



Facilitation Guide

The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA)

Reducing Expenses and Pollution

This facilitation guide is meant to highlight the positive environmental impacts that the IRA can have in our homes, neighborhoods, cities, and states. Together, we will envision what a flourishing community looks like with IRA benefits implemented, and what our roles may be in ensuring that access to resources are redistributed and invested in the needs and priorities of our very own local communities.

Materials Needed

- Paper
- Sticky notes
- Poster paper
- Markers
- Tape
- Pens

CEED resources to download and print

- IRA Graphic Stories: Community Member Storylines
 - Delaware [pending]
 - Michigan [pending]
 - Minnesota
 - [Accessing Federal Funds as a Community Member in MN \(for print\)](#)
 - [Accessing Federal Funds as a Community Member in MN \(online view\)](#)
 - New Mexico [pending]
- Know What You Qualify For info sheets: For Community Members
 - Delaware [pending]
 - Michigan [pending]

- [Minnesota](#)
- New Mexico [pending]
- IRA Graphic Stories: Tax-Exempt Entity Storylines
 - Delaware [pending]
 - Michigan [pending]
 - Minnesota
 - [Accessing Federal Funds as a Nonprofit in MN \(for print\)](#)
 - [Accessing Federal Funds as a Nonprofit in MN \(online view\)](#)
 - New Mexico [pending]
- IRA Graphic Stories: Local Government Storyline [pending]

Facilitation Steps

A. Introduction: Who are we? Who's all here (name/city of residence)? Goals for today [10 min]

B. What is the IRA? [15 min]

1. Begin by level-setting the space and briefly sharing what the Inflation Reduction Act *is*:

Understanding The IRA

The Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) was signed into law in August 2022 and makes an investment of \$369 billion in clean energy and pollution reductions over the next decade. The law includes more than \$50 billion that will be targeted to disadvantaged communities to advance environmental justice and climate justice.

While much included within the IRA takes steps toward a cleaner, safer energy system, other funding in the bill will flow to coal, oil and gas operations that can **worsen** pollution in already overburdened communities.

2. Prompt participants to share back what they heard, naming key words or takeaways. Use guiding questions:
 - a. Key words: law, legislation, money, funding, clean energy, reduce pollution, overburdened communities, etc.
 - b. What emotions do these words bring for you?
 - c. What do you believe the goal of the IRA is?
 - d. How do you see these goals coming to fruition?
 - e. How can we advocate for overburdened communities bearing the harms of the negative provisions within the IRA?

Tangible Benefits Within The IRA

The IRA's long-term goal is to reduce pollution, but how can this be achieved? We access the program funding and invest in our homes and communities!

For community members/households, the IRA includes billions of dollars in funding for **Home Energy Rebate Programs** and **tax credits** to support households in making energy efficient improvements. This is an opportunity to invest in your home (comfort, and safety) *and* get money back, as well as lessen your monthly energy bills and household emissions.

For local governments, nonprofits, and other tax-exempt entities, the IRA includes many new incentives and funding opportunities in the forms of **tax credits, direct pay, and grants** for clean-energy projects and upgrades.

It is essential that the administration commits to robust implementation and oversight of the IRA spending to ensure that all clean-energy resources reach the communities most in need of new investment. The more individuals and entities aware of these opportunities to invest in their homes and communities, the more likely we are to reach the end goal of reducing pollution [via energy efficiency and community-wide projects and upgrades].

C. Accessing IRA funds and benefits [40 min]

1. Have participants grab a chair and make a large group circle to prepare for a reading of CEED's IRA Graphic Stories: Community Member Storylines and/or IRA Graphic Stories: Tax-Exempt Entity Storylines¹. Explain that these stories are meant to further our understanding of *how to access* IRA benefits and ultimately, the positive in-home and community impacts that can come from accessing and implementing IRA [funded] projects.
2. Distribute pens, sticky notes, and CEED's IRA Graphic Story(ies) – share a brief summary of the story(ies) (see below).

IRA Graphic Stories For Community Members & Tax-Exempt Entities

The IRA allocates funds, benefits, and opportunities related to energy and climate related improvements and investments made in one's home or community. We all have a role to play in taking advantage of these funds and benefits to better our personal health, the health of our community, and ultimately, the health of our climate and earth.

Read CEED's IRA Graphic Stories to follow (1) a local community member who goes about

¹ Select the story most relevant for your audience and/or state; or read *both* storylines to learn the differing opportunities and responsibilities when it comes to accessing and implementing IRA spending and projects.

accessing IRA benefits to invest in home upgrade projects to improve their home's energy efficiency and their personal comfort; and (2) a tax-exempt entity working to fund projects and community investments.

Implementation of IRA benefits will look different in different places, but it is important to have a general understanding of its existence, and the process for accessing the funds and benefits.

3. Begin reading the story(ies); encourage participants to annotate their pages with ideas and questions that come to mind using sticky notes. Continue reading through the entire story, call on participants to read as needed. Allow ~5 minutes for reading and self-reflection.
4. Ask for volunteers to share the pages that stood out to them, and their notes on any initial thoughts, ideas, or questions that arose while reading. Facilitate further reflection using guiding questions:
 - a. How do you see the IRA's funds and benefits making a difference in your home or community?
 - b. How does the general process of accessing IRA's funds and benefits feel? (e.g this feels intimidating, lengthy, accessible)
 - c. For community members: Think about the energy efficiency needs you have for your home; what might you consider purchasing/investing in to address these needs? (e.g a new energy efficient washer and dryer) Explain that these are examples of energy efficient upgrades covered under IRA's funds.
 - d. For tax-exempt entities: Think about energy or climate related projects you'd like to invest in for your organization; what might you consider purchasing/implementing? (e.g install solar panels to supply electricity to your building) Explain that these are examples of purchases and investments covered under IRA's funds and that they can receive direct payments back.
5. Highlight CEED's Know What You Qualify For info sheets for community members (also located on the last two pages of the community member stories) outlining specific programs, and eligibility criteria to access IRA's funds and benefits.
6. Give participants a couple of minutes to read their sheets; instruct them to annotate their sheets, circling or underlining items they may be eligible for and pursue; and ideas and questions that come to mind. Allow ~5 minutes for reading, self-reflection, and annotating.
7. Prompt participants to connect with a partner and share:
 - a. Their willingness and eligibility to go after any of the opportunities listed.
 - b. Their ideas or plans for pursuing and implementing any of the opportunities listed.
 - c. Their motivations to pursue and implement any of the opportunities listed.
 - d. Their hesitations to pursue and implement any of the opportunities listed.

D. Accountability & local impact [20 min]

Taking Advantage of IRA Funds

It is a deeply collective effort to learn about and access the benefits and opportunities provided by the IRA. If we want to see measurable changes in emissions reductions to advance the health of our climate, it is extremely important for individuals, local governments, nonprofits, and other tax-exempt entities to take advantage of IRA funds and invest in their homes, communities, and cities; these community-based investments, when scaled across other states, has the power to transform the country.

1. While still gathered in a large group circle, encourage participants to explore and name where they believe responsibility and accountability should be delegated when it comes to accessing IRA and making small-large investments in our homes and communities. Facilitate the conversation using guiding questions as needed:
 - a. Where can community members make an impact?
 - b. Where can nonprofits or other community serving organizations make an impact?
 - c. Where can our local governments make an impact?
 - d. How can local governments support/invest in their constituency and neighborhoods?
 - e. How can community members hold local governments accountable?
 - f. How can nonprofits and other community serving organizations support/invest in their local communities?
 - g. How can community members hold nonprofits and other community serving organizations accountable?
 - h. While the IRA has many incentives and investments around renewable energy, there are still some harmful provisions that will directly impact frontline, BIPOC communities.
 - i. How can we ensure that these harms are heard and addressed – and who needs to hear and address them?
2. Emphasize that collective action is imperative to respond to the needs of local communities, and that holding local governments and other institutions and entities accountable is key as they have staffing and the ability to access larger sums of grants and investments for the needs of our communities
3. Distribute CEED's IRA Graphic Story: Local Government Storyline, a story from the perspective of a community member, naming the responsibilities local governments have in maximizing the beneficial energy and climate impacts within the IRA in their city. Allow ~5 mins for reading.
4. Ask for volunteers to share the pages that stood out to them. Facilitate further reflection using guiding questions:
 - a. Is your local government doing any of the actions named in the story?
 - b. What do you want to see from your local government in regards to IRA funds and community advocacy and/or investment?

5. Building off of questions answered and discussed above, encourage participants to consider their next steps for accessing IRA benefits and investing into their homes or community.

E. My ability to invest in my community [40 min]

1. Encourage participants to name some ideas of the possible projects the IRA could fund for them (e.g rebate for a new water heater in their home, tax credits for their workplaces to install solar panels, etc.). Document the ideas on a large poster paper, and stick it in the front of the room to be referenced for the remainder of the activity.
2. Pass out paper and markers to all participants. Explain that they will be creating their own graphic story that illustrates a personal and tangible timeline for them to continue learning about projects funded by the IRA, and ultimately, to implement and execute a number of these projects in their homes and communities. Their stories are meant to represent visual action plans that show continued momentum around learning and implementing to truly seize IRA funded opportunities.
3. Instruct participants to draw two lines across their page – splitting their page into three sections. In the top section, have participants write the current month, and its following three months (e.g January - April); in the middle section write the following four months (e.g May - August); and the last section should include the remaining months (e.g September - December). Across the three sections, an entire year should be represented.
4. Referencing the poster paper at the front of the room, encourage participants to select one project idea to commit to starting and (possibly) implementing throughout the next twelve months. Encourage community member participants to also reference CEED's Know What You Qualify For info sheets (located on the last two pages of the community member story) to view specific programs, and ensure they are eligible for certain IRA project funds.
5. Once participants have committed to their project, instruct them to begin their graphic stories – what will they commit to learning or executing in relation to their project each quarter?
 - a. Each section should have their goal(s) related to executing their project written out.
 - b. Their illustrations should represent the actions necessary in reaching their goal(s).
 - c. Note: Remind them to be realistic about their capacity and to not feel overwhelmed with the need to hit the ground running; remind them that learning more, connecting with neighbors, their utility companies, and local organizations is a great way to pace themselves and ensure they feel good about their next steps.
6. Encourage participants to talk amongst each other to share overlapping ideas and next steps. Allow ~30 minutes for conversations and sketching.
7. Give participants a couple of minutes to summarize their stories before reconvening as a larger group.
8. Invite participants share their stories and action plans; guide the conversation to solidify the importance of their goal(s) and actions, using leading questions:
 - a. Who was involved in the process?
 - b. Why is this step important?

F. Reflections & Closing [10 min]

1. Wrap-up; what did participants learn? What will they be sharing with community members?

What remains unanswered?

2. Thank participants for their time and participation; we hope that they learned something new and are energized to continue conversations like today's.