

NEWS

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For Immediate Release
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Energy Trust awards solar innovation grants to community-based organizations

Grants support projects that will help low- and moderate-income Oregonians benefit from solar solutions

PORTLAND, Ore. — April 18, 2019 — Energy Trust of Oregon has awarded \$81,600 in solar innovation grants to nine community-based organizations. Grants will help these organizations develop community-centric program models that help low- and moderate-income Oregonians benefit from solar technology. Awardees can use grant funds to offset solar program development costs such as staff time, energy studies and professional services such as grant writing. Demonstration projects that result from these programs will also be able to access [solar installation incentives](#) through Energy Trust.

Often barriers exist for low- and moderate-income communities to install solar, such as access to financial resources, up-front costs and limitations for renters. The grant funding enables community groups to explore ways to mitigate these barriers to make solar technology accessible. Models created by these community organizations may be replicated and leveraged by others in the future to expand the benefits of solar across Oregon.

Grant recipients include:

- [African American Alliance for Homeownership](#) (Portland Metro and Washington County)
- [Mid-Columbia Economic Development District](#) (The Dalles and Columbia Gorge)
- [NeighborWorks Umpqua](#) (Douglas County)
- [Oregon Clean Power Co-op](#) (Portland)
- [Seeds for the Sol](#) (Benton County)
- Solar for All (Portland Metro)
- [Sustainable Northwest](#) (Lake and Klamath counties)
- [Verde](#) (Portland Metro)
- [Wallowa Resources](#) (Wallowa County)

“People who live in and know their community are best able to understand the barriers to solar energy,” said Betsy Kauffman, renewable energy sector lead at Energy Trust of Oregon. “Through these grants, we’re sowing seeds to see what creative solutions will blossom and how Energy Trust can play a role in helping them come to fruition and become scalable and replicable models.”

Each grant ranges between \$5,000 and \$10,000. All recipients are located in the service territories of Portland General Electric and Pacific Power. Awardees intend to utilize grants for programs such as developing basic solar curriculum and financial incentives for soon-to-be homeowners from underserved communities; figuring out a shared benefit model to pass on solar financial benefits to tenants in affordable multi-family buildings; creating a co-housing development with solar access; and bringing solar solutions to qualifying Habitat for Humanity Homes, starting in Benton County and expanding across Oregon.

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Energy Trust of Oregon is an independent nonprofit organization dedicated to helping utility customers benefit from saving energy and generating renewable power. Our services, cash incentives and energy solutions have helped participating customers of Portland General Electric, Pacific Power, NW Natural, Cascade Natural Gas and Avista save \$3.2 billion on energy bills. Our work helps keep energy costs as low as possible, creates jobs and builds a sustainable energy future. Learn more at www.energytrust.org or call 1-866-368-7878.