



Sol Systems contributes \$1.2 million to community organizations in partnership with Microsoft

By SB Staff February 14, 2023




Sol Systems has invested an additional \$1.2 million into community organizations focused on environmental justice, workforce training and climate resiliency. Building on a partnership with Microsoft, this investment builds on the initial \$200,000 invested in 2022 and commits new funding to the original five partners while adding five new partners: Appalachian Voices, Virginia Environmental Justice Collaborative, Community Housing Partners, Climate Access Fund, and Rebuilding Together DC Alexandria.

"At Sol we aim to build critical sustainable infrastructure for the future and also ensure that local communities benefit. We are proud to expand our collaboration and investment with these community partner organizations and Microsoft and look forward to building on this foundation moving forward," said Yuri Horwitz, CEO of Sol Systems.

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The total announced \$1.4 million in investments is the initial phase of a partnership with Microsoft, announced in July of 2020, combining a 500 MW framework power purchase agreement (PPA) with a strategy to invest over \$50 million in communities disproportionately impacted by environmental issues.

"Microsoft has made commitments to environmental sustainability, diversity and inclusion, and racial equity, and an important point of intersection for these commitments is environmental justice. For us, the foundation of pursuing environmental justice is to center communities and those who have been impacted most by industrial pollution and are more vulnerable to climate change. We believe it is important to fund community-serving organizations like these to implement solutions with partners like Sol Systems," said Danielle Decatur, Director of Environmental Justice, [Microsoft](#).

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The commitment to [Appalachian Voices](#) will expand the breadth of support offered by its Appalachian Solar Finance Fund (SFF) to important community institutions such as schools, hospitals, libraries and fire departments in Central Appalachian counties.

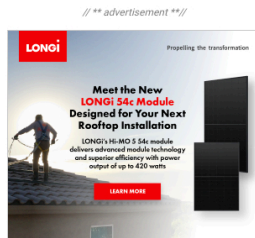
"The Impact investment in the SFF establishes a dedicated 'solar readiness' funding pool targeted toward facilities whose key barrier to solar is related to poor roof conditions. This innovative approach will help overcome pre-development barriers for otherwise viable solar projects in economically depressed areas where deferred maintenance is a chronic issue" said Autumn Long



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continuing, expressed their shared maintenance to a strong leader, Sam Hattam, Sr., Director, Appalachian Solar Finance Fund.



The partnership with [Community Housing Partners](#) (CHP) will allow residents at S.A. Robinson Apartments in Pembroke, Virginia, to obtain critical home repairs and energy efficiency upgrades.

"Not only will this investment help to reduce resident electric bills through increased energy efficiency and improve resident comfort, but it also demonstrates that we value and listen to our residents' feedback," said Shaun Rai, SVP of multifamily housing at Community Housing Partners. "CHP is committed to providing high-quality, affordable, and sustainable housing."

[Rebuilding Together DC Alexandria](#) will use the funding to improve energy efficiency for its residents.

"Creating energy-efficient homes for low-income individuals and families is critical to our mission of creating safe, healthy, and affordable homes for everyone. The investment from Sol Systems to help us make energy-efficient upgrades to supportive housing units will not only benefit the residents but the community and nonprofits that support them," said Katharine Dixon, CEO, Rebuilding Together DC Alexandria.

The [Climate Access Fund](#) aims establish a new model of community solar developed in and for under-resourced communities.

"With Sol Systems' support and partnership with the Henderson-Hopkins School, the Climate Access Fund's 800 kW Solar4Us @ Henderson-Hopkins project in East Baltimore will provide discounted solar power to over 150 low-income households, employment opportunities to community members, and an after-school learning club to middle school students. The impact funding is providing critical financial and technical support to this demonstration project and to the Climate Access Fund's ability to replicate the model," said Lynn Heller, founder and CEO, Climate Access Fund

The [Virginia Environmental Justice Collaborative](#) (VEJC) will use the community investment to build a solar and battery storage resiliency hub in Petersburg, Virginia.

"The VEJC welcomes the initiative, which shares our vision of environmental equity for all communities. We look forward to a collaboration that unites the strengths of each organization to create community impact through large-scale renewable energy procurement and collaboration towards a just energy transition. Together, our united goals are within reach," said Queen Shabazz, CEO, Virginia Environmental Justice Collaborative.



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