



RECOGNIZING INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS TO KEY CLIMATE AND ENERGY ISSUES IN METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON

PURPOSE

The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' (COG) Climate and Energy Leadership Awards recognize organizations that develop climate stewardship projects and programs that engage and serve the region's underserved communities. The awards program highlights a broad range of climate solutions for their unique engagement practices as well as their results, creativity, and replicability.

RECOGNITION

Climate and Energy Leadership awardees will be recognized in front of local, regional, and national officials. COG will showcase awardees to bring recognition to their successes and to serve as a role model for metropolitan Washington. This type of public acknowledgment can encourage continued and enhanced efforts of communities and organizations. Awardees will also be presented with a unique, environmentally-friendly award that is hand-crafted by a local artist.

ELIGIBILITY

Four applicants from metropolitan Washington will be recognized with a Climate and Energy Leadership Award for leading practices in climate mitigation and/or resiliency including greenhouse gas reduction, built environment and infrastructure, renewable energy, transportation, land use, or sustainability programs. Scoring places an emphasis on creative, impactful projects that engage and support underserved communities. COG will provide awards to one organization (or partnership) in each of the following categories:

- **Government Agency (2)** (local, state, regional, quasi-govt, utilities, or authorities)
 - 1 small government (<90k population) ◦ 1 large government (>90k population)
- **Non-Governmental Organization (1)** (non-profit, citizen, or community-based groups)
- **Businesses and For-profits (1)**
- **Educational Institution (1)** (K-12, public, private, or higher education)

HOW TO APPLY

Applications can be submitted at www.mwcog.org/climateawards or emailed to lboggs@mwcog.org between **April 22 - June 30, 2026**. Applications must include a 1-3 page project summary file that gives clear description on how it meets the four judging criteria listed below. Engagement will be weighed more heavily and account for 45% of the total score. Full criteria measurements below:

- **Engagement** (engage underserved communities) - 40%
- **Creativity** (innovative, resourceful or unique aspects) - 20%
- **Model** (replicability to other communities/organizations) - 20%
- **Results** (results, achievements, measured outcomes like cost-effectiveness) - 20%

Full application details are available under [Procedures and Guidelines](#) on the [awards website](#).



Metropolitan Washington
Council of Governments

CLIMATE AND ENERGY LEADERSHIP AWARDS

JUDGING RUBRIC

SCORE	ENGAGEMENT (Weight 40%)	CREATIVITY (Weight 20%)	MODEL (Weight 20%)	RESULTS (Weight 20%)
5 = Excellent	Applicant actively engaged vulnerable populations and under-served communities to play an integral role, and they were extremely involved, supportive, and positive throughout the process. Statements, testimonials, or feedback from impacted person(s) or communities were provided.	Overall the initiative is extremely innovative and unique. This presents a new practice/new way of thinking.	The initiative is easily transferable to another jurisdiction/organization.	The intended results, achievements, and measured outcomes, including cost-effectiveness have gone beyond expectations.
4 = Good	Applicant effectively engaged vulnerable populations and underserved communities, and they were generally supportive and positive throughout the process. Applicant addressed issues that will have a positive impact on these populations.	The initiative is innovative and interesting. It is beyond standard practice and creative.	The initiative is transferable to another jurisdiction/organization.	The initiative has achieved the intended results and measurable goals/outcomes in a cost-effective manner.
3 = Adequate	Applicant engaged vulnerable populations and under-served communities, but there were missed opportunities to gain their support and involvement. This resulted in limited focus on issues that affect these populations. A more general demographic census was highly responsive.	The initiative shows some creative thought and has unique aspects.	It is possible to replicate the initiative in another jurisdiction/organization; however, there are some unique conditions that may limit its replication.	The initiative has had some successful results and measurable achievements, but thus far has not reached the main intended outcomes in a cost-effective manner.
2 = Fair	Applicant attempted to focus on the needs of vulnerable populations and under-served communities but did not actively engage these populations in the process. A more broad range of partners, stakeholders and/or public were subjects of the program.	The initiative is straight-forward with some unique aspects.	The initiative would be somewhat difficult to replicate in another jurisdiction/organization.	The initiative showed some promise but has not yet delivered many of the intended results, achievements and other measured outcomes in a cost-effective manner.
1 = Poor	Applicant did not engage vulnerable populations and under-served communities and did not address issues that affect these populations. A minimal array of partners, stakeholders and/or public were subjects of the program.	The initiative seems to be very standard practice with very little or no creativity.	The initiative would be extremely difficult to replicate in another jurisdiction/organization.	The initiative lacks results, achievements and other measurable outcomes in a cost-effective manner.

Add your company or organizational logo here.

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Climate and Energy Leadership Awards 2026 Application/Project Summary Template

- Organization:** Name of your organization
- Project:** Name of program or project to be evaluated.
Category [Government (small or large government) /NGO/For Profit-Business/Educational Institution]
- Contacts:** Lead contact (name, title, email, and phone number):
Secondary contact (name, title, email, and phone number):
- Overview:** A clear description of your program/project.
- Engagement:** Clear description of addressing equity concerns and engaging underserved communities, diverse populations, or general collaboration with the community.
- Demonstrate equity engagement.** Provide testimonials/feedback/statements from impacted person(s)/communities/groups/populations who have or will benefit from implementation of the project.
****Weighted 40% in final judge's rubric***
- Creativity:** Describe and elaborate on any innovative, resourceful, and/or unique aspects. Provide links, photos and/or videos to project.
****Weighted 20% in final judge's rubric***
- Model:** Describe the project's replicability to other communities/organizations.
****Weighted 20% in final judge's rubric***
- Results:** Should be quantifiable. Estimate the impacts from the program/project in terms of intended results, achievements, and measurable outcomes including cost-effectiveness.
****Weighted 20% in final judge's rubric***

Supplemental Application Elements:

- Links to website(s), photos, and videos.