

# Amicus Solar: Spreading next generation enterprise design across an industry

52 company members,  
revenue > \$500 mil.

Purchasing cooperative  
B Corp



**AMICUS SOLAR** is a purchasing co-op founded in 2011 by six independent solar companies, including Namaste Solar, an employee-owned B Corp. The Amicus co-op today is owned by 52 solar photovoltaic (PV) installers and developers. Amicus members collaborate on business issues such as operational efficiencies and sales and marketing strategies. Small solar installers face intense competition from large national companies such as Solar City and Sun Power. By coming together in a purchasing co-op, these small businesses increase their competitive advantage while staying autonomous and local. Serendipitously, the purchasing co-op also demonstrates how a contagion effect can spread next generation enterprise design across an industry.

Amicus is a B Corp, and at last count, 23 of its member businesses are B/benefit corps. Ten Amicus members—A and R Solar, Positive Energy, PV Squared, Revision Energy, Sky Fire Energy, South Mountain Company, Sun Light and Power, Sunbug Solar, and Technicians for Sustainability—are also employee-owned, largely inspired by the initial example of Namaste. These Amicus members receive some of the highest B scores of any industry group.

In 2017, Amicus members founded the Clean Energy Credit Union (CECU), which received the first federal charter for a new credit union in Colorado in 31 years. CECU's mission is to promote clean energy, environmental stewardship, and cooperative enterprises. Using the federally insured deposits of its members, the credit union provides consumer loans to reduce the cost of clean-energy products and services.

**“We envision a world where everyone can participate in the clean-energy movement,”** said board chairman Blake Jones, co-founder of Boulder-based Namaste Solar. This new credit union “will make it easier for people to both invest in and use clean energy in order to help protect our environment and improve our economy.”

Amicus CEO Steve Irvin says the organization seeks consensus in decisions, which “can take time,” but builds “engagement and commitment.” Democratic governance has contributed to the purchasing co-op's success and shown members that ownership, mission, governance, and culture matter.