**Proposed Approach to Granting Self-Determination**

Elevate Energy, in its capacity as Program Administrator, will convene an Environmental Justice Community Self-Designation Committee to evaluate self-designation proposals submitted via this process. The Committee will be comprised of 5-8 members, including representatives from the Program Administration team and additional Environmental Justice expert(s). The Committee will review proposals and make the final determination as to whether the community in question is designated as an Environmental Justice Community.

Designators responsible for facilitating their community’s self-designation proposal will be asked to define their community based on relevant, localized geographic boundaries (e.g. streets, rural highways, county lines). However, the practical result of the self-designation process will be that additional census block groups within that self-defined community receive the Environmental Justice Community designation. This level of granularity in the designation will enable the Program Administrator to ensure consistency in how it tracks and measures participation from these communities, as well as how Approved Vendors and potential participants are able to use tools (e.g. maps and address look-ups) to determine whether or not they are located within a designated Environmental Justice Community.

A community will come to the self-designation process under one of two scenarios and will qualify for Environmental Justice status accordingly:

*Scenario A*) If a majority of the census block groups that constitute a community, as identified in this self-designation process, have already been designated Environmental Justice Communities

THEN

The community Designator must demonstrate that the community is subject to higher than average impacts from each of a minimum of two quantitative factors plus a combination of two additional quantitative or qualitative factors[[1]](#footnote-1) in order to be granted Environmental Justice Community status for the remaining census block groups within its territory. The result would be a cohesive community with the Environmental Justice designation.

*Scenario B*) If less than a majority of the census block groups that constitute a community, as identified in this self-designation process, have already been designated Environmental Justice Communities

THEN

The community Designator must demonstrate that the community is subject to higher than average impacts from each of a minimum of four quantitative factors plus two additional quantitative or qualitative factors[[2]](#footnote-2) in order to be granted Environmental Justice Community status for the remaining census block groups within its territory. The result would be a cohesive community with the Environmental Justice designation.

**Part A: Basic Information**

1. Name of Designator
2. Designator affiliation
3. Designator contact information
4. Additional organizations/individuals supporting Designator
   1. Letters of support from additional organizations or individuals may be provided, but are not required to complete the process
5. Name of community proposed for designation
6. Geographic limits of proposed community
   1. Street boundaries, rural highways, county lines, or similar
7. Number of census block groups within proposed community limits.
   1. *Can be determined using Illinois Solar for All Environmental Justice maps*
8. Number of census block groups designated as Environmental Justice Communities within proposed community limits
   1. *Can be determined using Illinois Solar for All Environmental Justice maps*

Please provide a brief explanation of why you believe the territory you have identified is a cohesive community for the purposes of receiving an Environmental Justice Community designation under of Illinois Solar for All. Your answer may draw from history, culture, economics, geography, or other considerations you deem relevant.

*Open text response*

**Part B: Quantitative Support**

Please provide supporting data to demonstrate a disproportionate environmental, health or socioeconomic burden experienced by your community. Each new quantitative variable that you present must show an average level for your community that is above the Illinois statewide average for that metric. Please explain your methodology for calculating or finding the average level for your community and the statewide average.

The sample list of environmental indicators below is, as a whole, intended to be representative of the pollutant types that a community may face; as such, it is intended that a cross-section of metrics selected from the list will provide a representative snapshot of your community’s level of environmental health. Your community may not be impacted by all of the following factors, but please identify those that are relevant. You may use additional indicators that are not listed below, provided that you include the source of the information and the nature of harm caused by that indicator. The Program Administrator and the Illinois Power Agency will retain the right to review the quality and relevance of data submitted and reject the use of data that are not compiled by either (i) federal/state/local public authorities or (ii) scientists employing reliable methods generally accepted in the scientific community.  The data for any variable submitted must also be available for all locations across the State of Illinois.  Applicants who submit data that fails to qualify under this standard will be given one opportunity to amend their submission.

Note that a number of factors, listed here *[link to EJ SCREEN factors],* have already been accounted for through the initial Environmental Justice analysis; those 17 variables are taken from the U.S. EPA’s EJ SCREEN tool. Environmental metrics provided below or otherwise submitted by the applicant must go beyond those datapoints already considered in the EJ SCREEN analysis.

Data provided should be the most current available and must be from within the last ten years.

* [Drinking Water Watch](http://water.epa.state.il.us/dww/index.jsp) – identify elevated lead levels in community drinking water
  + *Box to input value in 0.000000 format*
* [Site Remediation Program](https://www2.illinois.gov/epa/topics/cleanup-programs/bol-database/Pages/srp.aspx) – determine whether participating sites exist within the community
  + *Form to input site location (site name, address, type, status)*
  + *Ability to input multiple sites*
* [Leaking Underground Storage Tank Incident Tracking](https://data.illinois.gov/dataset/477iepa_leaking_underground_storage_tank_incident/resource/e5a113ea-279e-47b6-ad08-8701bbedf8b4) – view locations and statuses of any sites within the community
  + *Form to input site location (site name, address, type, status)*
  + *Ability to input multiple sites*
* [State Response Action Program](https://www2.illinois.gov/epa/topics/cleanup-programs/bol-database/Pages/ssu.aspx) – view locations and statuses of all sites
  + *Form to input site location (site name, address, type, status)*
  + *Ability to input multiple sites*
* [Solid Waste Facilities](http://epadata.epa.state.il.us/land/solidwaste/index.asp) – identify facilities within the community
  + *Form to input site location (site name, address, type, status)*
  + *Ability to input multiple sites*
* [Birth Characteristics](http://www.dph.illinois.gov/sites/default/files/publications/Birth-Characteristics-2016.pdf) – view county level statistics for low birthweight infants
  + *Form to input county, number of low weight births, percentage of low weight births*

**Part C: Qualitative Support**

The IPA and the Illinois Solar for All Program Administrator recognize that all data points may not be available in all instances, nor does it always represent the full picture of a community’s unique experiences that may qualify it as an Environmental Justice Community. In order to account for this, we have identified a number of qualitative factors that can be considered in this self-designation process. Please only provide responses to those areas which are relevant to your community. You may include additional factors as you deem appropriate.

For qualitative responses that include a statistic, please also include reference to an average that your specific community may be compared against[[3]](#footnote-3). For qualitative responses that cite a specific incident, please include the year in which the incident occurred, as well as an explanation of how your community was more greatly impacted than a comparable geography[[4]](#footnote-4).

Data provided should be the most current available and must be from within the last ten years.

* Historical events (e.g. fire, housing crisis) – *please describe how these events impacted your community on a localized level.*
* Environmental disasters and/or severe weather events - *please describe how these events impacted your community on a localized level.*
* Plant (e.g. manufacturing, fossil generation) openings/closures/operations
* Economics - mass migrations, businesses closing, mortgage crisis
* Community Toxicity & Poor Health (e.g. number of dialysis facilities, number of abandoned gas stations and/or homes, lead exposure in children)
* Resource Starvation (e.g. lack of fresh food outlets, limited access to infrastructure)

**Stakeholder Feedback**

The Program Administrator is seeking feedback on the following components, in particular, of the self-designation process proposal[[5]](#footnote-5):

1. Is this an acceptable approach to self-designation?
2. Are there additional geographic boundaries that will need to be used to self-identify a community?
3. Are there other factors that should be expressly included in the process?
4. What time constraints should be applied to the supporting data provided? Should this be different for the quantitative vs. qualitative portion?
5. Are the minimum submission requirements reasonable?

1. For a total of four EJ-related supporting criteria. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. For a total of six EJ-related supporting criteria. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Please include a reference for the source of the statistic and the average/comparison figure. [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Can be compared to the state as a whole, surrounding communities, metropolitan areas, or other geographies as deemed most appropriate for the scale of the incident. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. The numbering here corresponds with the numbered questions outlined on Slide 32 of the Designating Environmental Justice Communities feedback session presentation dated January 17, 2019. Stakeholders may also offer comment on additional aspects of this proposal. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)