

Financing and Funding for Community Solar Projects

A guide to the available grants, loans, rebates and incentives | April 2024



Image 1 Berwick Community Solar Project. Photo Credit - Communications Nova Scotia

Disclaimer: Any investment you make before the program approval is at your own risk and does not guarantee eligibility or acceptance into the Nova Scotia Community Solar Program.

Disclaimer – Funding Guide Accuracy: While we have made every effort to compile accurate and up-to-date information in this funding guide, it is essential to recognize that funding opportunities are subject to change. Before proceeding with any investment or application, we strongly recommend that applicants verify all information directly from the original source – the official funding webpage.

Contact Information: Community Solar team at the Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources and Renewables sharesolar@novascotia.ca

Quick Guide

Click the name of financing options below that your organization is eligible for to read more.

Name of Financing and Funding Program	Municipalities	Non-profits	Post-secondary	First Nations	Business
Halifax Climate Investment, Innovation and Impact Fund	X	X	X	X	X
Low Carbon Communities Program	X	X	X	X	X
Renewable Energy Production on a Brownfield	X	-	-	-	-
Smart Renewables Electrification Pathways Program	X	X	X	X	X
Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund	X	X	X	X	-
Low Carbon Economy Challenge Fund	X	X	X	X	X
Clean Electricity Investment Tax Credit	Crown corporations and publicly owned utilities, corporations owned by Indigenous communities, and pension funds.				

[Check other resources that help you find financing options!](#)

Halifax Climate Investment, Innovation and Impact Fund

Offered by: HCl3 (Halifax Climate Investment, Innovation and Impact Fund)

Type: Funding

Description: HCl3 supports innovative projects that help Halifax/Kjipuktuk reach its goal of becoming net zero by 2050 through a just and equitable low-carbon transition. It works through a combination of impact investing and grant funding for projects that are either located in Halifax/Kjipuktuk, or benefit Halifax/Kjipuktuk if they are located elsewhere. For grants, any organization or company except individuals, individual schools or classrooms, provincial crown corporations, and political parties can apply. HCl3 looks to support scalable and replicable projects with direct or indirect GHG reduction potential, community benefits, and positive impact on social equity and reconciliation.

Full Program Details <https://www.hci3.ca/>

Program Contacts grants@hci3.ca or investments@hci3.ca

Low Carbon Communities Program

Offered by: Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources and Renewables

Type: Funding

Description: This program supports community-led projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and promote low-carbon solutions in buildings, electricity, transportation and education. Low Carbon Communities Grants are provided for projects that involve feasibility studies, designs, strategies, planning, engagement and education activities, or testing innovative solutions. The grants can cover up to 75% of the total project eligible costs, up to a maximum amount depending on the project category. The program is open to municipalities, First Nations bands or organizations, post-secondary institutions, businesses and non-profit organizations that have projects that benefit Nova Scotian communities.

Intake Type: Deadline-based. The program will re-open in 2024.

Full Program Details [Low Carbon Communities - Government of Nova Scotia, Canada](#)

Program Contacts lowcarboncommunities@novascotia.ca

Renewable Energy Production on a Brownfield

Offered by: Green Municipal Fund

Type: Loan

Description: This program supports municipal initiatives that generate renewable energy on a brownfield site, with or without its remediation. The program offers a low-interest loan for capital projects, and certain municipal applicants may be eligible for a grant worth up to 15% of the loan. The program is open to all Canadian municipal governments and their partners. The program aims to fund projects that are transformative, impactful, and replicable. Examples of eligible projects include installing solar panels or wind turbines on a brownfield site.

Intake Type: Continuous Intake. The program accepts applications year-round, until the funding is allocated.

Full Program Details [Capital project: Renewable energy production on a brownfield | Green Municipal Fund](#)

Program Contacts gmfinfo@fcm.ca

Smart Renewables Electrification Pathways Program

Offered by: Natural Resources Canada

Type: Funding

Description: The new request for capacity building and Indigenous engagement proposals are open under the Smart Renewables and Electrification Pathways Program. Capacity Building Stream is a funding opportunity for projects that aim to increase the knowledge and skills of communities and organizations related to renewable energy, energy storage, and grid modernization technologies. The stream is open to First Nation, Inuit, and Métis communities, municipalities, non-governmental organizations, and private sector entities that have projects that benefit Canadian communities. The Indigenous Engagement Grants RFP supports projects that involve engagement, consultation, and partnership activities with Indigenous communities and organizations.

Intake Type: Deadline-based. Request for Proposals was due January 31, 2024.

Full Program Details [Smart Renewables and Electrification Pathways Program \(canada.ca\)](#)

Program Contacts sreps-erite@nrcan-rncan.gc.ca

Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund

Offered by: Environment and Climate Change, Government of Nova Scotia

Type: Funding

Description: The Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund is a provincial grant program for local action on climate change in Nova Scotia. It supports community efforts to reduce or remove greenhouse gas emissions, or to prepare for and respond to the impacts of a changing climate. The fund offers grants up to \$1,000,000 for projects that align with the core objectives of mitigation and adaptation, as well as co-benefits such as equity, health, and economy. The fund is open to municipalities, First Nations, non-profits, and post-secondary institutions, and encourages collaboration and regional approaches.

Intake Type: Deadline based.

Full Program Details [Sustainable Communities Challenge Fund \(nschallengefund.ca\)](https://nschallengefund.ca)

Program Contacts: info@sccfns.ca

Low Carbon Economy Challenge Fund

Offered by: Department of Environment and Climate Change Canada

Type: Funding

Description: The Low Carbon Economy Challenge Fund is a federal grant program that supports projects that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and generate clean growth in Canada. The program provides funding for projects that deploy proven, low-carbon technologies, align with Canada's net-zero by 2050 goals, and have multiple community benefits. The program is open to a wide range of recipients, such as private sector organizations, non-profits, municipalities, and Indigenous groups.

Intake Type: Deadline based.

Full Program Details [Low Carbon Economy Challenge - Canada.ca](https://lcef-fefec@ec.gc.ca)

Program Contacts: lcef-fefec@ec.gc.ca

Clean Electricity Investment Tax Credit

Offered by: Government of Canada

Type: Tax Credit

Description: This is a 15% refundable tax credit for eligible investments in non-emitting electricity generation systems, abated natural gas electricity-fired electricity generation,

stationary electricity storage systems, and equipment for the transmission of electricity between provinces and territories. This credit is available for taxable and non-taxable entities such as Crown corporations and publicly owned utilities, corporations owned by Indigenous communities, and pension funds.

Tax Credit Details [A Made-in-Canada Plan: Affordable Energy, Good Jobs, and a Growing Clean Economy - Canada.ca](#)

Canada Infrastructure Bank Investment

Offered by: Canada Infrastructure Bank

Type: Financing (debt, equity etc)

Description: The Canada Infrastructure Bank (CIB) is a federal Crown corporation that invests in public infrastructure projects that have revenue-generating potential and are in the public interest. Focus of their investments include, but not limited to, clean power and green infrastructure. The CIB accepts project proposals from public sponsors, such as municipalities, provinces, territories, Indigenous communities, and federal departments or agencies. The project must align with the CIB's mandate, sectors, and criteria. The CIB also proactively engages with potential sponsors to identify and develop projects. The CIB has a wide range of financial instruments, including: senior debt, subordinated debt, preferred equity, equity and structured risk positions, depending upon the needs of a specific project.

CIB Website: [Canada Infrastructure Bank \(CIB\) | Canada Infrastructure Bank \(CIB\) \(cib-bic.ca\)](#)

Other Useful Resources on Funding

[Nova Scotia Federation of Municipalities Municipal Funding Database](#)

- **Funding Opportunities:** The database lists various grants from federal, provincial, and private sources that are relevant to municipal services. The grants are divided into ten categories and have application deadlines and webinars indicated.
- **Grant Navigation:** The database provides a Grant Navigator, Lucy MacLeod, who can assist with the application process and help create competitive and informed applications. Lucy can be contacted via email at lmacleod@nsfm.ca.

[CLIMAtlantic List of Funding Opportunities Website](#) This page lists multiple sources of funding for climate adaptation projects across the region from federal, provincial and non-government sources.

[FCM's Green Municipal Fund: Funding opportunity finder](#) : Looking for funding for your sustainability project? Use the tool by FCM to find Freen Municipal Fund options that could suit your municipality.

[Climate Change Funding Programs \(Government of Canada\)](#)

[Funding Opportunities by Natural Resources Canada](#)