California Climate Investments Technical Assistance

Preparing Communities for Success

The California Climate Investments Technical Assistance Program (CCI TA) supports communities in applying to the California Climate Investments (CCI) funding programs. Created in 2016, the program aims to level the playing field for applicants that lack the capacity to successfully access these funds, particularly those located in in the state's most under-resourced communities. The California Strategic Growth Council (SGC) works alongside several State agencies that implement CCI programs to provide application assistance, implementation assistance, and capacity building activities to eligible applicants, enabling them to positively impact their communities.

PROGRAM GOALS

» **Direct Assistance** - Increase the number of successful application from under-resourced communities to CCI programs by providing direct applications assistance and quantifying greenhouse gas reductions.

» **Capacity Building** - Strengthen the capacity of under-resourced communities in identifying potential projects, creating cross-sector partnerships, and finding appropriate CCI programs to meet community needs.

» **Implementation Support** - Assist under-resourced communities in implementing CCI grants to maximize benefits to priority populations and to ensure effective grant management, reporting, and evaluation.

PROGRAM ASSISTANCE

Each CCI program has its own set of goals and intended outcomes, requiring specific technical expertise. SGC works closely with State agencies to design technical assistance (TA) that is tailored to the needs of each program and its applicants. In many cases, SGC provides match funding for partner agencies to hire third-party TA providers with expertise in each program's focus. SGC staff also provides guidance to State agencies interested in launching a new TA program or improving upon or expanding existing services.

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TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE GUIDELINES FOR STATE AGENCIES

In 2020, SGC convened a work group of TA and capacity building experts from 13 State agencies to draft Technical Assistance Guidelines for State Agencies, as directed by SB 1072 (Leyva, 2018). This guidance offers best practices to help State agencies evaluate options, make key decisions, and avoid pitfalls as they develop effective TA programs. While State agencies are the primary audience for the TA Guidelines, other stakeholders seeking to provide or receive TA will likely find the manual useful as well. The TA Guidelines are now available as a user-friendly toolkit on the SGC website, making it easier to find useful tools, tips, and best practices for designing and delivering effective TA.

TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE HIGHLIGHTS

SGC has partnered with multiple CCI administering agencies to provide TA and capacity building for a wide range of programs that fund many different climate solutions, including clean transportation and public transit; bike and pedestrian infrastructure; location efficient affordable housing; community solar projects; sustainable agriculture and agricultural land conservation; and more. The following are just a few examples of past and ongoing TA that the CCI TA program has supported:

» **The Active Transportation Resource Center's Technical Assistance for Disadvantaged Communities Program** – SGC worked closely with Caltrans to design this TA pilot which provided application assistance to 5 disadvantaged communities that were historically unsuccessful in securing funding from the highly competitive Active Transportation Program (ATP).
sgc.ca.gov/technical-assistance/toolkit/case-studies/active-transportation-center.html

» **Technical Assistance for the Community Solar Pilot Program** – SGC supported two phases of TA for applicants to the Department of Community Services and Development's (CSD) Community Solar Pilot Program. Strong partnerships were necessary to succeed in the program and so CCI TA supported capacity building and partnership development in the first phase and grant implementation assistance in the second.
sgc.ca.gov/technical-assistance/toolkit/case-studies/community-solar.html

» **Climate Smart Agriculture Technical Assistance Program** – This partnership between SGC, the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA), and the University of California Agriculture and Natural Resources (UCANR) supports 10 full-time community education specialists who provide grant application assistance and trainings on climate smart agricultural practices across the state. The program prioritizes socially disadvantaged farmers and ranchers for assistance.
sgc.ca.gov/technical-assistance/toolkit/case-studies/sustainable-agriculture.html