

September 3, 2026

RI Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council (EC4)

Comments on FY2027 EC4 Funding Proposals

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing on behalf of Acadia Center to provide feedback on the Executive Climate Change Coordinating Council (EC4)'s FY2027 Funding Proposals. [Acadia Center](#) is a nonprofit organization with over 25 years of experience advancing transformative clean energy solutions that promote a livable climate and a more equitable economy. Through rigorous data analysis and strategic partnerships, Acadia Center advocates for policies that significantly reduce carbon emissions and address systemic energy challenges.

Report on Past Awards

As Acadia Center has emphasized in previous EC4 spending cycles and meetings, including written comments submitted on September 12, 2024, the EC4 should publish regular reports on the status and impact of past awards. Many FY2027 proposals build upon initiatives and investments supported in prior years. Understanding whether past funding allocations have been spent and have been successful is critical to informing decisions about future allocations. Regular reporting would strengthen transparency and accountability and allow the EC4 and the public to determine which initiatives merit continued investment.

Embed Climate in Agency Budgets

The solicitation and receipt of 30 proposals requesting more than \$4 million demonstrates the immense demand for climate funding and the readiness of state agencies and public institutions of higher education to advance climate mitigation and resilience efforts. Many of the agency requests are multi-year initiatives that build upon work previously supported with EC4 funding. In order to implement the Act on Climate, the EC4 should strive to incorporate climate considerations into the ongoing work of all state agencies. A serious and sustainable commitment by the state must involve embedding such work into the annual budgets of all state agencies. Acadia Center recommends that the EC4, with leadership from the gubernatorial administration, require and prioritize sustainable agency funding for projects or staffing which may be initially funded with EC4 funds. Discretionary EC4 funding cannot indefinitely fund all climate work, but should serve as a catalyst for durable action.

Lead By Example vs. Economy-Wide

EC4 investments continue to overemphasize resources for state government to lead by example. While we acknowledge the importance of agency engagement, the state's efforts to lead by example are a small piece of the puzzle to meeting the state's economy-wide Act on Climate mandates. Regular lead by example reports should also benchmark EC4 investments against the targets laid out in [Executive Order 23-06](#) or other strategic plans.

Acadia Center urges the EC4 to articulate a vision and written criteria for EC4 funding which prioritizes compliance with the Act on Climate (emission reduction economy-wide) and broader community impacts.

Additional Considerations

Acadia Center further calls on the EC4 to foster transparency and publish selection criteria for the limited projects that may ultimately be funded. Below are examples of potential criteria and projects which may match such priorities.

- Centering vulnerable communities
 - Income-eligible – Energy navigator training via community health workers
 - Language --Translation of Resilient Rhody
 - Children – LEAD public school facilities
 - Seniors – Reduced or fare-free transit for seniors, youth, etc.
- Oversight of utility spending – PUC staffing
- Stakeholder representation, EC4 accountability – EC4 STAB consultant
- Taxpayer savings – DEM weatherization
- Innovation – embodied carbon in building (DEM) and transportation (DOT) materials
- Emission reduction potential – cold hardiness to cut propane and fuel oil use of greenhouses

Conclusion

Rhode Island must take bold steps to mitigate and adapt to climate impacts. The EC4 has an important role to play in ensuring that the state's limited climate resources are directed toward investments that are strategic and equitable. Acadia Center seeks to see EC4 funding leveraged to catalyze lasting changes, not only within state government, but also in communities most impacted by climate change and energy burdens.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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