pledged in the commitment letter(s) will be considered as eligible match.

- **Letters of Support (optional):** Applicants are encouraged to submit letter(s) of support that substantiate the estimated demand and/or the potential benefits of the proposed project. Third-party letters of support can be provided by, but are not limited to air districts, state or federal agencies, local safety officials, potential users of the proposed project, community-based organizations, non-profit organizations, and any other relevant organizations.

### 3.3.10 CEQA Worksheet

Applicants must include a completed CEQA Worksheet (Attachment 4). The CEC requires this information to assist it in making its own determination under the California Environmental Quality Act (Public Resources Code Section §§ 21000 et seq).

Applicants must complete the detailed CEQA Worksheet and submit it with their application. This worksheet will help Applicants, CALSTART, and CEC to determine CEQA compliance obligations by identifying which projects may require more extensive CEQA review. Failure to complete the worksheet may lead to disqualification of the proposal.

Applicants are encouraged to provide documentation of communication with the local lead agency, if one exists (e.g., a county or city). Documentation such as a completed notice of exemption, a letter from the local agency acknowledging their role in the CEQA process, or a permit application to the lead agency that is stamped as received. If no CEQA review would be required by the local lead agency, provide documentation (letter or e-mail) from the local agency explaining why not.

**Note Regarding Encumbrance Deadlines and Disclaimer:** The funds under this solicitation have a strict encumbrance deadline. The CEC must complete environmental review under CEQA and approve each grant’s CEQA compliance at a business meeting prior to the applicable encumbrance deadline. Funds *must* be encumbered prior to June 30, 2025. To maintain the schedule for a grant agreement to be approved at the business meeting, it is recommended that Applicants submit all CEQA documentation including a CEQA

determination already made by a lead agency to CALSTART as soon as possible and no later than 6 months after the NOPA is posted.

Thus, if a project cannot complete CEQA review in time to meet the applicable encumbrance deadline, CALSTART reserves the right to cancel the proposed award and recommend funding the next highest scoring award that can meet the encumbrance deadline, in addition to any other rights afforded CALSTART by law, and regardless of the Applicant's diligence in submitting CEQA information and materials. Further, neither CALSTART nor CEC is liable for any costs incurred during environmental review or as a result of cancelling the proposed award.

### *3.3.11 Manufacturing Facility Layout*

Applicants must submit a layout map of the intended manufacturing facility, with detailed descriptions of workstations and workflows.

### *3.3.12 Localized Health Impacts Form*

Applicants must complete and submit a Localized Health Impacts Information Form (Attachment 5). CEC requires this information to assist in developing and publishing a localized health impact report.

### *3.3.13 Confidential Volume*

Applicants who may provide financial documentation to demonstrate financial and economic viability as described in the Financials criterion in [Section 3.3.4.1](#), may be provided as confidential information if submitted as a separated, clearly labeled volume of the Application.

Specifically, corporate financial records, technology trade secrets, and price components of materials provided to meet the requirements of this section may be submitted to CALSTART as confidential information as part of a clearly labeled, separated volume of the Full Application.

Corporate financial records include balance sheets and cash flow statements, and 3-year

pro forma statements (if applicable).

A technology trade secret is defined as a formula, practice, process, design, instrument, pattern, commercial method, or compilation of information which is not generally known or reasonably ascertainable by others, and by which a business can obtain an economic advantage over competitors or customers.

Price components, such as the price received for goods sold from materials' purchase agreements will be kept confidential. Applicants should submit two copies of such agreements: one with price information redacted that is included in the non-confidential portion of the Application, and another with price information shown that is included in the separate section of confidential documents.

NOTE ON CONFIDENTIALITY: The section on "Financials" **may** be provided as confidential information. Applicants must upload under the file description, "Confidential Information," and clearly identify "confidential" on each page.

The information requested from Applicants in the "Financials" section will be kept confidential by CALSTART, unless CALSTART is ordered to release it by a court or other entity with jurisdiction over the issue or the information otherwise becomes public. The information will be kept confidential from receipt to seven (7) years following the posting of the NOPA, after which time the records will become public.

With the exception of information submitted in the "Financials" section, Applicants should not submit materials that are marked or otherwise delineated as confidential. In addition, any such materials will be promptly destroyed or returned to the Applicant.

Financial statements should be audited and certified by a Certified Public Accountant (CPA). With everything else being equal, audited, and certified financial statements will be scored higher; and, unaudited and/or non-certified financial statements will be scored lower.



### *3.3.14 Past Performance Reference Form(s)*

Applicants must complete and submit a separate Past Performance Reference Form (Attachment 6) for each CEC agreement (e.g., contract, grant, or loan) received by the Applicant in the last 10 years and the five most recent agreements with other public agencies within the past 10 years.

### *3.3.15 Risk Assessment Form*

Applicants must complete and submit the Risk Assessment Form (Attachment 7).

### *3.3.16 CA Secretary of State Certificate of Status*

Applicants who are proposed for funding must submit a copy of the California Secretary of State Certificate of Status to CALSTART as part of their completed application and labeled as Attachment 10.

Applicants who do not have a copy of the California Secretary of State Certificate of Status at the time of Application may submit a memo detailing their progress towards the Certificate of Status and submit as Attachment 10.

## 3.4 Application Delivery

The only method of delivery for this solicitation is the PowerForward website [powerforwardgrant.org](https://powerforwardgrant.org) application portal prior to the date and time specified in this solicitation. Files must be in Microsoft Word (.doc) and Excel (.xlsx) format, unless originally provided in the solicitation in another format. Completed Budget Forms must be in Excel format.

**The deadline to submit grant applications is 5:00 p.m. Pacific Time as listed in Table 1: Key Activities & Dates in [Section 1.4](#).** The system automatically closes at 5:00 p.m. If the full submittal process has not be completed before 5:00 p.m., your application will not be considered.

Please give yourself ample time to complete all steps of the submission process: do not wait

until right before the deadline to begin the process. First time users must register as a new user to access the system. A tutorial of the system will be provided at the Pre-Application Workshop, which will be posted on the website after the Workshop, and you may contact the CALSTART staff identified in the [Questions section](#) of the solicitation for more assistance.

**Hard copy submissions will not be considered.**

## 4. Evaluation Process and Criteria

### 4.1 Application Evaluation

Applications will be evaluated and scored based on the responses to the information requested in this solicitation. The entire evaluation process from receipt of applications to posting of the NOPA is confidential. Please note that after the NOPA is posted, all applications, excluding financial statements and pro forma (if applicable) information submitted in accordance with [Section 3.3.13](#), will be publicly available.

To evaluate all applications, CALSTART will organize an Evaluation Committee. The Evaluation Committee may consist of CALSTART staff, Project Partners, and other private and public entities.

The Evaluation Committee reserves the right to schedule a clarification interview with an Applicant that will either be held by telephone or video chat for the purpose of clarification and verification of information provided in the application. However, these interviews may not be used to change or add to the contents of the original application. Applicants will not be reimbursed for time spent answering clarifying questions.

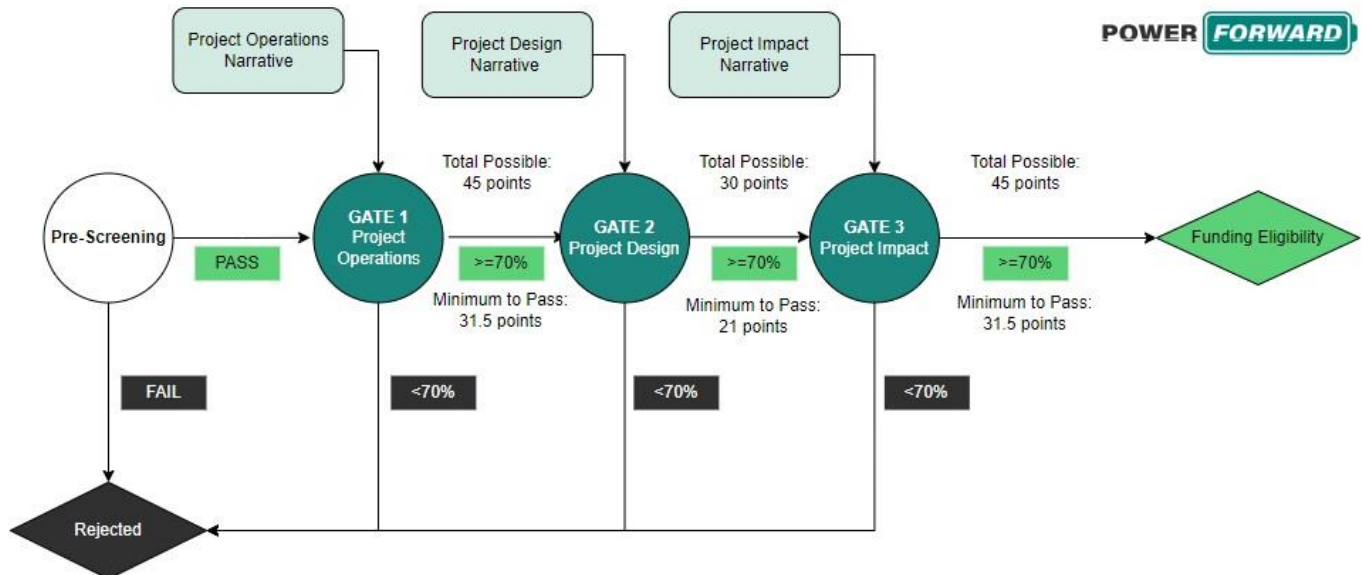
The total score for each application will be the average of the combined scores of all Evaluation Committee members.

**A minimum score of at least 70 percent of available points is required to clear each of the**

review gates (see Figure 1). In addition, an overall score of 70 percent (84 points) is required for the application to be eligible for funding.

The highest scoring project, which receives a passing score, in each category will be proposed for funding. If funding remains after the highest scoring passing project in each category is awarded, then the next highest scoring passing project, regardless of category, will be proposed for funding. Additional passing projects, regardless of category, in order of highest scoring proposal will be considered for award until funding is exhausted.

Figure 1: Application Evaluation Flowchart



The diagram above describes the evaluation process of applications. Applications are first put through a pre-screening, detailed in [Section 4.5](#). Applications that do not pass the pre-screening are rejected and do not continue in the application process. After passing pre-screening, the Project Operations Narrative is evaluated according to the Scoring Criteria listed in [Section 4.6](#) and the Scoring Scale in [Section 4.4](#). Narratives scoring greater than or equal to 70% pass on to the next scoring section, and narratives scoring less than 70% are rejected. Passing applicants are then evaluated on their Project Design narrative according to the Scoring Criteria listed in [Section 4.7](#) and the Scoring Scale in [Section 4.4](#). Applicants scoring 70% or higher move on to the next scoring section, and applicants

scoring below 70% are rejected. Passing applicants are then evaluated on their Project Impact Narrative according to the Scoring Criteria listed in [Section 4.8](#) and the Scoring Scale in [Section 4.4](#). Applicants scoring a 70% or higher are eligible for funding, and applicants scoring less than 70% are rejected. Awards are given to the highest score in both Category 1 and Category 2, and the remaining awards are given in order of highest score regardless of category until funds are depleted. Tiebreakers are listed in [Section 4.9](#).

## 4.2 Grounds to Reject an Application

In addition to the Screening Criteria identified within this solicitation, CALSTART reserves the right to reject an application and/or cancel an award if at any time during the application or agreement process the following circumstances are discovered:

- The application contains false or intentionally misleading statements or references which do not support an attribute or condition contended by the Applicant.
- The application is intended to erroneously and fallaciously mislead CALSTART in its evaluation of the application and the attribute, condition, or capability is a requirement of this solicitation.
- The application does not literally comply or contains caveats that conflict with the solicitation and the variation or deviation is material, or it is otherwise non-responsive.

## 4.3 Notice of Proposed Awards

The results of the evaluation will be posted in a NOPA and will include the recommended funding level and the rank order of Applicants. CALSTART will publish the NOPA on the PowerForward website and email the NOPA to all parties that submitted an application.

### 4.3.1 Debriefings

Applicants that are not proposed for funding may request a debriefing after the release of the NOPA. A request for debriefing should be received no later than 15 calendar days after the NOPA is released. Please reach out to CALSTART staff listed under [Section 1.5 Questions and Contact Information](#) to schedule your debriefing.

## 4.4 Scoring Scale

Using this Scoring Scale, the Evaluation Committee will give a score for each criterion described in the Evaluation Criteria.

Table 7. Scoring Scale

<b>% of Possible Points</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>	<b>Explanation for Percentage Points</b>
<b>0%</b>	Not Responsive	Response does not include or fails to address the requirements being scored. The omission(s), flaw(s), or defect(s) are significant and unacceptable.
<b>10-30%</b>	Minimally Responsive	Response minimally addresses the requirements being scored. The omission(s), flaw(s), or defect(s) are significant and unacceptable.
<b>40-60%</b>	Inadequate	Response addresses the requirements being scored, but there are one or more omissions, flaws, or defects or the requirements are addressed in such a limited way that it results in a low degree of confidence in the proposed solution.
<b>70%</b>	Adequate	Response adequately addresses the requirements being scored. Any omission(s), flaw(s), or defect(s) are inconsequential and acceptable.
<b>75%</b>	Between Adequate and Good	Response better than adequately addresses the requirements being scored. Any omission(s), flaw(s), or defect(s) are inconsequential and acceptable.

<b>80%</b>	Good	Response fully addresses the requirements being scored with a good degree of confidence in the Applicant response or proposed solution. No identified omission(s), flaw(s), or defect(s). Any identified weaknesses are minimal, inconsequential, and acceptable.
<b>85%</b>	Between Good and Excellent	Response fully addresses the requirements being scored with a better than good degree of confidence in the Applicant response or proposed solution. No identified omission(s), flaw(s), or defect(s). Any identified weaknesses are minimal, inconsequential, and acceptable.
<b>90%</b>	Excellent	Response fully addresses the requirements being scored with a high degree of confidence in the Applicant response or proposed solution. Applicant offers one or more enhancing features, methods or approaches exceeding basic expectations.
<b>95%</b>	Between Excellent and Exceptional	Response fully addresses the requirements being scored with a better than excellent degree of confidence in the Applicant response or proposed solution. Applicant offers one or more enhancing features, methods or approaches exceeding basic expectations.
<b>100%</b>	Exceptional	All requirements are addressed with the highest degree of confidence in the Applicant response or proposed solution. The response exceeds the requirements in providing multiple enhancing features, a creative approach, or an exceptional solution.

## 4.5 Pre-Screening

The Evaluation Committee will screen applications for compliance with the Pre-Screening

Pass/Fail criteria. Applications that fail any of the Screening Criteria shall be disqualified and eliminated from further evaluation.

Table 8. Pre-Screening Pass/Fail Criteria

Pre-Screening Criteria	Pass/Fail
The application must pass ALL screening Criteria	
The application is received by the due date and time specified in the “Key Activities Schedule” in <a href="#">Section 1.4</a> of this solicitation.	Pass / Fail
The application is received with all required attachments and documents.	Pass / Fail
The Applicant provides the required authorizations and certifications.	Pass / Fail
The Applicant has not included a statement that is contrary to the required authorizations and certifications.	Pass / Fail
The Application and required attachments do not contain confidential information, or any portion marked confidential, except for information separated and clearly labeled as confidential as outlined in <a href="#">Section 3.3.13</a> . <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Allowable information if provided as a separate attachment: corporate financial records (include balance sheets and cash flow statements, and 3-year pro forma statements (if applicable)), technology trade secrets, and price components of materials</li> </ul>	Pass / Fail
The Applicant is an eligible Applicant as specified in <a href="#">Section 3.1</a> of this solicitation.	Pass / Fail
The project is an eligible project as specified in <a href="#">Section 3.1</a> of this solicitation.	Pass / Fail
The project meets the minimum match share requirement.	Pass / Fail
The Applicant passes the past performance screening criterion.	Pass / Fail
The Applicant passes the risk assessment form.	Pass / Fail

4.5.1 Past Performance Screening Criteria

An Applicant may be disqualified under this solicitation due to severe performance issues under one or more prior or active CEC agreement(s) within the last 10 years. An Applicant is defined as either (a) the business, principal investigator, or lead individual acting on behalf of themselves that received funds from the CEC (e.g., contract, grant, or loan) and entered into an agreement(s) with the CEC; or (b) a business, principal investigator, or lead individual that received a CEC-funded incentive. Any Applicant that does not have an active or prior agreement and has not received a CEC-funded incentive equates to no severe performance issues and therefore would pass this screening criteria. CALSTART reserves the right to notify CEC of the Applicants under this solicitation and collect information from CEC about the Applicant's past performance in order to fulfill this screening criteria.

Severe performance issues are characterized by significant negative outcomes under an agreement and may include:

- Agreement was terminated with cause.
- The CEC filed litigation against the Applicant.
- Severe audit findings are not resolved to the CEC's satisfaction. Severe audit findings may include but are not limited to: incomplete or unsatisfactory deliverables; grant funds used inappropriately (i.e., other than as represented); or questioned costs.
- Project objectives were not met and were caused by factors that are, or should have been, within the Recipient's control.
- Significant delays in project completion resulting in delayed benefits for California. Project completion delays of one year or more from the originally proposed project schedule and caused by factors within the Recipient's control may be considered significant.
- Deliverables were not submitted to the CEC or were of poor quality. For example, Recipient delivers poorly written reports that required significant rework by staff prior to acceptance or publication.
- Demonstrated and documented poor or delayed communication when significant issues or setbacks were experienced that materially and negatively impacted the project. For example, delays in informing the CEC when the Recipient experiences loss of a key project partner or site control may be considered significant.



# 4.6 Project Operations Gate

A minimum score of 70% is needed on the Project Operations criteria to progress. The Project Operations Narrative will be graded based on the Project Operations Narrative in Table 8

Table 8. Project Operations Points

Category	Possible Points
Manufacturing Operations	20
Project Implementation	10
Project Budget	10
Financials	5
Total Possible Points	45
<b>Minimum Passing Score (70%)</b>	<b>31.5</b>

Table 9. Project Operations Scoring Criteria

<b>Category</b>	<b>Criterion</b> Applications will be evaluated on the degree to which:	<b>Possible Points</b>
<b>Manufacturing Operations</b>	The Applicant has documented one or more manufacturing line(s), from inventory to shipping, with facility layout map(s) and photographs that identify workstations and workflow.	2.5
	The Applicant demonstrates efforts to track their own carbon footprint, a track record of policies and practices around reducing emissions, has goals to reach carbon-neutral manufacturing practices or other scope emission goals. The Applicant is ISO 9000 and 14001 compliant.	2.5
	The Applicant has robust processes in analyzing deficient materials or returned products under warranty, customer service, and/or other lessons learned that can inform product design and development and reduce costs.	2.5
	The Applicant has established product validation processes as well as quality control systems and a culture of quality control.	2.5
	With the understanding that the proposed project will comply with basic California safety and environmental regulations, the Applicant will have an environmental safety plan that includes procedures for the safe handling, storage, and removal of all battery-related hazardous materials, and workplace safety trainings and procedures for employees handling cells, batteries, and other hazardous materials.	2.5
	The Applicant identifies market barriers and details effective sales strategies, dedicated offtake customers, customer service approaches, and other solutions to overcome those market barriers.	2.5
	The Applicant demonstrates they have the freedom to practice (via patents, intellectual property developed or owned by the Applicant, or other means) and has undergone steps to validate this ability (patent review) to manufacturer the proposed products.	2.5
	The Applicant demonstrates an established and resilient supply chain, with long-term supply agreements.	2.5
<b>Project Implementation</b>	The tasks in the Scope of Work and the dates in the Project Schedule and Due Dates are complete, sequential, and will lead to successful and timely completion of the proposed project.	2.5
	The Applicant demonstrates site control for the proposed project.	2.5
	The Applicant has progressed in obtaining permits for the proposed project.	2.5

	The proposed project has progressed towards achieving compliance under CEQA.	2.5
<b>Project Budget</b>	The proposed project budget is cost-effective and appropriate to the purpose of this solicitation.	4
	The source, type, and amount of Match Share funds are described, documented, and committed to the proposed project.	4
	The Applicant demonstrates dedicated, documented, and committed Match Share funds that are greater than the required 50% of the total project cost.	2
<b>Financials</b>	The Applicant submitted financial statements are audited and certified by a Certified Public Accountant (CPA)	1.25
	The Applicant submitted three (3) years of the most recent financial statements of the entity that manufactures the product(s) and are not of the parent or holding company. (See Section III.E of this Manual for confidential document submission information).	1.25
	The Applicant provided three (3) years of Pro Forma information and assumptions that are reasonable and are supported by company investments, staffing levels, established supply chains, and market share trends for the company's products. (See <a href="#">Section 3.3.13</a> of this Manual for confidential document submission information); or a non-confidential Limited Business Plan of three (3) forward years for the products and operations resulting from the proposed project.	1.25
	The Applicants' financial statements and third-party financial assessments demonstrate revenue, sales trends, a pathway toward profitability, and verification of existing business.	1.25

## 4.7 Project Design Gate

Applications that pass pre-screening will be scored based on the following scoring criteria. Minimum score of 70% needed to progress.

Table 10. Simplified Scoring Criteria

Category	Possible Points
Team Qualification	10
Workforce Plan	20
Total Possible Points	30
<b>Minimum Passing Score (70%)</b>	<b>21</b>

Table 11. Project Design Scoring Criteria

Category	Criterion Applications will be evaluated on the degree to which:	Possible Points
<b>Team Experience and Qualifications</b>	The project team's manufacturing qualifications and experience are suitable for the tasks described in the proposed Scope of Work.	2.5
	The team can support manufacturing products, increasing sales, securing capital, and establishing a reliable supplier network.	2.5
	The project's team demonstrates a previous history of successful grant management	2.5
	The team demonstrates the ability to respond to and mitigate proposed project delays, manage cash flow, leverage capital, and address supplier delays.	2.5

	<p>The proposed project will increase the number and quality of direct and indirect jobs created in California, and the application describes the related calculations and assumptions.</p>	<p>2</p>
<p><b>Workforce Plan</b></p>	<p>The proposed project promotes job quality. Applicant must provide at a minimum the estimated total number of workers to be trained and/or hired; job classifications or titles; job classifications' specific role(s) in the project; wage rates and benefits; share of jobs that are short-duration positions (less than 18 months) and long-term positions (18 months or more). For the purpose of this solicitation, a quality job shall be one that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports family-sustaining wages by paying its employees at or above a living wage as established by the living wage calculator published by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, using the living wage rate for a household of two working adults with two children, or at local or regional prevailing wage standards for the applicable occupations.</li> <li>• Provides employer-paid health insurance, paid family and sick leave, and retirement options for all full-time employees.</li> <li>• Includes a certification statement that all workers are properly classified pursuant to Ca. Lab. Code § 2705.5.</li> <li>• The use of project labor agreements for all construction and maintenance work that ensure payment of prevailing wages and benefits and use of a skilled and trained workforce.</li> </ul>	<p>3</p>

	<p>The proposed project includes a comprehensive workforce training program that includes all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Standardized curriculum resulting in an industry recognized credential that is jointly created by workers and management, registered federally and/or with the California Division of Apprenticeship Standards.</li> <li>• Measurable goals, regular reporting, and accountability standards to assess program effectiveness.</li> <li>• Wages and Stipends for program participants, including assistance with tuition, supplies, and materials.</li> <li>• Pay increases tied to new skills gained and trainings completed.</li> <li>• Formalized agreements with a public entity, nonprofit, and/or labor organization to support the training program, whose purpose aligns with the program goals.</li> </ul>	2
	<p>The employee recruitment and job placement efforts include meaningful outreach and recruitment activities and measurable hiring goals specifically targeted to individuals facing barriers to employment, workers from DACs and/or low-income communities, as well as workers displaced from jobs in the fossil fuel industry and provide opportunities for upward mobility.</p>	2
	<p>Submission of the incidences of serious workplace injuries or illnesses reported to the Division of Occupational Safety and Health during the two years preceding the application's filing date, and evidence the Applicant has adopted an injury and illness prevention program consistent with Section 3203 of Title 8 and the California Code of Regulations.</p>	1
	<p>The Applicant demonstrates consistent compliance with workplace laws and regulations, including proactive efforts to remedy past problems, as measured by proof of internal procedures for investigating and responding to complaints of inappropriate workplace conditions and a narrative description of any charges of lawsuits filed by employees against the Applicant during the two years before the application's filing date.</p>	1

	<p>The Applicant demonstrates mechanisms such as a card check neutrality agreement, collective bargaining agreement or a letter of intent (with a labor organization) to enter into a card check neutrality agreement to include worker voice and agency for the purposes of dealing with employees' grievances, labor disputes, wages, rates of pay, hours of employment, quality of work, productivity, health and safety, or working conditions. These types of agreements facilitate community input and labor engagement and can substantially reduce or eliminate stalls or slowdowns, litigation, and other risks associated with project implementation. Scoring will reflect the degree to which progress towards these agreements has been made.</p>	<p>9</p>
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# 4.8 Project Impact Gate

Applications that pass the project design gate will be scored based on the following scoring criteria. Minimum score of 70% needed to progress.

Table 12. Simplified Scoring Criteria

Category	Possible Points
Market Impact	10
Community Benefits	10
Domestic & Sustainable Supply Chain	20
Federal Funding	5
Total Possible Points	45
<b>Minimum Passing Score (70%)</b>	<b>31.5</b>

Table 13. Project Impact Scoring Criteria

Category	Criterion Applications will be evaluated on the degree to which:	Possible Points
Market Impact	The Applicant demonstrates that the proposed project will advance battery manufacturing efforts in California and contribute to a domestic battery supply chain	2
	The Applicant demonstrates that the proposed products will contribute to California's goals of zero-emission transportation and reduced greenhouse gas emission.	2
	The proposed project will result in positive economic impact at the local and state level.	2
	The proposed project contributes meaningfully to the domestic battery production scale and takes efforts to expand California's supply chain ecosystem.	2



	The proposed project demonstrates innovative approaches in its manufacturing process to scale production, increase efficiency, reduce costs, or reduce emissions and waste.	1
	Likelihood that manufacturing activities would not have otherwise occurred in-state either in terms of the entity's presence in California or at the scale that may not otherwise be achieved without the manufacturing grant.	1
<b>Community Benefits</b>	The proposed projects include specific and measurable benefits to local communities and workers from priority populations, DACs, low-income communities, and tribal lands in accordance with CalEnviroScreen 4.0 Tool. The Applicant demonstrates progress on Justice40 and a Community Benefit Plan (Please see the <a href="#">Resources Section</a> for more information on Community Benefit Plans)	2.5
	The Applicant demonstrates a track record of partnerships or commitments to partner with local community-based organizations, workforce development boards, and/or high road training partnerships	2.5
	The Applicant demonstrates a track record of meaningful and inclusive engagement with local community-based groups and organizations on the environmental and employment impacts of the proposed project.	2.5
	The Applicant demonstrates meaningful engagement or partnerships with local educational systems (University of California system, California State University system, community colleges, etc.) to build job training curriculums, connect to relevant student organizations, and create pathways for job recruitment.	2.5
<b>Domestic &amp; Sustainable Supply Chain</b>	The proposed project will expand opportunities for domestic (ZEV battery related) supply chain partners by incorporating and/or using domestic content as opposed to foreign mined minerals and other content.	4
	The proposed project will expand opportunities for California (ZEV battery related) supply chain partners by incorporating and/or using California-sourced content as opposed to other domestic or foreign content, and where possible, California located customers for products. Proposed projects that selected the Material Processing category will incorporate material from the Salton Sea lithium extraction projects.	8
	The proposed project will support California supply chain clusters by establishing connections with state-based labs, universities and colleges, and state and regional clean industry organizations.	3
	The proposed project sources from sustainable sources, and where possible, companies that have committed to sustainable sourcing practices (IRMA Principles or equivalent)	5
<b>Federal Funding</b>	The Applicant has applied for federal funding for DOE loans or grants, tax credits, or other.	1
	The Applicant leverages federal funding and has received DOE loans or grants, tax credits, or other.	4

## 4.9 Tie Breakers

If the score for two or more applications are tied, the application with a higher score in the Community Benefits category will be ranked higher. If still tied, the application with a higher score in the Manufacturing Operations category will be ranked higher. If still tied, an objective tiebreaker (such as a random drawing) will be utilized.

## 5. Resources

1. California Office of Environmental Health Hazard Assessment (2023). California Communities Environmental Health Screening Tool: CalEnviroScreen 4.0  
<https://oehha.ca.gov/calenviroscreen>
2. California Air Resources Board (2023). California Climate Investments Priority Populations Map 2023  
<https://gis.carb.arb.ca.gov/portal/apps/experiencebuilder/experience/?id=6b4b15f8c6514733972cabdda3108348>
3. Department of Energy, Community Benefit Plans:
  - a. About Community Benefit Plans: <https://www.energy.gov/infrastructure/about-community-benefits-plans>
  - b. Community Benefit Plan Toolkit: <https://www.energy.gov/justice/community-benefit-agreement-cba-toolkit>
4. Department of Commerce, Job Quality Toolkit  
<https://www.commerce.gov/work-us/job-quality-toolkit>
5. Massachusetts Institute of Technology Living Wage Calculator, California  
<https://livingwage.mit.edu/states/06/locations>
6. Global Battery Alliance (2023), Greenhouse Gas Rulebook V2.0  
<https://www.globalbattery.org/media/publications/gba-rulebook-v2.0-master.pdf>
7. Global Battery Alliance (2023), Human Rights Index  
<https://www.globalbattery.org/media/publications/gba-humanrightsindex-v1rev2.pdf>
8. Global Battery Alliance (2022), Child Labour Index  
<https://www.globalbattery.org/media/publications/gba-childlaborindex-v1rev2.pdf>
9. Initiative for Responsible Mining Assurance (IRMA)  
<https://responsiblemining.net/>

10. Justice 40 Initiative

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/environmentaljustice/justice40/>

11. Global Battery Alliance (2023), Human Rights Index

<https://www.globalbattery.org/media/publications/gba-humanrightsindex-v1rev2.pdf>

12. Global Battery Alliance (2022), Child Labour Index

<https://www.globalbattery.org/media/publications/gba-childlaborindex-v1rev2.pdf>

13. Initiative for Responsible Mining Assurance (IRMA)

<https://responsiblemining.net/>

**14. Technology Readiness Assessment Guide: Best Practices for Evaluating the Readiness of Technology for Use in Acquisition Programs and Projects. Table 11: DOE Technology Readiness Levels (2011), pages 118-119.**

<https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-20-48g.pdf>