Illinois Solar for All Annual Summary

The Illinois Solar for All (ILSFA) program officially launched on May 15, 2019. This summary highlights program accomplishments from the first two program years; Program Year 1 opened for project applications in May 2019, and Program Year 2 opened for project applications in September 2019.

The full project submission windows for Program Year 1 and Program Year 2 are available on the ILSFA website.

Program Impact

Chicago South Side homeowners Debra and Greg Earl were among the first Illinois residents to have solar installed on their roof through ILSFA.

Photo courtesy of Certasun LLC

Program Year 1

In ILSFA's first program year **11 projects** were approved. These projects have a combined nameplate capacity of approximately **5,207 kW AC of solar energy**. The carbon reduced from the projects each year is comparable to a passenger vehicle driving **19.7 million miles**.

Program Year 2

In the second program year, **38 projects** were approved, supporting a combined nameplate capacity of **9,059 kW AC of solar energy** in Illinois. The carbon reduced from the projects each year is comparable to a passenger vehicle driving over **34.9 million miles**.

Projects

ILSFA's residential solar program allows Illinois homeowners to install solar on their roof, like this Chicago bungalow, or in their yard without upfront costs.

Photo courtesy of Certasun LLC

Program Year 1

In the first program year, **4 community solar** and **7 non-profit/public facilities projects** across the state were approved. The projects advanced ILSFA's goal of increasing access to solar in communities statewide, with:

- **93%** of funding allocated to projects located in designated Environmental Justice Communities,
- **99%** of funding allocated to projects located in Low-Income Census Tracts,
- **53%** of funding allocated to projects located in Ameren territory, and
- **47%** of funding allocated to projects located in ComEd territory.

Program Year 2

In the second program year, **4 community solar**, **24 non-profit/public facilities**, and **10 residential projects** across the state were approved. **Of the funding for those projects:**

- **49% was allocated to projects** located in designated Environmental Justice Communities,
- **97% was allocated to projects** located in Low-Income Census Tracts,
- **60% was allocated to projects** located in Ameren territory, and
- **40% was allocated to projects** located in ComEd territory.

After approval, non-profit/public facilities and residential projects have up to 12 months to complete construction and begin delivering Renewable Energy Credits, while community solar projects have up to 18 months to meet this milestone. **Two projects** completed construction and were energized before June 2020, meaning they're connected to the grid and soaking up the sun.

Funds Allocated

In its first two program years, ILSFA incentives provided funding for community solar projects across Illinois.

Program Year 1

ILSFA allocated over **$14.1 million** worth of incentives in the first program year.

- **Over $11.3 million** went to community solar projects, and
- **Over $2.7 million** funded onsite solar projects for non-profits and public facilities.

Funding came from the **Renewable Energy Resources Fund** (**over $8.5 million**) and utility funds (**over $5.5 million**).

Program Year 2

In our second program year, we allocated **over $22.9 million** worth of incentives.

- **Over $12.2 million** went to community solar projects,
- **Over $6.5 million** funded onsite solar projects for non-profits and public facilities, and
- **Over $4.1 million** served residential projects.

Over $12.8 million came from the **Renewable Energy Resources Fund** and **over $10 million** came from utility funds.

Approved Vendors

When ILSFA launched, **8 solar companies** had been accepted as ILSFA Approved Vendors. By the end of the second program year, **49 vendors** had been approved. **Six** of those are minority- or women-owned business enterprises.

In the first two program years, **13 Approved Vendors** had at least **1** approved ILSFA project. Of those Approved Vendors, **5 had more than 5 projects approved**.

Grassroots Education

Community Organizing & Family Issues (COFI), a grassroots education organization for ILSFA, leads a team of solar ambassadors in Chicago's Englewood and New City neighborhoods and East St. Louis.

Grassroots education for ILSFA began in July 2019 with **11 community-based organizations** receiving funding to deliver outreach campaigns about ILSFA to Illinois communities. This first cohort of grassroots organizations held **154 events** and educated **3,609 income-eligible Illinoisans** about ILSFA and solar in **38 cities and villages** across the state during the first two program years.

A second round of funding was announced in early 2020 and began their work in July 2020. The **10 selected organizations** are continuing to reach potential participants virtually during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Job training

Through ILSFA, job trainees gain hands-on experience in solar installation, system design, sales, and more tasks.

ILSFA supports a clean energy workforce and equitable access to solar jobs by requiring all ILSFA Approved Vendors to hire trainees from qualifying job training programs to work on their portfolio of projects.

Approved Vendors report their job training metrics once their projects are completed and energized. As more of the projects approved during the first two program years reach this milestone, the ILSFA team is looking forward to working with job training organizations to bolster the solar workforce in Illinois.

Public Engagement

Stakeholder input and public awareness are critical for ILSFA to deliver on its goals of equity and access. The Illinois Power Agency and Program Administrator held numerous stakeholder sessions when developing ILSFA and continue to work with stakeholders to refine the program.

Between May 2019 and June 2020, the Program Administrator hosted **2 stakeholder feedback sessions** and posted a request for stakeholder comments **3 times**, receiving **11 comments** from stakeholders on program documents and processes. The Program Administrator sent **11 newsletters** with program updates to **over 4,100 subscribers** during the first two program years.

Illinois Solar for All is a program developed by the Illinois Power Agency and administered by Elevate Energy (Elevate). Elevate is a non-profit organization working with key partners to administer Illinois Solar for All, including GRID Alternatives, AECOM, and Shelton Solutions.

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