

Memphis Wins BIG in the Solar in Your Community Challenge!

May 8th, 2017 › [Energy Justice, Solar](#) › [Angela Garrone, Esq.](#) ›



Memphis Heritage Solar Uprising - one of the local teams moving forward in the Solar in Your Community Challenge

Summer is just around the corner and the sun is already shining on Memphis, TN. Five Memphis teams are moving forward to the next phase of the [SunShot Prize: Solar In Your Community Challenge](#), a [Department of Energy initiative](#) aimed at increasing opportunities and access to solar resources in lower-income communities ([The State University of New York Polytechnic Institute](#) will administer the Challenge). Memphis is prime real estate for solar projects, thanks both to geography and the long hours of sunlight we get throughout the year. Couple that with a high number of communities living in poverty and in need of cheap power – the SunShot Challenge is a perfect fit for Memphis.

Several Memphis teams worked to submit proposals for the SunShot Challenge, with the following five teams selected to move forward to the next round – Memphis Heritage Solar Uprising, New Chicago Community Partnership Revitalization, Rozelle-Annesdale Community Initiative, AimsSolar and EnLIGHTen Soulsville.

SOLAR *in Your Community* CHALLENGE Team Map



The SunShot Challenge supports teams across the country as they work to develop solar projects and programs and prove that their specific business models can help expand access to underserved communities. A team must be working on a solar project or program that will serve at least 20% low- to moderate-income households (LMI) or 60% non-profits. The Challenge officially began this month and will end in October 2018.

The Grand Prize, \$500,000, is expected to be awarded in January 2019 and will go to the team that most effectively demonstrates an innovative and scalable solar model that can help expand access across the United States. Over the course of the entire competition timeline, \$5 million in cash prizes and technical assistance will be awarded, including up to \$2 million in seed prizes and \$2 million in technical assistance.



DOE staff visited Memphis in Jan. 2017 to discuss its Sunshot Prize: Solar In Your Community Challenge at The African American International Museum and Foundation.

[SACE staff worked to bring the Department of Energy to Memphis in January of this year](#), holding a meeting at The African American International Museum and Foundation in the New Chicago

neighborhood. Around 60 people attended that meeting, including local politicians, non-profits, solar companies and staff from Memphis Light, Gas and Water. Attendees of that meeting had varying levels of experience with solar – ranging from solar installers to non-profits who had already drawn up plans on how to incorporate solar panels into their operations to community members who wanted to learn more about how solar could help provide low-cost energy and create jobs.

Below is a short synopsis of each of the Memphis teams projects:

Memphis Heritage Solar Uprising

This project is aimed at providing solar energy to a nonprofit and would install around 100 kilowatts (kW) of solar on two historically significant buildings in Downtown Memphis.

New Chicago Community Partnership Revitalization

This project would serve both LMI communities and a local nonprofit and is working towards bringing up to 5,000 kW of solar energy to the New Chicago community, located in North Memphis. Dr. Carnita Atwater, owner of The African American International Museum and Foundation and New Chicago community leader is leading the project.

Rozelle-Annesdale Community Initiative

The Rozelle-Annesdale community is one of the oldest in Memphis, dating back to the 1830s, and is currently a majority African American community. This team is aimed at serving LMI households in the Rozelle-Annesdale area with around 35 kW of solar energy.

AimsSolar

AimsSolar is working to bring around 150 kW of solar energy to a LMI community located in Northeast Memphis.

EnLIGHTen Soulsville

EnLIGHTen Soulsville, a project of [Knowledge Quest](#), is focused on the Soulsville community, located in South Memphis and so-named due to it being home to the former Stax Records and current Stax Museum of American Soul Music. This team is working to bring around 33 kW of solar to the community that would serve both LMI households and local nonprofits that serve the Soulsville community.

Other teams moving ahead in the SunShot Challenge from the Southeast are listed below:

City/State	Team Name	Solar Project Size (kW)
Bessemer, AL	Solarup!	250
Huntsville, AL	Charger Energy	5000
Birmingham, AL	ShinE Solar	2500
Miami, FL	City of Miami Brighter Days	14,000
Miami, FL	HBCU Clean Energy Consortium	75
Jacksonville, FL	SolarWorks Plus	2500
St. Petersburg, FL	Team St. Pete Evergreen	938
Atlanta, GA	Atlanta Solar for All	1000
Brunswick, GA	PURE Brunswick	100
Piney Woods, MS	Piney Woods Solar	1000
Durham, NC	SoYoCo	30
Raleigh, NC	GreenPower of North Carolina	1000
Concord, NC	Barber-Scotia College & the Logan Community	3000
Pittsboro, NC	Sharing Solar	27
Columbia, SC	TEAM S.E.P.	450
Charleston, SC	Charleston Community Solar	1
Aiken, SC	The Enlighteners	50
Columbia, SC	Solarize Bellfield	140
Charleston, SC	Project Carolina Phoenix	46
Spartanburg, SC	VivoRex	1000
Nashville, TN	Whites Creek/Bordeaux Community Solar	2000

SACE will provide support to teams in Memphis and across the Southeast throughout the SunShot Challenge competition period and will continue to provide updates as these teams work to increase access to cheap, clean solar energy resources that can help our most vulnerable communities.

Tags: [AimsSolar](#), [Clean Energy](#), [Community Solar](#), [Department of Energy](#), [EnLIGHTen Soulsville](#), [Knowledge Quest](#), [low-income communities](#), [Memphis](#), [Memphis Heritage Solar Uprising](#), [MLGW](#), [New Chicago](#), [New Chicago Community Partnership Revitalization](#), [Renewable Energy](#), [Rozelle-Annesdale](#), [solar](#), [Solar In Your Community](#), [Soulsville](#), [Stax](#), [Tennessee](#)

3 Comments

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Congratulations Dr. Carnta Atwater, Yolanda Manning, Sandeep Pednekar, Anthony Milton, and Jimmie Tucker!!!

Comment by [Solar Sista Sandy](#) on May 8, 2017 [5:36 pm](#)

This is great news. I'm amazed that there are so many projects ongoing in the south and southeast, working to develop solar power and to increase access to solar energy. Our environment, our weary planet, really cries out for initiatives like these.

Comment by [Kibibi](#) on May 9, 2017 [10:33 pm](#)

The Sierra Club congratulates SACE and the 5 local projects, plus MLGW and TVA for their efforts. Solar power costs have come down by 60-80% making the technology quite affordable, plus being a good source of jobs.

Comment by [Dennis Lynch, Sierra Club](#) on May 10, 2017 [2:50 pm](#)