The SolSmart program helps communities become “open for solar business.” Our Regional Organization pathway is bringing the benefits of SolSmart to more communities!

Since 2016, SolSmart’s efforts have helped local governments around the country reduce the soft costs associated with solar. As SolSmart’s reach has grown, we’ve heard from some underserved communities that they would love to participate, but lacked the capacity to engage.

Some communities lack the time, resources, staff, or expertise to adequately consider solar within their communities. To ensure that all communities have the opportunity to benefit from SolSmart, the SolSmart team has turned to regional organizations to help engage with underserved communities and provide more region-specific assistance.

Regional organizations help remove capacity barriers for communities that would otherwise be unable to benefit from the SolSmart program. SolSmart provides participating regional organizations with the training and resources to support communities in their area in implementing policies that meet the needs of their community, without expending unavailable resources.

Involvement of Regional Organizations in the SolSmart program provides several advantages in the capacity they offer to the communities they serve:

- Creating a cohesive plan for the entire region
- Bringing a local perspective to adoption of best practices
- Providing a platform for the communities to share ideas/problem solve
- Providing economies of scale with respect to training sessions and engagement with utilities and community

SolSmart’s “Regional Organization Pathway” is the set of criteria that regional organizations must complete to achieve designation and develop a solar-friendly region. Contact SolSmart@IRECUSA.org to learn more.

Through this pathway, regional organizations will strengthen the region’s resources on:

- Permitting
- Planning, Zoning and Development Regulations
- Inspections
- Construction Codes
- Solar Rights
- Utility Engagement
- Community Engagement
- Market Development & Finance