



# Inclusive Shared Solar Session

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# What is Community Solar?

The U.S. Department of Energy defines community solar as any solar project or purchasing program, within a geographic area, in which the **benefits of a solar project flow to multiple customers** such as individuals, businesses, nonprofits, and other groups.

## Community solar...

- **Allows households who cannot access rooftop solar to access the benefits of solar energy** (which can be due to barriers such as rooftop suitability, cost, or tenancy).
- **Creates subscriptions, benefits, and/or ownership opportunities** that participants can access for a portion of electricity produced.
- Typically **provides participants with an electric bill credit** for electricity generated by their share of the system.
- **Can provide meaningful benefits** such as low-income access, electric bill savings, resilience, community wealth building, and workforce opportunities.



# The National Community Solar Partnership



# Pathway to Success Priorities

TECHNICAL  
EXPERTISE  
AND CAPACITY  
BUILDING



STATE  
ENGAGEMENT



ACCESS  
TO CAPITAL



CUSTOMER  
ENGAGEMENT



EDUCATION  
AND OUTREACH



**NCSP  
TARGET**  
5 million households  
and \$1 billion in  
savings by 2025

## Resulting in...

- ★ An average 20% energy bill reduction
- ★ 700% increase in community solar capacity

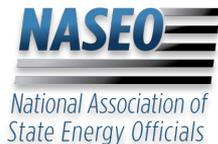
### Meaningful benefits:

Greater household savings; LMI household access; Resilience and grid benefits; Community ownership; Workforce development and entrepreneurship

# Low Income Clean Energy Connector Overview

NCSP is partnering with the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to develop and pilot a digital tool that will identify and make **community solar with verified savings and strong consumer protections more accessible** to households participating in a U.S. government-run low-income support programs (i.e., the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program/LIHEAP).

## Main Project Partners



## Additional Project Partners



National  
Consumer Law  
Center

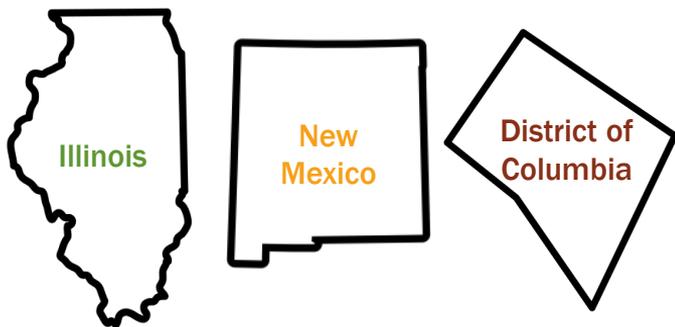


Learn more: <https://www.energy.gov/communitysolar/community-solar-subscription-tool>

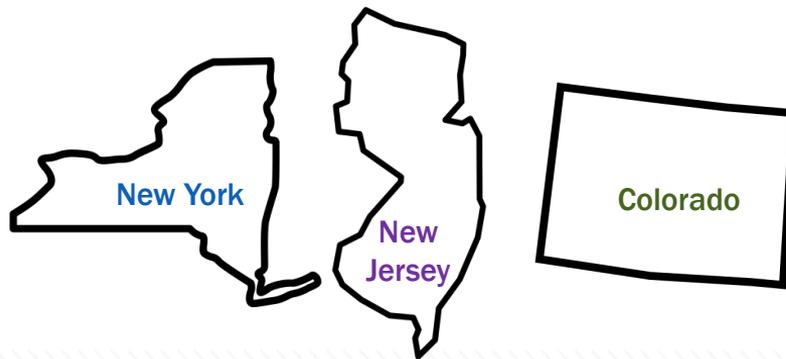
# Connector Partner States

- Six states signed on in 2022 to support the initial project development
- Pilot states are beta testing the Connector in fall 2023 – winter 2024
- Advising and additional states can pilot and use the connector in 2024

## Pilot States/Regions



## Partner States



# Interagency Coordination



## U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

- Partnership with DOE on Connector Development
- Memorandum for State Grantees on Community Solar (June 15, 2023):  
<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/ocs/policy-guidance/liheap-im-2023-04-community-solar-and-liheap-considerations>



## U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development

- Partnership with DOE to ensure no impact on utility allowances due to community solar subscriptions
- Treatment of CS credits on tenant utility bills (Jul 2022):  
[https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/Housing/documents/MF\\_Memo\\_Community\\_Solar\\_Credits\\_signed.pdf](https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/Housing/documents/MF_Memo_Community_Solar_Credits_signed.pdf)
- Treatment of solar benefits for master-metered buildings:  
[https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/Housing/documents/MF\\_Memo\\_re\\_Community\\_Solar\\_Credits\\_in\\_MM\\_Buildings.pdf](https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/Housing/documents/MF_Memo_re_Community_Solar_Credits_in_MM_Buildings.pdf)

# Low-Income Clean Energy Connector User Types



## State Community Solar Administrator

- Approves SMs and available projects
- Evaluates programs
- Adjusts project prioritization



## State LIHEAP Administrator

- Approves local LIHEAP admins to use Connector
- Adjusts household prioritization



## Subscription Managers

- Upload available projects
- Enrolls households in projects



## Local LIHEAP Administrators

- Educates households about community solar
- Uploads interested households to Connector

# Connector Key Project Components

Compensation for local LIHEAP administrators from subscription managers

Community solar education and support materials tailored for participating states

State support and enforcement of consumer protections

Strong partnerships between state LIHEAP and community solar agencies

Guidebook to help states onboard to using the Connector – including all necessary policy changes

Launching in Spring 2024 in pilot states; **additional states can join from 2024 onwards**

# NASEO Conference Attendee Next Steps



Join the National  
Community Solar  
Partnership (NCSP)



Contact Ariel to discuss  
rolling out the  
Connector in your state



Join the NCSP States  
Collaborative



Apply for no-cost  
technical assistance  
from the NCSP

Individuals can join the NCSP here:

<https://www.energy.gov/communitysolar/join-national-community-solar-partnership>

