

Alberta Indigenous Solar Program Guidelines

The Alberta Indigenous Solar Program (AISP) is a program that provides grants to Alberta Indigenous communities or Indigenous organizations to install solar photovoltaic (PV) systems on community-owned or organization-owned facilities.

The program supports solar power projects that assist in:

- Increasing Indigenous participation in Climate Leadership initiatives that reduce community greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions;
- The transition to a lower carbon economy;
- Creating more sustainable, community-energy generation; and
- Equipping Indigenous communities with information to support them in investing in solar energy infrastructure.

Who is Eligible?

- First Nation communities, Metis Settlements, Metis Nation of Alberta and the Aseniwuche Winewak Nation;
- Indigenous organizations, including Friendship Centres and Indigenous community-owned businesses;
- Applicants must be in compliance with the terms and conditions of any previous Alberta Indigenous Relations funding; and
- Applicant communities or organizations must be located in the province of Alberta.

What Types of Projects?

The AISP provides funding for eligible projects that:

- Are compliant with the Government of Alberta's [Micro-generation Regulation 27/2008](#) (for grid-connected projects);
- Are greater than or equal to two kilowatts (kW DC PV array capacity), and less than or equal to one megawatt (MW DC PV array capacity), in installation capacity;
 - For projects between one to five megawatts in capacity, communities or organizations are encouraged to apply for the Alberta Indigenous Green Energy Development Program (AIGEDP).
- Have a cost under \$3.25 per watt. This requirement may be waived in exceptional situations on a case-by-case basis;
- Are completed within one (1) year of the signing of the grant application; and
- Are new installations, where “new” is defined as construction completed or begun after the application was submitted to Indigenous Relations.
- Installations may be considered even if they are not grid-connected.

Funding is not available for projects that are:

- Located on buildings (facilities) or land owned by the private sector or private individuals;
- Located on temporary structures;
- Supported financially by other Government of Alberta grant programs;
- Supported financially by private-utility providers through solar leasing; and
- Above one megawatt in installation capacity.

Contractor Eligibility

Contractors must be a member of the Solar Energy Society of Alberta.

The program applicant must exercise due diligence (ie. conduct their own qualification and reference checks) when selecting a solar PV system provider. For more information on what to look for in a PV system provider and how to check their credentials, please see solaralberta.ca/content/how-choose-solar-provider or contact Indigenous Relations program staff for more information regarding selecting a solar PV system provider at IR.climate@gov.ab.ca.

What Funding is Available?

The AISP provides funding for up to 80 per cent of eligible expenses up to a maximum of \$200,000 per project.

Applicants can access other non-Government of Alberta funded programs to cover the remaining 20 per cent of the project costs. The maximum funding stacking level is 100 per cent of eligible costs.

All funding sources should be clearly identified in the project budget.

What Project Expenses are Eligible?

Applicants must outline all (both eligible and ineligible) expenses in the AISP Letter of Application.

Eligible expenses include:

- Expenses for the purchase of solar PV equipment for the project [e.g. solar PV modules, racking, inverters, transformer (if any), cabling, conduit, fittings, disconnects and monitoring interface, shipping costs];
- Expenses for the design, development, energy modelling, engineering (structural, electrical, civil, geotechnical) specification, procurement and construction of the project;
- Expenses for obtaining the required electrical permit and grid-connected approvals, as well as any required building and development permits;
- Administration costs, including expenses to complete the AISP application and expenses related to ongoing project management to ensure successful completion of the project; and
- Expenses for completing the required electrical and building inspection for the project.

Ineligible expenses include:

- In-kind expenses, however these are to be included in the budget;
- Payments for services that would normally be provided without charge (e.g. honoraria for a community service);
- Training and economic development services;
- Expenses for the operation and maintenance of the project;
- Lease payment expenses incurred after the project is energized;
- Expenses associated with structural upgrades to building(s);
- Expenses incurred by the Indigenous community or organization for permanently-employed staff; and
- Any other expense incurred during the project that does not cover the capital equipment costs, professional installation of the panels, and the required documentation and permits.

Grant Information

Each successful application will be funded on a first-come, first-served basis. Indigenous communities and organizations will be queued in the order in which they submit a completed AISP Application to the satisfaction of the ministry of Indigenous Relations. When the available funding is fully committed, the program will be closed to further applications.

Indigenous Relations, at its sole discretion, reserves the right to deny or limit approval of any AISP Application for reasons including, but not limited to, geographic distribution of grant funding, low energy yield, and inappropriate or insufficient design.

If the program is undersubscribed, additional applications may be invited from Indigenous communities or organizations that have already submitted and received funding from a previous application.

When Do I Apply?

Once the program opens for submission, it will remain open until program funding is fully committed to projects within the fiscal year.

How do I Apply?

The AISP Letter of Application should be downloaded from Indigenous.alberta.ca/AISP.

All applicants must submit a fully completed Letter of Application, including the following information and attachments:

1. [Letter of Application](#) signed and dated by the individual with full legal authority.
2. Demonstrated support for the project, such as:
 - A Band Council Resolution, Council Resolution/Motion, and/or Board motion;
 - A letter of support from the Board of Directors (for Indigenous organizations);
 - Letters of support from other sources that are significant to the project; or
 - Copies of contracts or other commitments to the project.

3. Technical details related to the project, including:
 - A description of where on the building (facility) or property the solar PV system will be installed and what type of mounting will be used (e.g. roof, wall, ground, ballasted, pole, side, attached, building-integrated, off-grid);
 - A structural assessment demonstrating that the building can support solar (if the solar installation is on a building);
 - The total sum of the rated installed capacity (watt DC) of all solar PV systems included in the project; and
 - The cost per watt of the installed capacity.
4. A description of the project, including:
 - A complete budget for the project, listing all expenses and revenue for the project;
 - The anticipated start and end dates for the project; and
 - A quote from the contractor(s) engaged to complete the design, procurement and installation of all solar PV systems included in the project.
5. A completed [AISP Application Submission Checklist](#).

What are the Reporting and Deliverables Expected?

Grant recipients are expected to report on the use of the Indigenous Relations funding through a final report on the project, photos of the finished solar PV panels, a financial statement, and completion of a survey.

For the AISP Program, the following deliverables will be required:

I. Final Report Content Guide

The following outlines the type of information that could be useful for project reports submitted to Indigenous Relations. Please note that any additional information is encouraged, since this guide cannot address every aspect of every project.

A. Project summary:

Provide a short summary of the project. This could include, but **should not be limited to**, a brief background and significance of the project, relevant statistics on the capacity (watt DC), and what were the general outcomes.

B. Results:

- **Activities:** Describe the activities of the project, from contractor deliverables, any retrofit initiatives and/or other recommendations implemented.
- **Outcomes:** What has been achieved? What are the positive and negative outcomes? What is the community proudest of regarding this project?
- **Challenges:** Describe what challenges the project faced in planning financing, on-site logistics, and/or ability to find qualified contractors, etc.
- **Success:** Describe what the community and project managers are most proud of regarding the project.

C. Project verification:

The following documentation must be included as an attachment to the Final Report:

- A copy of the final Interconnection and Operating Agreement with the interconnecting wires service provider (where applicable); and
- Photograph(s) of the project through which all the solar PV modules are visible.

D. Lessons learned:

- Were the objectives of the project achieved? Why or why not?
- Is the Nation or community satisfied with the overall project?
- Was further work needed/mentioned and, if so, how will that be accomplished?
- What would you do differently if you had the chance?

E. Appendices:

- A copy of the Generation Project Notice ([AUC Form A](#)) and supporting documentation submitted to the wires service provider through which the solar PV system is to be connected(if applicable); and
- Include any items of value to report to Indigenous Relations on the project (project drawings, illustrations, charts, warranty docs, etc.).

II. Financial Statement

- A financial statement with an authorized signature, stating the information reported is accurate; and
- Invoices detailing the nature of the work completed, as well as the cost of such work and confirmation of payment by the Indigenous community or organization for all invoices provided.

Deliverables will be due 60 days after the end date of the project.

Follow-up:

Indigenous Relations reserves the right to follow-up with the applicants to evaluate the project effectiveness, including discussions of best practices and maintenance.

How are Applications Assessed?

Once the Letter of Application and supporting documents are received, the following process is implemented:

- An assessment will be conducted by Indigenous Relations to ensure the application letter and other documents contain the required information; and
- An assessment will confirm applicant eligibility and suitability with the AISP.
- Additional information may be requested if an application is incomplete. Applicants will be informed of any deficiencies.

**Who do I Talk to if I have Questions?
How do I Submit my Application?**

1. **Have questions** about the program, services or the grant application process?
 - **Email:** IR.climate@gov.ab.ca (preferred)
 - **Phone:** 780-427-8407
To call toll-free anywhere in Alberta, dial 310-0000, Monday to Friday from 8:15 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
2. **Application forms** and other documents should be downloaded from Indigenous.alberta.ca/AISP.

All submissions must be made electronically to IR.climate@gov.ab.ca.

Please note in the email subject line “AISP Application and (Community/Organization Name)”.

A hard copy of the submission may also be couriered to:

Alberta Indigenous Relations
Attention “Aboriginal Initiatives-AISP”
19th Floor, Commerce Place
10155 – 102 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5J 4G8

NOTE: Funding approvals may take up to 12 weeks.

How will I know if my Application has been Accepted?

A grant manager will communicate the status of the application by email and a final decision will be sent in a letter by email.