

Bay Area Resilient Libraries Network Initiative

Frequently Asked Questions



FAQ

Q: When are applications due?

A: Completed applications are due via email by Friday September 30th at 5pm. Please email to Aleka Seville at aseville@bayareametro.gov with the subject: Resilient Libraries Network Pilot Application. Late applications will not be considered.

Q: Who is eligible to apply?

A: The Resilient Libraries Network pilot is open to Bay Area cities and counties.¹ Each application must include a Bay Area City or County staff member who will act as the Local Government Lead and primary point of contact for BayREN. The local government lead participates in participant convenings and must be a city or county staff member who can connect BayREN with necessary energy use information about the library site to complete the site assessment. The Local Government Lead will be the primary point of contact for BayREN throughout the duration of the initiative from November 2022 through November 2023.

¹ BayREN serves all Bay Area cities and counties who are PG&E customers for electricity and/or gas distribution. The City of Healdsburg and the City of Palo Alto have their own utilities that provide both electricity and gas distribution and therefore are not eligible to participate in this pilot. Jurisdictions that purchase electricity through a CCA are eligible to participate.

Q: What type of community engagement activities should applicants carry out before applying?

A: BayREN encourages applicants to build a “CRC Team” of relevant stakeholders that the Local Government Lead can partner with to both develop community driven goals for their CRC and implement energy upgrades and other activities to realize these goals. Examples of stakeholders that could join the CRC Team include but are not limited to:

- **Community members, representatives and/or residents** that will co-develop the goals for the Community Resilience Center and provide guidance on local community needs.
- **Library staff at the library site** that can co-develop goals for the Community Resilience Center and provide guidance on community needs and existing library resources and priorities.
- **County Office of Emergency Services** staff that will co-develop goals for the Community Resilience Center and provide insight on how to coordinate this initiative with existing OES efforts.

Please note:

- At minimum, BayREN is seeking applications from jurisdictions that have engaged and solicited input from relevant community stakeholders and staff at the library site.
- BayREN encourages applicants to also engage their County Office of Emergency Services (OES) staff to coordinate this CRC effort with other ongoing County emergency response efforts. If an applicant is not able to coordinate with their County OES office prior to applying but is selected to participate, BayREN will help facilitate this coordination with your County OES office in late 2022.
- Only the Local Government Lead is required to participate in two Resilient Library Initiative Network convenings in November of 2022 and November of 2023. All CRC Team members are encouraged to participate in these convenings if desired.

Q: How much funding will each participant receive?

A: BayREN has funding to support approximately ten library sites to participate in the Resilient Libraries Network pilot. Participants will not receive funding directly but will receive free technical assistance outlining specific energy upgrades and cost estimates for their library site to achieve their goals. Participants will also be matched with resilience funding and financing experts and receive tailored guidance on how to fund and/or finance BayREN’s recommended energy upgrades. Other benefits of participating include joining a network of Bay Area libraries working to improve community resilience based on local needs, and access to community engagement and facilitation support to develop community-driven goals for your Community Resilience Center.

Q: My community is considering multiple library sites to develop into Community Resilience Centers (CRCs). What types of library sites are the best fit for the Resilient Libraries Network?

A: BayREN is seeking applications from jurisdictions that will serve Frontline Communities AND/OR are in Equity Priority Communities² OR that can demonstrate that their library site will serve populations that align with some of the demographic factors that define Frontline and Equity Priority Communities. We are also looking for sites that could reasonably expect reduced energy use and greenhouse gas emissions when energy upgrades are implemented, and where there is a commitment to implementing at least some of the recommended energy upgrades in the three to five years following completion of the pilot in November 2023.

In addition, BayREN encourages jurisdictions to consider the following questions when deciding which library sites might be a good fit for the Resilient Libraries Network:

- Does the library site currently serve Equity Priority Community and/or Frontline communities who are most impacted by climate change and have the least resources to deal with these impacts?
- Are there any ownership, physical or operational barriers that would make it difficult to implement the energy upgrade recommendations that BayREN will provide for this site?
- Are there opportunities to improve energy efficiency and reduce greenhouse gas emissions from this site through energy upgrades?
- Can the Local Government Lead access and provide to BayREN utility bills and 15-minute interval data for the library site from the most recent year available and the year 2019? Can the Local Government Lead provide access to any recent energy audits completed for this site?

Q: In Section 1 of the Application (Library Site Information), BayREN asks whether the library site already has solar and/or battery back-up power. If the site has solar and/or battery back-up power, does that make it a better candidate for this pilot?

A: BayREN is asking for site information so that we can evaluate the potential for each site to achieve increased efficiency and decreased greenhouse gas emissions. If a site already has solar and/or battery back-up power this does not mean that it is not a good candidate for the pilot. In some cases, solar PV systems may be too small or may not be working well, or a battery may be inadequate for resilience. In general, the library site will receive higher points for this section if it shows strong potential for energy savings and greenhouse gas reduction (older, less efficient buildings may have more potential for savings, for example), considering all aspects of the library site's current energy system, including any existing solar and battery.

² BayREN looks to the Bay Area Metropolitan Transportation Commission's (MTC) [Equity Priority Communities framework](#) for examples of demographic factors that identify communities most in need of CRCs. BayREN also looks to the American Society of Adaptation Professionals's (ASAP) [working definition of Frontline communities](#) for guiding principles and a framework to understand which communities would benefit most from BayREN's support to develop a Community Resilience Center (CRC).

Q: In the past, we have found it challenging to add batteries to buildings with existing PV solar systems because this could potentially void the warranty on the solar system. If a site with existing PV is selected to participate in the pilot, will BayREN be able to help us navigate this challenge?

A: The best way for a site to retain its warranty on the solar PV system when adding new batteries is by retaining the same contractor who installed the solar PV system. We recommend checking with the solar installer to determine whether they also install battery systems prior to submitting an application if possible. Most solar PV installers are already providing this service. In addition, the site might also be able to reap additional technical benefits from retaining their solar PV installer including ensuring equipment compatibility between the battery system and the solar PV system. Additionally, when planning for the battery system, the installer will have to conduct pre-installation investigation of the site including – electrical system upgrade, site real estate availability to install batteries, inverters, etc. If the installer is already familiar with the site, the cost of pre-installation investigation might be lower. While a jurisdiction could plan to reach out to their solar installer when they are ready to implement BayREN's energy upgrade recommendations, checking with the solar installer in advance could help to clarify and streamline the process.