



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Just A Start Awarded \$150,000 EmPower Massachusetts Implementation
Grant to Advance Solar Energy Projects**
MassCEC Funding to Support Long-Term Savings for Affordable Housing Residents in Cambridge

Cambridge, MA — November 8, 2024 — [Just A Start](#) has been selected as a recipient of a \$150,000 EmPower Massachusetts Implementation Grant through the [Massachusetts Clean Energy Center](#) (MassCEC). With this funding, Just A Start aims to expand access to renewable energy to our low-income residents by piloting an innovative solar ownership model across our portfolio of affordable housing. The MassCEC Implementation Grant will provide seed funding to allow Just A Start to invest over \$1 million in solar photovoltaic systems, leverage the full tax benefits of the Inflation Reduction Act, and create long-term energy price stability and savings. These systems will deliver clean, renewable energy to low-income residents in [Environmental Justice](#) neighborhoods in Cambridge.

“Massachusetts Clean Energy Center is thrilled to support Just A Start’s efforts to bring the benefits of renewable energy to affordable housing residents,” said **Lisa Dobbs, Senior Program Manager at MassCEC**. “This project is a powerful example of how clean energy can provide long-term savings, resilience, and sustainability for communities that need it most.”

In partnership with [Resonant Energy](#), a leading solar energy company and nonprofit consultant with a mission to build a more equitable clean energy transition, Just A Start will conduct technical assessments, structural analysis, interconnection design, and utility permitting to get these projects shovel-ready. The grant will also fund essential legal and tax guidance to create internal Power Purchase Agreements (PPA) between building owners and the special purpose LLC established to own the solar arrays.

“With this innovative solar project, Just A Start will decrease operating costs and provide electricity benefits to tenants while reducing its reliance on fossil fuels,” said **Keegan Doherty, Affordable Solar Account Manager at Resonant Energy**. “We are excited to be working with Just A Start to set up their housing portfolio for a sustainable and resilient future.”

Through the *Clean Energy for Cambridge Affordable Housing Project*, Just A Start will expand access to renewable energy for affordable housing residents across scattered sites in Cambridge. With the potential to generate substantial long-term savings, the organization aims to install 300 kW-DC of solar energy, which could yield up to \$1 million in lifetime savings. Just A Start is exploring innovative ways to reinvest these savings directly into its residents by reducing utility bills and enhancing resident services. These installations will provide long-term energy stability and resilience to properties, ensuring reduced energy costs over the lifetime of the systems.

“We are excited to take this step forward in our commitment to sustainable, affordable housing,” said **Carl Nagy-Koechlin, Executive Director of Just A Start**. “Support from the Massachusetts Clean Energy Center allows us to leverage cutting-edge solar technology to create lasting energy price stability and reinvest in the communities we serve.”



67-73 Webster Ave, 51-53 Bristol St Cambridge, MA



70 Bishop Allen Drive, Cambridge, MA



8-12 Boardman Street, Cambridge, MA

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About Just A Start:

Just A Start believes that access to stable housing and sustainable careers are the essential building blocks of equitable communities. For more than 50 years, we have focused on meeting the fundamental needs of individuals and families who have been systematically denied opportunities to realize their full potential. Our programs include affordable housing, education and job training, and comprehensive support services, spanning Cambridge and beyond. We have developed and currently maintain 600 affordable apartments. To keep community members housed, we also offer financial and technical assistance to prevent evictions, and support low- and moderate-income homeowners. Finally, we prepare individuals of all ages and circumstances with the skills and knowledge they need to secure fulfilling careers, leveraging their talents to achieve economic mobility and strengthen the region's workforce.