



Orange County Climate Action Fund – Project Eligibility and Scoring FY 2020-21

Eligibility:

All public and non-profit entities are eligible to apply as well as small businesses whose gross revenues do not exceed \$3 million annually. All proposed projects must demonstrate a positive impact on Orange County's residents and environment as described in the scoring criteria. All funds awarded through this grant program should be spent in Orange County. Before funds can be distributed, successful applicants must have the legal standing to enter into a contractual funding agreement with Orange County. Such legal standing is not required at the time of application.

The Board of Orange County Commissioners (BOCC) intends to use the Climate Action Fund to support projects that would not be completed without funding assistance. Existing projects and programs may be eligible if the applicant can demonstrate that Climate Action Funding would significantly accelerate the pace or amplify the scope of the project or program. Projects that contain repairs and replacement of necessary technology or infrastructure must show both energy efficiency improvements and demonstrate that the project is unlikely to be funded through another funding mechanism within the next 5 years.

Scoring process:

For the FY 20-21 funding round, there will be a single open application period during the Fall of 2020 with project awards scheduled by the end of the calendar year, December 31st, 2020.

In addition to the guidance and online tools provided, the Orange County Commission for the Environment (CFE) and supporting staff will respond to applicants' requests for clarification or technical assistance if submitted before the posted deadline for questions. Applicants are encouraged to ask for clarification and technical assistance as early as possible.

Once the FY 2021 application period closes, the CFE will review and score all eligible projects using a formula that prioritizes social justice and racial equity. The CFE may consult with other experts or advisory boards on any or all submitted applications for the purposes of ensuring diversity and inclusion and to reinforce their scoring decisions. Upon request, comments from the reviewers on the relative merits of an application will be made available to the Board of Orange County Commissioners and/or to the party who submitted the application.

The CFE will deliver a rank-ordered list of their recommended projects to the Board of Orange County Commissioners who will make the final funding decisions.

Scoring criteria:

Projects will be assessed by the CFE based primarily on the following main criteria. Example metrics that can be used to assign scores under the main criteria are listed below each one. Not all example metrics will apply to each project.

1. Social Justice and Racial Equity (0 to 5pts):

Low-income households have fewer resources to help them avoid or adapt to the impacts of climate change, and communities of color are often most-heavily impacted by the disruptions of climate change. Both socio-economic status and racial identity are key factors that will be used to target and track the positive impacts of these programs. It should be noted that socio-economic status and race should be tracked separately since not all County residents below the poverty line are people of color.

- Low-income or marginalized communities/households were engaged in the creation of this project.
- Low-income or marginalized communities/households benefit most directly.
- Racial minorities will be hired and/or are essential to the completion of the project.
- Any negative side effects of the project do not impact any low-income or marginalized communities/households.

2. Emissions reduced (0 to 4 pts):

This criterion rewards projects which reduce the most emissions as well as those that reduce emissions within Orange County (e.g.- transportation, carbon farming), instead of at a power plant as all of these are outside of the County except for UNC's co-gen plant which regularly only powers a portion of the UNC campus.

- A significant amount of Greenhouse gas emissions will be reduced within Orange County as a result of this project.
- Greenhouse gas emissions reductions are directly attributable to the project.

3. Efficient use of Funds (0 to 4 pts):

This criterion measures the relative impact per dollar of investment from the Climate Action Fund, as well as how. Some example metrics include:

- Impact per grant dollar.
- Generated cost savings over a reasonable payback period.
- Acceleration or expansion of existing programs that already show positive impact.
- Leveraging other funding sources.
- The proposed project positions the applicant for future funding from other sources.

4. Capacity of Applicant (0 to 3 pts)

- Applicant has the expertise to complete the project, and shows understanding of what is needed to accomplish the project goals.
- Applicant has done similar projects or has collaborators with direct experience in the project field.

5. Local Economic Development (0 to 3 pts):

Reducing climate change impacts can also increase and diversify local economic development. Transitioning to renewable energy and clean technologies is a huge market opportunity and the County Commissioners want to reward projects that emphasize local investment. Some example metrics include:

- Number of Orange County residents employed by the applicant organization.
- % of project materials that are sourced within Orange County/The Triangle/North Carolina.

6. Amount and Duration of Engagement (0 to 3 pts):

This criterion measures the extent to which projects effectively educate on climate change impacts, mitigation, and/or resilience, and increase community awareness and engagement with climate change efforts. Some example metrics include:

- Number of people reached.
- Retention of new knowledge or attitude after project completion.
- Likelihood of impacted audience continuing engagement with climate change efforts.

7. Time to complete (0 to 3 pts):

- Project can be completed or show clear positive impacts within two years or less.

CFE Project Scoring Table:

<u>Project</u>	<u>Cost Estimate</u>	<u>Social Justice/Racial Equity (5 pts)</u>	<u>Emissions Reduced (4 pts)</u>	<u>Efficient use of Funds (4 pts)</u>	<u>Capacity of Applicant (3 pts)</u>	<u>Local Economic Development (3 pts):</u>	<u>Amount and Duration of Engagement (3 pts):</u>	<u>Time to Complete (3 pts):</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Rank*</u>
Total (Max for 2020-21: \$478,657)										

*All projects, including those that tied in their scoring and those that exceed the funding limit will be placed in rank order by CFE voting.