



CHARGED IMPLEMENTATION WORKSTREAM OVERVIEW

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In 2024, the CHARGED Initiative was formed with the goal of removing barriers to reliable and affordable electrification on the distribution system. Founded by GridLab, RMI, and Advanced Energy United, the CHARGED Initiative is designed to make progress outside of traditional modes of change in the industry. The three pillars of work in this initiative are centered around *ideation* (solution development), *education* (solution dissemination), and *implementation* (solution deployment). This factsheet provides an overview of the implementation workstream, including the approach taken, and experiences from our work thus far.

What are the core challenges?

Utilities, advanced energy companies, advocates, and regulators often struggle to align on solutions to support affordable electrification that work for all stakeholders, without triggering lengthy, sometimes contentious proceedings. Regulatory processes place enormous burden on commission staff to reconcile competing positions, and at the same time, on intervenors and utilities to engage. The result is often slow and incremental progress that may result in sub-optimal outcomes that may not keep pace with electrification goals and load growth. The CHARGED Initiative was designed with this primary barrier in mind. While the Ideation workstream of CHARGED generates solutions with multiple stakeholders from across the country, the CHARGED Implementation workstream seeks to support deployment of these solutions within specific jurisdictions or utility service areas. Since the creation of the CHARGED Initiative, the issue of energy affordability has moved front and center, which only strengthens the need for more timely implementation of affordable electrification solutions.

What form can a CHARGED implementation engagement take?

The CHARGED implementation team works directly with one or more utilities and their relevant stakeholder communities to address a specific grid barrier. The form of this support often includes the design and facilitation of in-person workshops to drive toward alignment on key issues related to solution deployment. Stakeholders — including utilities, technology providers, project developers, load customers, financiers, advocates, and regulators — participate side-by-side in structured sessions designed to surface real-world constraints, test proposed solutions, and build shared understanding across traditionally siloed groups. This process can be more effective for generating effective solutions than the traditional approach of submitting comments or testimony into the regulatory record, which by its very nature tends to be adversarial. As required, CHARGED will leverage its technical expertise to support content generation, as well as supporting analysis and research.

The workshop duration is designed to suit the needs of the engagement but has typically

been two days and addresses both technical and commercial dimensions of the issue at hand. Using structured facilitation techniques, CHARGED designs an agenda to move from foundational concepts through design trade-offs to implementation pathways, with a mix of technical presentations (followed by Q&A), and breakout groups that facilitate solution development. Breakout groups are often organized by customer type (e.g., load vs. generation) or topic area. This format has proven especially effective at surfacing differences in stakeholder needs that might otherwise go unaddressed — for example, revealing that load customers and generation developers have fundamentally different preferences for flexible grid connection. Following each workshop, CHARGED synthesizes all feedback into a detailed summary and shares it with the project partner and participating stakeholders to directly inform next steps in program or tariff design.

Where has CHARGED conducted implementation activities?

Many of CHARGED implementation activities have focused on advancing flexible grid connection, building on the ideation activity on this topic. CHARGED has facilitated flexible grid connection workshops with multiple utilities across the country, including Xcel Energy in Colorado, Ameren and ComEd in Illinois, and National Grid, Unitil and Eversource in Massachusetts (via the Interconnection Implementation Review Group).

In addition, CHARGED has been working with Con Edison in New York on identifying opportunities for harmonizing their portfolio of flexible load programs to better serve customers and the grid. Building on the principles developed in the 2025 CHARGED Convening, we define program harmonization as the alignment, consolidation, and/or optimization of a utility's load flexibility programs to deliver meaningful benefits across stakeholder groups.

CHARGED continues to explore additional

implementation opportunities, including but not limited to flexible grid connection, data access platforms, and proactive investment frameworks.

Why It Works

By convening stakeholders in a structured, neutral setting outside of a regulatory proceeding, CHARGED enables utilities and other stakeholders to ultimately engage in formal regulatory processes with clearer, more durable proposals that already reflects the needs of developers, financiers, and load customers. Participants consistently report that face-to-face dialogue between parties that may typically be intervenors and utility staff are able to help convey perspectives more effectively. In addition, cross-sector dialogue, for example, between load and generation stakeholders who rarely engage directly with each other, shifts perspectives, allows for rapid iteration, and surfaces practical solutions that no single party would have developed alone. The result is faster, more workable program designs and a stronger foundation for regulatory approval.

How does a CHARGED implementation engagement get commissioned?

Utilities or other stakeholders can reach out directly to CHARGED if they are dealing with a challenge related to readying the distribution system for electrification. This may be driven by an ongoing working group, regulatory order, or anticipated future challenge. A CHARGED implementation engagement can be commissioned to be responsive to an urgent need or can be proactive in nature, for example, developing a new approach to an existing challenge.



For more information about CHARGED, see chargedinitiative.org