

NYSERDA Climate Justice Fellowship Informational Webinar

Wednesday, March 1, 2023

Q & A Document

#	Question	Answer
1	How early can fellowships start? We'd like this to happen not later than this summer.	The PON is live and applications can be sent in immediately. The application process usually takes about 4 – 8 weeks, so there should be no issues with having a fellow start by this summer or earlier.
2	Could fellows be considered as electrical apprentices? Also, what if we have a project in Africa for people with limited clean water access. Are international projects considered as disadvantaged communities? Do you have a list of fellows seeking employment?	Yes, fellows can be electrical apprentices. The fellow needs to be based in NYS and work on projects in disadvantaged communities in NYS. They could also work on international projects in addition to their NYS work. Yes, there is a fellow directory available and once a host organization gets approved, they get access to the directory. Organizations can also select their own fellows from their networks and recruitment processes.
3	In the application, it says "workforce development" for program family - is that correct or do we select something else?	Yes – correct.
4	We would first apply as an org and then advertise for a fellow. Does that work? Or do we need to have a fellow identified before applying as an org?	Correct. The employer host organization applies first and doesn't need to have a fellow identified yet. In the next step, the fellow applies or gets selected from the directory.
5	Question- does the fellow need to be full-time? \$37,000 isn't a liveable wage in the Hudson Valley.	Yes, the fellow does need to be full time, defined as 35 – 40 hours / week for 12 months. Additional funding to supplement salaries may be provided as part of the employer match or supported through additional funding sources.
6	Question- what's the timeline like for this? 1- how long will this opportunity be available 2- what's the waiting time between the application, the decision on the application, and the dispersal of funds?	1 – Applications are being accepted on a rolling basis through the end of 2023 or until funds are expended. 2 – The host employer approval process is about 4 – 8 weeks. The fellow approval process is about 2 weeks and the fellowship application approval process is about 2 weeks. Funds

		get dispersed on a monthly basis once the contract is in place.
7	Question- does the On-the-Job Training program require the participant to have done the Climate Justice fellowship?	No. They are separate programs. A fellow can do on-the-job training after completing the fellowship, but that is not required. An organization that has not hosted a fellow can apply to on-the-job training.
8	Can this be paired with other justice-oriented grant funded fellowship/apprenticeships?	Yes. However, different fund sources cannot be used to pay for the same thing twice. In other words, you can't pay the fellow \$37K, get reimbursed by NYSERDA and then use another grant to reimburse your organization for the \$37K a second time. However, you could use the second grant for supplementary salary for the fellow or for other training and wraparound services for the fellow.
9	Could a cohort of employers employ a Fellow or group of Fellows in order to share some of the fringe costs?	You can partner with other organizations to support the fellow as long as only one organization is contracting with NYSERDA and that organization is paying the fellow.
10	If the organization is advancing clean energy, but not climate justice specifically, could they still be a potential fit for a fellow?	Yes.
11	Since this funding and the other PON's you mentioned do not cover all of the wages and/or expenses for the Fellow, is it ok to seek additional funding from other sources?	Yes. See questions 5, 8 and 9 for additional details.
12	Would a recent graduate qualify as low income?	It depends on the individual situation and their previous year's income as well as what other LMI programs they qualify for such as SNAP. See question 16 for additional details.
13	Is "potential environment justice area" considered interim? - Nancy Shannon	Potential Environmental Justice Areas are a different designation. This program is focused on projects in Disadvantaged Communities as defined on the NYSERDA definitions page: https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/All-Programs/Clean-Energy-Workforce-Development-and-Training/Resources/Definitions
14	If a potential fellow has to go back to college in fall 2023 and will be able to work full time in	Yes. A delayed start date can be worked out with the project manager. However, it's

	Dec. 2023 can we apply now and start in December?	recommended that the host employer apply early first and then the fellowship application could get submitted later, closer to the intended fellowship start date.
15	I think it was mentioned, but can the climate justice fellowship have virtual aspects?	Yes. A fellow can work remotely temporarily if needed due to COVID or other circumstances, but the intention is for it to primarily be an in person fellowship in NYS. The fellow does need to reside in NYS even if they are working remotely temporarily.
16	For Priority Population, how is "low-income" determined? Is that last year's income tax filing?	Low-income individuals, whose household's total income is below or at 60% of the State Medium Income, or whose household has been determined eligible for or is receiving assistance through the Home Energy Assistance Program (HEAP), Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), or other human service benefit programs.