

# Buildings UP

The Buildings Upgrade Prize

AMERICAN  
**MADE**  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY



## Informational Webinar for NASEO

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BUILDING TECHNOLOGIES OFFICE

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# Introductory Webinar Agenda

**1** Buildings UP Overview

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**2** Prize Goals

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**3** Pathways , Prizes, & Eligibility

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**4** Application Support Bonus Prize

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**5** Get Involved

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# The Buildings Upgrade Prize (Buildings UP)

Launched in January 2023, Buildings UP is designed to rapidly scale energy efficiency and efficient electrification building upgrades in communities across the country. The prize is envisioned to consist of four phases over approximately five years.

Application support prizes available for new and under-resourced teams.

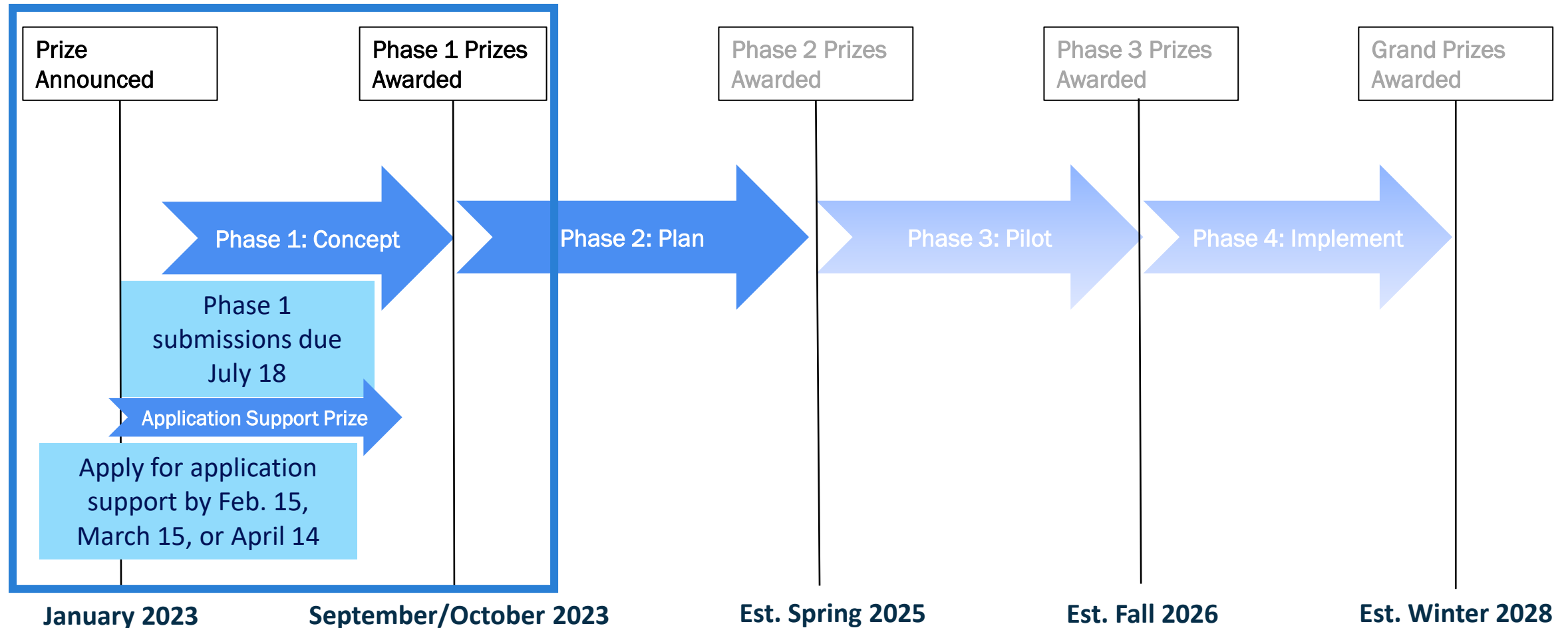
## Phase 1: Concept

- \$22M+ in Prizes to Teams + Technical Assistance
- Applications OPEN NOW, due by July 18, 2023
- Seeking 20–60 teams to join the “coopetition.”



[www.heroX.com/buildingsUP](http://www.heroX.com/buildingsUP)

# Buildings UP: 4 Phases, 5 Years\*



\*Subsequent phases are envisioned to offer similar prizes and are subject to the availability of funds.

# Grants vs. Prizes

## Financial Award Process

Write and submit concept papers

Concept paper review

Applicants write and submit full applications

Full applications review

Selections and negotiations

Begin performing

Prepare and submit reimbursement request

Request reviewed and reimbursement issued

## Prize Award Process

Begin performing

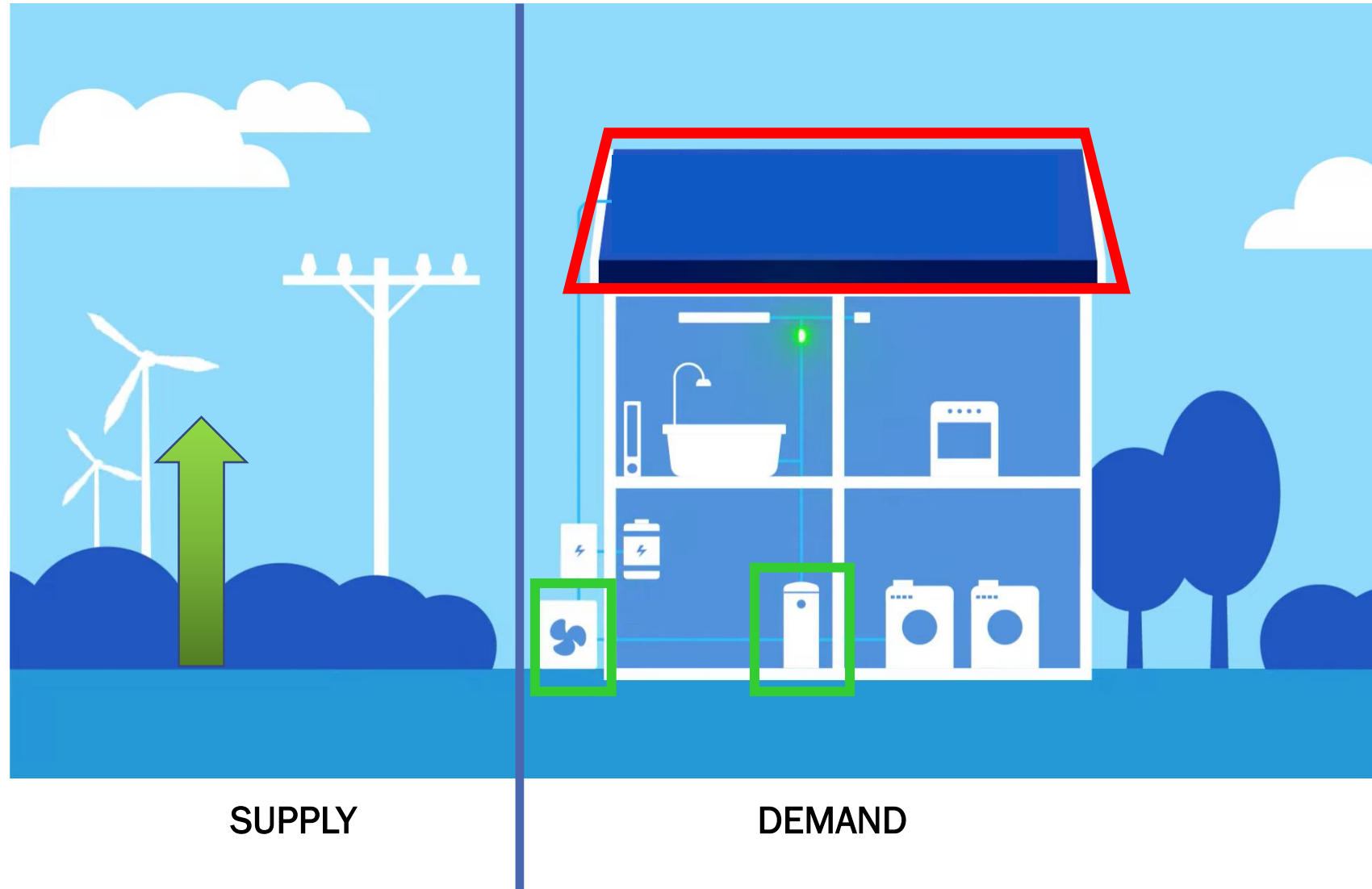
Achieve predefined goal

Complete submission packet

Judges score submissions

Winners receive payment

# Why Efficiency + Efficient Electrification?



# Prize Goals

**Buildings UP aims to address persistent administrative, financial, social, and other barriers to improving building energy efficiency and reducing on-site emissions.**

Buildings UP is a capacity-building prize to support teams with solutions that:

- **Accelerate building upgrades** for efficiency and on-site emissions reductions beyond current best practices in the applicant's identified area of focus
- **Demonstrate scalability and replicability** across building type(s), climate zone(s), and/or, community type(s)
- **Advance holistic and lasting energy efficiency and efficient electrification** initiative development
- **Benefit underserved communities** by ensuring that benefits accrue to equity-eligible buildings\*, their occupants, and surrounding communities.

\*Equity-eligible buildings include buildings in disadvantaged communities; low- and moderate-income (LMI) households; and underserved commercial, nonprofit, and public buildings.



# Equity-Eligible Buildings

Geographic Location  
(Justice 40 Census Tracts, Tribal Lands, Territories)

Affordable Housing  
(Subsidized, Naturally Occurring)

Underserved Commercial  
(including Title 1 Schools, Community Services, Non-profits)

Team-Defined

*Additional information is in Section 3.5 of the official rules.*

# Phase 1: Pathways & Prizes

Teams chose one of two pathways and submit an actionable concept plan for energy efficiency and efficient electrification that demonstrates a commitment to further develop and implement the initiative in Phase 2.

## Equity-Centered Innovation Pathway

**\$400,000 in cash prizes for each winning team**

Teams focus on a geographic area or building type that can achieve scalability and replicability of building upgrades AND develop innovative building upgrade initiatives in equity-eligible buildings\* (i.e., 80% of implementation would be equity-eligible).

## Open Innovation Pathway

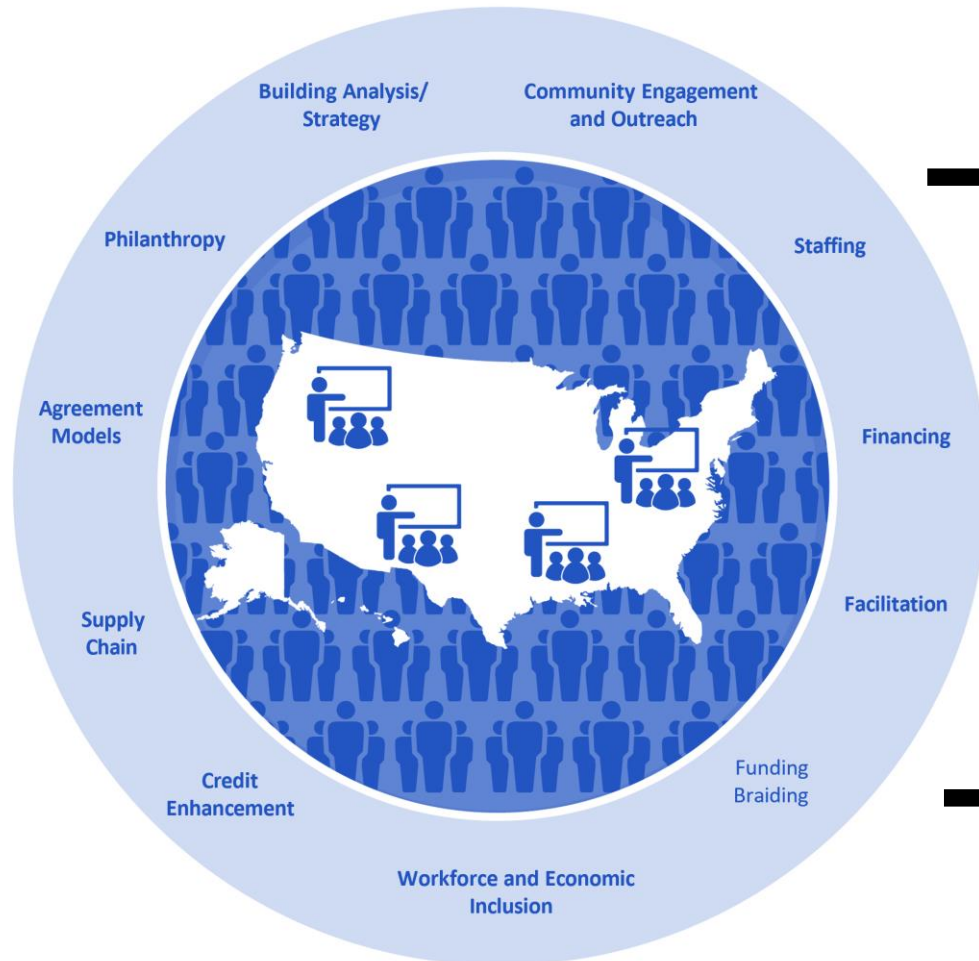
**\$200,000 in cash prizes for each winning team**

Teams focus on a geographic area or building type that can achieve scalability and replicability of building upgrades. Open Innovation Pathway applicants may include a focus on equity but are not required to.

**Access to Technical Assistance is awarded to winning teams in both pathways.**

\*Equity-eligible buildings include buildings in disadvantaged communities; low- and moderate-income (LMI) households; and underserved commercial, nonprofit, and public buildings.

# Technical Assistance for Phase 1 Winners



## Technical Assistance

American-Made Prize Power Connectors, webinars, and 1:1 support

## Regional Navigators

Each team assigned a point of contact who meets with teams regularly, tracks progress, provides local connections, guides teams to appropriate TA in prize network

## Buildings UP Team Network

20 to 60 teams selected for multi-year cohort. Online platform for teams to share resources and information

# Minimum & Eligible Building Upgrades

The **minimum** technologies and strategies teams must include in their initiatives include:

- **Efficient electric heating and cooling equipment** (e.g., heat pumps and/or heat pump water heaters)
- **Weatherization and envelope improvements** (e.g., insulation, air sealing, window improvements).

**Additional strategies and technologies teams may incorporate into their initiatives include:**

- Efficient electric appliances
- Electric vehicle chargers
- Geothermal heating and cooling
- On-site and community solar
- Electric panel upgrades
- Building controls
- Energy storage.

# Eligible Building Types

Buildings intended for upgrades may include one or multiple residential or commercial building types, such as:

- Single family
- Multifamily
- Manufactured housing
- K–12 schools
- Higher education
- Commercial real estate
- Hospitality
- Health care
- Retail
- Food service/grocery
- Government buildings (state, local, tribal government buildings)

Note: Identified buildings may be in a single community or include buildings across multiple geographic locations.

# Building Upgrade Zone

## 1) Geographic boundary around the buildings your initiative will address, such as:

- entire community
- neighborhoods within a community
- a utility service area
- portfolio of geographically dispersed buildings

## 2) Specific building type(s) to be addressed within the boundary, such as:

- single family homes utilizing fuel oil or propane
- multifamily buildings utilizing inefficient electric or gas heating and/or cooling
- small commercial buildings with roof-top units

**A strong application will include multiple buildings in a building upgrade zone.**

# Example Projects\*

A Rural Electric Co-op partners with a **local CBO** and the **county** to help **LMI single-family home residents** transition from **propane heat** to **efficient electric heat pumps**.



A **CBO** partners with the local government to bring **heat pumps (and air conditioning!)** to affordable housing buildings throughout the community.



A **school district** and an **energy services company** partner to **electrify district buildings**.



A **national residential property owner** teams up with **multiple local governments** and **utilities** on an initiative to **electrify its properties in three major markets**.



A **business improvement district** in a **large city neighborhood** partners with **local houses of worship** to bring efficient electric heating and cooling equipment to small businesses.



## +Innovations!

**\*Minimum technologies and strategies teams must include in their initiatives:**

- Weatherization and envelope improvements (e.g., insulation, air sealing, window improvements)
- Efficient electric heating and cooling equipment (e.g., heat pumps and/or heat pump water heaters).

# Seeking Innovations to Address Challenges

- **Lack of contractor and occupant familiarity** with technologies
- **High first costs for upgrades**, limited short-term payback
- **Lack of retrofit materials** and components
- **Insufficient workforce** to complete upgrades
- **Lack of reach of funding and incentive programs** to historically underserved households and building owners
- **Inconsistent quality of work** and consumer mistrust.



# Application Support Prize Overview

**The Application Support Prize is available for new and under-resourced teams.**

## Award Criteria for Application Support Prize

In addition to the eligibility requirements of Phase 1, applicants must:

- Confirm no organizations on their team have secured funding from DOE's Building Technologies Office in the past 5 years
- Ensure the lead organization represents a community with equity-eligible buildings or its mission is to serve communities with equity-eligible buildings
- Demonstrate that application support would allow them to develop a competitive Phase 1 submission and confirm an intent to apply.
- Confirm concept includes minimum techs and strategies

## Application Support Prizes

- Up to 50 prizes of:
  - \$5,000 cash prize
  - Up to 10 hours assistance

## Support Provider

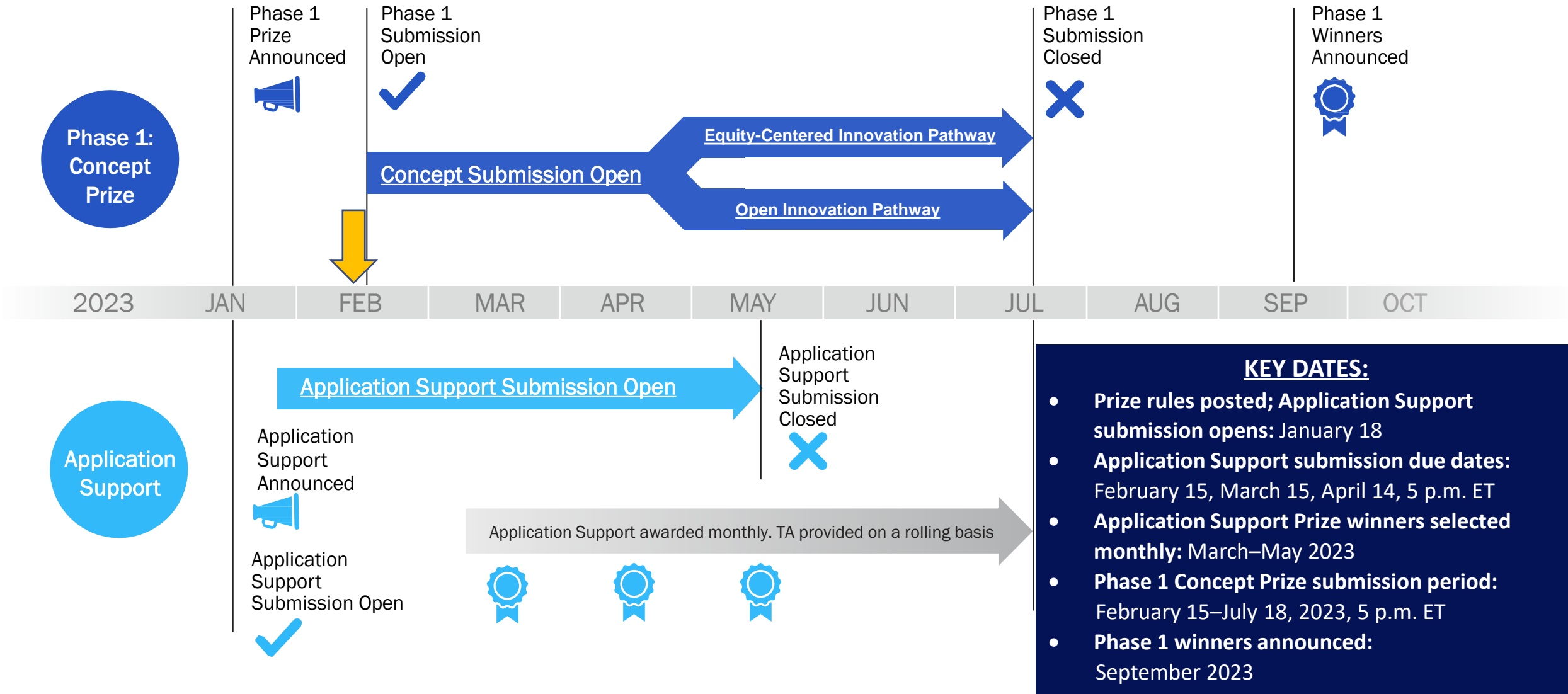
- Elevate
- <https://www.elevatenp.org/about/>

## Rolling submission due dates\*

- February 15
- March 15
- April 14

\*Later submission due dates may be canceled if prize funds are exhausted in earlier rounds. Cancellations will be posted on HeroX.

# Phase 1 Timeline



# HeroX Demonstration

# Eligibility & Teaming

# Applicant Eligibility: Overview

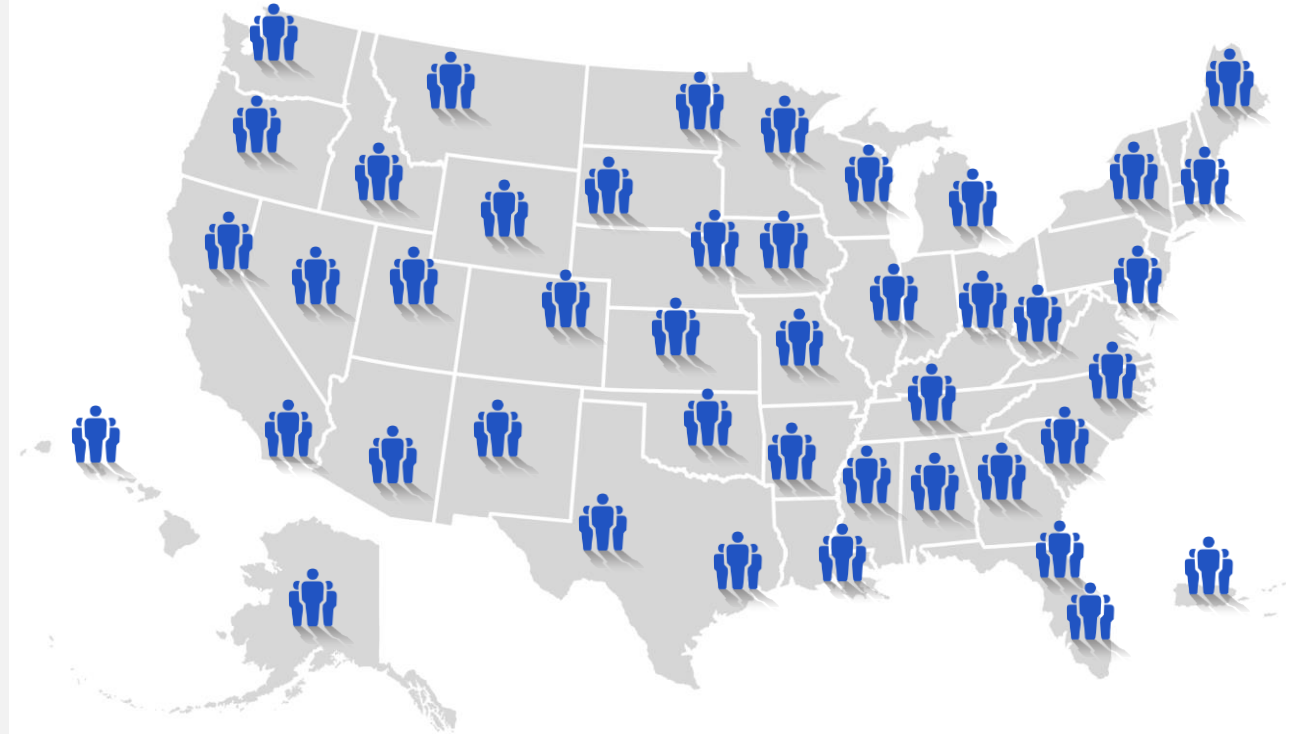
## Organization Types

- Non-federal government and tribal entities
- Nonprofit organizations
- For-profit organizations
- Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) with its own nonprofit legal status OR utilizing a fiscal sponsor with a nonprofit legal status.

## Primary Place of Business

Entities must be incorporated in and maintain a primary place of business in the United States with majority domestic ownership and control.

Additional eligibility information can be found in the official rules.



Teams must enter in Phase 1.  
Subsequent Phases are only open to Phase 1 awardees.

# Applicant Eligibility: Definitions & Examples

- **Non-federal-government entities** such as municipalities, states, counties, tribal governments, territories, public housing authorities, and/or regional planning organizations.
- **Indian Tribes.** For the purposes of this prize, the term “Indian Tribe” includes both federally recognized and non-federally recognized (e.g., state-recognized) Indian tribes.
- **Community-based organizations (CBOs).** For this prize, DOE defines community-based organizations as “nonprofit organizations that are representative of a community or segments of a community, defined by place or population, and provides financial, educational, cultural, and/or other resources aimed at enhancing health, wealth, and overall community well-being.” For-profit entities and large nonprofits with a particular area of focus beyond the local level are typically excluded from this definition. Ideally, CBOs are physically based in the communities they serve, though in some cases CBOs can be effective even without a physical presence. CBOs range from formal organizations with legal nonprofit status (501(c)(3), 501(c)(4), etc.) to informal, grassroots community groups that are mission-driven and headed by respected community leaders. **To be eligible for this Prize, a CBO must have its own nonprofit legal status OR utilize a fiscal sponsor with a nonprofit legal status.**
- **Nonprofit or for-profit organizations** such as portfolio building owners/operators, utilities, building upgrade service providers, unions, faith-based organizations, and other entities.

# Team Composition

	Equity-Centered Innovation Pathway	Open Innovation Pathway
Required Team Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead Organization (demonstrates at least 1 full-time equivalent [FTE] staff member available for the initiative)</li> <li>Designated Prize Recipient (up to 2 per team)</li> <li>Community Engagement expertise representing communities to be served (e.g., Community Based Organization).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lead Organization (demonstrates at least 1 FTE available for the initiative)</li> <li>Designated Prize Recipient (1 per team)</li> </ul>
Encouraged Team Members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expertise in accessing and/or combining multiple sources of funding to fully resource building upgrade initiatives.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community engagement expertise</li> <li>Expertise in accessing and/or combining multiple sources of funding to fully resource building upgrade initiatives.</li> </ul>

## All Teams Must Include:

- A Lead Organization** that commits at least one full-time equivalent (FTE) staff person for the duration of their involvement in Buildings UP.
  - This FTE may be hired after Phase 1 awards are announced.*
- A Designated Prize Recipient** that is a legal entity and can receive prize funds. The Designated Prize Recipient can be a fiscal sponsor for a participating organization that is not a legal entity. The Lead Organization may also be the Designated Prize Recipient.

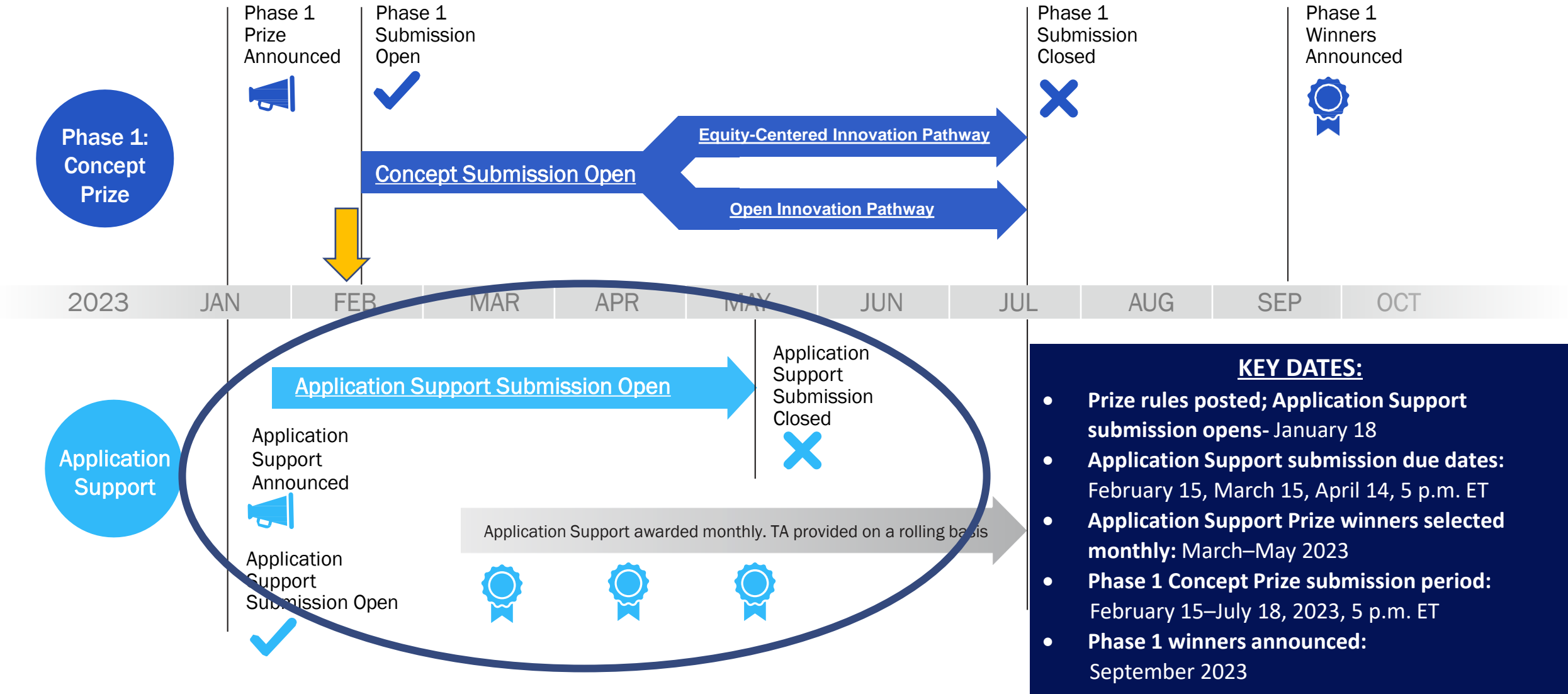
# Phase 1: Application Support Details

## Deadlines:

- February 15
- March 15
- April 14



# Phase 1 Timeline



# Application Support Prize

The **Application Support Prize** is meant to encourage applicants who might otherwise not have the staff capacity, time, or expertise to submit a full Phase 1 submission.

## To be eligible for the Application Support Prize, organizations involved must:

1. Confirm no organizations on their team have secured for funding from DOE's Building Technologies Office in the past 5 years
2. Ensure the lead organization represents a community with equity-eligible buildings or its mission is to serve communities with equity-eligible buildings
3. Demonstrate that application support would allow them to develop a competitive Phase 1 submission and confirm an intent to apply.

Phase 1 Prize Description	Submission Due Date	Anticipated Number of Awards	Dollar Amounts per Winning Team
Bonus Prize: Phase 1 Application Support	February 15, 5 p.m. ET March 15, 5 p.m. ET April 14, 5 p.m. ET	Up to 50 awards	\$5,000 Cash Prize and 10 hours of technical assistance for new and under-resourced applicants

# Application Support



## American-Made Challenges

973

Share

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## Buildings Upgrade Prize

Supports actionable and scalable solutions to advance energy efficiency and efficient electrification upgrades in existing U.S. buildings.

Energy, Environment & Resources

Government

Stage:  
Application Support  
submission opens

Prize:  
\$22,000,000+

[www.HeroX.com/BuildingsUP](http://www.HeroX.com/BuildingsUP)

SOLVE THIS CHALLENGE

# Application Support Submission Materials

Teams competing for the Application Support Prize must complete the Application Support Prize Submission Form on the HeroX platform.

## Required Submission Materials:

Item	Will Be Made Public	Scored Item
Eligibility Information	No	No
Team Information	Partial	No
Description of Need Narrative*	No	Yes
Intent to Apply Narrative	No	Yes

## Narrative Detail and Scoring Criteria:

Criterion 1: Demonstrated Need for Support to Develop Phase 1 Submission	
<p><b>Suggested Content Team Provides</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Describe current challenges your team is experiencing (e.g., lack of staff time, expertise) that make it difficult to complete a Phase 1 submission for Buildings UP.</li> <li>Describe the full-time equivalent (FTE) staff your organization has available to complete a Phase 1 application.</li> <li>Describe the annual budget of your organization.</li> <li>Describe the anticipated impact of a cash and technical assistance award to your team. How would Application Support impact your team's ability to complete a Phase 1 submission?</li> </ul>	<p>Each Statement Scored on a 1–6 Scale</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The team has significant barriers to completing a Phase 1 submission.</li> <li>DOE funding and technical assistance would significantly improve the likelihood that the team can complete a quality Phase 1 submission.</li> </ul>

\*The narrative response should be no longer than 500 words (5,000 characters max).

# Application Support Scoring

The Narrative Response will be scored from 1–6, as shown here, on how well the applicant addresses the statements in each criterion.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

The following table explains the way the scores for each submission for Application Support will be calculated.

Criteria	Number of Scored Statements	Percentage of Total Score	Total Possible Points
Criterion 1: Demonstrated need for support to develop Phase 1 submission	2	100%	12
<b>TOTAL</b>	2	100%	12

# Winner Selection & Announcement Process

## Eligibility Screen

After each submission deadline, the Prize Administrator screens all completed submissions.

## Evaluation

All eligible applications will be given a score based on criteria listed in the Rules document.

Teams may be invited to a short interview. The interviews serve to help clarify questions the judge may have. Attending interviews is not required and interviews are not an indication of winning.

## Selection

Final determination of winners by the final selection official will take the reviewers' scores, Program Policy Factors and the interview findings (if applicable) into account.

The Director of BTO is the final selection official of the competition and will make the final determination.

## Announcement

Approximately 15 days after the contest closes, the Prize Administrator notifies winners and requests the necessary information to distribute cash prizes.

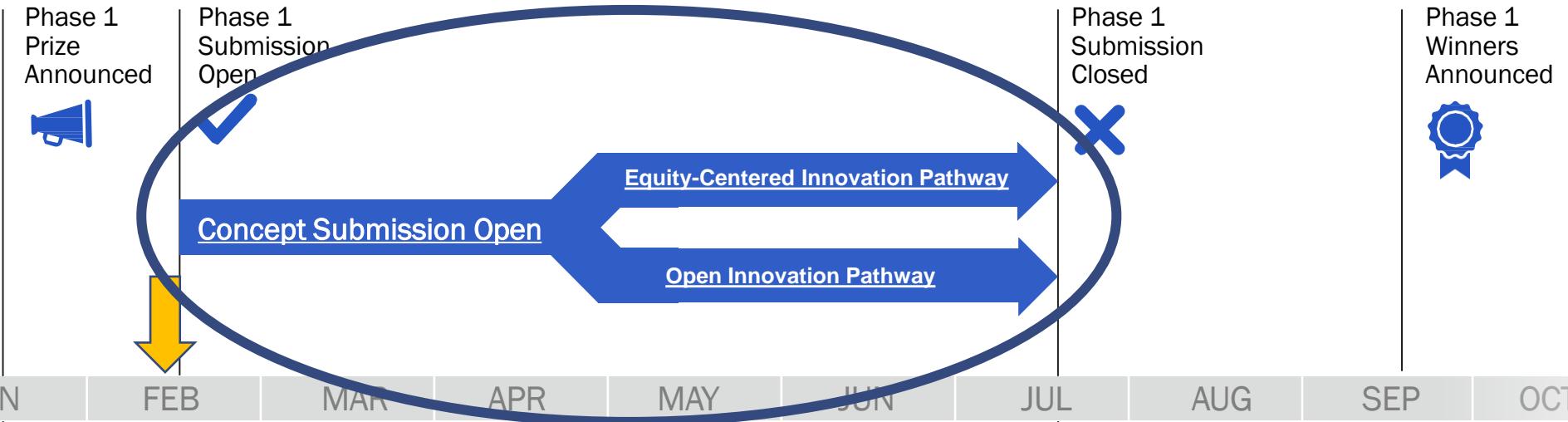
The Prize Administrator will then publicly announce winners.

# Phase 1: Concept Submission Details

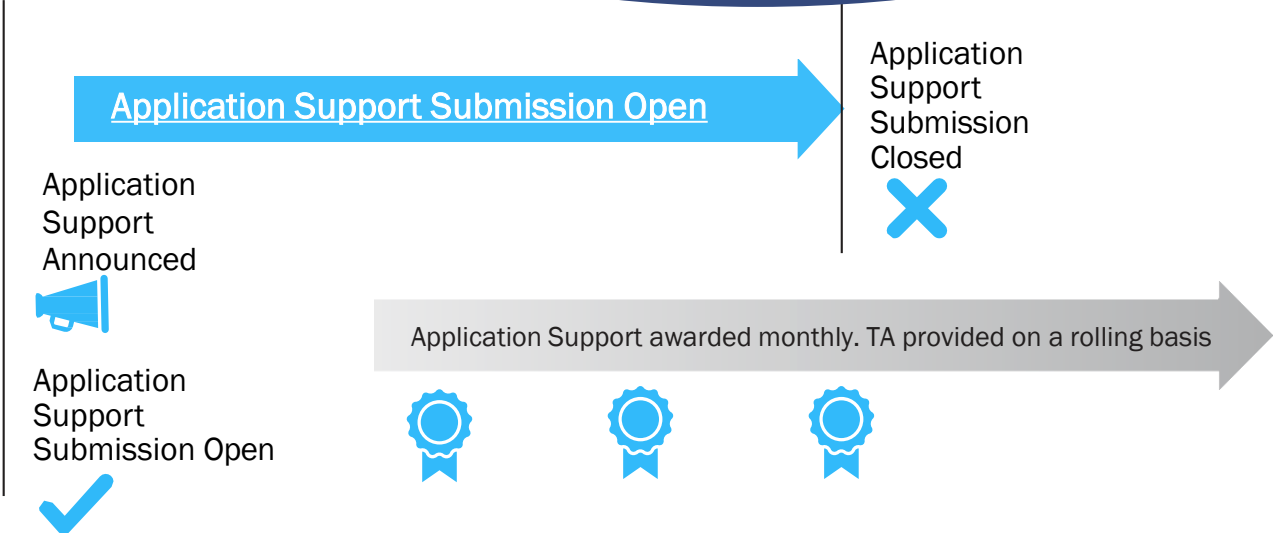
Due July 18, 2023, 5 p.m. ET

# Phase 1 Timeline

Phase 1:  
Concept  
Prize



Application  
Support



**KEY DATES:**

- Prize rules posted; Application Support submission opens- January 18
- Application Support submission due dates: February 15, March 15, April 14, 5 p.m. ET
- Application Support Prize winners selected monthly: March–May 2023
- Phase 1 Concept Prize submission period: February 15–July 18, 2023, 5 p.m. ET
- Phase 1 winners announced: September 2023



# How to Enter Phase 1: Concept

Teams interested in competing in Phase 1 of Buildings UP should go to [HeroX](#) and follow the instructions for registering and submitting all required materials before the specified deadline.

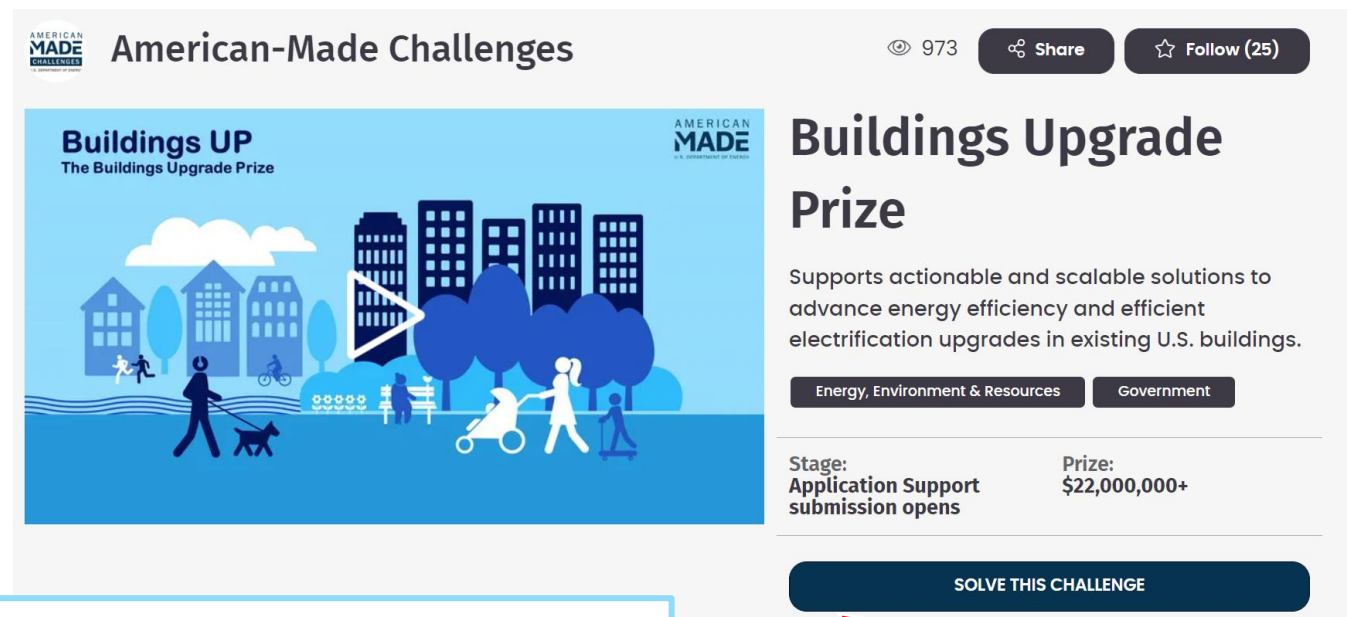
Teams are strongly encouraged to form multidisciplinary, cross-sector teams while developing their Concept Plans.

The HeroX online prize platform provides a space where teams interested in collaboration can post information about themselves and learn about others who are also interested in competing in this Prize.

[www.HeroX.com/BuildingsUP](http://www.HeroX.com/BuildingsUP)

**Phase 1 submissions open: February 18**

**Phase 1 submissions close: July 18, 2023, at 5 p.m. ET**



The screenshot shows the HeroX challenge page for 'Buildings Upgrade Prize'. At the top, it says 'American-Made Challenges' with a view count of 973, a 'Share' button, and a 'Follow (25)' button. The main image is a blue illustration of a city with houses, trees, and people walking, with the text 'Buildings UP The Buildings Upgrade Prize' and 'AMERICAN MADE' logo. To the right, the title 'Buildings Upgrade Prize' is displayed, followed by a description: 'Supports actionable and scalable solutions to advance energy efficiency and efficient electrification upgrades in existing U.S. buildings.' Below this are two category tags: 'Energy, Environment & Resources' and 'Government'. Further down, it lists 'Stage: Application Support submission opens' and 'Prize: \$22,000,000+'. At the bottom right, there is a dark blue button labeled 'SOLVE THIS CHALLENGE' with a red arrow pointing to it.

# Phase 1: Concept Submission

The following items are required for submission:

Item	Will Be Made Public	Scored Item
<b>Eligibility Information</b>	No	No
<b>Team Information</b>	Partial	No
<b>Concept Plan Narratives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Criterion 1: Assessing and Prioritizing Challenges</li> <li>• Criterion 2: Addressing Challenges Through Innovation: Initiative Scope and Impacts</li> <li>• Criterion 3: Scaling and Replicating Innovation Through Community Engagement</li> <li>• Criterion 4: Demonstrating Capabilities and Team Characteristics Critical for Success</li> <li>• Criterion 5: Achieving Equitable Building Upgrade Strategies (to be completed only by teams submitting to be selected for the Equity-Centered Innovation Pathway).</li> </ul>	No	Yes
<b>Summary Slide</b>	Yes	No
<b>Video Pitch (Optional)</b>	Yes	No
<b>Letters of Support</b>	No	Yes

# Concept Plan Narrative

The required narratives constitute your team's building upgrade Concept Plan. There is one narrative for each criterion. Each narrative should be no longer than 500 words (5,000 characters max).

You may upload one page of supporting graphics, figures, or tables with each narrative if desired via the HeroX platform.

Below are the criteria that should be addressed in the narrative responses:

- **Criterion 1:** Assessing and Prioritizing Challenges
- **Criterion 2:** Addressing Challenges Through Innovation: Initiative Scope and Impacts
- **Criterion 3:** Scaling and Replicating Innovation Through Community Engagement
- **Criterion 4:** Demonstrating Capabilities and Team Characteristics Critical for Success
- **Criterion 5:** Achieving Equitable Building Upgrade Strategies (to be completed only by teams submitting to be selected for the Equity-Centered Innovation Pathway).

The narrative responses should collectively describe the upgrade initiative concept and address all applicable criteria.

# Concept Plan Narrative

## Criterion 1: Assessing and Prioritizing Challenges

### Suggested content team provides:

- Describe the building upgrade zone—the area identified for the initial application of the building upgrade innovation. This may be an entire community, neighborhoods within a community, a utility service area, portfolio of geographically dispersed buildings, or another zone. Describe building type(s) to be addressed within the building upgrade zone and any key characteristics of these buildings.
- Describe your team’s understanding of the greatest challenges to building upgrades in your building upgrade zone (e.g., lack of contractor familiarity with decarbonization technologies and integrated building upgrades, high first costs for labor and equipment compared to conventional equipment, lack of retrofit materials/components, limited short-term financial payback, insufficient number of skilled workers to successfully implement retrofits, lack of reach of funding and incentive programs to historically underserved households).
- Explain how your team prioritized these challenges as critical to enabling widespread upgrades in your building upgrade zone.
- Describe initial stakeholder engagement your team has conducted, including engagement with historically marginalized communities, to identify and understand these challenges.

### Each statement is scored on a 1–6 scale:

- The team has a clearly defined building upgrade zone and demonstrates an understanding of the buildings to be addressed within it.
- The team demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the challenges to energy and efficient electrification in the building upgrade zone.
- The team has articulated why addressing these challenges is critical to enabling widespread energy efficiency and efficient electrification upgrades.
- The team has sought out diverse stakeholder perspectives, including with historically marginalized communities, to assess and understand challenges to building upgrades.

# Concept Plan Narrative

## Criterion 2: Addressing Challenges Through Innovation: Initiative Scope and Impacts

### Suggested content team provides:

- Describe the building upgrade initiative scope (i.e., starting a new building upgrade initiative or improving or expanding/improving an existing initiative, etc.).
- What innovative approach(es) does the building upgrade initiative introduce to address key challenges identified in Criterion 1 in a transformative way?
- Describe building upgrade strategies and technologies that may be utilized in the building upgrade initiative. (See Section 2.3 for a list of required and eligible technologies and strategies.)
- Describe how the residents/building occupants, businesses, communities, and/or other populations of focus within the building upgrade zone may be positively or negatively impacted by the proposed upgrades (e.g., increased or decreased energy costs, displacement, improved indoor air quality, improved resilience, local workforce development). What is your plan to minimize negative impacts? **Teams are encouraged to develop initiatives that offer multiple benefits.**
- How will local contractors and businesses participate in and benefit from this work (e.g., through inclusive procurement practices, local workforce development, local hiring)?

### Each statement is scored on a 1–6 scale:

- The building upgrade initiative addresses identified challenges with innovations that can deliver significant results, such as:
  - Funding combinations and financing to reduce upfront costs
  - Scalable and replicable models that streamline implementation of upgrades
  - Attractive business models that incentivize manufacturers and contractors to enable upgrades
  - Quantification and marketing of additional co-benefits of upgrades for building owners and tenants
  - Promotion of energy efficiency and efficient electrification solutions among a broader range of stakeholders
  - Ensuring high quality installations and upgrades
  - Other.
- The proposed portfolio of building upgrade technologies and strategies include at a minimum: (1) weatherization and envelope improvements and (2) efficient electric equipment installations (e.g., heat pumps, heat pump water heaters, and electric appliances), that are feasible for the climate zone(s) and building types identified in the building upgrade zone.
- The proposed building upgrade strategies will deliver substantial benefits to residents/occupants.
- The team has identified potential negative impacts to residents/occupants and described preliminary plans to minimize negative impacts.

# Concept Plan Narrative

## Criterion 3: Scaling and Replicating Innovation Through Community Engagement

### Suggested content team provides:

- Describe how the innovation(s) addressing key challenge(s) outlined in Criterion 2 may be scaled to realize widespread adoption of building upgrades in the building upgrade zone.
- How will your team work to center community members, especially historically marginalized community members, and/or other stakeholders in leadership and decision-making roles as you develop and scale your building upgrade initiative in your building upgrade zone?
- Explain how the innovations addressing key challenge(s) described in Criterion 2 may be replicable (e.g., to other communities, building types) by your team or others.
- Describe the stakeholders and who would be important to engage in order to replicate the innovative strategy (e.g., to other building types or locations).

### Each statement is scored on a 1–6 scale:

- The team articulated a compelling vision for how the innovation(s) can be scaled in the building upgrade zone.
- The team demonstrates a commitment to centering community leadership and meaningfully involving other stakeholders in the development and scaling of the building upgrade initiative.
- The team has clearly explained how their innovation(s) can be replicated in other communities or building types.
- The team has described the stakeholders that would be important to engage in order to replicate the innovation(s) elsewhere.

# Concept Plan Narrative

## Criterion 4: Demonstrating Capabilities and Team Characteristics Critical for Success

### Suggested content team provides:

- What organizations/departments are on your team and what skills does each bring to the team?
- Describe the team's experience accessing and combining multiple sources of funding to fully resource initiatives or activities. (Note: letters of support from organizations that may provide funding to your building upgrade initiative are optional but encouraged.)
- What type(s) of support and technical assistance do you anticipate you will need to further develop and implement a building upgrade initiative?
- Describe your team's proposed budget for the next year if you win a prize award. How do you anticipate funding will be allocated between team members?

### Each statement is scored on a 1–6 scale:

- The team includes members with the skills to develop and implement a building upgrade initiative, including members who can effectively lead community engagement efforts.
- The team includes expertise accessing and combining multiple sources of funding to resource initiatives or activities.
- The team demonstrates an understanding of the support and technical assistance they may need to address the identified key challenges.
- The proposed annual budget allocates funding among team members in a manner that will support success.

# Concept Plan Narrative

## Criterion 5: Achieving Equitable Building Upgrade Strategies

*(for teams submitting to be selected for the Equity-Centered Innovation Pathway only)*

### Suggested content team provides:

- How do the buildings your team proposes to address meet at least one criterion for equity-eligible buildings (see Section 3.5 for criteria)?
- What proportion of total building upgrades performed through your building upgrade initiative do you anticipate will take place in equity-eligible buildings? (Note: to be selected for the Equity-Centered Innovation Pathway, teams should commit to performing at least 80% of total upgrades in equity-eligible buildings.)
- Describe community-based organizations (CBOs) or other organizations on your team that represent and/or serve the occupants of the equity-eligible buildings to be addressed.
- Describe these organizations' history with the building occupants/residents and how they are well-positioned to provide valuable community perspectives to the team's planning and decision-making processes and/or contribute to initiative implementation. (Note: letters of support are required if the team is not led by a CBO or Indian tribe.)

### Each statement is scored on a 1–6 scale:

- The proposed buildings to be addressed by the initiative meet at least one criterion for equity-eligible buildings as defined in Section 3.5.
- The team intends to implement at least 80% of building upgrades in equity-eligible buildings.
- The team includes CBOs or other organizations that can represent the equity-eligible building residents/occupants in the building upgrade zone.
- The CBOs or other organizations are well-positioned to provide knowledge of community needs and to help shape overall the building upgrade initiative.



# Additional Submission Materials

## Summary Slide

### *Required*

Make a public-facing, one-slide submission summary that introduces your team and your building upgrade innovation concept. The summary slide may be made public.

## Letters of Support

### *Required for Equity-Centered Innovation Pathway if CBO or Indian tribe is not lead applicant*

Letters of support from team member organizations or other key partners and stakeholders involved in your initiative (e.g., community residents) may be uploaded in .pdf format. Teams applying for the Equity-Centered Innovation Pathway must include at least one letter of support from a relevant CBO or Indian tribe if the CBO or Indian tribe is not the lead applicant. Letters should detail any past work with the team and how the organization will be involved with or benefit from the proposed initiative.

## Video Pitch

### *Optional*

Upload a video (up to three minutes) that will familiarize reviewers and the public with your team and your concept. Suggested content for the video includes an introduction to your team, the building upgrade innovation concept, and the anticipated impact. The three-minute video pitch may be made public.

# Phase 1: Concept Scoring

The narrative response will be scored from 1 to 6 on how well the team addresses the statements in each criterion.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Slightly Disagree	Slightly Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

# Phase 1: Concept Scoring

## Criterion 1: Assessing and Prioritizing Challenges

### Suggested content team provides:

- Describe the building upgrade zone—the area identified for the initial application of the building upgrade innovation. This may be an entire community, neighborhoods within a community, a utility service area, portfolio of geographically dispersed buildings, or another zone. Describe building type(s) to be addressed within the building upgrade zone and any key characteristics of these buildings.
- Describe your team’s understanding of the greatest challenges to building upgrades in your building upgrade zone (e.g., lack of contractor familiarity with decarbonization technologies and integrated building upgrades, high first costs for labor and equipment compared to conventional equipment, lack of retrofit materials/components, limited short-term financial payback, insufficient number of skilled workers to successfully implement retrofits, lack of reach of funding and incentive programs to historically underserved households).
- Explain how your team prioritized these challenges as critical to enabling widespread upgrades in your building upgrade zone.
- Describe initial stakeholder engagement your team has conducted, including engagement with historically marginalized communities, to identify and understand these challenges.

### Each statement is scored on a 1–6 scale:

- The team has a clearly defined building upgrade zone and demonstrates an understanding of the buildings to be addressed within it.
- The team demonstrates a comprehensive understanding of the challenges to energy and efficient electrification in the building upgrade zone.
- The team has articulated why addressing these challenges is critical to enabling widespread energy efficiency and efficient electrification upgrades.
- The team has sought out diverse stakeholder perspectives, including with historically marginalized communities, to assess and understand challenges to building upgrades.

# Equity-Centered Innovation Pathway Scoring

Criteria	Number of Scored Statements	Percentage of Total Score	Total Possible Points
<b>Criterion 1:</b> Assessing and Prioritizing Challenges	4	20%	24
<b>Criterion 2:</b> Addressing Challenges Through Innovation: Initiative Scope and Impacts	4	20%	24
<b>Criterion 3:</b> Scaling and Replicating Innovation Through Community Engagement	4	20%	24
<b>Criterion 4:</b> Demonstrating Capabilities and Team Characteristics Critical for Success	4	20%	24
<b>Criterion 5:</b> Achieving Equitable Building Upgrade Strategies	4	20%	24
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>120</b>

# Open Innovation Pathway Scoring

Criteria	Number of Scored Statements	Percentage of Total Score	Total Possible Points
<b>Criterion 1:</b> Assessing and Prioritizing Challenges	4	25%	24
<b>Criterion 2:</b> Addressing Challenges Through Innovation: Initiative Scope and Impacts	4	25%	24
<b>Criterion 3:</b> Scaling and Replicating Innovation Through Community Engagement	4	25%	24
<b>Criterion 4:</b> Demonstrating Capabilities and Team Characteristics Critical for Success	4	25%	24
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>96</b>

# Winner Selection and Announcement Process

## Eligibility Screen

The Prize Administrator screens all completed submissions and ensures that the teams are eligible and, in consultation with DOE, assigns subject matter expert advisory judges to independently score the content of each submission.

## Evaluation

Expert Reviewers score applications and may provide comments.

Teams may be invited to participate in short interviews to help clarify questions. Attending interviews is not required and interviews are not an indication of winning.

## Selection

Final determination of winners by the final selection official will take the expert reviewers' scores and comments (if any), Program Policy Factors and the interview findings (if applicable) into account.

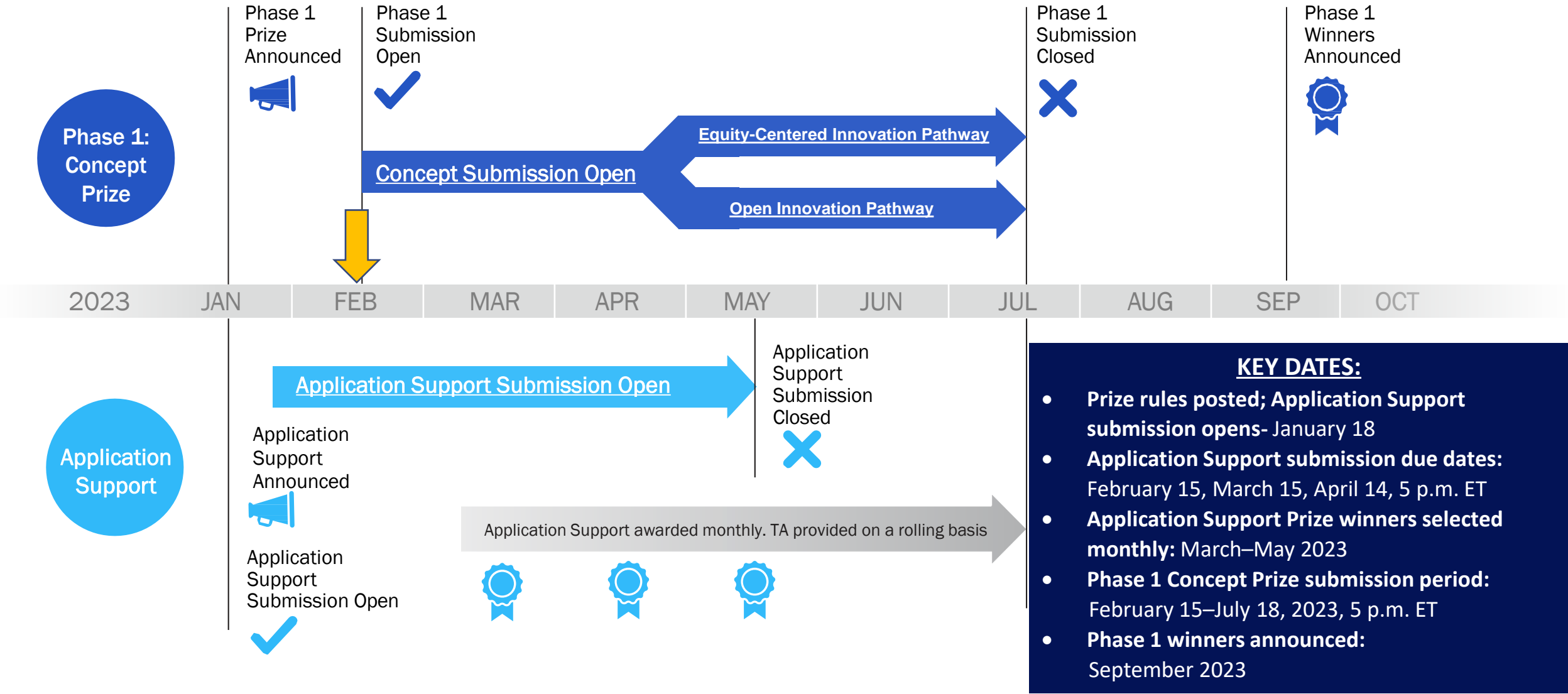
The Director of BTO is the final selection official of the competition and will make the final determination.

## Announcement

Approximately 60 days after the contest closes, the Prize Administrator notifies winners and requests the necessary information to distribute cash prizes.

The Prize Administrator will then publicly announce winners.

# Phase 1 Timeline



# Phase 1 Summary

Phase 1 Prize Description		Submission Due Date	Anticipated Number of Awards	Cash Prize per Winning Team
Phase 1 Application Support		February 15, 5 p.m. ET March 15, 5 p.m. ET April 14, 5 p.m. ET	Up to 50 awards	\$5,000 Cash Prize and 10 hours of technical assistance to help new and under-resourced applicants develop Phase 1 Concept submissions
Phase 1 Concept	Equity-Centered Innovation Pathway	July 18, 5 p.m. ET	20-60 awards	\$400,000 per winning Team + access to regional navigators/technical assistance
	Open Innovation Pathway			\$200,000 per winning Team + access to regional navigators/technical assistance

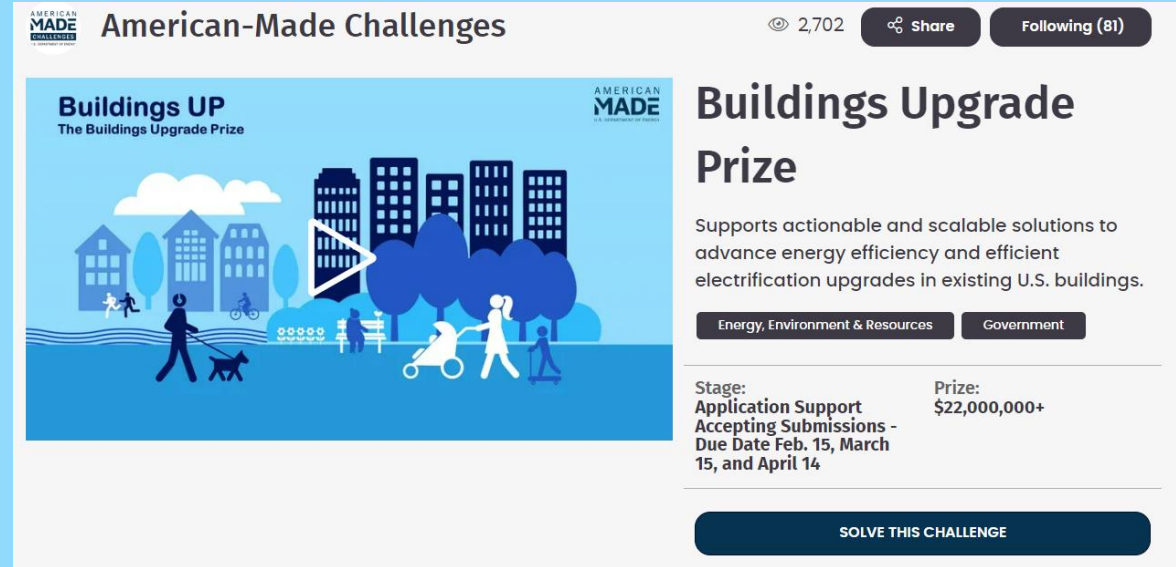


# Next Steps

- **Follow Buildings UP** on HeroX for all prize-related news and updates.
- Read the [rules](#) and review the [FAQs](#) on HeroX.
- **Share with stakeholders or form a Team**
- **If eligible, apply for application support** by February 15, March 15, or April 14 at 5 p.m. ET
- **Participate in upcoming trainings** (see HeroX)
- **Submit a Phase 1: Concept application** via HeroX by July 18, 5 p.m. ET.

**Follow:** [www.HeroX.com/BuildingsUP](http://www.HeroX.com/BuildingsUP)

**Questions:** [buildingsUP@nrel.gov](mailto:buildingsUP@nrel.gov)



The screenshot shows the 'American-Made Challenges' page for the 'Buildings Upgrade Prize'. The page features a header with the challenge name and a play button icon. Below the header is a large illustration of a city street scene with various buildings, trees, and people walking, pushing a stroller, and riding a bicycle. To the right of the illustration, the text reads: 'Buildings Upgrade Prize', 'Supports actionable and scalable solutions to advance energy efficiency and efficient electrification upgrades in existing U.S. buildings.', 'Energy, Environment & Resources', 'Government', 'Stage: Application Support', 'Accepting Submissions - Due Date Feb. 15, March 15, and April 14', 'Prize: \$22,000,000+', and a 'SOLVE THIS CHALLENGE' button. The page also shows a view count of 2,702, a share button, and a 'Following (81)' button.

