Illinois Solar for All
A STATE PROGRAM

Illinois Solar for All Annual Summary

June 2023 - May 2024

Illinois Solar For All (ILSFA) is a state program that ensures income-eligible residents and organizations will save money on their electric bills. Whether through solar installations or community solar subscriptions, the program makes solar energy work for households and organizations that need it most. Created by the State of Illinois, the program supports the state's renewable energy goals.



ILSFA experienced substantial growth during its 2023-2024 Program Year, particularly in residential solar projects. The program approved **400% more solar projects** compared to the previous program year.

ILSFA also launched several initiatives during this program year to drive participation. The initiatives were created through the Illinois Power Agency's 2022 Long-Term Renewable Resources Procurement Plan.

- The **Home Repairs and Upgrades Initiative** connected residents with funding opportunities for roof or electrical repairs needed to make their homes solar-ready. Thirteen homes were repaired or upgraded this program year.
- The **Bright Neighborhoods Initiative** aimed to reduce barriers to participation and test an alternative program delivery model in the Residential Solar (Small) sub-program in three community areas.
- The **Small and Emerging Business Initiative** worked to find ways to support more small businesses—particularly those located in low-income and environmental justice communities—to participate in ILSFA and the solar market.

Program Impact



Gerald Jones, a homeowner in Chicago's West Chesterfield neighborhood, received electrical repairs through the Home Repairs and Upgrades Initiative – which paved the way for his Illinois Solar for All project. "ILSFA's is a winning proposition," Jones said. "I recommend everybody to enroll in the program."

ILSFA approved 1,339 projects, an increase of more than 400% over the previous program year and the largest number of projects approved in a given program year since the program's inception. These projects had a total capacity of 23.7 megawatts AC.

ILSFA helps the state build a brighter future and meet its renewable energy goals. In their first year of operation, projects approved during the program year will prevent approximately 52.4 million pounds of carbon dioxide from being released into the air. **The reduced emissions are equivalent to powering 5,200 homes or taking 3,428 cars off the road for a year.***

The program is also delivering on its goal to help participants save on their electricity bills. The 237 projects that were fully constructed and energized by the end of the program year are expected to produce more than **$66 million in lifetime bill savings to participants.***

** Findings from "Illinois Solar for All: Program Year Six PY6) Annual Evaluation Report" from ILLUME Advising, 2025. Includes energized projects from all sub-programs.*

Projects

The growth in Residential Solar projects helped ILSFA deliver electric bill savings to substantially more income-eligible homeowners across the state.

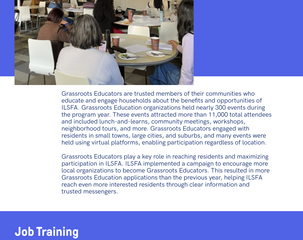


- During the 2023-2024 Program Year, Illinois Solar for All approved **1,296** Residential Solar projects, all but one of which were single-family homes. Of the Residential Solar projects, **472** projects were located in Environmental Justice Communities. **559** were located in income-eligible census tracts, and **37** were Energy Sovereignty projects.
- ILSFA approved **39** Non-Profit and Public Facilities projects.
- ILSFA approved **four** Community Solar projects.

These projects advanced ILSFA's goal of helping communities statewide save money on electricity with solar. Notably, this also demonstrates how ILSFA prioritizes projects in areas that suffer disproportionately from environmental hazards that can cause long-term negative health effects.

Project Funding

More than 1,400 households subscribed to ILSFA Community Solar projects in the 2023-2024 Program Year.



ILSFA allocated more than **$65 million** during the program year for solar projects across the state.

Project Funding in Vulnerable Communities

- **46%** in income-eligible census tracts
- **27%** in designated Environmental Justice Communities

Project Funding by Utility Territory



Funds Allocated

- More than **$32 million** went to Residential Solar (Small and Large) projects
- About **$19 million** funded Community Solar projects
- Nearly **$14 million** serviced Non-Profit and Public Facilities projects

ILSFA funding comes from the Renewable Energy Resources Fund, administered by the Illinois Power Agency, and funding supplied by utilities from ratepayer collections.

Approved Vendors

ILSFA Approved Vendors follow clean program requirements so participants receive quality solar installations and electric bill savings.



As of the 2023-2024 Program Year, 133 vendors are approved to participate in ILSFA, including five new Approved Vendors. Of all Approved Vendors, 15 are minority- or women-owned business enterprises (MWBE), and three have indicated that their MWBE certification is pending.

Eleven Approved Vendors had at least one project approved. Across all ILSFA sub-programs, three MWBE Approved Vendors submitted three projects, two of which were approved.

Grassroots Education

Thirteen organizations were selected and trained to implement Grassroots Education campaigns in the 2023-2024 Program Year.



Grassroots Educators are trusted members of their communities who educate and engage households about the benefits and opportunities of ILSFA. Grassroots Education organizations held nearly 300 events during the program year. These events attracted more than 11,000 total attendees and included lunch-and-learns, community meetings, workshops, neighborhood tours, and more. Grassroots Educators engaged with residents in small towns, large cities, and suburbs, and many events were held using virtual platforms, enabling participation regardless of location.

Grassroots Educators play a key role in reaching residents and maximizing participation in ILSFA. ILSFA implemented a campaign to encourage more local organizations to become Grassroots Educators. This resulted in more Grassroots Education applications than the previous year, helping ILSFA reach even more interested residents through clear information and trusted messengers.

Job Training

ILSFA's job training requirements help build a renewable energy workforce with members of historically marginalized communities.

Approved Vendors are required to hire trainees from Qualified Job Training programs to complete a percentage of their ILSFA solar projects.

During this program year, Approved Vendors hired 54 individual trainees from 14 qualified job training programs. Most of the job trainees came from programs funded by the Future Energy Jobs Act or Climate and Equitable Jobs Act, and many trainees worked on multiple projects with the same Approved Vendor. Job trainees logged more than 11,700 work hours, mostly in installation activities.

Public Engagement

Bright Neighborhoods outreach events raised awareness of ILSFA in selected community areas.

The ILSFA Program Administrator implemented activities to raise awareness of the program and drive participation.

ILSFA's new Small and Emerging Business Initiative held seven workshops across Illinois to educate business owners on entering the solar market and to share information on becoming an Approved Vendor.

ILSFA promoted the Bright Neighborhoods initiative through marketing and outreach, resulting in nearly 37,000 additional website visits and 150 inquiries to the program.

To inform a website redesign and enhanced messages, ILSFA gathered research on target audiences. The website refresh improved accessibility, streamlined navigation, and provided clear information and action steps for prospective participants and Approved Vendors.

ILSFA shared program news in four newsletters sent to approximately 2,600 people. The newsletters featured essential program milestones, the launch of new initiatives, and Grassroots Education activities. ILSFA also sent 75 email announcements to approximately 1,200 stakeholders, a 10% increase from the previous year.

Media coverage is essential to raise awareness of ILSFA throughout the state. During the program year, 95 news articles mentioned ILSFA in outlets such as Illinois Business Journal, CNET, Solar Builder, Chicago Construction News, Energy News Network, and Forbes. For example, Solar Power World featured the launch of an Illinois Solar for All: Community Solar project serving 660 income-eligible households in a Cook County Environmental Justice Community.

The ILSFA Advisory Committee held six meetings during the program year to explore updates and improvements to ILSFA. Topics included innovative pilot programs, energy sovereignty, and coordination with community action agencies and with energy efficiency and income-eligibility programs.

The public engagement activities drove interest in ILSFA. During the program year, the ILSFA Call Center answered more than 1,000 calls and made nearly 700 outbound calls.

Illinois Solar for All is a program developed by the Illinois Power Agency and administered by Elevate.

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