



BAY AREA AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

(FYE 2017) *Charge!* Program Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

This document provides answers to frequently asked questions about the FYE 2017 *Charge!* Program. For complete information about this Program, please visit the [Charge! Program website](#), read the [Program Guidance](#) and other resource materials, and attend at least one of the free pre-application webinars.

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1) **Who is eligible to apply for Charge! Program funding? And, can I apply for funds to pay for a project where I will be installing charging stations on a property that I do not own?**

Answer: Both public and non-public entities (e.g., government agencies, businesses) are eligible to apply for *Charge!* Program funding. Applicants must provide evidence that they can carry out the project which can be demonstrated by providing either 1) proof of ownership of the property where the proposed charging stations are to be installed (e.g., a copy of the deed), or 2) evidence (e.g., through a lease agreement or easement) that the property owner has allowed the applicant to install and operate charging stations for the duration of the Project Term. **Note that the Project Term ends approximately 8 years AFTER an award has been made.**

2) **What is the minimum and maximum grant amounts, and how are the amounts calculated?**

Answer: The minimum award amount for a project is \$10,000. The maximum award amount for a project is \$500,000. Applications for projects requesting less than the minimum amount, or that do not meet the minimum threshold of \$10,000, are not eligible.

The Charge! Program offers “Base” funding that is based on the quantity and type of chargers that are proposed in an application. Total project funding is determined by summing the number of funds that are available for each proposed charger. The pre-determined base funding (maximum amount) for each type of charging station is:

- 1) \$750 for a Level 1 station,
- 2) \$1,500 for a Level 2 station rated between 3.3 and 6.6 kW (level 2 low),
- 3) \$3,000 for a Level 2 station rated at 6.6 kW or higher (level 2 high),
- 4) \$18,000 for a DC Fast station;

Note that base funding amount for each charger may end up being lower than the amounts shown above in certain cases. Specifically, the *Charge!* Program requires applicants to provide a minimum of 25% match of the total cost of the project (defined as the sum of the eligible costs listed page 8 of the guidance) AFTER all other grant funding and discounts have been applied. So, if a project involves other grant funding sources, *Charge!* Program base funding for each type of charger that shown above may be reduced for the applicant to meet the 25% cash-match requirement.

Example 1- how funding is determined and adjusted to meet the 25% match requirement:

If an applicant applies for 15 level 2 stations, rated at 7.2 kW, and submits a quote showing that it would cost \$50,000 to purchase and install these stations, then to calculate the maximum base grant award, we first multiply each station by its pre-determined maximum amount (in this case, $15 \times \$3,000 = \$45,000$).

However, because *Charge!* Funding is may not exceed 75% of the award AFTER all other grant funding and discounts have been applied, the maximum award of \$45,000 would be adjusted down (reduced) to \$37,500 to satisfy the 25% match requirement, such that the applicant/project sponsor the applicant would have to provide at least \$12,500 in match.

Example 2- how funding is determined and adjusted to meet the 25% match requirement, after all other applicable manufacturer and local/state/federal rebates and discounts are applied:

Using the example shown above, if the applicant was awarded grant funds from another public agency, and/or will receive a discount from the vendor, such that their match requirement falls below \$12,500, then the Air District would recalculate its award and proportionally reduce it such that the 25% match requirement is satisfied.

3) ***When can we start work on the project? Can we do any work before the full execution of the funding agreement and be eligible for funding?***

Answer: Work on a Project, including activities such as placing orders for equipment, or signing a contract with an electrician or contractor who will provide any labor, may commence only AFTER the Funding Agreement has been fully executed (signed by both Project Sponsor and Air District).

Certain activities, such as obtaining additional quotes from licensed contractors, conducting environmental review, or obtaining permits, are considered preparatory and may be conducted prior before the agreement's execution; however, applicants do so at their own risk in that there is no guarantee that their project will be selected for award. Also, applicants are responsible for all preparatory costs they incur (such as the cost to obtain a permit) because any costs incurred prior to the full execution of the funding agreement are NOT be eligible for reimbursement. ***For this reason, Project Sponsors are urged to not conduct any work related to the project until they have received a copy of the fully executed contract.***

4) ***What are eligible and ineligible costs?***

Answer: See page #8 of the [Program Guidance](#).

5) ***Do program funds cover the cost of signage?***

Answer: Yes, producing signage and installing signage are eligible costs.

6) ***Do projects providing a higher percentage of match funds have greater advantage of being funded? How do match funds and pending match funds work?***

Answer: No, the Program does not prioritize or favor projects that provide a higher percentage of matching funds. We do encourage applicants to keep their costs (and therefore their match requirement) as low as possible. Also, because *Charge!* funding only offsets a portion of project costs (typically 10 to 50%), applicants are responsible for covering all other costs that are not reimbursable under *Charge!*, which requires a minimum of 25% of the total project cost (minimum match requirement).

7) ***What is the bonus for solar generation and what qualifies for it? Is there a bonus for battery storage?***

Answer: Projects that propose to co-locate new solar power to support the new charging stations are eligible for plus-up funding of \$1.00 per installed watt of solar, up to a maximum equal to the amount of base funding for the project. For example, if the project is eligible for a base award of \$6,000 to install two level 2 (high) charging stations, then the solar plus-up is limited to a maximum of \$6,000, and a total maximum Project award (base + plus-up) of \$12,000.

This Plus-up funding option only applies to new solar power generation installations. Also, while there is no Plus-Up funding for battery storage by itself, the cost for including battery storage is an eligible project cost. Please see the details of Solar Power Plus-up funding on page #7 of the [Program Guidance](#).

8) ***What are eligible facility types? Are new buildings eligible?***

Answer: The following five facility categories are eligible: Destination, Multi-Dwelling Unit, Transit Parking, Transportation Corridor, or Workplace. Many projects fit into one or more of these facility types and applicants should identify the primary and if applicable, secondary audience for that best

describes the use-case(s) for the proposed facility. Also, new construction is also eligible, if the location meets at least one of facility requirements.

9) ***Do chargers need to be publicly available?***

Answer: Only applications that propose chargers that will be available for use by the general public will be evaluated under the first-come, first-served period, which ends on May 22. However, applicants may request a case-by-case exemption if the facility or the proposed EV Chargers are not accessible to the public, and these applications will be evaluated if funding is available AFTER May 22.

10) ***Can I charge users a fee to recover the costs of operating the EV Charging Stations?***

Answer: Yes. We encourage Project Sponsors to charge reasonable usage fees to help defray their on-going costs associated with use of electricity, and operations & maintenance. Keep in mind that charging too high of a fee may impact your project's ability to deliver enough power to meet the minimum usage requirement.

11) ***Can I use grant funding to pay for the cost of electricity?***

Answer: No, the *Charge!* funds may only be used to reimburse Project Sponsors for initial costs incurred that are related to the purchase and installation of new equipment, and may not be used to pay for other on-going operational costs, such as the cost of electricity. Page #8 of the [Program Guidance](#) provides a list of costs that are eligible. Also, see response to a related question: "Can I charge users a fee to recover the costs of operating the EV Charging Stations"

12) ***Must Level 2 chargers be installed along with a DC fast charger?***

Answer: Only projects that propose the installation of one or more DC fast chargers at a Transportation Corridor Facility need to meet the additional requirement to install at least one level 2 charger. All other Facility locations (workplace, MDU, etc.) do not have this requirement.

13) ***Are the differences between a DC Fast, Level 2 (high), Level 2 (low) charger, and Level 1 charging station? What are the cost ranges?***

Answer: Yes. Basic information about the eligible charger types can be found in Table 1, page #7 of the *Charge!* [Program Guidance](#). Applicants are responsible for making their own decisions about which charger(s) are best for their Project. Additional information about the types of chargers, costs, and vendors is available at the [California Plug-in Electric Vehicle Collaborative's PEVC Documents and Resources](#). The Air District also encourages potential applicants to obtain multiple quotes from vendors/contractors to obtain information that is specific to their project.

14) ***Do the chargers have to be grid tied to qualify for Charge! funding?***

Answer: All charging stations must be connected to the electrical grid to qualify for *Charge!* Program funding; however, applicants that are interested in proposing non-grid-tied charging projects that will be powered by adequate renewable energy and/or battery storage systems, may request a case-by-case evaluation. Please note that these projects, if eligible, may be evaluated for base award amounts that are lower than the standard award amount if the amount of electricity that is available on any given day is limited and case-by-case applications will be evaluated AFTER May 22 if funding is still available.

15) *Is UL certification mandatory for participation in Charge!?*

Answer: At a minimum, the charging station must be listed by a nationally recognized testing laboratory (UL) in compliance with UL 2202 “Standard for Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging System Equipment.” Applicants are encouraged to check with their local permitting agency to ensure that the charger(s) they are considering comply with the specific local permitting safety requirements.

16) *Is the minimum usage requirement for or each year or the total three-year operational period?*

Answer: The usage requirement (e.g., 10,800 kWh for a Level 2 high charging station) must be achieved by the end of the Project Life (a three year period from the date the chargers are placed into service).

17) *Will the usage be evaluated for each charger? What are the penalties for not meeting the required metrics or minimum usage requirements?*

Answer: Usage is evaluated in aggregate for all of the chargers that are part of a project. For example, if a Project involves the installation of two level 2 (high) chargers, the minimum usage requirement would be 21,600 kWh over three years (10,800 x 2 = 21,600). If, after three years, one charger only delivers 200 kWh, and the other delivers 25,000 kwh, the Project would have satisfied the minimum usage requirement since the combined usage of Project chargers exceeds the minimum required.

If a Project does not satisfy the usage requirement within the first three years, Project Sponsors would be given the option to extend their project term for an additional year to allow additional time to satisfy the usage requirement. If after the additional year the usage requirement is still not fulfilled, Project Sponsors would be required to repay a percentage of the award equal to the percentage of the usage requirement that was not fulfilled.

18) *Must a vendor quote be provided as part of the Charge! application?*

Answer: Yes, a cost quote from a licensed contractor must be provided as part of the *Charge!* application. This quote is used for informational purposes during the evaluation phase. Project Sponsors may select a different vendor after an award is made, as long as there is no change to the Project Scope, and the replacement equipment is equivalent or better than what was proposed in the original quote that was included in the application.

19) *How can I get help putting the application together?*

Answer: Applicants are responsible for preparing their own applications, which also involves attending at least one of the mandatory pre-application webinars prior to submittal of an application. The workshops cover *Charge!* Program Requirements, the application process and evaluation criteria, and grantee/project sponsor’s administrative requirements. Please visit the *Charge!* Program website at www.baaqmd.gov/charge to view the schedule and register for the pre-application webinars.

Applicants may consider working with a vendor who provides turn-key service, however any costs that are incurred prior to the execution of a funding agreement are not eligible costs, and the cost to pay for the additional vendor support is also not an eligible cost.

20) *Can the Air District recommend vendors or contractors who can help?*

Answer: No, the Air District does not endorse or recommended any vendor or contractor. The [California Plug-in Electric Vehicle Collaborative's PEVC Documents and Resources](#) include a list of charging station vendors (Note, this list may be outdated).

21) *Do businesses get a different rate plan from PG&E?*

Answer: Utility rates are governed by the California Public Utilities Commission. Applicants are encouraged to contact their local utility prior to submitting an application, to obtain information about the different types of costs that may be incurred by use of the proposed chargers .

22) *On the application (page 3) it only allows for one file attachment. I have more than one. Should I send a separate email with the other drawings attached?*

Answer: To attach an additional document online, please click on the text, "Add another attachment" located within the lower right hand of each document type. ***Application materials that are emailed to the Air District will not be accepted or considered.***

23) *Can a special purpose entity be formed for each project to keep the funding amount per applicant below the Maximum Grant Amount?*

Answer: No. This Program is designed to providing funding on a first-come, first served basis, so the Maximum Grant Amount limit per applicant helps to ensure that funds benefit the greatest geographical area as possible. If multiple applications are received from the same entity, the Air District will evaluate applications in the order that they are received, and will award eligible applicants up to the Maximum Grant Amount.

24) *I want to apply for the Transportation Corridor Facilities Plus-up funding. How do you calculate the one mile driving distance requirement?*

Answer: The one-mile distance is calculated as the driving distance from the closest exit point of the heavy volume expressway, conventional highway or freeway, to the physical location of the proposed EV charging Stations.

25) *Where can I find the Charge! Program webinar presentation slides?*

Answer: The presentation slides can be found at the Air District's Charge! Program website at www.baaqmd.gov/charge under the Resources section.