

Portland Clean Energy Community Benefits Fund (PCEF) Roundtable

Key Takeaways

CBO Capacity Building Meetings #1 & #2

January 12, 2023, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

January 26, 2023, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m.

Key Takeaways

- Requiring detailed reporting metrics places a strain on CBOs. Although reporting metrics are required, it's best that they are not overly complicated and are known up front.
- CBOs are concerned about the timeline of the grant application process and beginning the work; they need time to ramp up capacity especially the smaller the organization is.
- CBOs always struggle with sustainable funding. PCEF should do what they can to ease this burden. Suggested ideas included creating a regrant process to continue funding successful projects and multi-year agreements.
- Program ideas / opportunities for this funding area that surfaced in the discussion:
 - Cohort program
 - Strategic opportunities for grantees to connect
 - Business coaching, general operating procedures assistance and networking opportunities
 - Researching services, gathering contractor quotes and facilitating technical assistance would be beneficial

Existing Conditions

- Many CBOs pivoted away from their missions to help their communities during the pandemic with the help of COVID relief funds. The end of this fiscal year will mean a transition away from that work and back to the organization's main functions.
- Often CBOs need to build capacity for upcoming work but then can't sustain staff if there are funding delays.

Desired State

- CBOs have funding to support more employees to focus on areas of work, rather than overworked employees filling multiple roles.
- CBOs have resources for administrative tasks from PCEF and are supported by a network of other organizations doing similar tasks.
- CBOs can rely on PCEF funding to be accountable to the program's values including in grant agreement terms, regardless of who administers the funding.

Key performance indicators

The following suggestions for measures of success for a capacity building program:

- Quantity of program deliverables (AC units in PCEF Heat Response example).
- Ability to sustain community engagement.
- Number of participants x dollars received.
- The number of organizations partnered to do the work.
- The number of leaders in the area ready to take on the work.
- The ability to convert volunteers to full time employees.
- The ability to shrink employees' work so that they are able to focus only on their program and not juggling many additional roles.
- Non-profits that are still operating are a measure of success.
- Ability to collaborate with other organizations.