

Frequently Asked Questions

Bringing It Home Project Accelerator

General Questions

What is the role of the Project Accelerator?

The goal of the Project Accelerator is to support the development of energy efficiency project plans for Indigenous housing. The program aims to support First Nation, Inuit, Métis communities, and Indigenous housing organizations.

What is the role of the Community/Organization?

The Project Accelerator should be viewed as a **community initiative**. Applicant communities/organizations will select a *Project Steward* who will take part in training and leading project development, but success will require involvement and support from leadership, key staff, members, and partners. Applying communities/organizations should have:

- Formal support from leadership and a commitment to implementing change (i.e. Council Resolution, letter of support or endorsement).
- Commitment to support the Project Steward and the overall project
- Support from community members and other partners
- A sense of housing questions and challenges to address
- Written commitment from their housing department
- Completed the [Application Form](#) and [Housing Landscape](#) (template to be provided)

What is a Project Steward?

The Project Steward is the individual chosen to represent the community or organization in the training components of the program, and to lead the development of a project plan. Project Stewards must commit to fully participating in webinars, in-person training sessions, and leading the project plan development.

Project Stewards will be supported with project coaching, one-on-one technical mentorship, and wrap-around supports to enable participation. The term Project Steward was chosen over 'lead' or 'champion' to inspire a deeper sense of care and commitment in supporting the success of the project, in the same way one is a steward of the land.

What makes a good Project Steward?

Project Stewards are not required to have professional housing backgrounds. While we welcome Housing Managers to apply as Project Stewards, the amount of work required for these projects may be beyond what they can take on while continuing their other duties.

Project Stewards should have:

- Support from leadership
- 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 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** takes place over 6 months with webinars and activities to support getting the project off the ground. Work will begin by collecting information about community housing and energy, building a team, and community engagement to understand the needs and vision for housing. Phase 1 will include:
 - Webinar Training
 - Project Coaching
 - Creating a Project Development Work Plan
- **Phase 2** takes place over 12 months and will guide participants through project plan development. Project Stewards will attend two weeklong on-site intensive training sessions with learning to support project development. The training includes hands-on and classroom learning, tours, and other interactive sessions. Phase 2 will include:
 - On-Site Intensives
 - Additional Webinar Training
 - Coaching and Technical Mentorship
 - Creation of a Comprehensive Project Plan

When will I be expected to attend webinars?

Phase 1 webinars will be scheduled from January to February 2025.

When and where will the on-site intensives take place?

There will be 2 separate weeks of in-person training. Cost of travel, accommodations, meals, and wrap-around supports will be covered by the program.

- Week 1: May 4th – 11th, 2025
- Week 2: August 3rd – 10th, 2025

What support and grants will be offered through the program?

Participating communities and organizations who meet program deliverables can receive two rounds of grant funding to directly support project development:

- **Project Kick-Start Funding:** In Phase 1 participants will be awarded up to \$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:

- **Coaching and Mentorship:** Project Stewards will have access to 1-on-1 mentorship with technical experts and project coaches to support their work.
- **Wrap-Around Support:** Wrap-around supports are offered to Project Stewards to cover childcare or other personal needs to enable full participation in the training.

What work will need to be done during the Project Accelerator?

The scale of energy efficiency work that will be developed through the program is a major undertaking. 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
- Developing an implementation plan
 - Project scope and components
 - Timelines
 - Estimated project impacts
 - Financial pro forma
 - Description of community support

About the Application

How does the application process work?

Applicants should complete and submit the full [application form](#). The form will require:

- **Project Steward Information:** This will tell us who is applying to lead the community/organization project and attend the training.
- **Housing Overview Information:** This 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. There is a space to attach 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 or Endorsement (Optional):** Any extra letters from community, partners, or other stakeholders to show support for a project will strengthen your application.

Why is information about the community being requested?

The Accelerator program is designed for community-based applications; this information will allow us to understand:

- Which applications are community-based and will receive support
- Community readiness and experience with housing and/or energy efficiency
- The type of project your community would like to pursue
- 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 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 the 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 meeting or phone call.

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. Commercial and institutional buildings are also included among the projects that can be planned throughout the program. This program focuses on the initial **planning and development** phase of the project, *not* project implementation. Through tailored training and support, the program equips participants with the knowledge and tools necessary to conceptualize, design, and plan large-scale energy-efficient 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 that most participants will develop their projects through the 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@indigenoucleanenergy.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?

It's okay to apply even if your community has no experience with energy efficiency work. The program is designed to prepare you to begin a project regardless of experience.

How does the community need to support the Project Steward?

Community/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, and meals?

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 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, please contact Corey Cote (Program Manager) at ccote@indigenoucleanenergy.com.