Project Accelerator - Frequently Asked Questions

What is the role of the Community/Organization in the Project Accelerator?
The focus of the Project Accelerator is to support the development of energy efficiency housing projects for Indigenous communities and housing organizations. We are accepting applications from First Nation, Inuit, and Métis communities and Nations as well as Indigenous housing providers. Each applying community/organization will need to choose a Project Steward who will take part in the training and lead the project on behalf of the community/organization. The Project Accelerator should be viewed as a whole community initiative. Applications with formal leadership support and a commitment to carry-out change will be seen as stronger candidates. Please include formal supports such as Council Resolution, letter of endorsement, or similar letters with your application.

Ideal community/organization applicants will have:
   » A commitment to make change (with formal documents).
   » Wide support for energy efficiency initiatives from community members, leadership, and other partners.
   » A sense of the questions/challenges to address through participation in the program.
   » Support to assist the Project Steward and the overall project.
   » Formal support from the housing department to support energy efficiency work.
   » Completed the full application form.

About the Program

How many participants will be accepted into the program?
We will be accepting up to 20 participants pending funding.

What is the difference between Phase 1 and Phase 2 of the program?

   » Phase 1 – will focus on the early learning and project activities to get your project plans off the ground. This means starting work in your community to collect information about housing and energy, building a team, and speaking with members to understand your community's needs and vision for housing.
      o   Webinar training will be offered to help prepare you for this work.
      o   This phase will take place over 6 months.

   » Phase 2 – is the program intensive. Project Stewards will attend on-site training, and work to take first phase project plans further to build a full project plan.
      o   2 weeks of on-site, in-person training to support project development.
      o   Mentorship will be offered to support this work.

o   This phase takes place over 12 months.

When will I be expected to attend webinars?
The 6 virtual webinars will be scheduled every Tuesday at 1pm ET from June 20 to August 8, 2023.

When and where will the on-site learning take place?
There will be 2 separate weeks of in-person training. Cost of travel and meals will be covered by the program as well as wrap-around supports to enable participation.

  »   Week 1: November 19-25, 2023 – Harrison Hot Springs, BC
  »   Week 2: February 4-9, 2024 – Wakefield, QC

What support and grants will be offered through the program?
Participating communities and organizations who meet deliverables can receive two rounds of grant funding to directly support project development:

  »   **Project Kick-Start Funding:** during Phase 1 of the program, participants will be awarded a grant of $25,000. This grant is designed to support initial planning and community work.

  »   **Project Development Funding**: Participants who complete Phase 1 and meet deliverables will be eligible for up to $100,000 to support project development.

In addition to the grants, the program will offer:

  »   **Project Steward Support:** Bringing It Home will offer wrap-around supports for Project Stewards to cover childcare or other personal needs to enable full participation in the training.

  »   **Mentorship:** Project Stewards will have access to 1-on-1 mentorship with technical experts and mentors to support their work.

What work will need to be done during the Project Accelerator?
The scale of energy efficiency work that will be developed through the Accelerator is a major undertaking, ideal projects will be larger community-scale and could span multiple years. The scope of work can be similar to a medium-sized renewable energy project.

The following are examples of project activities that will need to be undertaken by the community/organization under the leadership of the Project Steward:
  »   Community engagement and project visioning
  »   Engagement and communication with community leadership
  »   Gathering community housing and skills information
  »   Assessing gaps and opportunities for capacity development and project implementation

- » Scoping the energy efficiency project including scale and what measures will be taken
- » Financial pro forma and budgeting
- » Developing an implementation plan
  - o Timelines
  - o Project scope and components
  - o Estimating impacts

Communities/organizations will receive guidance to complete this project work from the program training and mentorship support.

What is a Project Steward?

The Project Steward is the individual chosen to represent their community or organization in the training components of the program. They will be the person to guide the project development work in their community or organization. The term Project Steward was chosen over 'lead' or 'champion' to inspire a deeper sense of care and commitment to supporting the success of the project, in the same way one is a steward of the land.

Project Stewards must commit to fully participating in webinars, in-person training sessions, and lead community-level work throughout the program. The Project Steward will also receive mentorship from technical experts.

Depending on roles in your community, a Project Steward can come from energy, climate change, economic development, housing, or other departments. Please note that the amount of work required for these projects may be more than a Housing Manager can take on.

Ideal Project Stewards have some or all the following:
- » Support from community/organization leadership
- » Support from community members
- » Commitment to attend all training sessions (virtual and in-person)
- » Commitment to stick with the project
- » An eagerness to learn and lead a project

About the Application

How does the application process work?

Applicants should complete and submit the full application form. The form will require information about:
- » Project Steward Info – this will let us know who is applying to lead the community/organization project.
- » Housing Overview Info – this information will build an understanding of where you are coming from as a community/organization on housing and energy.

We have intentionally designed this application to encourage you to connect and engage with your leadership and/or housing department. A fully completed application will score higher in the assessment.

There is a space to attach all other supporting documents on the bottom of the application page. Supporting documents could include:

» **Council Resolution, Mandate Letter, or similar letter** – A letter from leadership to show a commitment to action and to support the Project Steward.
» **Letters of Support (Optional)** – Any extra letters from community, partners, or other stakeholders to show support for a project will strengthen your application.
» **Community Endorsements (Optional)** – Any other types of endorsements or documents to support your application to the program.

Why is information about the community being requested?
The Accelerator program is designed for community-based applications; this information will allow us to understand:

a) That applications are community-based and will receive support.
b) Community readiness and experience with housing and/or energy efficiency work.
c) The type of project your community would like to pursue.
d) How we can refine the program to best support participants.

Why does the application form require information about the Project Steward?
We want to get to know the Project Stewards. The basic information we ask for on the Application Page will allow us to understand a Project Steward's level of experience, their relation to the community, and their commitment to stewarding the project.

How are applications being evaluated?
We will evaluate both the Project Steward and community/organization based on information that we receive through the application. Evaluations will largely focus on the community information that has been provided in the Housing Overview application form.

Project Stewards will be evaluated on their availability to attend all training, their commitment to the role, and if they are supported from leadership and community. We are interviewing shortlisted applicants; this may include an in-person or phone meeting with the Program Team.

Project Questions

What types of projects does the Project Accelerator focus on?
The Project Accelerator program will deliver training that supports the development of energy efficient retrofits to existing homes and high-efficient new build projects.

Do I have to have a project started when I come into the program?

No. While we welcome applications with projects underway, we expect most participants will develop their projects through the accelerator program. We are looking for communities who are trying to improve their housing and infrastructure.

Community Questions

What if we don't have a Project Steward?
Each community or organization will need a Project Steward to take part in the virtual and in-person training. If you can't identify a Project Steward, please reach out to Corey Cote at ccote@indigenouscleanenergy.com to discuss options or look at submitting your application for the next cohort.

What if our community/organization hasn't done any energy efficiency projects yet?
It's okay to apply even if your community has no experience with energy efficiency work. The Project Accelerator is designed to prepare you to begin a project regardless of experience.

How does the community need to support the Project Steward?
Community and/or organization leadership, staff, and housing managers/departments (if applicable) can support the Project Steward by providing authority to make change, access to information, and project development support where needed. These projects should be seen as a community initiative, support for the Project Steward is essential and applications will be assessed on this commitment.

Can remote communities participate?
Yes. This is a national program, and we are accepting community applications from anywhere in Canada.

Project Steward Questions

Will I be responsible for covering the costs of travel, accommodation, or other expenses?
No. Travel, accommodations, and meals will be covered by the program.

What if I need help completing my Housing Overview?
A Project Steward may not be able to fill out the full Housing Overview application without help from leadership, housing, or other community staff.

I've submitted my application, what happens next?
Applications will be evaluated internally by ICE Staff and the Project Steward may be contacted by phone for a short interview.

How long is the commitment period?
The entirety of the Project Accelerator Program is 18 months, but an energy efficiency project can span many years.

If I work full time, can I still participate as a Project Steward?

Yes, you can still participate while employed but be aware that this is an intensive program with the expectation that you attend all virtual training, 2 weeks of in-person training, and lead the development of the efficiency project.

Have More Questions?

If you did not find the answer to any of your questions on this page, you can contact Bringing It Home staff. Corey Cote, Program Manager: ccote@indigenouscleanenergy.com.