



LOCAL HIRING & PARTNERSHIP WITH UTILITIES

GRID Alternatives

Learn more about models for supporting workforce development and advancing equitable access to the clean jobs' sector



Solar PV installation by GRID Alternatives volunteers

LOCATION

Oakland, CA (headquarters); Willits, CA; Los Angeles, CA; Chico, CA; Fresno, CA; Riverside, CA; San Diego, CA; Denver, CO; Washington, DC; Masaya, Nicaragua

ENTITY

Nonprofit organization

CLEAN JOB SECTOR

Energy efficiency

GRID Alternatives is a non-profit organization based in Oakland, California with a mission to build community-powered solutions to advance economic and environmental justice through renewable energy. It was founded in 2001 during the California energy crisis by two engineering professionals who wanted to provide free, clean, solar electricity to communities.

The GRID Alternatives (GRID) model is to make solar PV technology practical and accessible for low-income communities, while providing pathways to clean energy jobs. GRID was selected by the California Public Utilities Commission to serve as the statewide program manager for its groundbreaking [Single-family Affordable Solar Homes \(SASH\)](#) incentive program, prompting an expansion across California in 2008. GRID is now the nation's largest non-profit solar installer, serving families throughout California, Colorado, the Mid-Atlantic region, tribal communities, and some international program partners with communities in Nicaragua, Nepal, and Mexico.

GRID is committed to equity, aligning with their mission to build community-powered solutions to advance economic and environmental justice through renewable energy. Their workforce development programs give job seekers the practical experience and networking opportunities they need to compete for local solar company positions. GRID's training philosophy is to help job seekers gain skills in different aspects of the solar industry.

Their training offers the unique opportunity to participate in the installation process from start to finish. Trainees learn while participating in real-world solar installations and getting a complete picture of the industry by meeting the clients and communities served.

The growing solar industry is creating pathways out of poverty for tens of thousands of workers with low entry barriers. GRID's employment training program helps participants launch new careers in solar with over 32,600 people receiving hands-on experience, including volunteers, students, and job trainees. The total time spent on job training-focused installs with GRID amounts to 292,203 hours. Lastly, GRID has around 310 training partners in total—the Center for Employment Training, YouthBuild, Veterans Green Jobs, Rising Sun Energy Center, Green City Force community colleges and vocational schools, and even some high schools. Partnering with these local job training organizations provides students with hands-on experience to complement classroom learning and prepare them for employment in the renewable energy and environmental impact fields.

SUCCESS STORIES

Diana Adams started volunteering with GRID and quickly became a volunteer team leader. After attending a GRID-hosted job fair, she applied for 11 jobs and was offered nearly all of them. Now she's working as a solar installer in Santa Ana. "I am really into it, I love solar," she said. "I am going to do this for the rest of my life. I feel like this is my calling." It doesn't take an advanced degree to get a well-paid, high-growth solar job!

"The vibe was awesome! Everyone was so positive and hardworking." Anthony graduated in December 2018 from the GRID San Diego's Installation Basics Training program. Soon after completing the program, Anthony received a job offer from Sun Mechanical as an Electrical Apprentice.

Website: <https://gridalternatives.org/>