

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 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.
- Equipping Indigenous communities with information to support them in investing in solar energy infrastructure.

Who is Eligible?

- First Nations, Aseniwuche Winewak Nation, Metis Settlements.
- Indigenous community-owned businesses and development corporations.
- Tribal Councils, Treaty Organizations, Metis Settlements General Council.
- Métis Nation of Alberta (including Regions and Locals).
- Indigenous not-for-profit organizations, including Friendship Centres with projects related to AISP objectives.
- Applicants must be in compliance with the terms and conditions of any previous Indigenous Relations funding.
- Applicant communities or organizations must be located in the province of Alberta.

Note: If an organization that serves your community applies to AISP, your community is still eligible to apply. As an example, both a Tribal Council and a community served by said Tribal Council are eligible to receive AISP funding during the same funding year.

What Types of Projects are funded?

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.
- Have a cost under \$3.25 per watt.
- Are completed within one (1) year of the signing of the grant application.
- Are new installations, where "new" is defined as construction completed or begun after the application was approved by Indigenous Relations.

NOTE: 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.
- above one megawatt in installation capacity.

NOTE: Projects that are larger than 1MW AC in capacity are encouraged to apply for the Alberta Indigenous Green Energy Development Program (AIGEDP) indigenous.alberta.ca/AIGEDP.

Contractor Eligibility

Contractors must be a member of the Solar Energy Society of Alberta. The program applicant must exercise due diligence by conducting 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 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% of eligible expenses up to a maximum of \$200,000 per project.

- Applicants can access other non-Government of Alberta funding programs to cover the remaining 20% of the project costs. The maximum grant stack funding is 100% of eligible costs.
- All funding sources should be clearly identified in the project budget.

What Project Expenses are Eligible?

Applicants must provide all (both eligible and ineligible) expenses in the AISP of Application budget form.

Eligible expenses

- Expenses for the purchase of solar PV equipment for the project; 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.
- Expenses for completing the required electrical and building inspection for the project.
- Justifiable administration costs of up to 15% for total requested amount of grant, which could include costs related to financial reporting, travel, elder fees/elder honorarium etc.
 - Securing a contractor and ensuring the project is carried out according to the contract developed with the procured contractor.

- Expenses incurred by the organization to prepare documents, process invoices or other administrative or internal costs.
- Also costs specifically incurred to ensure grant agreement deliverables are provided to Indigenous Relations.

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 other economic development activities or 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.
- 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.

When to Apply?

Please refer to the AISP website (indigenous.alberta.ca/AISP) for more details on when to apply.

How do I Apply?

Please refer to the AISP website (indigenous.alberta.ca/AISP) for more details on how to apply.

Applications may be submitted online through the portal on the program webpage indigenous.alberta.ca/AISP or through <http://grants.indigenous.alberta.ca/AISP> or program staff can provide a fillable application form.

All applicants must be able to demonstrate:

- All applications must demonstrate support for the project to be considered for funding, which *at a minimum* will include a:
 - Band Council Resolution (BCR) for applications from a First Nation.
 - Council Resolution for applications from a Metis Settlement.
 - Board Resolution from a community-owned company, development corporation, etc.
 - Board Resolution from a not-for-profit Indigenous organizations.
 - Equivalent demonstration of support for applications as discussed with the program manager.
- Supporting technical details related to the project:

- A structural assessment demonstrating that the building can support solar (if the solar installation is on a building).
- 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).
- The total sum of the rated installed capacity (watt DC) of all solar PV systems included in the project.
- The cost per watt of the installed capacity.
- 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.
 - Quotes from, at minimum, two contractors engaged to complete the design, procurement and installation of all solar PV systems included in the project.
 - A completed AISP Application Submission Checklist.

What are the Reporting Requirements?

Grant recipients are expected to report on the use of the funding received as follows:

- A program final report and a program survey that helps indicate how the project progressed and final outcomes.
- Project verification that includes 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).
 - Photograph(s) of the project through which all the solar PV modules are visible.
 - 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).
 - Include any additional items on the project (project drawings, illustrations, charts, warranty docs, etc.).
- A financial statement with an authorized signature, stating the information reported is accurate.

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 an application is received, the following process is implemented:

- A preliminary assessment of the application will be conducted by program staff to ensure that each submission contains the required information.
 - Additional information may be requested if an application is incomplete. Applicants will be informed of any deficiencies.

- Only correctly and fully completed applications, with all required documentation, that are submitted during the intake period will be reviewed for eligibility and considered for funding.
- Applications will be evaluated by staff against the program's priorities and scoring criteria, which include:
 - Socio-economic benefits and impacts;
 - Number of people anticipated to be impacted;
 - Description of need for the project;
 - Project planning, readiness and due diligence;
 - Described outcomes related to GHG reduction, energy efficiency, electricity generation;
 - Price per watt of installed capacity;
 - Priority will be given to applicants who have not received funding from the program in previous years.

Questions?

Have questions about the program, services or the grant application process?

- Please email IR.Climate@gov.ab.ca.

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 by letter from the Minister of Indigenous Relations.