

SunShot Prize

RACE TO 7-DAY SOLAR

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

JULY 20, 2015



1. Is the SunShot Prize a grant funding opportunity?

No, the SunShot Prize is not a grant funding opportunity. The SunShot Prize competition offers a total of \$10 million in cash awards to the best teams that bring process certainty and reduce the permit-to-plug-in time from current durations to a swift seven days for small PV systems (≤ 100 kW) or seven weeks for large systems (≤ 1 MW). SunShot will provide small prizes to help support up to 20 teams during a set 18-month performance period that begins in September 2015.

2. Is the SunShot Prize affected by budget cuts?

No, the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has allocated \$10 million for cash awards, which will be obligated prior to the start of the competition for administration by a non-Federal government third-party. DOE is not obligated or expected to make awards, if prize conditions are not satisfied.

3. Is this SunShot Prize restricted to residential rooftop systems?

No. DOE will run two contests in this competition for 18 months: one targeted at small solar systems (1 - 100 kW) and other targeted at large solar systems (101-1,000 kW). There are no restrictions on mounting method, deployment location, or business model, provided that these PV systems are co-located in the same service area of the customers' utility company.

4. What can SunShot Prize Winners do with the cash awards? Must SunShot Prize Winners pay taxes on winnings?

There are no restrictions placed on the use of the cash awards once awarded and there is no tax exemption associated with the SunShot Prize. Any cash award received is subject to applicable tax codes.

5. What are the size limits of a single installation?

The nameplate rated DC power of each installation must range between 1 and 100 kilowatts for the Small System Contest and range between 101 and 1,000 kilowatts for the Large System Contest.

6. Are solar systems in Puerto Rico eligible?

Yes, competing teams may install systems in any U.S. state or territory. Systems installed in buildings owned or controlled by the U.S. government overseas, such as embassies and on military bases, do not qualify. Military bases in the U.S. do qualify.

7. Can a team use local subsidies from a city or a utility?

The SunShot Prize: Race to 7-Day Solar has no restrictions or limitations on the use of incentives or subsidies for installing systems within the applicable laws and regulations. This prize competition focuses on process certainty and aims to reduce the permit-to-plug-in time from current durations to a swift seven days for small PV systems (≤ 100 kW) or seven weeks for large systems (≤ 1 MW). Competing teams are not required to report prices on installed systems to show performance.

8. Are there any restrictions on team members or the team lead?

Every team must have a Team Lead, a single legal entity representing the entire team that meets eligibility requirements specified in the official SunShot Prize rules document (See Pages 10-12).

9. Can our team work with solar providers across a number of different states?

There are no limitations on the number of members in a team. The rules do not restrict collaboration among solar providers across different states.

10. Can foreign exchange students participate in a team?

Foreign exchange students can participate in a team as long as their activities are in compliance with Federal, state, local laws and regulations.

11. Can our team use volunteer labor?

The SunShot Prize rules document has no restrictions on the use of volunteer labor. Teams may use volunteers who are legally eligible to work in the U.S provided that all requirements of Contestants Eligibility conditions listed in the rules document are met.

12. Are electric utilities or water authorities eligible to participate in this competition?

Yes!

13. How many jurisdictions can one team pick in the Large System Contest? Can they cover a state?

There are no limitations, in one state or across numerous states, on the number of participating jurisdictions in one team in the Large System Contest or the Small System Contest. Please review the definition of Competition Population on page 8 in the rules.

14. What “groups” or “entities” would not be able to participate in the SunShot Prize competition, especially those outside the solar industry?

Any individual or entity or groups of individuals or entities that meet the conditions outlined in section 6. Contestant Eligibility of the SunShot Prize official rules document can participate. None of these conditions are experience or industry specific.

15. If a Change Champion candidate team does not complete the minimum 10% of the required solar capacity installed by the first progress report (Round I) but

completes the minimum 30% of the required solar capacity installed by the second progress records (Round II), then would DOE award cash prizes for both rounds?

DOE will not disqualify a Change Champion candidate team from receiving cash prizes if the team does not meet the required minimum 10% by first progress report (Round I). In this case, DOE will not grant this team the second tranche of \$25,000 cash prize at that time. However, if this team meets the evaluation criteria of Round II including completing the minimum 30% of the required solar capacity by the second progress report (Round II), then DOE will grant this team the second and third tranches totaling \$75,000 in cash prizes.

16. Is there any other contact information including phone numbers that we can use to ask questions?

The DOE's SunShot Prize team reads every email you send to sunshot.prize@ee.doe.gov and will post answers to unanswered questions online. Sending specific questions to sunshot.prize@ee.doe.gov is the best way for DOE to answer your questions while benefiting all potential contenders in this prize competition. If DOE does not respond to your question directly, please check the posted FAQs online. To ensure fairness, DOE will not have private conversations regarding this competition with any individuals.

17. Can you provide any information on the criteria regarding points to be accumulated during the 18 month performance period?

The SunShot Prize Official Rules describe how points will be accumulated during the 18 month Performance Period. In determining winners of the Grand Prizes, a candidate's performance will be evaluated based on five metrics scored independently per contest across three evaluation criteria: Repeatability, Time Performance, and Replicability. The values of each of these five metrics convert to points using lookup tables provided by the SunShot Prize official rules document. DOE made this MS Excel Sheet to ([Download here](#)) for calculating the point scores.

The maximum number of points any team can score is 3,000. For each contest, the two teams with the highest two total points, above 2,250 points at the end of the competition win the first place and second place prizes. If no teams score above 2,250 points no Grand Prizes will be awarded. Pages 14-18 in the SunShot Prize official rules document provide detailed explanation of every metric. The following table provides an overview of these metrics across these three criteria. For more details please review, the SunShot Prize official rules document.

Criteria	Metric	Max Points	Short Description
Repeatability	Time-adjusted capacity	250	Team's total eligible installed capacity (in MWs) adjusted based on the different Total Time periods. Details: Appendix C - Metric #1
	Normalized time-adjusted capacity	1000	Time-adjusted deployments normalized by team's total eligible installed capacity. Details: Appendix C - Metric #2
Time Performance	Total Time expected value (scale-adjusted)	250	Time is measured as the average of Total Time weighted by total capacity (measured in MWs) installed in set time periods. Details: Appendix C - Metric #3
	Total Time variability (scale-adjusted)	1000	Variability is measured as a standard deviation of Total Time weighted by total capacity (in MWs) installed in set time periods. Details: Appendix C - Metric #4
Replicability	Diversity of jurisdictions	500	Geographic spread of local jurisdictions weighted by eligible installed capacity (in MWs). Details: Appendix C - Metric #5

18. As a utility company, do we only count projects from within the team (i.e. only projects submitted by installers in the jurisdictions that have agreed to participate) for the purposes of scoring, or do we count all of our applications across our service territory?

PV systems are counted based on the team's Competition Population which is defined in the rules. A team must define its own Competition Population by designating specific utility service areas, local jurisdictions, installers or a combination of all three. For specific details, see page 8 of the rules. An important restriction to remember when counting PV systems is that that no one installation will be counted by more than one team. If two or more teams count the same system, DOE will disqualify the system and it will not be counted by any team.

One can envision, for example, a utility company teaming up with a number of installers and local authorities to cover multiple jurisdictions. DOE hopes that this competition will create greater collaboration among multiple stakeholders to make the going solar experience in the U.S. fast and efficient.

19. We have been contacted by several organizations about joining their teams in this competition as a software provider. We would not lead any team and we will be a relatively minor participant. Can we join more than one team?

Providing support to a team as a vendor does not require explicit disclosure, especially for software vendors. Individual entities can be part of multiple teams however, it is important to remember that each system can only be counted by one team.

20. Suppose we install 20 MW for the Small System Contest during the 18 month performance period, could we just count the last 15MW as opposed to the total? Alternatively, could we begin our performance period later into the competition assuming we ended our performance period at the same time as everyone else?

In this case, the 20MW has to be counted. However, a team's may start deploying PV systems on or after the starting date of the 18 month performance period and may end on the ending date of this performance period or earlier. All systems installed during this performance period will be considered towards a team's performance to avoid time-based cherry picking. Each team must define its own Competition Population as described by the rules (see page 8). Any eligible project that has the same attributes of a project specified or listed in the Competition Population must be counted for fair and equitable performance evaluation.

21. We are considering being the Team Lead on a multi-jurisdiction team that includes dozens of jurisdictions in our state. However, our city, like most cities is self-insured. Providing a proof of general liability insurance as described by the official rules of the SunShot Prize may limit our ability to participate in this competition. What do you recommend?

For self-insured entities like a city, a local government, or an academic institution, it suffices to provide a letter from a ranking official in the organization to indemnify the Federal government from third party claims for damages arising from or related to competition activities and for damage or loss to government property resulting from such an activity in the amount of \$1 million per incident and up to a \$5 million total.

22. A number of cities and jurisdictions, in our state, are teaming up with a local utility to compete in the SunShot Prize. The utility company will be the Team Lead but it is not interested in receiving during the 18 month performance period any Change prizes (i.e. up to \$100k) even if our team qualifies. These cash prizes are important for the rest of the team, but not the Team Lead, please provide guidance?

By informing DOE, the Team Lead may designate any team member to receive cash prizes provided that this team member meets the following:

1. Validly existing, duly organized, and in good standing in the jurisdiction of its organization with a valid [DUNS](#) number.
2. Can receive payments that are legally made from the U.S. in U.S. dollars.
3. Has a bank account into which funds can be legally deposited from the U.S. in U.S. dollars.

23. Must a team register to compete for the SunShot Prize?

Yes, the Official Entrance Application is due on July 22, 2015.

24. What is the definition of an installer in the context of Competition Population attributes?

An installer in this context is defined as the entity that applies for and receives a permit (from the local permitting authority) or an interconnection permission (from the local utility) to authorize a PV system installation work.

25. When can a team add and inform DOE of new combinations to its Competition Population?

A team is required to send Competition Population updates to DOE on a quarterly basis. Teams should include new additions to the Competition Population as fast as these projects are completed and to be included in these quarterly updates. However, it is important to remember that teams are not allowed to revise prior submissions of Competition Population updates. If there were submission errors teams need to notify DOE immediately to clarify these revisions and provide necessary justifications.

26. During the Performance Period, if a jurisdiction is added to the team, which projects in this jurisdiction should be added to the Competition Population? Clarify whether all projects in this jurisdiction should be included or only those completed after the jurisdiction has been added.

When a jurisdiction is added, a team must include all projects installed and interconnected during the Competition Period not just the ones completed after the jurisdiction has been added to the team.

27. How would a team record, without violating the “no duplication” rule, projects where an initial system was built and interconnected but then it was expanded in a separate interconnection request at a later date during the performance period?

Each project, even if installed on the same building or location, should be counted separately as long as there are separate project activities (e.g. interconnection agreements). In the scenario described here, the system would be counted as two projects with two Total Times.

28. In the event that the team exceeds 15MW of installed capacity for the Small System Contest, are there any “bonus’ points awarded?

No, the current rules do not grant any bonus points for exceeding the required minimum.

29. If a team exceeds 15 MW, is it possible to only count the last 15 MW installed?

No, all installations within in the Competition Population during the Performance Period must be counted.

30. Is it possible to expand the provided scoring spreadsheet to include more than 10 justifications?

Yes, DOE will post online an expanded scoring spreadsheet to help the contestants calculate their scores. Please check online for updates.

31. On page 8-9, of the official rules, it states that "Each Team's Competition Population must be defined by specifying at least one attribute." But, later on, "Rule of All Three" states that "systems that share the same three attributes..." Please clarify, if a system has to have at least one attribute or all three attributes?

Every project once installed and completed will have three specific attributes (i.e. specific utility, installer, permitting jurisdiction). A team has to specify at least one attribute to define their interest. For example, a team could be interested in all projects by installer A regardless of which permitting jurisdiction or utility. The team may be interested in all projects by installer A but in jurisdiction X only, or installers A and B, and jurisdictions X.

A team starts listing projects to be counted for measuring performance in the Competition Population as specified. The team may add more projects with new attributes. But once a project is listed in the Competition Population and because this project has three specific attributes (i.e. known utility, known installer, and known permitting/inspection jurisdiction), then every project that was completed during the performance period that share exactly these three specific attributes should be included in the Competition Population, if any, to comply with the "Rules of All Three."

32. For permit and building inspection required documents listed in Appendix D, Required Documents for Performance Verification, does DOE require the actual .pdf document of the signed permits or would a data set containing the important information on the permit (such as permit #, parcel #, date issued, inspector) suffice for this requirement?

Teams are required to submit electronic copies of the .pdf documents of signed permits in order to perform the necessary verifications and audits. DOE will provide additional details on how to provide these supporting documents.

33. Can a current SunShot awardee be part of a team?

Yes, a current recipient of DOE grant funds can be part of a team. However, DOE would like to remind funding recipients that they can only invoice DOE for costs that are allowable and allocable to their award. Recipients should not count any activity directed towards this contest towards their other award with DOE.

34. We have a large number of team members, are they all required to be parties to the teaming agreement?

No. As a requirement of participation in this award, contestants are required to have an agreement with their team members. This agreement is to protect contestants from disputes between team members. DOE will not intervene in disputes between team members, nor will DOE review teaming agreements.

35. How do we categorize team members that do not fit the description provided in the rules for team members or the Competition Population attributions?

A list of entity types that can be team members was mentioned in Official Sunshot Prize Rules document for descriptive purposes only. This list is not exhaustive. Almost any legal entity can be a team member and there is no need to provide any special categorization to be compliant with the rules.