



# **e**MOBILITY MICROGRANT GUIDELINES

EVOLVE

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## HELLO!

Thank you for your interest in Evolve's eMobility Microgrant opportunity. The following document details the grant application process, requirements, key dates, and shares a little bit about us.

## ABOUT EVOLVE

Founded in 2019, Evolve Houston is a coalition of sustainability-minded civic, business, and academic leaders who seek to accelerate clean transportation through electrification. Our goal is to improve regional air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the Greater Houston area.

Through the support of Mayor Sylvester Turner and the City of Houston, and our Founding Member network, which includes CenterPoint Energy, Shell USA, NRG Energy, and the University of Houston, Evolve is launching an all new Equity Program in 2022 with the eMobility Microgrant Initiative to support local efforts advancing equitable eMobility in Houston.

Additionally, Evolve is committed to investing 40% of all programmatic funds towards Houston's underserved communities to empower access to clean transportation and clean energy careers that will facilitate improved air quality for all.

On behalf of the entire Evolve team, we are grateful for your participation in the application process of our inaugural microgrant initiative.

## CORPORATE CATALYSTS

This funding opportunity is made possible with commitments from our Corporate Catalysts, General Motors and bp America, as well as commitments from other local foundations.

Evolve is continuing to develop partnerships with corporations and organizations who are committed to supporting the vision of equitable access to the social, environmental, and economic benefits of eMobility.

[Click here to contact us to learn more about becoming a Corporate Catalyst.](#)

## eMOBILITY MICROGRANTS

Through the eMobility Microgrant Initiative, Evolve is partnering with local nonprofits, Community Champions (community reviewers), and Corporate Catalysts to award funding to grassroots eMobility projects that address community mobility needs in Houston's historically underserved neighborhoods.

This funding opportunity is open to applicants in the Greater Houston area, including Austin, Brazoria, Chambers, Fort Bend, Galveston, Harris, Liberty, Montgomery, and Waller counties.

## WHY eMOBILITY?

Decades of transportation planning and investment have often failed to materially resolve the mobility needs of low-income, minority, and other frontline communities.

Without meaningful connections to the decision-making process, residents within these communities experience disproportionate levels of transportation-related pollution and longer, more costly, and less reliable commutes.

Transportation is essential to access jobs, education, and resources – all critical factors in forming the foundation of equal opportunity and resiliency. Inadequate access to dependable mobility options intensifies social inequities in areas such as health and wealth.

Electric vehicles (EVs) and other forms of electromobility (eMobility) offer a novel opportunity to catalyze a new era of community-driven mobility solutions and develop a better, cleaner, and more equitable transportation system.

Evolve recognizes the severity of the air quality and mobility challenges our communities face and the need to support leaders developing local eMobility solutions. This initiative provides grant funding to enable relationships and accelerate outcomes.

# ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

## APPLICANT TYPE:

The eMobility Microgrant application is open to individuals, private organizations, nonprofits, collectives, and other community-led groups.

Applicants will be evaluated on execution risk of implementing their project proposals. Priority will be given to applicants that can clearly demonstrate project governance and accountability in their application. Individuals and for-profit organizations are encouraged to apply with a fiscal oversight partner/sponsor.

### Fiscal Sponsorship

A fiscal sponsor is a nonprofit corporation with 501(c)(3) status that applies for financial support on behalf of another organization to receive benefits of a tax-exempt status.

## GEOGRAPHY:

Funded projects must target residents in the Greater Houston area.

Highest priority will be given to projects that impact residents within [Complete Communities](#). Projects that fall within [Historically Disadvantaged Communities](#) as defined by the U.S. Department of Transportation will also be given priority status.

## FOCUS AREAS:

Organizations and individuals with viable clean transportation project proposals that target any of the following criteria are invited to apply.

1. Increasing access to and awareness of all forms of electric mobility and EV infrastructure.
2. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions from transportation sources.
3. Expanding economic opportunities in terms of workforce development to support transportation electrification, increased connectivity to places of employment, health and recreation, and general economic support.

### A Non-Comprehensive List of Eligible Activities:

Community engagement and eMobility assessments.

Awareness, education, and outreach.

Expansion of charging infrastructure to frontline communities.

eMobility workforce development.

Data collection, research, and analysis.

Micromobility programs and initiatives.

Electric multi-modal and mass transit.

Power generation, battery storage and innovative grid solutions.

Value-added eMobility services.

## FUNDING SUPPORT:

### Nonexclusive list of costs that are eligible expenditures:

- Staff and personnel
- Organizational debt/financial solvency
- Equipment
- Infrastructure (+ O&M)
- Existing or new programming
- Training and expertise building
- Rent and mortgage
- Insurance premiums and deductibles

### Nonexclusive list of costs that are not eligible expenditures:

- Damages covered by insurance
- Expenses that have been or will be reimbursed under any federal program
- Reimbursement to donors for donated items or services
- Legal settlements

# SIGNS OF A STRONG GRANT PROPOSAL

**MISSION MATCH:** A clear tie between your organization's mission or your project's goals and advancing equitable eMobility to achieve a cleaner environment, better services, and diversified economic development

**EXECUTION RISK:** Demonstrated ability to successfully implement the proposed project and inclination to continue collaboration efforts to advance equitable eMobility.

Clarity into the vision and purpose of the proposal and the steps needed to implement as well as the alignment of the proposal's management team with the project's goals indicate a low risk of execution.

**COMMUNITY CONNECTION:** A direct connection to the community (or communities) impacted by the proposed project and the value of the proposed project on the target community's air quality and mobility needs.

**EXPECTED IMPACT:** A clear tie between the proposed project's goals and the benefits local residents will receive. The applicants' ability to execute after the receipt of microgrant funds will also be taken into account.

**GEOGRAPHIC FOCUS:** A clear alignment with the nine-county geographic location and community.

## SIGNS THAT THIS GRANT MIGHT NOT BE A MATCH:

**MISSION MISMATCH:** Applicant does not have a focus on clean transportation, as demonstrated by mission, long-term programming.

**LACK OF CONNECTION:** Applicant lacks leadership and service to key communities targeted by the proposed project.

**CLICK HERE TO ACCESS THE EVOLVE  
MICROGRANT APPLICATION.**

# GRANT APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

## **Step 1: Eligibility Review – Evolve Houston Team**

Applications are reviewed by Evolve team to verify eligibility. Eligibility is broadly defined as any project that advances equitable eMobility, including improving eMobility access and awareness, reducing greenhouse gas emissions from transportation, and expanding economic opportunities.

## **Step 2: Community Champion Panel Review – Community Nominated Reviewers**

We are currently recruiting Houston residents to serve as Community Champions to review eMobility Microgrant applications and identify high-value projects and initiatives for their communities. These leaders should have a solid understanding of air quality and mobility challenges in their community.

Selected Community Champions will form a review panel to engage in a peer-review process to consider grant applications. Evolve will meet with Community Champions throughout the review process to share learnings and facilitate conversations around the applicants and their potential projects. At the conclusion of the review process, Community Champions will meet to participate in an extended panel deliberation session to determine high-priority grant applications.

## **Step 3: Verification and Approvals – Evolve Houston Steering Committee**

Community Champions will forward their recommendations to the Steering Committee comprising representatives from Evolve Founding Organizations. The Steering Committee and Program Director will resolve any outstanding questions and finalize allocations.

# ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

## **EVOLVE HOUSTON TEAM MEMBERS:**

- Determine the eligibility of microgrant applicants.
- Recruit Community Champions
- Attract grant applications

## **COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS:**

- Review applications using the review criteria
- Document scores and comments
- Forward their chosen applications to the Steering Committee

## **STEERING COMMITTEE:**

- Finalize allocations
- Approve for funding



# AWARD DETERMINATION

By December 2022, Evolve will invest funding from Corporate Catalysts into eMobility projects in Houston, and will support a broad range of applicants from various skillsets, backgrounds and communities within the Greater Houston area. Microgrants will be awarded up to \$15,000 depending on anticipated budget and project need.

# GRANT RECIPIENT REQUIREMENTS

Evolve will not require a traditional Final Report from grantees awarded in this funding opportunity. We will work with grantees to track project implementation after awards have been disbursed. We will also ask all grantees to designate at least one representative from the leadership team to attend at least one Listening & Learning Session in 2023. We will announce dates and locations after all funds have been distributed.

Additionally, we will welcome photos, videos or notes that demonstrate what this funding will make/has made possible.

# KEY DATES – UPDATED

## **APPLICATIONS OPEN:**

Thursday, August 18, 2022 at 12 PM CST

## **INFORMATION SESSIONS:**

Weeks of August 29, 2022 to September 19, 2022

Information sessions will include instructions for applying and information on the application process.

## **APPLICATION DUE:**

Friday, September 30, 2022 at 6 PM CST

## **APPLICATION REVIEW:**

Monday, October 3, 2022 through Monday, November 7, 2022

## **AWARD NOTIFICATIONS:**

Evolve will notify all awardees in December 2022. Grants will be disbursed in January 2023.

## **AWARDS EVENT:**

Grantees will be invited to attend an awards event in January 2023.

# ASSISTANCE

The Evolve team provides application support via information sessions and scheduled meetings or phone calls.

Evolve team members are available to provide technical assistance to people with disabilities, and Evolve will provide assistance in other languages upon request.

If you have any questions or need assistance with the application, please email [equity@evolvehouston.org](mailto:equity@evolvehouston.org).

If you have any technical questions, check out the [Submitter Resource Center](#) or reach out to Submittable's Customer Support team [here](#).

Visit [www.evolvehouston.org](http://www.evolvehouston.org) to learn more about information session opportunities and sign up to receive email updates.

# GLOSSARY OF TERMS

**eMOBILITY:**

Electromobility (eMobility) refers to electric-powered transportation powered, including electric cars and trucks, e-bikes and scooters, e-buses and more.

**FRONTLINE COMMUNITY:**

A community that has experienced systemic socioeconomic disparities, environmental injustice, or another form of injustice. For example, BIPOC, people who are low-income, who have disabilities, etc.

**COMMUNITY CHAMPION:**

Community leaders who advocate on behalf of their community to identify projects that maximize value and impact for their fellow residents. Community Champions will serve as microgrant reviewers in exchange for a memorandum.

**CORPORATE CATALYST:**

Organizations that fund Evolve's Equity Program.

**FISCAL SPONSOR:**

A nonprofit corporation with 501(c)(3) status who applies for financial support on behalf of another organization/collective in order to receive benefits of a tax-exempt status.