

ENERGY CODES SUPPORT FOR TRIBAL NATIONS GRANT APPLICATION

Introduction and background

What are Energy Codes?

Energy codes are a type of building code that regulates the energy efficiency of new buildings and existing buildings undergoing renovations, setting minimum energy performance requirements that decrease energy bills for owners and occupants, lower carbon emissions, and improve comfort. Items regulated by the energy code include building insulation and air tightness, HVAC systems, and lighting efficiency and controls.

As sovereign nations, Tribal Nations are not subject to Minnesota State Building Codes and can adopt their own building and energy codes. Because energy codes set minimum performance requirements for all new construction and buildings undergoing major renovations, adopting more efficient energy codes is a significant opportunity for Tribal Nations to achieve cost-effective energy savings, cost savings, and emissions reductions. Energy efficiency measures required by code can also increase resilience to extreme weather events and improve indoor air quality. Once an energy code is in place, it must be enforced to realize its full savings potential. When a permit application is submitted, plans are reviewed to ensure they are code compliant and field inspections are conducted throughout the construction process to ensure plans are followed.

Grant Opportunity Summary

Through the Minnesota Advanced Energy Codes Partnership (MN AECP), Center for Energy and Environment (CEE) is providing Tribal Nations in Minnesota with technical assistance to adopt or update energy codes and support energy code compliance. We are currently working with several Tribal Nations to develop customized work scopes for technical assistance based on individual need for each jurisdiction. We have been awarded additional funding through the Minnesota State Competitiveness Fund to support Minnesota Tribal Nations' work on energy codes through direct grant payments. These grants aim to ensure Tribal Nations have funds to support staff time spent on these efforts. CEE staff would provide technical support and energy code expertise in addition to grant funds.

Minnesota Advanced Energy Codes Partnership (AECP)

The MN AECP was formed to help implement [Minnesota's Climate Action Framework](#), which calls for new commercial and multifamily buildings to reach net zero by 2036 and achieve significant energy and emissions reductions in existing buildings. The AECP is funded by the Department of Energy and sponsored jointly by the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry and the Minnesota Department of Commerce. The AECP is led by CEE with the participation of the state's major investor-owned utilities, additional expert consultants, and a broad-based

advisory council. CEE has secured additional funding to support energy codes work through Minnesota's Efficient Technology Accelerator (ETA), a statewide market transformation program that accelerates the adoption and availability of emerging energy efficiency technologies.

CEE Background

For nearly 40 years, CEE, a Minnesota-based nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation, has worked to advance the public interest in cleaner energy and a healthier economy by ensuring businesses operate more efficiently; households and governments spend less on energy; homes and businesses are more comfortable and healthier places to live and work; and utilities achieve their clean energy goals cost-effectively. CEE's staff conduct nation-leading technical research; implement award-winning clean energy programs for local governments, businesses, and utilities; advance state and local policy innovations; and run loan programs to finance upgrades for businesses and homeowners. CEE has served over 10,000 businesses and 100,000 homeowners and tenants in Minnesota through our programs.

Scope and Potential Activities

Cost share funds will support the building and energy code work of Tribal Nations located within the borders of Minnesota. Strategies for both commercial and residential buildings will be considered. As part of the grant award, CEE will work with each Tribal Nation to create a custom scope of work for technical support to complement grant funds. Examples of technical support available from CEE include providing expertise on energy code development and adoption, energy code training for plan reviewers or building inspectors, and third-party energy code plan review for large commercial buildings, which CEE currently provides for several jurisdictions in Minnesota. Below are some examples of energy code activities that could be funded through this grant opportunity.

- Energy code development and adoption
 - Residential or commercial energy code adoption
 - Long-term energy code advancement planning to meet energy or sustainability goals
 - Facilitating general building code development
- Energy code compliance support
 - Energy code training
 - Developing technical resources on energy code requirements
 - Developing resources and processes to support energy code-related permit applications and plan review
 - Third-party energy code plan review for large commercial buildings
- Other tasks as determined during scope development

Budget

CEE does not have a strict budget for individual Tribal Nations. Our full budget for this grant opportunity will be up to \$300,000. We anticipate individual awards will range from \$20,000 to \$75,000, depending on the scope of work.

Application Submission

Application Requirements

Applications should be limited to 2 pages or less in total length and should contain the following components.

1. **Background** – Describe any building or energy codes that have already been adopted.
2. **Proposed Energy Code Activities** – Provide a description of your proposed energy code or existing buildings strategies, including any technical support needed from CEE.
3. **Project Team** – List your proposed implementation team and the estimated number of hours each member will spend on the project.
4. **Timeline** – Provide a timeline for implementation of proposed work.
5. **Cost Proposal** – Provide an overall estimate of funds needed.

Applications will be reviewed and recipients selected based on alignment with the scope of this grant opportunity and the technical support CEE is able to provide, implementation feasibility of proposed tasks, and the potential benefits of proposed tasks.

Question and Application Submission

CEE will be reviewing and funding qualifying applications on an ongoing basis, beginning 6/13/2025 and continuing as long as funds are available. Respondents are encouraged to apply as soon as possible to ensure access to the funds.

Send all questions and applications to Sophia Jungbauer at sjungbauer@mncee.org.

Applications should be in Word or PDF format. CEE is available to meet with any Tribal Nations considering applying to identify potential activities that best align with community needs and goals and assist with application development.