**Section 710.60 Grant Award Selection**

Grants will be awarded by the Department to grantees following a merit review by DCEO and pursuant to GATA requirements (44 Ill. Adm. Code 7000.350). The Department will award up to five total grants that support the installation and operation of energy storage facilities at the sites of up to three qualifying electric generating facilities located in the Midcontinent Independent System Operator, Inc. region in Illinois and the sites of up to two qualifying electric generating facilities located in the PJM Interconnection, LLC region in Illinois. In evaluating applications, the Department will consider the criteria listed below:

a) Whether the applicant and the proposed energy storage facility site meet the eligibility criteria (Section 710.40);

b) The need to develop an energy storage facility at the proposed site. This will be based on:

1) A demonstration of how the applicant will engage effectively with the local community during and after construction;

2) A justification for the specific project location of the energy storage project beyond meeting the qualifications established by the Act (e.g., located at a site with generating capacity of at least 150 megawatts; sites burned or is burning coal as its primary source of fuel);

3) Providing documents from Midcontinent Independent System Operator, Inc. or PJM Interconnection, LLC, indicating proposed project may be interconnected to the regional transmission grid, as applicable; and

4) A demonstration of a plan and commitment to ecological site improvement;

c) A demonstration of the ability to successfully complete the energy storage facility project. This will be based on the following criteria:

1) Successful prior experience in the development of energy storage facilities;

2) Significant energy storage performance based on estimated annual MWh energy storage capacity and total estimated MWh energy storage capacity over the life of the energy storage system as follows:

A) Energy storage capacity, or the maximum amount of stored energy, in MWh;

B) Storage duration in hours;

C) Expected system life in years based on anticipated operating conditions;

D) Estimated energy storage in the first twelve months of system operation; and

E) Estimated annual system degradation rate, as a percentage;

3) The ability to provide realistic timelines for construction and the expected date for commercial operation launch, which comply with the requirements of 20 ILCS 3855/1-75(c-5)(10)(C)(8);

4) Energy storage capacity of at least 37 megawatts at the proposed energy storage facility site; and

5) The ability to meet the requirements of 20 ILCS 3855/1-75(c-5)(10)(C) and this Part, as demonstrated in the technology description.

d) A demonstration of the ability to meet the commitments and agreements listed in 20 ILCS 3855/1-75(c-5)(10)(C) and in this Part (Section 710.40). Evaluation will be based on the following criteria:

1) The applicant's plan for ensuring the energy storage facility will be constructed or installed by a qualified entity or entities consistent with the requirements of subsection (g) of Section 16-128A of the Public Utilities Act [220 ILCS 5/16-128A(g)] and any rules adopted under that Section. Applicants should be able to demonstrate the effectiveness of the plan;

2) Existing and proposed relationships with workforce training partners and plans to meet training and hiring objectives of the program, particularly how they relate to achieving the program's diversity goals and providing employment opportunities for employees of the coal-fueled electric generating facility. The applicant should be able to identify current relationships with workforce training partners and provide a quality plan to ensure that personnel operating the energy storage facility will have the skills, knowledge, training and experience to complete the program, as well as efforts to ensure diverse hiring and opportunities for employees of coal plants; and

3) Previous efforts the applicant has had in negotiating project labor agreements for the construction of projects overseen by the applicant and the details describing efforts to meet diversity targets, improve diversity at job sites, provide diverse apprenticeship opportunities, and provide opportunities to employ former coal-fired power plant workers. The applicant should describe past experiences negotiating project labor agreements and the effectiveness of past experience in improving diversity and apprenticeship opportunities.

e) Applicants may appeal any denial pursuant to the process described in 44 Ill. Adm. Code 7000.350(g).