Competition Structure

The NY Prize Competition is administered by NYSERDA, with support from the Governor's Office of Storm Recovery, to support community grid planning and development.

NY Prize offers support for feasibility studies, audit-grade engineering design and business planning, and project build-out and post-operational monitoring. Initially, applicants are asked to define their project concept, including:

- Identify stakeholder needs
- Prepare statement of needs
- Preliminary business case
- Prepare outline project brief
- Appoint project team

The NY Prize Selection Committee will approve up to $100,000 in funding for approximately 25 feasibility studies across New York State. Upon approval, at the Feasibility Stage, the applicant is expected to identify:

- Site constraints and opportunities
- Select and appoint consultants
- Develop project brief
- Preliminary project master program
- Options, appraisal and selection
- Funding investment and appraisal
- Project organization and control
- Procurement strategy
- Cost planning and management
- Prepare full business case

During the Design Stage, the NY Prize Selection Committee will approve up to $1,000,000 in funding for approximately ten detailed designs. Detailed design should include the following:

- Prepare detailed consultant RFPs
- Select bidders list
- Bid projects
- Evaluate bids
- Approval to proceed
- Appoint consultants
- Detailed design
- Design team briefing
- Detailed proposals
- Final proposals
- Product information
- Variations to traditional forms of contract

During the Project-Build Stage, the NY Prize Selection Committee will approve up to $7,000,000 per project for approximately five projects for build and construction. Evaluation criteria includes:

- The overall cost and benefits of the project
- The project's contribution to public need (increasing safety and quality of life for residents in an outage situation)
- The technical and operational performance of the project
- The demonstrated reliability of the proposed Microgrid configuration
- The use of clean and renewable generation resources in the project
- Overall financial and managerial capabilities of the developer

Given that some community grid projects may already be supported through current or pending NYSERDA awards, funded through other means or otherwise in progress, not every project will have to start with feasibility. Some projects may decide to apply at the design stage, some may apply at the project-build stage. To be eligible for NY Prize support at any stage of the competition, all microgrid/community grid proposals, must meet established criteria for feasibility and design. Applications will be judged against program requirements at each stage of the competition for which funding is being requested.

Project feasibility assessments will be evaluated against prescribed criteria. Those projects selected to advance may be awarded NY Prize support to conduct an audit-grade engineering design with business plan.

In the final competition stage, support will be provided for community grid construction and post-commissioning monitoring and evaluation activities.

Desirable project attributes include, but will not be limited to those projects that:

- Use innovative design, engineering, and construction solutions to integrate distributed energy resources
- Anticipate the use of smart grid technology and demonstrate advances in power electronics, communication equipment, and data sensors and analytics
- Demonstrate practical business models that demonstrate value for utility customers, third parties, utilities, and the bulk power system
- Lead to competitive markets that account for utility costs and revenues and demonstrate new variable pricing structures
- Engage local officials and local citizens in the design of their upgraded energy infrastructure while meeting community needs of safety and resiliency