

Community Solar for Nova Scotia Program Update May 2023 ¹



Why community solar?

Community solar programs seek to:

- ▶ Expand solar energy to those who are unable to access it, such as low to moderate income families, populations in traditionally marginalized communities, those living in multi-unit residential buildings and homes unable to install solar PV panels
- ▶ Support economic development through investment in utility scale solar projects
- ▶ Further Nova Scotia's renewable energy targets by providing renewable energy to the grid



Nova Scotia's proposed community solar program

- ▶ Community solar is a broad term, often used interchangeably with Shared Solar
- ▶ Under the proposed community solar program in Nova Scotia:
 - ▶ Project owners can apply to the province to build a community solar garden between 1MW* to 10MW**
 - ▶ Project owners construct, generate and operate the community solar garden
 - ▶ Generated solar energy is sold to Nova Scotia Power Incorporated (NSPI) under a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA)
 - ▶ NSPI sells the solar energy to subscribers
 - ▶ Project owners continue to engage subscribers and provide support with subscription management



*Projects under 1MW may be considered on a case-by-case basis

**Maximum project size will depend on the hosting capacity at the proposed project site, determined by NSPI's interconnection processes

Who can apply as a project owner?

- ▶ Municipalities, towns, townships and villages
- ▶ Not-for-profits
- ▶ First Nations
- ▶ For profit businesses and developers
- ▶ Co-operatives
- ▶ Colleges and Universities
- ▶ A partnership between any of the entities listed above



Project owner application process

Community solar projects require a number of studies in the program application process. Examples of these studies typically include but are not limited to:

- ▶ Detailed site selection study
- ▶ Geotechnical study
- ▶ Preliminary engineering and design



Additional considerations

- ▶ Community solar gardens require space
- ▶ A 1MW community solar garden may require 4-6 acres; 10MW could require 45-50 acres
- ▶ Costs to construct can vary considerably and are dependent on a number of factors
- ▶ Projects will require a mix of equity, funding and financing
- ▶ Taking on a community solar project is not for everyone
- ▶ Whether you are interested as a project owner or subscriber, we encourage you to research community solar gardens and other options such as commercial net-metering and the Greenchoice program

<https://novascotiagcp.com/>



Feasibility Funding

Funding to assist with some of the initial studies required for the application process is available through the following programs, **open now for applications:**

Low Carbon Communities

novascotia.ca/low-carbon-communities/

HCi3

hci3.ca/grants/



How can I learn more?

- ▶ We are in the process of developing materials to assist potential project owners and subscribers with understanding community solar and how they can participate
- ▶ Once the regulations and program are ready we will provide communications promoting webinars, educational materials, the program webpage, the application template and program guide and other resources
- ▶ We are continuing work to identify additional funding for feasibility studies and capital funding for projects and will communicate publicly if funding becomes available. We encourage those interested to continue to research funding options



Next Steps

- ▶ Finalize policy and regulations
- ▶ Complete program guidelines and application process
- ▶ Continue funding exploration

Program launch: Tentative summer/fall 2023

