



Information Sessions on the First Nations Electricity Program

What We Heard Report

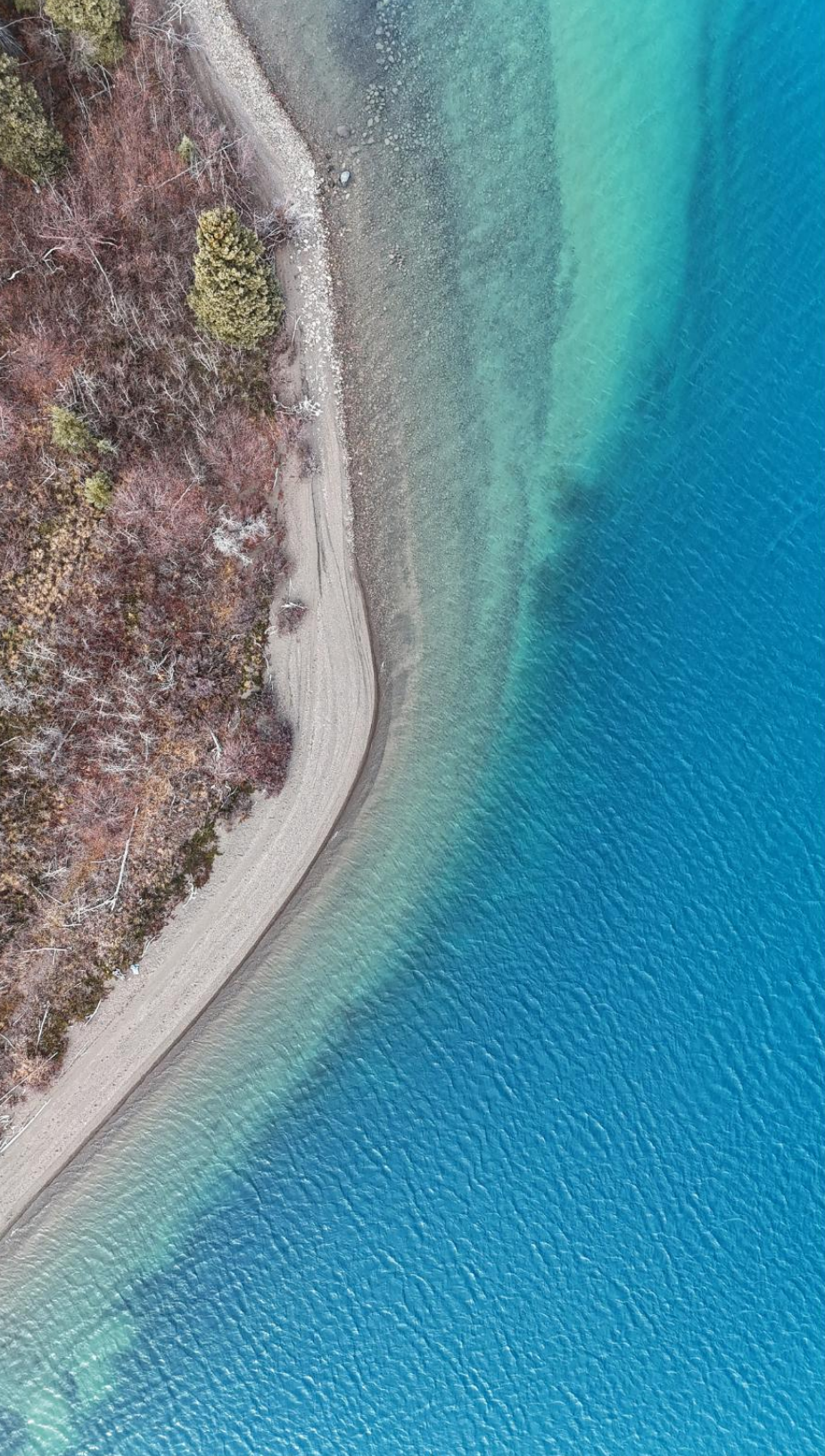


Table of Contents

Executive Summary..... 3

Background 4

Participant Overview..... 5

Overview 5

Presentations..... 6

Thematic Analysis of Participant Questions17

Conclusion19

Appendix I – Outreach Materials21

Appendix II – Participant List.....27

Appendix III – Questions & Answers.....30

June 24, 2026 – Information Session #1.....31

June 25, 2026 – Information Session #2.....42

July 7, 2026 – Information Session #3.....49

Written Submissions.....62

DISCLAIMER

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Executive Summary

In late June and early July 2026, **New Relationship Trust (NRT)** and BC Hydro hosted three virtual information sessions on the **2026 First Nations Electricity Program (FNEP)** to share proposed program parameters, provide an overview of the program process, and answer questions related to the program. Mahihkan Management supported the planning and facilitation of these sessions and prepared this What We Heard Report, which summarizes participant questions, comments, and key discussion themes.

Analysis of the discussions revealed a consistent set of themes among participants. Participants were primarily focused on understanding how the program would be implemented, how projects would be assessed, and how the initiative could support long-term First Nations clean energy development.

A significant portion of the discussion centred on the application and assessment process. Participants sought a clearer understanding of how proposals would be reviewed, how funding decisions would be made, and what information would be used to assess project competitiveness. Requests for greater visibility into the assessment process reflected a desire for increased confidence and predictability when preparing applications.

Financial considerations featured prominently throughout the sessions as participants sought clarification on how the funding model would support project development, eligible costs, and whether the program's financial structure would support community-scale projects. Questions frequently centered on the relationship between available funding, project economics, procurement pricing, and long-term project sustainability.

Another recurring area of discussion focused on the practical challenges associated with project development. Participants identified electricity system interconnection, infrastructure capacity, study requirements, and project timelines as key considerations. Many were also interested in opportunities for innovative approaches to grid integration and community generation project development.

Participants consistently sought clarification regarding the scope of eligible projects and flexibility of the program. Their questions reflected interest in a broad range of technologies, ownership structures, and project configurations.

Many participants also requested additional guidance on technical requirements, application documentation, timelines, and program terminology.

As the sessions progressed, discussion expanded beyond individual project questions to broader considerations about the future of First Nations energy development. Participants emphasized the importance of ensuring that the program complements existing Nation-led energy strategies, supports Indigenous ownership and leadership, and provides predictable opportunities for future project development. The discussions emphasized a strong interest in building long-term partnerships that enable First Nations to advance their own energy priorities while contributing to British Columbia's (B.C.'s) growing electricity needs.

Overall, participants expressed support for the objectives of FNEP, while identifying opportunities to enhance program clarity, transparency, and flexibility. This feedback offers insights into how measures to better communicate and implement the program may be refined.

Background

In 2023, the Province of B.C. provided NRT with a \$140 million contribution to expand the **B.C. Indigenous Clean Energy Initiative (BCICEI)** and further support small-scale, First Nations-led clean energy projects that are connected to the grid. The funding was intended to help offset the higher anticipated costs of these projects and led to the development of FNEP – a new stream of the BCICEI to be administered separately. The program will support:

- The development of small-scale First Nation-led on-grid clean energy projects.
- First Nation economic development and Provincial reconciliation objectives.
- Measures to meet the growing demand for power in B.C. while limiting the impact on BC Hydro ratepayers.
- Offsetting costs to enable smaller clean energy projects to be competitive.

Acronym List

BCER	– BC Energy Regulator
BCICEI	– B.C. Indigenous Clean Energy Initiative
BCUC	– B.C. Utilities Commission
CEDR	– Community Energy Diesel Reduction
CFP	– Call for Power
CIB	– Canadian Infrastructure Bank
COD	– Commercial Operation Date
CPI	– Consumer Price Index
DGIA	– Distribution Generator Interconnection Agreement
EPA	– Electricity Purchase Agreement
FNEP	– First Nations Electricity Program
IPP	– Independent Power Producer
kW	– Kilowatt
MW	– Megawatt
MWh	– Megawatt Hours
NRT	– New Relationship Trust
POI	– Point of Interconnection
RFP	– Request for Proposal
SIS	– System Impact Study
SOP	– Standing Offer Program

Each proposed project must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- Ability to connect to BC Hydro’s integrated distribution system.
- Greater than 2 megawatts (MW) and less than or equal to 15MW in size.
- First Nations majority ownership (51% or more).
- Clean or renewable resource, as defined by the *Clean Energy Act*.
- Commercial operation date before December 31, 2032.

The 2026 intake of FNEP is planned to launch in Fall 2026. Successful applicants will enter into a **Contribution Agreement** with the NRT and an **Electricity Purchase Agreement (EPA)** with BC Hydro.

Objectives

In June and July 2026, NRT and BC Hydro hosted three virtual information sessions to provide a detailed overview of the application process for FNEP. The sessions were also an opportunity to gather feedback prior to the program launching this fall.

Session Overview and Structure

Participant Overview

Overall, a total of 258 participants attended across the three information sessions (Table 1), representing 92 organizations and 69 First Nation communities. A complete list of participating organizations and communities is in [Appendix II](#).

June 24, 2026	June 25, 2026	July 7, 2026
74 Participants	42 Participants	142 Participants

Overview

Each information session began with a welcome from facilitator, Cara Lenoir. For two of the sessions, Elder Buddy Joseph, Squamish Nation, provided opening remarks to ground the sessions. Following introductions and housekeeping, NRT and BC

Hydro provided presentations, which are summarized in detail below. Participants were then provided the opportunity for questions after each presentation block.

Presentations

New Relationship Trust – BC Indigenous Clean Energy Initiative and First Nations Electricity Program Overview

Representatives from NRT, including Sarah Powell, Manager of Programs and Services, and Katya McClintock, Director of Clean Energy, outlined the role of NRT, noting that it was established in 2006 as a non-profit organization that is dedicated to building capacity within First Nations communities. They explained that NRT provides support through funding and non-repayable grants to First Nations in B.C., including programs such as the BCICEI.

Powell and McClintock provided an overview of the BCICEI, expanding on the funding priorities and the next expected intake. They noted that Pacific Economic Development Canada (PacifiCan) and the Province of B.C. have funded the initiative since 2016, providing \$40 million to more than 170 projects led by over 90 First Nations. They added that the next intake is anticipated for winter 2026. Their priorities include:

- Clean energy developments in grid-connected, remote, off-grid, diesel-dependent, or end-of-line communities
- Job creation
- Community well-being
- Increased energy self-sufficiency
- Revenue generation for communities' clean energy projects
- Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions reduction

Powell and McClintock described the BCICEI's four different program streams:

- Stream 1: Community energy planning – ideal for communities who are new to clean energy projects.
- Stream 2: Project Planning – includes activities such as pre-feasibility and feasibility studies, site selection, permitting and initial engineering design with up to a \$300,000 funding cap.
- Stream 3: Small Scale Energy & Efficiency – this most popular stream is for non-revenue-generating projects such as rooftop solar on residential buildings, and retrofits that reduce energy within homes, such as heat pumps, with up to a \$300,000 funding cap.

- Stream 4: Pre-construction/Pre-COD – this stream, with a funding cap up to \$500,000, is for larger, primarily revenue-generating projects. This funding stream was created to address a gap in available funding immediately before construction begins.

Powell and McClintock then spoke about the Province’s \$140 million contribution to NRT to expand the BCICEI and further support small-scale, First Nation-led clean energy projects on BC Hydro's integrated electricity grid. Powell and McClintock noted that due to its complexity and alignment with BC Hydro’s procurement process, the FNEP will operate separately from the four existing BCEICI streams. Powell and McClintock explained that the NRT funding process would run in partnership with BC Hydro’s procurement process, adding that the program was renamed to make it easier to distinguish from the original BCICEI.

BCICEI and FNEP Clean Energy Project Funding Lifecycle

Powell and McClintock described how the BCICEI and FNEP funding supports the project development lifecycle. They highlighted that the new FNEP program would support additional project phases, such as finalizing capital costs, lending, entering into the EPA process, and construction. The project’s due diligence would be carried out by NRT, the Province of B.C., and BC Hydro, with support from PacifiCan, Natural Resources Canada, as well as Indigenous representatives and clean energy

leaders. They emphasized that the processes are separate but also interconnected. The current BCICEI program and the new FNEP program are visually represented in Figure 1. As a final note on the lifecycle table, Powell and McClintock explained that BCICEI support occurs earlier in the process, while the new FNEP lifecycle begins later, though still ahead of Commissioning and Operations.

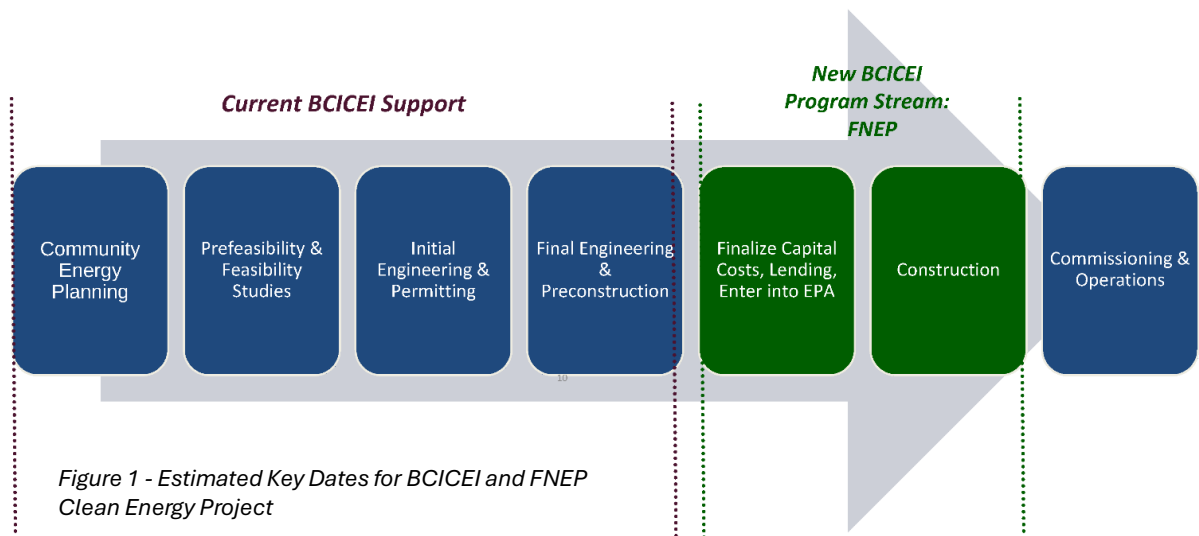


Figure 1 - Estimated Key Dates for BCICEI and FNEP Clean Energy Project

FNEP Objectives

Powell and McClintock noted that the FNEP objectives focus on supporting small-scale, First Nation-led clean energy projects connected to the BC Hydro distribution grid, advancing First Nations' economic development and Provincial reconciliation goals, and addressing clean energy funding gaps. They added that the program also helps meet B.C.'s growing electricity needs while minimizing impacts on BC Hydro ratepayers. By closing these funding gaps, smaller clean energy projects are better able to compete and progress successfully through the development lifecycle.

FNEP Activities to Date

Powell and McClintock outlined the steps taken since the \$140 million funding announcement in June 2023. Following the announcement, the NRT and its program development partners developed an initial framework for the new funding stream and released those early concepts in a discussion paper in May 2024. Powell and McClintock added that using that paper as a foundation, they hosted a series of First Nations engagement sessions in May and June 2024 to gather feedback on program design. In May 2025, NRT issued a request for information to gather details about the projects First Nations were interested in advancing. The insights gathered from these past engagements have since guided the program development team as they work on a detailed program design.

Powell and McClintock closed their presentation by emphasizing that the FNEP is guided by the BCICEI Advisory Committee, whose membership includes executive representatives from NRT, the Province of B.C., BC Hydro, PacifiCan, Clean Energy BC, Indigenous representatives, and clean energy leaders.

FNEP Eligibility Criteria

McClintock was invited to speak further on the FNEP eligibility criteria, program structure, funding mechanisms, funding caps and eligible activities, and the funding and procurement process.

McClintock reiterated that to qualify for the FNEP, projects must be able to **connect to BC Hydro's integrated distribution system, be greater than 2 MW and less than or equal to 15 MW**, have at least **51% Indigenous ownership**, use **clean or renewable resources** as defined under the *Clean Energy Act*, and achieve **commercial operation before December 31, 2032**.

FNEP Structure Overview

Funding Disbursal

McClintock outlined the FNEP structure and described how NRT funding and the BC Hydro procurement processes will align. McClintock explained that NRT will serve as the program's funding-disbursement entity, providing grant funding for the interconnection studies required by BC Hydro and eligible capital costs for project development. McClintock added that based on their analysis, the capital grant model already in use at NRT offered the most effective and practical structure for the program and that successful projects would then enter into a Contribution Agreement with NRT.

BC Hydro Procurement and Decision-Making Process

McClintock explained that the BC Hydro procurement process will run parallel to NRT's funding program, with successful projects entering an EPA with BC Hydro. She spoke about a joint decision-making process between NRT and BC Hydro that includes evaluation criteria and a joint review process. She added that a successful project will be selected based on overall score and funding request.

FNEP Funding Mechanisms

McClintock provided an overview of the FNEP funding, which supports the **capital grant requested, up to 80% of interconnection study costs**, as well as other eligible **network upgrade** costs supported through NRT funding. BC Hydro will contribute **a portion of network upgrade costs** and will establish the **Electricity Benchmark Price based on the 2025 Call for Power (CFP) Results**.

FNEP Funding Caps & Eligible Activities

McClintock explained that FNEP funding will be determined using an estimated rate of \$1,200/kW, subject to a project funding cap, with an anticipated budget of approximately \$35 million per intake. McClintock emphasized that these figures are estimates and may be adjusted as the program develops. NRT anticipates that planning and most pre-construction costs would flow through the current BCICEI streams, especially for projects that are early in the process. Examples of eligible activities under FNEP funding include the following, with additional details to be provided as the program approaches launch:

- Professional, scientific, technical and contracting services
- Salaries, administration, and project management costs
- Contract labour and equipment for project construction, including site preparation
- Technology procurement

FNEP Funding & Procurement Process

McClintock then provided a high-level overview of the FNEP structure, outlining the parallel processes for NRT funding and BC Hydro procurement, along with where they intersect. FNEP will start with an optional enrollment process with NRT. McClintock recommended enrollment as an opportunity for First Nations to discuss their projects, including a determination of the lifecycle development stage and potential funding. She added that the initial step for BC Hydro's procurement process is the interconnection studies, for which NRT will cover up to 80% of the study costs. The findings from the studies will help First Nations proponents make decisions on the final **Request for Proposal (RFP)** package, including whether to proceed with the project. McClintock continued to explain that First Nations who decide to move forward will then submit a grant funding request to NRT and the RFP package to BC Hydro. After BC Hydro and NRT complete their evaluation processes, successful projects will then enter into a Contribution Agreement with NRT and an EPA with BC Hydro.

BC Hydro – Procurement Process Overview

BC Hydro delivered a three-part presentation on the FNEP procurement process.

Buying Power 101 (BC Hydro – Emily Wang)

Emily Wang, project manager of the FNEP program at BC Hydro, explained that the presentation is for informational and preliminary guidance purposes only and is subject to change. She emphasized that the upcoming RFP and EPA should be considered the authoritative source of information.

In her presentation, Wang explained that an **Independent Power Producer (IPP)** is an independent entity that develops and operates electricity generation assets and sells electricity to BC Hydro. These IPPs can include First Nations, energy companies,

industrial firms, and local governments. Wang added that IPPs can take on different forms depending on generation technology, the size of the project and the ownership structure.

Procurement Process Overview (BC Hydro – Emily Wang)

Wang provided a high-level overview of the draft Procurement Process, noting major steps before and after the issuance of the RFP. She emphasized that the final process will be outlined in the final RFP once it is finalized and released.

Wang explained that after enrollment with NRT, proponents will need to begin by completing the **FNEP Basic Distribution (Basic D) request** submitted through a **Basic Distribution System Information Request application** to BC Hydro. After receiving the Basic D results, proponents will then need to request a BC Hydro **System Impact Study (SIS)**. The SIS will help further assess the project's interconnection requirements.

Wang explained that once the RFP is issued and before the proposal submission deadline, BC Hydro will hold information sessions to help proponents prepare their submissions. Wang added that these sessions are intended to provide clarification, practical guidance, and ensure participants have the support and resources needed throughout the process. Wang then outlined the next steps in the procurement process: when the RFP closes, the proposals received will be evaluated in accordance with the evaluation process contained in the RFP to determine the project(s) recommended for selection. Those selected will receive an EPA from BC Hydro along with a Contribution Agreement from NRT.

Distribution Generator Interconnection Process (BC Hydro – Chris Roberts)

Chris Roberts, who oversees the technical interconnection for distribution generator projects, explained that the importance of the technical studies is to ensure a generator can safely connect to BC Hydro's system to inject clean energy. In describing distribution lines, he asked participants to picture the smaller lines typically seen in residential neighbourhoods, back alleys and businesses. Roberts used analogies throughout his presentation to help participants with all levels of expertise follow along. He equated the connection between clean energy and BC Hydro's distribution system to connecting a new road to their highway.

Roberts explained that the Distribution Generator Interconnection process begins with the submission of an FNEP Basic Distribution request, adding that there is no charge for the first two Basic Distribution requests. Referring to the road analogy,

Roberts explained that the Basic D is similar to asking the transportation authority whether a road can be connected to the highway and how much traffic the highway would carry if that connection were made. Ideally, they would not take on projects that would trigger costly upgrades to the existing infrastructure; low complexity would not include replacing transformers at existing BC Hydro substations or increasing the footprint of their existing substations.

Roberts explained that the SIS would then be carried out, with its results identifying the required interconnection upgrades and associated work, estimated with a cost accuracy of +100/-35%. NRT will reimburse up to 80% of the SIS costs. Roberts compared it to road engineers conducting a traffic study to determine if the new road will cause traffic jams and impact other drivers who already use the highway.

Roberts then outlined the next steps after the SIS report has been issued – a Facilities Study would be initiated to develop a detailed design, cost and project schedule. Roberts explained that the Facilities Study builds on the SIS by providing a detailed design of the network upgrades to connect generators. The facilities study will help determine exactly what is needed with a cost accuracy of +15%/-10%. He added that this is equivalent to determining how the two roads will meet, i.e., if there will be a merge lane or if there should be an intersection, and how many overhead lights and signage will be needed to ensure safety and that existing users are not impacted.

He concluded his presentation by explaining that a Distribution Generator Interconnection Agreement (DGIA) is then signed at which point BC Hydro will implement their scope of work outlined in the Facilities Study Report.

Request for Proposals Overview (BC Hydro – Emily Wang)

BC Hydro's presentation continued with details on the draft eligibility requirements and evaluation criteria. Wang noted that meeting the draft eligibility requirements is a prerequisite for being considered in the evaluation process. The draft eligibility requirements include the following:

- **Location:** In B.C.
- **Project Type:** Greenfield projects; expansions allowed (but not preferred)

- **Generation Technology:** Single source of clean or renewable resource (as defined by the *Clean Energy Act*) from a commercially proven technology
- **Project Size:** Greater than 2 MW and less than or equal to 15 MW
- **Point of Interconnection (POI):** Direct interconnection to BC Hydro's integrated distribution system OR indirectly through a third party, but no indirect connections through other utilities (e.g., FortisBC)
- **Commercial Operations Date (COD):** Before December 31, 2032
- **First Nations Equity Ownership:** Minimum 51%
- **System Impact Studies:** Completion of System Impact Studies
- **First Nations Consultation Adequacy Review:** Passed First Nations Consultation Adequacy Review, staying within the program's grant cap
- **U.S. Supplier:** U.S. Suppliers are not eligible to participate

After passing the eligibility assessment, conformity review and the First Nations Consultation Adequacy Assessment, the proposal enters the evaluation process. While still under development, the evaluation process will consider factors such as risk assessment (including financial, permitting and approvals, technical and energy resource risk categories), total grant funding requested, network upgrade costs, and the extent of First Nations economic participation (e.g., community capacity building, job creation, economic benefits, environmental benefits).

First Nations Consultation (BC Hydro – Bob Ayers)

Bob Ayers from BC Hydro's Indigenous Relations team provided additional details of BC Hydro's consultation approach and standards. Ayers explained that the duty to consult First Nations is triggered if BC Hydro's decision to enter into an EPA could potentially incrementally impact Aboriginal rights, title and treaty rights. This would include projects that are on-reserve, treaty land, Nation-owned fee-simple land, or on Crown land. Ayers added that if any part of the project is on Crown land, then consultation with First Nations who might claim that land is also required.

Ayers explained that BC Hydro delegates the procedural aspects of consultation to proponents (because proponents have more information about their projects than BC Hydro does) and then reviews their consultation. He emphasized that if the proponent's consultation is not adequate, BC Hydro will not enter into an EPA. He also noted that BC Hydro does not review the consultation of other Crown agencies, for example with respect to their permitting referrals. Ayers identified the following consultation standards that BC Hydro will use to assess the adequacy of a proponent's consultation, noting that these will be posted in the RFP. At the time of bid submission, a proponent has to have:

- Provided First Nations with all information necessary for them to determine concerns and potential impacts and to have given them sufficient time to raise questions, concerns, and comments with the proponent.
- Respond appropriately to all questions, concerns, and comments or have a plan to do so;
- Followed up on all commitments to First Nations or have a plan to do so; and
- Actively sought input and facilitated the consultation process and have a consultation plan demonstrating how the proponent will continue to do so into the future.

Electricity Purchase Agreement (BC Hydro – Sarbinder Singh)

Sarbinder Singh, a member of BC Hydro's IPP Portfolio Management team, provided an overview of draft key terms of the EPA offered by BC Hydro.

Singh described the EPA as a formal commercial agreement that transfers electricity produced by the IPP to BC Hydro at the POI. BC Hydro pays for the electricity received at the Point of Interconnection (POI) at a price specified in the agreement. Singh noted that this is net of any losses that may have been incurred between the metering point and the POI. The key provisions include project definition outlining capacity, the technology used, specifications of key equipment, and the proposed POI. Singh added that the EPA also sets rights and obligations of each party, and that the EPA is subject to B.C. Utilities Commission (BCUC) regulatory review.

Singh explained that BC Hydro intends to offer benchmark pricing based on 2025 CFP results. Singh referenced the benchmark price for the 2024 CFP as \$86 per megawatt hour (MWh); the 2026 value of the 2024 CFP benchmark price is approximately

\$89.70 per MWh after adjusting for inflation. 100% of the FNEP EPA price will be escalated to the B.C. Consumer Price Index (CPI) (All Items) up to the Commercial Operations Date (COD), after which the BC CPI escalation will be applied to 30% of the EPA price. The EPA term will be 30 years from the COD. Singh added that the price will be adjusted for Time of Delivery and an additional credit of 30 cents per MWh will be applied if Canadian content exceeds 50% in the capital cost. BC Hydro will also recognize the IPPs' commitment to providing winter capacity by providing pricing credits.

Singh noted that in alignment with the intent of the FNEP program, the IPPs will be required to maintain First Nations ownership at a minimum of 51% during the EPA term, and any decrease in ownership interest will result in price reduction. The terms for energy delivery will be similar to other EPAs that BC Hydro has executed in the past. Singh pointed out that BC Hydro will have the exclusive right to energy produced by the IPP; BC Hydro will accept energy delivered at the POI net of any losses between the metering point and the POI. Singh added that BC Hydro will have no obligation to accept or pay for energy in excess of the hourly limit, emphasizing that there will be no payment for any energy delivered before the COD.

Singh noted that the FNEP EPAs will not require performance security, though such requirements may apply under other BC Hydro agreements. There will be no liquidated damages in the EPA except for capacity commitment shortfalls.

Singh explained that in addition to the EPA, the IPPs will be required to execute the following agreements with BC Hydro: 1) Distribution Generator Interconnection Agreement; 2) Meter Lease Agreement; 3) E-Meter Access Agreement; 4) First Nations Side Letter; and 5) Electricity Service Agreement.

Timeline and Next Steps

Before closing the session, McClintock provided an overview of the anticipated FNEP 2026 timeline and next steps, explaining that Summer 2026 will involve information sessions, the What We Heard Report, and final program design. In Fall 2026, over an estimated six-week period, NRT will offer optional enrollment alongside BC Hydro's reviews of Basic D applications. Once that phase is complete, BC Hydro will begin issuing the RFP and accepting SIS requests, and NRT will open its SIS funding application window. Spring 2027 will mark the closing of the RFP and the deadline for NRT's FNEP capital grant funding applications.

Lastly, Summer 2027 will include an evaluation period, followed by a period in Fall/Winter 2027 during which successful projects will be selected, BC Hydro will award EPAs, and NRT will issue the Contribution Agreements.

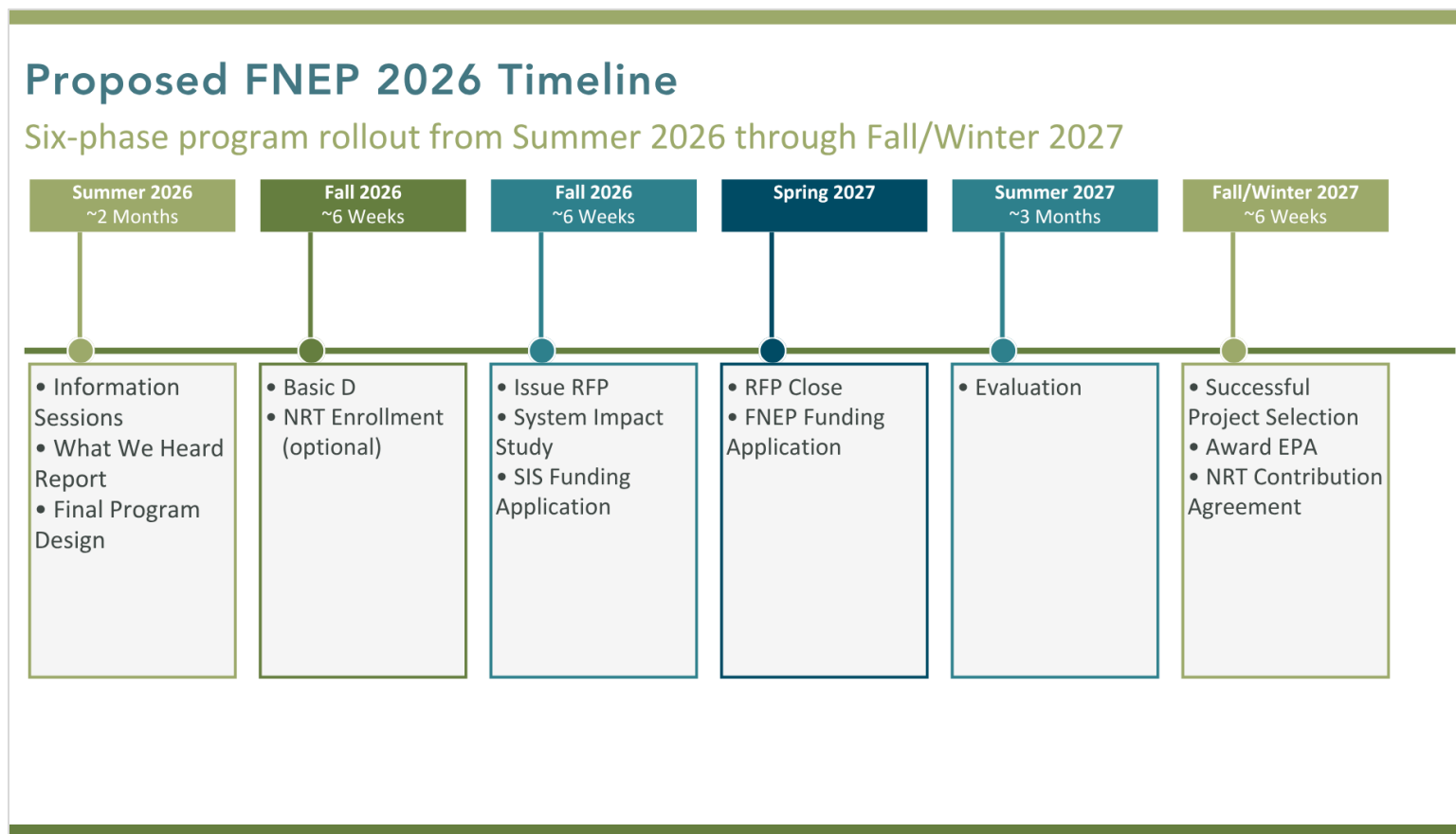


Figure 2 - Proposed FNEP Timeline (2026)

Thematic Analysis of Participant Questions

These sessions were structured around information sharing; Participants were given opportunities to ask questions and provide comments following the presentations from NRT and BC Hydro. Questions raised across the three information sessions were analyzed to identify recurring topics and areas where participants consistently sought additional information or clarification. As a result, the themes below reflect the topics, concerns, and information needs identified through participants' questions and comments.

1. Evaluation Criteria & Transparency

The most consistent theme across all sessions was participants seeking clarity around the evaluation criteria and wanting greater transparency on the decision-making process. Participants repeatedly requested the evaluation criteria and weighting factors and scoring matrix. Many wanted to better understand how to submit competitive applications, and the majority of attendees supported making the evaluation framework publicly available.

2. Funding Structure, Budget, and Financial Support

Another common theme involved funding structure, program budget, and financial support. Participants consistently asked about funding caps, total program funding, eligible costs, reimbursement (e.g., professional studies and engineering costs), repayment expectations, and how many projects could realistically be funded. Questions reflected a desire to understand both the scale and sustainability of the funding program.

3. Commercial Viability, Pricing, and Procurement

Numerous questions focused on benchmark pricing, EPAs, return on investment, economies of scale, regional pricing, time of delivery factors, capacity incentives, and overall project economics. Participants sought assurance that First Nation projects could be financially viable under the proposed program design.

4. Interconnection and Grid Infrastructure

Across all sessions, interconnection was identified as one of the largest barriers for implementing a project. Participants asked about transmission versus distribution connections, study requirements and timelines, network upgrades, grid constraints, single-phase systems, innovative interconnection approaches, and ownership of new infrastructure.

5. Project Eligibility and Program Flexibility

Participants asked for clarity on eligible technologies, project sizes, batteries, storage, transmission projects, rooftop solar, distributed generation, Canadian content requirements, ownership models, and participation in multiple programs. Participants wanted confidence that the program could accommodate diverse community circumstances and project types.

6. Application Process and Program Guidance

Participants requested clearer guidance on application requirements, engineering expectations, documentation, definitions, timelines, future RFPs, and procurement schedules. Many questions reflected a desire for more comprehensive guidance materials to support applicants.

7. First Nations Leadership, Ownership, and Community Priorities

While present throughout the information sessions, this became a dominant theme in the third session. Participants emphasized that the program should support existing Nation-led energy plans, encourage Indigenous ownership, respect territorial priorities, and provide flexibility for communities to pursue their own energy development objectives.

8. Long-Term Program Certainty

Participants had questions regarding the long-term nature of the program. They wanted to understand whether the program will have future funding rounds or was the beginning of a longer-term procurement strategy, with long-term budgets and predictable procurement schedules.

Conclusion

The three information sessions provided an important opportunity for First Nations, industry representatives, and other interested parties to learn about the FNEP and ask questions. The high level of participation and engagement throughout the sessions demonstrated strong interest in advancing First Nation-led clean energy development and highlighted the importance of continued collaboration between First Nations, NRT, and BC Hydro.

The questions and comments received throughout the process reflected both the diversity of projects being considered and the common challenges faced by prospective applicants. Participants consistently sought greater clarity regarding program requirements, funding, procurement processes, project evaluation, and interconnection. As discussions evolved, participants focused on broader priorities, including supporting Nation-led energy planning, strengthening Indigenous ownership and participation, and providing greater certainty for long-term project development.

Overall, the feedback indicates broad support for the objectives of the FNEP and recognition of the program's potential to advance clean energy development, economic opportunities, and reconciliation. At the same time, participants identified several opportunities to strengthen program implementation through enhanced guidance materials, increased transparency around assessment and decision-making processes, and continued communication as the program evolves. Realizing these opportunities would help expand applicants' understanding of program expectations and support the development of strong, competitive proposals.

Continued engagement with First Nations and program participants is seen to be an important component of ensuring the program responds to emerging needs while contributing to a more sustainable, reliable, and inclusive electricity system for the province.



APPENDICES

Appendix I – Outreach Materials

Agenda – June 24, 2026



Participant Agenda Information Sessions on the First Nations Energy Program 2026

Wednesday, June 24, 2026
9:00am – 12:30pm PDT

Zoom Access Information:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88174919113?pwd=wsvbvuUlehFB4UayK8MBgmSFw9q6Lf.1>

Meeting ID: 881 7491 9113

Passcode: 074458

Participant Agenda

9:00am	Welcome and Introduction - Welcome from Facilitator - Opening by Elder - Introduction and Housekeeping
9:20am	New Relationship Trust and BCIEI Overview Overview of FNEP & Funding Available Program Timeline Presented by New Relationship Trust Participant Q&A
10:20am	HEALTH BREAK
10:30am	BC Hydro Procurement Process Overview – Part 1 Buying Power 101 – presented by Emily Wang Participant Q&A Procurement Process Overview – presented by Emily Wang Participant Q&A Distribution Generator Interconnection Process – presented by Chris Roberts Participant Q&A

Figure 3 - Agenda for June 24, 2026 (Page 1)

11:15am	HEALTH BREAK
11:25am	BC Hydro Procurement Process Overview – Part 2 Request for Proposals Overview – presented by Emily Wang Participant Q&A First Nations Consultation – presented by Bob Ayers Participant Q&A Electricity Purchase Agreement (EPA) – presented by Sarbinder Singh Participant Q&A
12:10pm	Participant Closing Words & Feedback
12:20pm	Session Summary & Next Steps
12:30pm	Session ends

Figure 4 - Agenda for June 24, 2026 (Page 2)

Agenda – June 25, 2026



Participant Agenda
Information Sessions on the First Nations Energy Program 2026

Thursday, June 25, 2026
9:00am – 12:30pm PDT

Participant Agenda

9:00am	Welcome and Introduction - Welcome from Facilitator - Opening by Elder - Introduction and Housekeeping
9:20am	New Relationship Trust and BCICEI Overview Overview of FNEP & Funding Available Program Timeline - Presented by New Relationship Trust Participant Q&A
10:20am	HEALTH BREAK
10:30am	BC Hydro Procurement Process Overview – Part 1 Buying Power 101 – presented by Emily Wang Participant Q&A Procurement Process Overview – presented by Emily Wang Participant Q&A Distribution Generator Interconnection Process – presented by Chris Roberts Participant Q&A
11:15am	HEALTH BREAK
11:25am	BC Hydro Procurement Process Overview – Part 2 Request for Proposals Overview – presented by Emily Wang Participant Q&A

Figure 5 - Agenda for June 25, 2026 (Page 1)

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	First Nations Consultation – presented by Bob Ayers Participant Q&A Electricity Purchase Agreement (EPA) – presented by Sarbinder Singh Participant Q&A
12:10pm	Participant Closing Words & Feedback
12:20pm	Session Summary & Next Steps
12:30pm	Session ends

Figure 6 - Agenda for June 25, 2026 (Page 2)

Agenda – July 7, 2026



Participant Agenda Information Sessions on the First Nations Energy Program 2026

Tuesday, July 7, 2026
9:00am – 12:30pm PDT

Participant Agenda

9:00am	Welcome and Introduction - Welcome from Facilitator - Opening by Elder - Introduction and Housekeeping
9:20am	New Relationship Trust and BCICEI Overview Overview of FNEP & Funding Available Program Timeline - Presented by New Relationship Trust Participant Q&A
10:20am	HEALTH BREAK
10:30am	BC Hydro Procurement Process Overview – Part 1 Buying Power 101 – presented by Emily Wang Participant Q&A Procurement Process Overview – presented by Emily Wang Participant Q&A Distribution Generator Interconnection Process – presented by Chris Roberts Participant Q&A
11:15am	HEALTH BREAK
11:25am	BC Hydro Procurement Process Overview – Part 2 Request for Proposals Overview – presented by Emily Wang Participant Q&A

Figure 3 - Agenda for July 7, 2026 (Page 1)

1

	First Nations Consultation – presented by Bob Ayers Participant Q&A Electricity Purchase Agreement (EPA) – presented by Sarbinder Singh Participant Q&A
12:10pm	Participant Closing Words & Feedback
12:20pm	Session Summary & Next Steps
12:30pm	Session ends

Figure 4 - Agenda for July 7, 2026 (Page 2)

Information Backgrounder

Information Sessions on First Nations Electricity Program 2026

- Funded by a \$140 million endowment provided by the Province of B.C.
- Administered jointly by the New Relationship Trust (NRT) and BC Hydro.
- Successful applicants will enter into a funding agreement with the New Relationship Trust and an Electricity Purchase Agreement with BC Hydro.

About the First Nations Electricity Program

In 2023, the Province of B.C. provided New Relationship Trust with a \$140 million endowment to expand the B.C. Indigenous Clean Energy Initiative and further support small-scale, First Nations-led clean energy projects that are connected to the grid by helping to offset the higher anticipated costs of these projects. This funding led to the development of the First Nations Electricity Program – a new stream of the BC Indigenous Clean Energy Initiative. The program will support:

- the development of small-scale First Nation-led on-grid clean energy projects
- First Nation economic development and Provincial reconciliation objectives
- addressing the growing demand for power in B.C. while limiting the impact on BC Hydro ratepayers
- offsetting the costs to enable smaller clean energy projects to be competitive

Proposed Project Eligibility Criteria

The project must:

- be able to connect to BC Hydro's integrated distribution system
- be between 2MW and 15MW in size
- have First Nations majority ownership of 51% or more
- be clean energy technology as defined by the Clean Energy Act
- have a commercial operation date before December 31, 2032

Initial proposed program design is outlined in a 2024 [discussion paper](#) and engagement [summary](#).

Estimated Key Dates

Information Meetings on Program Elements & Process	Spring-Summer 2026
Issue What We Heard Report and share key documents	Summer-Fall 2026
Procurement & Application Period	Fall 2026-Early Spring 2027*
EPA Award	Spring-Summer 2027*

*Dates to be finalized

Your Involvement

New Relationship Trust and BC Hydro are hosting three virtual information sessions. The sessions will provide a detailed overview of the application process for the First Nations Electricity Program 2026 and an opportunity to gather feedback to inform the final program parameters.

New Relationship Trust and BC Hydro are working with Mahihkan Management to facilitate these information sessions.

How to Join

The same information will be shared at each session. Please register for only one session to ensure everyone can participate.

DATE	TIME	REGISTRATION
Wednesday, June 24, 2026	9:00am- 12:30pm	Register Here
Thursday, June 25, 2026	9:00am- 12:30pm	Register Here
Tuesday, July 7, 2026	12:30pm	Register Here

To register click on the registration link above and provide your information. If you are unable to attend any of the listed sessions, please send your feedback in writing to events1@mahihkan.ca.

ABOUT THE ORGANIZERS

New Relationship Trust

New Relationship Trust (NRT) is an Indigenous-led nonprofit based in B.C. Since 2006, the NRT has distributed funding to First Nations communities across B.C. to advance governance, economic development, education, clean energy, food sovereignty, and long-term self-determination.

BC Indigenous Clean Energy Initiative

Administered by the NRT, the BC Indigenous Clean Energy Initiative (BCICEI) provides support and capacity-building funds to First Nations, tribal councils, and organizations majority owned by First Nations working on the development of clean energy projects in B.C.

In June 2023, the Province of British Columbia announced a contribution of \$140 million to NRT to expand the BCICEI and further support small-scale, First Nation-led clean energy projects on BC Hydro's integrated electricity grid. Interest earned from the endowment is currently being used to support existing BCICEI funding streams, including pre-construction costs for small, distribution-scale projects.

Mahihkan Management

Mahihkan is an Indigenous-owned business that specializes in designing and delivering Indigenous engagements and events. Culturally and ethnically diverse, Mahihkan works with contractors representing many cultures, including Indigenous Peoples and have worked in collaboration with government and Indigenous led organizations to deliver engagements within BC and across Canada. For more information, visit: mahihkan.ca

For questions, comments or more information on how to be involved, contact events1@mahihkan.ca.



Invitation E-mail

You're Invited: Information Sessions on the New First Nations Electricity Program with NRT and BC Hydro



Hello,

On behalf of New Relationship Trust and BC Hydro, Mahihkan Management is pleased to invite you to attend an upcoming information session on the First Nations Electricity Program 2026 (the program) opening this fall.

Participants will be provided with an overview of the program design and have an opportunity to provide feedback and ask questions on program parameters.

These sessions contain time sensitive information. Sessions will not be recorded and available after the fact. Representatives are encouraged to register as further opportunities won't be available prior to the program commencing this Fall.

More About the First Nations Electricity Program

The First Nations Electricity Program 2026 is a new stream of the BC Indigenous Clean Energy Initiative, to be administered separately. The program was developed to support First Nations economic development through the advancement of small-scale, First Nation-led, on-grid clean energy projects.

The program will support small-scale clean energy projects that are connected to the grid. Successful applicants will enter into a Contribution Agreement with the New Relationship Trust and an Electricity Purchase Agreement with BC Hydro.

More information on the program can be found in the attached backgrounder.

More About These Sessions

Participants will be provided with an overview of the program design and have an opportunity to provide feedback and ask questions on program parameters.

These sessions build on the objectives and outcomes of the engagements that took place with BC First Nations in May and June of 2024. Information about the outcomes of the 2024 engagements can be found in the discussion paper and [engagement summary report](#).

New Relationship Trust and BC Hydro are working with Mahihkan Management to facilitate three virtual information sessions at the following dates and times.

Session Dates & How to Register

The same information will be shared at each session. Please register for only one session to ensure everyone can participate.

Date	Time	Registration
Wednesday, June 24, 2026	9:00am-12:30pm PDT	Register Here
Thursday, June 25, 2026	9:00am-12:30pm PDT	Register Here
Tuesday, July 7, 2026	9:00am-12:30pm PDT	Register Here

To register for a session, please click on registration link above and provide your information.

Who Should Attend

- Representatives from BC First Nations which may include leadership, staff supporting capital projects and or climate, and land and resource management staff
- Representatives from BC First Nations Economic Development corporations
- Project developers and consultants working with a First Nation

Other Ways to Provide Feedback

Participants are also welcome to send feedback and questions on the design of the First Nations Electricity Program 2026 to events1@mahihkan.ca.

Questions? Email Mahihkan Management at events1@mahihkan.ca

Thank you,

Mahihkan Management
on behalf of New Relationship Trust and BC Hydro



Email events1@mahihkan.ca
Website www.mahihkan.ca
1466 Enderby Ave, Delta, BC V4L 1S5



Appendix II – Participant List

Communities and Organizations Represented

First Nations

Boston Bar First Nation
Bridge River Indian Band
Carrier Sekani Tribal Council
Cheslatta Carrier Nation
Citxw Nlaka'pamux Assembly
Coldwater Indian Band
Doig River First Nation
Fort Nelson First Nation
Gitanyow Hereditary Chiefs
Gitlaxt'aamiks Village Government
Gitxaala Nation
Homalco First Nation
Huu-ay-aht First Nation
Kanaka Bar Indian Band
Kitsoo Xai'xais Nation
Kitsukalum Indian Band
K'omoks First Nation
Lake Babine Nation
Laxgalts'ap Village Government
Lheidli T'enneh First Nation
Lil'wat Nation
Lower Nicola Indian Band
Malahat First Nation
Mamalilikulla First Nation
Musqueam Indian Band
Nak'azdli Whut'en First Nation
Neskonlith Indian Band
Nuu-Chah-nulth Tribal Council
Office of the Wet'suwet'en

Organizations

Acestes Power
Accelerating Community Energy Transformation
– University of Victoria
ADK Group of Companies
Advantage Engineering Ltd.
AOE Accumulated Ocean Energy
ʔaq'am Community Enterprises
AtkinsRealis
B6 Consulting Inc.
Barkley Project Group
BBA Consultants
Blue Harp Consulting
Boney Creek Development
Burns Lake Native Development
C3 Alliance
Carisbrooke Consulting Inc.
Coastal First Nations and Great Bear Initiative
Cheslatta Contracting LP
CIMA+
Clean Energy Association of BC
Clean Energy Research Group – Simon Fraser
University
Coastbuild Consulting Inc.
Coben Advisory Inc.
Community Power
Converge Infrastructure Advisory
EcoSmart Foundation
EDF Power Solutions
Elemental Clean Fuels

Communities and Organizations Represented

First Nations

Okanagan Indian Band
Pacheedaht First Nation
Pauquachin Nation
Penticton Indian Band
Quatsino First Nation
Saik'uz First Nation
Saulteau First Nations
Seabird Island Band
shíshálh Nation
Shxw̓ha:y Village
Shxw'ówhámél First Nation
Skeetchestn Indian band
Skowkale First Nation
Skwah First Nation
Snuneymuxw First Nation
Songhees Nation
Spuzzum First Nation
Stellat'en First Nation
Stswecem'c Xget'tem First Nation
Tahltan Nation
Takla Nation
T'it'q'et First Nation
T̓kém̓lúps̓ te Secwépemc
Tl'azt'en Nation
Toquaht Nation
Tsartlip First Nation
Tsawout First Nation
Tsawwassen First Nation
Tseshaht First Nation
T̓sid̓eld̓el First Nation
Ts'il Kaz Koh First Nation
T̓silhq̓ot'in National Government
Tskwaylaxw First Nation

Organizations

Elemental Energy
Energy Economics Solar
Extropic Energy Inc.
First Nation Power Development
First Nations Energy & Mining Council
First Nations Utility Battery Partnership
First Nation Power Development Inc.
Fraser Basin Council
Generations Energy Consulting
Gitxaala Enterprises Corporation
Gitxaala Environmental Services
Global Public Affairs
Green Cat Renewables Canada
Hakai Energy Solutions
Hazelwood Construction Services
Headwater Capital Consulting
Hub International
Innergex
International Petroleum Corporation
Kikinaw Energy
Kitsumkalum Economic Development
Knight Piesold Ltd.
Kerr Wood Leidal Associates Ltd.
Lateral Agency
Massif Energy
MCE Consulting
McElhanney Ltd.
Metlakatla Stewardship Society
Moytelexw Sts'ailes Development
Nahwitti Plateau Project
Natural Forces Solar
Natural Resources Canada
Nch'kay Development Corp.





Communities and Organizations Represented

First Nations

Upper Similkameen Indian Band
Wei Wai Kum First Nation
West Moberly First Nations
Whispering Pines/Clinton Indian Band
Williams Lake First Nation
Yaqan Nuʔkiy
Yekooche First Nation

Organizations

Nu Energy Corp
Oceanvolt Solar & EV
ODE Consulting Inc.
Osprey Power Inc.
PACE Canada Development
Pipestem Enterprises Ltd.
Qualus Canada Ltd.
Quatsino Economic Development
Ratcliff LLP
Raven Thermal
Reconcept Canada
Riverside Energy Systems
Scwénwen Land Development Corporation
Sea to Sky Energy Solutions
Seabrook Strategies
SES Consulting
Skookum Manufacturing
SkyFire Energy
Sp'akw'us Civil Constructors Ltd.
Summit Power Management Inc.
Sunrise Energy
Sunspear Microgrid
Tll Yahda Energy
Trinity Consultants Canada
Tu Deh Kah Geothermal
Tuya Terra Geo Corp.
Unify Partners
Upper Nicola Holdings
Urban Systems Ltd.
Wildstone Construction
Xatsull Development Corporation
Xepá:y lálém Development

Appendix III – Questions & Answers

The following section provides a record of the questions raised and responses given during the three FNEP information sessions. However, it is worth noting that some questions could not be addressed during a session and are being answered for the first time in this section.

This section also captures the questions and comments that informed the thematic analysis presented in this report, while providing additional context on the topics, areas of interest, and points of clarification identified by participants. The questions and responses have been organized according to the information session they occurred in, followed by the responses provided by NRT and/or BC Hydro.

DISCLAIMER

This document is provided solely for the purpose of providing general information about the First Nations Electricity Program and all content remains subject to change. This document does not create any legally binding obligations, rights, or liabilities between the reader of this document and the New Relationship Trust, BC Hydro, or the Province of B.C. The reader of this document is encouraged to seek independent legal and other professional advice about their participation in the First Nations Electricity Program.

Symbol Legend

The following symbols have been used to visually represent the writer of each response:



New Relationship Trust



BC Hydro

June 24, 2026 – Information Session #1

Q: Is there a repayment requirement based on profitability for the grant funding?



In Session Answer: No. The current approach is a capital funding model estimated at approximately \$1,200/kW, though details remain under development. (NRT)

Q: Are there funding limits for various types of clean energy projects within each intake?



In Session Answer: Not at this point. (NRT)

Q: Is this a First Nation version of BC Hydro's Request for Power?



In Session Answer: There will be a BC Hydro procurement process. (NRT)

Q: What are the evaluation criteria based on?

In Session Answer: The evaluation criteria are expected to be included in the final RFP package. (BC Hydro)



Q: Are 2 MW Indigenous community solar projects eligible? Projects under BC Hydro's new community generation program recently approved by BCUC?

In Session Answer: Projects under BC Hydro's new community generation program would be eligible under the existing BCICEI Small Scale Clean Energy stream. (NRT)



Supplementary Answer: More information on the BCICEI can be found on the NRT website: [Indigenous Clean Energy Initiative](#)

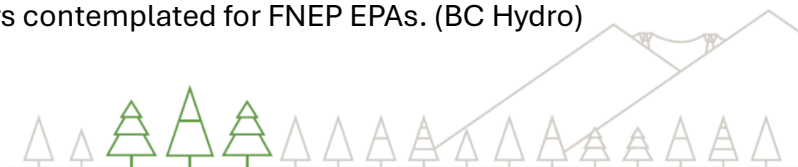
Q: Is it possible for projects of this scale to interconnect to the BC Hydro transmission grid (instead of distribution)?

In Session Answer: This program is only for distribution voltage projects. It's for projects that are 25,000 volts or below, not transmission ones, which are 60,000 volts and above. (BC Hydro)



Q: Will there be regional adjustment factors to the price?

In Session Answer: There will be no regional adjustment factors contemplated for FNEP EPAs. (BC Hydro)



Q: So, there is a special base rate for First Nations for the duration of the EPA?

In Session Answer: No. A common benchmark price is expected be offered to all successful projects. (BC Hydro)

Q: First Nations are required to own 51%, but does this mean that they have to provide 51% of the capital? If so, what is the estimated payback period per projected financials before First Nations start receiving any profit?

***Answer:** Ownership and capital structures will vary between projects, and the estimated payback periods will also vary accordingly. (NRT)



**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*

Q: Will BC Hydro ensure that the financials work for the benefit if First Nations if they get involved?



***Answer:** Both the BC Hydro and NRT evaluation processes will consider the financial viability of projects.

**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*

Q: We are currently awaiting BC Hydro upgrades due to the size of our residential solar projects. Would we then need potentially further upgrades for this opportunity?

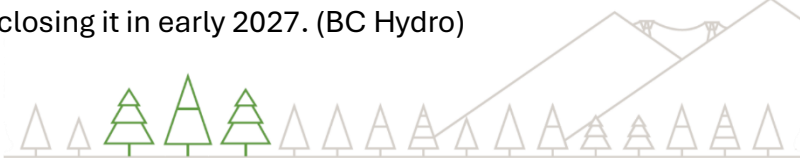
***Answer:** The study will determine if potential future upgrades are required. (BC Hydro)

**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*



Q: Any estimate for RFP deadline?

In Session Answer: Opening the RFP in the Fall 2026 and closing it in early 2027. (BC Hydro)

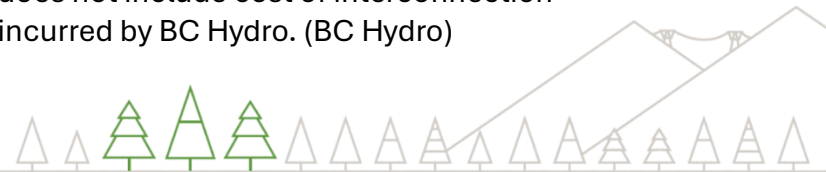


Q: Is there a risk that, after spending money on feasibility studies, the project may still not be approved by BC Hydro?

In Session Answer: Yes. BC Hydro's completion of interconnection studies does not guarantee selection. Projects must still successfully proceed through the joint BC Hydro and NRT evaluation process. (BC Hydro)

Q: Does the Canadian content include interconnection and BC Hydro internal costs?

In Session Answer: The Canadian content credit applies if capital cost constitutes more than 50% Canadian content. It does not include cost of interconnection incurred by BC Hydro. (BC Hydro)



Q: The 500 kv transmission line runs right through our Nation, a potential site for a project would be 4 km away from said line. Is this viable?

In Session Answer: No, FNEP is for projects connecting to BC Hydro's distribution system. (BC Hydro)



Q: How many MW of contracts are expected to be awarded in the first round?

In Session Answer: There is no set target in terms of megawatt or megawatt-hour. The number of contracts award will be determined based on the funding that is available in the first intake and the funding cap. (BC Hydro)



Q: Is the price fixed at contract or escalated until connection COD?

In Session Answer: The price is determined as of the execution date of the EPA and is escalated by 100% at BC CPI (All Items) until IPP achieves the COD. (BC Hydro)



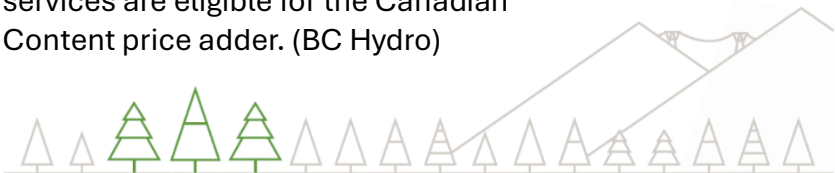
Q: If a system impact study is pending with BC Hydro, can it be prioritized to ensure it is done before the application period ends?

In Session Answer: The first intake of this program is in fall 2026. Each project that has completed a system impact study will be evaluated together as part of the RFP process. (BC Hydro)



Q: For the Canadian content requirements, are international proponents permitted, or just Canadian-based companies?

In Session Answer: Please review the CFP 2025 documentation, we have defined information on eligibility of suppliers for the RFP and a Canadian Content price adder incentive in the Specimen EPA. U.S. Suppliers are not eligible to participate in RFP. Only Canadian supplied goods and services are eligible for the Canadian Content price adder. (BC Hydro)

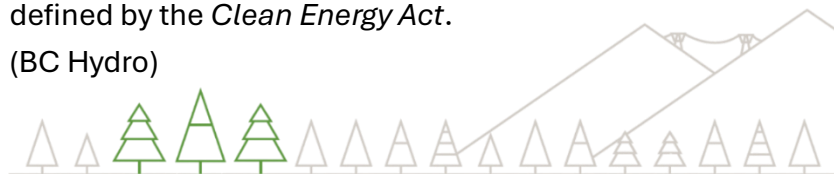


Q: What is a First Nations side letter? In Session Answer: It relates to contingencies associated with BCUC approvals and consultation matters. (BC Hydro) Supplementary Answer: The EPA Side Letter is an agreement between BC Hydro and an IPP, entered into separately but concurrently with the EPA. In the EPA Side Letter, the IPP releases BC Hydro from liability for any failure by BC Hydro to fulfill an obligation relating to impacts of the EPA or project that BC Hydro owed to First Nations prior to entering into the EPA. BC Hydro’s liability for any failure after the EPA is signed will be addressed in accordance with the provisions of the EPA. The EPA Side Letter is separate from the EPA so that the release and EPA provisions relating to BC Hydro liability will continue even if the EPA is found to be non-enforceable. (BC Hydro)	Q: Can you define capital cost? In Session Answer: It is the cost that is incurred by IPP prior to achieving a COD and can be capitalized under the applicable accounting policies. An accountant would be more suitable to answer this question and provide further details. (BC Hydro)
Q: How many MW/MWh of contracts are anticipated to be awarded in the first round? In Session Answer: There is no target in terms of MW or MWh with this program. It is based on the amount of funding that is available and the funding cap per intake. (BC Hydro)	Q: Will there be additional value provided for 51+% Indigenous ownership? In Session Answer: Our current thinking is to provide a higher score for projects with a higher level of First Nations ownership during Evaluation. (BC Hydro)

Q: Does BC Hydro evaluate all generation technologies equally, or are certain technologies, such as wind, given preference? Based on recent successful projects, wind appears to have been favoured; would that also be the case for this program?

In Session Answer: BC Hydro considers and evaluates all power generation technologies equally, as long as these technologies are clean or renewable sources of energy as defined by the *Clean Energy Act*.

(BC Hydro)



Q: If a community only has single-phase power available, can they build their own three-phase private 25 kV line to a nearby three-phase BC Hydro system instead of BC Hydro upgrading their existing single-phase system?

In Session Answer: Potentially yes, subject to project-specific circumstances. (BC Hydro)



Q: Please share the evaluation matrix and scoring methodology to assess proposals. Once the evaluation process is complete, will each proponent receive their individual score, and a breakdown of how their proposal was evaluated against the various criteria?

In Session Answer: The evaluation criteria that we are assessing the proponent's proposal against will be shared in the final RFP package. We are considering a draft version before the final release of the RFP package. BC Hydro does not typically share detailed scoring information with proponents, but we will consider feedback on this topic.

(BC Hydro)



Q: If BC Hydro is not contributing capital funding or interconnection costs, could you help me understand why project cost is an evaluation criterion?

In Session Answer: The evaluation is conducted jointly by BC Hydro and NRT. It includes both the network upgrade cost and the grant amount requested. The network upgrade cost is necessary to align with FNEP's objective of limiting ratepayer impacts. The grant amount requested may be constrained, and our goal is to optimize available funding and ensure equitable distribution to support economically viable projects. (BC Hydro)



Q: Will there be a draft RFP distributed for review and comment as part of this process, or will it only be shared in its final version?

In Session Answer: Planning on releasing the final version of the RFP only, but based on feedback from the webinars, this may change. (BC Hydro)



Q: What is the price benchmark? Is it based on the latest CFP average results?

In Session Answer: The benchmark price will be based on the results of the 2025 CFP. Final pricing is expected to be available in late summer or early fall 2026. For reference, the estimated value of 2024 CFP in \$2026 is \$89.70/MWh. (BC Hydro)



Q: First Nations don't want to take on debt without the possibility of a return on investment. What is the base rate BC Hydro is going to pay?

In Session Answer: The base rate is based on the 2025 CFP results. For reference, the estimated value of 2024 CFP in \$2026 is \$89.70/MWh. (BC Hydro)



Q: Can we enter into an EPA with BC Hydro without an NRT-approved project? Or are you only looking at NRT-funded agreements?

In Session Answer: The current program design includes joint evaluation and selection by BC Hydro and NRT. Although BC Hydro is leading the procurement process, the evaluation after the RFP closes will be jointly conducted by BC Hydro and NRT. The successful projects will receive an EPA from BC Hydro and a Contribution Agreement from NRT.

Supplementary Answer: Only projects that are successful in both the BC Hydro procurement process and NRT funding application process will be approved. (BC Hydro)

Q: What is the typical maximum capacity of distribution lines? Are there any distribution lines with the capacity to connect 15 MW generator?

In Session Answer: Maximum capacity of a 25,000-volt distribution line with the largest conductor size in 15MW. It depends on the location and existing conductor size.
(BC Hydro)



Q: Under BC Hydro's former Standing Offer Program (SOP), BC Hydro applied an Interconnection Network Upgrade Threshold (INUT), which effectively provided a discount on interconnection network upgrade costs of approximately \$170,000/MW.

In Session Answer: FNEP is a separate program from the former SOP, and the SOP was repealed in 2024. Network upgrade costs and funding support are being addressed differently through the FNEP, including NRT funding support for eligible costs and the program's overall funding structure. NRT and BC Hydro indicated that details regarding eligible network upgrade cost coverage will be provided through the final program materials. (BC Hydro and NRT)



Q: Will the NRT refund cover any technical supporting engineering work, or simply the BC Hydro study costs?



In Session Answer: The up to 80% in funding from NRT is specific to the BC Hydro Interconnection Study costs. Early-stage technical studies and engineering work may be eligible through existing BCICEI streams. Depending on the final engineering activities associated with project construction, these activities may also be eligible under FNEP. (NRT)

Q: What is the turnaround time for the various BC Hydro studies?

In Session Answer: FNEP Basic Distribution Requests are expected to take several weeks. FNEP System Impact Studies are expected to take approximately four months, and FNEP Facility Studies approximately six to twelve months. (BC Hydro)



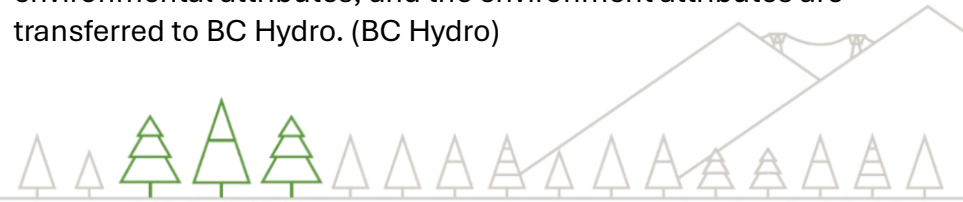
Q: What if the community I work for wants to participate but the community is connected via single-phase power? Does this have any impact on the Basic D?

In Session Answer: An upgrade would be required from single-phase to three-phase power. Required upgrades would be assessed through the study process and may affect project economics. (BC Hydro)



Q: Does the price include the environmental attributes price already?

In Session Answer: Yes. The price includes the value of environmental attributes, and the environment attributes are transferred to BC Hydro. (BC Hydro)

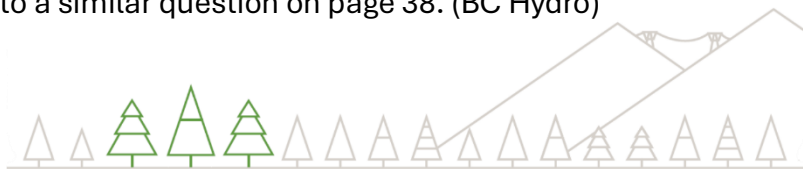


Q: Are batteries designed to improve the time of use score eligible for support in this?

In Session Answer: We have time of delivery factors defined for hours of the day, days of the week and months of a year based on BC Hydro's system requirements. The proponents can use the Time of Delivery table to assess the economic value of batteries. (BC Hydro)

Q: Can you give me some general idea of what the First Nations Letter is?

In Session Answer: Discussion and thinking revolve around if there is a contingency if the BC Utilities Commission (BCUC) does not accept the EPA. Please refer to the answer to a similar question on page 38. (BC Hydro)



Q: So, there will be no consideration for economies of scale on the base price when compared to 200MW+ projects vs small projects?

In Session Answer: In the evaluation, there is consideration of the total project cost, and it is evaluated by the dollar amount per megawatt or kilowatt numbers. (BC Hydro)

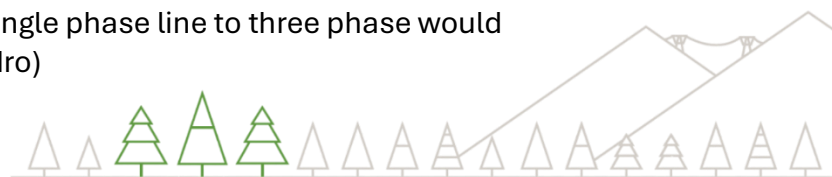
The NRT grant aims to offset costs to enable smaller clean energy projects to be competitive. (NRT)



Q: The single-phase line travels 40+ km to a potential project site. Is this too far or too large of an investment for BC Hydro to access power from 3 Nations?

***Answer:** The scope and cost of upgrading a 40km BC Hydro single phase line to three phase would be assessed and evaluated against the other projects. (BC Hydro)

**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*



Q: Can someone speak to the difference between the contract date and connection date?

***Answer:** Relative to the DGIA, the contract date is the COD, and the connection date is the operational in-service date of the commissioned generating facility. (BC Hydro)

**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*



Q: Is this funding program operating in parallel with a BC Hydro CFP or a standing offer for up to 15 MW?



***Answer:** This is a separate program from the BC Hydro 2024 CFP, 2025 CFP, and Standing Offer Program. The Standing Offer Program was repealed by the Government in 2024.

In FNEP (this program), the NRT funding process will run in parallel with BC Hydro's procurement process. Successful applicants will enter into a Contribution Agreement with NRT and an EPA with BC Hydro. (BC Hydro & NRT)

**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*



Comments:

- “My takeaway: the projects won’t be commercially viable standalone and will rely on external funding due to limited economies of scale and current pricing.”
- “Regarding the BC Hydro sharing the evaluation and scoring matrix. Could we have a show of hands from those in favour of this, so it is recorded in the What We Heard document, rather than it just being a question.” **Through a show of hands, the majority of attendees expressed that they would like to see the evaluation and scoring matrix.*

June 25, 2026 – Information Session #2

Q: How many projects are you targeting to award per intake?



In Session Answer: We don't have a target set per intake. We have a budget per intake and will determine how many projects we are awarding per intake. (NRT)

Q: Does the SIS need to be initiated prior to applying for BCICEI support for that study?



In Session Answer: We are still working out how the process will flow, but most likely the SIS will need to be initiated but may not necessarily need to be complete before NRT will provide funding. (NRT)

Q: Will the evaluation criteria be shared later in the presentation?



In Session Answer: The draft evaluation criteria will be shared later in the presentation. Please refer to the final RFP package for the final evaluation criteria. (NRT)

Q: Is there an opportunity to get support for clean projects where Nations do not have equity?



In Session Answer: BCICEI would be a great place to seek funding. We provide funding for items such as heat pumps, rooftop solar projects, metering and other types of clean energy projects that the existing streams of the BCICEI initiative can support.

Refer to the BCICEI website for more information: [Indigenous Clean Energy Initiative](#) (NRT)

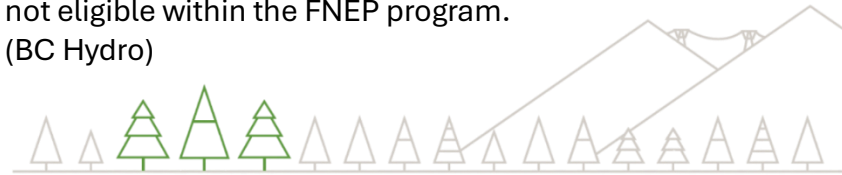
Q: Is a high-level Class D/Class C estimate acceptable, or is a more detailed engineering cost estimate required? Would BC Hydro expect proponents to engage an engineering consultant to prepare the project capital cost estimate?



In Session Answer: Proponents may be required to provide a high-level cost estimate during the enrollment stage with NRT as part of the project readiness assessment. (BC Hydro and NRT)

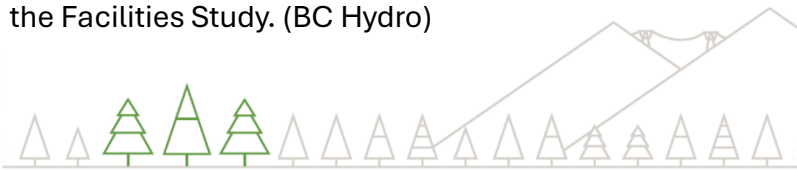
Q: How does this program impact projects that are already participating in the Calls for Power and Request for Expressions of Interest for capacity?

In Session Answer: The FNEP is separate from the CFP and the Request for Expressions of Interest for capacity. The CFP Program was for projects greater or equal to 40 MW, which is not eligible within the FNEP program. (BC Hydro)



Q: Is the Generator Interconnection Agreement signed upon completion of the Facilities Study, or in this case upon completion of the project selection and EPA execution?

In Session Answer: The Generator Interconnection Agreement is signed upon completion of the Facilities Study. The EPA would be awarded prior to the initiation of the Facilities Study. (BC Hydro)



Q: Does NRT reimbursement for Interconnection Studies cover BC Hydro costs only or does it also support pre-design costs on the proponent's side?

In Session Answer: Through the FNEP funding, NRT would cover up to 80% of the interconnection studies cost. The proponents would make the payment in full to BC Hydro first. Then they would request up to 80% of the fees to be reimbursed through NRT. Most early pre-design costs could be funded through existing BCICEI streams in the project planning stage. (NRT)



Q: Can you elaborate on the "credits winter capacity commitments"? Would a wind/solar project with a battery qualify?

In Session Answer: The winter capacity commitment credits are currently under development and will be shared at a later date. The wind/solar projects with battery will qualify as long as the total capacity at the POI does not exceed 15 MW. (BC Hydro)



Q: Could you please clarify how the proposed \$1,200/kW funding cap works? For example, if a 15 MW wind project costs approximately \$30 million, would the program contribute up to \$18 million, with the proponent responsible for securing the remaining funding?

In Session Answer: We would use the \$1,200/KW calculation. We will have a funding cap per project, and we are still working to determine that amount. Any costs beyond that cap would need to be covered by the proponent through their own secured funding/financing. (NRT)



Q: \$140M/\$18M = 7ish, you can only support 7 projects?



In Session Answer: Possibly, but we don't have the exact funding cap for each project. (NRT)

Q: Could you please confirm the total program budget? Is it approximately \$140 million?

In Session Answer: That is the amount of funding that NRT received from the Province. Some of that will be used for administration and potentially other small-scale projects. The capital grants for the program will be slightly less than the \$140 million. (NRT)



Q: What level of project cost estimate is expected as part of the application?



***Answer:** Cost estimate and other requirements will be shared as part of the RFP and application packages to be shared in the Fall.

**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*

Q: Does a BC Hydro-managed, diesel-powered grid (such as Haida Gwaii) qualify under this program?

In Session Answer: No. The FNEP is a separate program and is unrelated to the Non-Integrated Area funding. (BC Hydro)



In Session Answer: Another clean energy funding program that NRT administers is the Community Energy Diesel Reduction (CEDR) program, which supports remote diesel-dependent communities to develop their own clean energy initiatives.

Refer to the CEDR website for more information on the program: [Community Energy Diesel Reduction](#) (NRT)

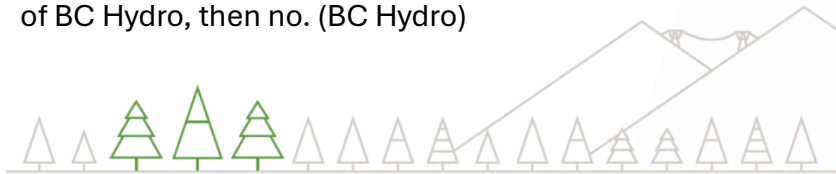
Q: Does the mode of clean energy generation carry weight on BC Hydro's awarding process? For example, recent CFP EPAs heavily favoured wind projects.

In Session Answer: For the FNEP, all the generation technology will be considered equally, if it is a clean or renewable source of energy as per the BC *Clean Energy Act*. (BC Hydro)



Q: If a project created more energy than BC Hydro agreed to purchase, then we aren't allowed to sell that power elsewhere? But it could be utilized internally, correct?

In Session Answer: If it is used internally (i.e., geothermal, biomass, etc.), then yes, but if it is injecting to BC Hydro and the neighbouring facility, which is a consumer of BC Hydro, then no. (BC Hydro)



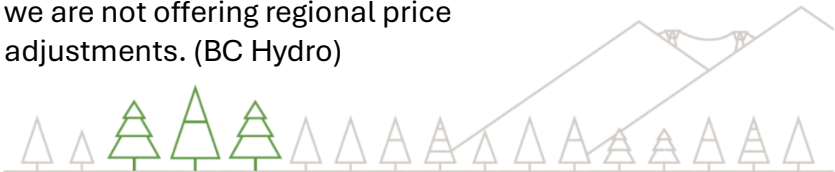
Q: Could you elaborate on "Canadian Content"?

In Session Answer: Please refer to 2025 [CFP documentation](#) on Canadian Content. More information will be provided in the program documents. (BC Hydro)



Q: Are there regional adjustments for price? e.g. Vancouver Island, North Coast premium on the base price?

In Session Answer: Only distribution connected IPPs will be offered EPA under this program which means most of the electricity produced by IPPs is consumed locally. Therefore, we are not offering regional price adjustments. (BC Hydro)



Q: You mentioned time of day adjustments ...Do you contemplate time of year adjustments, too? (i.e., a 2x12 pricing structure)?

In Session Answer: The Time-of-Day adjustment table provide adjustments for hour of the day, day of the week and months in a year. The table remains the same for all years. (BC Hydro)



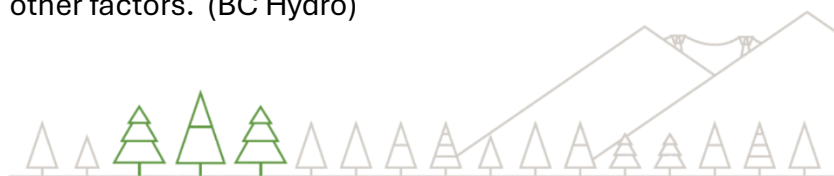
Q: Can you clarify "benchmark price based on 2025 CFP" - Is this based on all projects submitted or only on projects awarded EPAs?

In Session Answer: The benchmark price is based on projects that were awarded EPA by BC Hydro as part of the 2025 CFP. (BC Hydro)



Q: The CFP 2025 awarded large-scale wind projects of approximately 200–500 MW, which benefit from economies of scale. Would it be possible to consider price references for a smaller-scale generation procurement process?

In Session Answer: BC Hydro is offering benchmark price for electricity purchased under the FNEP program and NRT is providing funding to compensate for economy of scale and other factors. (BC Hydro)



Q: Can you clarify if the target project capacity range of 2MW-15MW would include solar/wind generation + battery capacity (i.e., 15MW wind installed with 15MW battery capacity vs. 10MW wind with 5MW installed battery)?

In Session Answer: As long as the combination does not exceed 15 MW in total. (BC Hydro)



Q: Is the upcoming RFP a one-off, or will there be subsequent RFPs issued on a predictable timeline? Will the upcoming RFP be open similar to the old SOP program?

In Session Answer: There will be multiple intakes of the FNEP. There will be an RFP, and for any subsequent intakes, there will be other RFPs. The FNEP is a competitive, funding limited program, whereas the SOP was a non-competitive program. (BC Hydro)



Q: Can we expect a discussion on the Basic D outcome? These are typically results-based reports and proponents may not understand the requirements, as it is usually yes or no.

In Session Answer: We will be reviewing the FNEP timeline and resources required to consider follow-up discussion with FNEP Basic D applicants. (BC Hydro)



Q: More on "benchmark price" – the \$86 / MWh price mentioned for 2025 CFP – would that be the "levelized plant gate" price?

In Session Answer: The 2024 CFP benchmark price of \$86 per MWh is not a levelized price. The benchmark price is included in the EPA for settlement purpose. The price included in the EPA is indexed to a base year and escalated annually as per the escalation formula defined in the EPA.

Gate price refers to price included in the EPA, and the levelized price covers the entire EPA term. The levelized price is not used in payment settlements under an EPA. (BC Hydro)



Q: Many communities we work for are very remote and experience frequent power outages. The addition of batteries in those communities could resolve these issues. Would that be evaluated in your criteria? Are intangible benefits included in your criteria?

In Session Answer: The FNEP is intended to support smaller Indigenous-led power projects that may otherwise not be competitive due to their smaller size. Frequent power outages are not included in our criteria. (BC Hydro)

Q: Would "Water Battery" projects be considered eligible for the next CFP projects?



In Session Answer: If you mean that the hydro-electric project produces electricity and that battery storage (water is pumped uphill into a high-elevation reservoir) is used to take advantage of price spread due

to time of delivery, then as long as the total connected capacity does not exceed 15 MW it will be acceptable for FNEP. (BC Hydro) The prior response is for FNEP. As it relates to a future BC Hydro CFP, this is unknown at this time. (NRT)

Q: The scoring matrix seems to only consider network upgrade costs and not the evaluation price. I know the process uses the benchmark price, but this is still affected by the production profiles and time-of-delivery price adjustments. Is this accounted for in the scoring matrix?

In Session Answer: The scoring matrix is different from the CFP. The scoring matrix for this program considers the network upgrade cost and total requested grant amount, and we rank them against each other in the evaluation process. (BC Hydro)

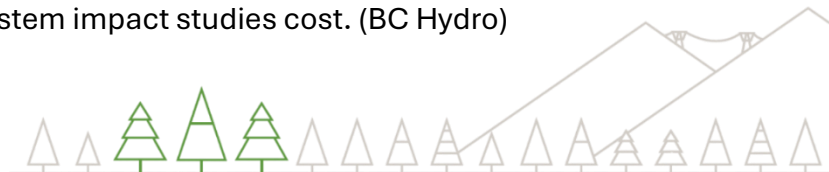


July 7, 2026 – Information Session #3

Q: Can BCICEI funding be used to pay for system impact studies from BC Hydro?

***Answer:** Yes. The funding will reimburse up to 80% of the system impact studies cost. (BC Hydro)

**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*



Q: Are the studies only reimbursed (80%) for awarded projects, or for all projects?



***Answer:** Projects that complete a System Impact Study will be eligible for up to 80% reimbursement from NRT. (NRT)

**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*

Q: Are projects in transmission or storage as well as generation?

***Answer:** This program is for distribution only, which is generally 25,000 volts and not for transmission which is 60,000 volts and greater. The generation technology needs to qualify as a clean or renewable resource as per the *Clean Energy Act*. (BC Hydro)

**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*



Q: Does the solar need to come from the same contiguous area, or can it be spread out, such as a combination of houses doing rooftop solar?

***Answer:** This may be a reference to a community generation project that is not included in this program. Community generation projects have a limit up to 2 MW and require subscribers. FNEP is for projects above 2 MW and doesn't require subscribers. (BC Hydro)

BC Hydro Community Generation website: [Community Generation](#)

**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*

Q: Is BC Hydro looking at AI-enabled interconnection studies, dynamic queue management, or differentiated interconnection pathways for smaller and co-located projects so that interconnection doesn't become the limiting factor for First Nations-led development?

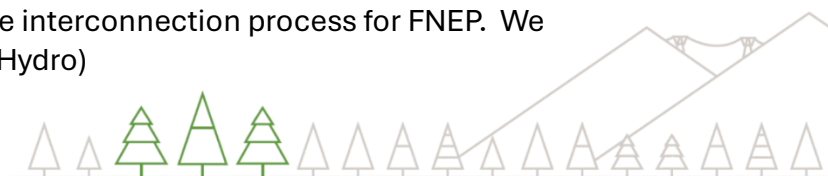
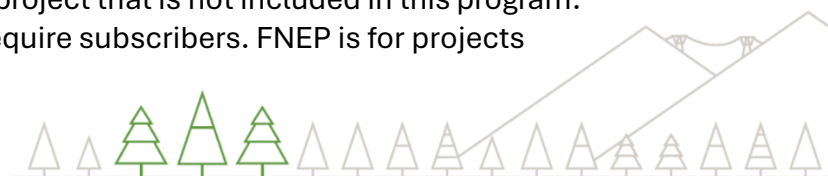
***Answer:** There will likely only be enough funding for a handful of projects to be studied per intake and therefore we don't anticipate substantial changes needing to be made to the interconnection process for FNEP. We don't anticipate processing co-located projects for FNEP. (BC Hydro)

**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*

Q: Is the limit of 2 free Basic D info requests based on the project or the party submitting the form?

***Answer:** It is based on the project. (BC Hydro)

**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*



Q: How will the First Nations Electricity Program recognize and support Nation-led energy plans, rather than requiring Nations to adapt their priorities to fit a procurement process?



***Answer:** The program has broad eligibility parameters around location, size and fitting into the Clean Energy Act. There is a lot of flexibility in making sure the projects are Nation-led. We are looking at First Nations ownership, and we want to ensure that these are the projects that Nations want to develop. NRT also has funding for community energy plans. We want to ensure that the projects are grounded in community priorities. (NRT)

**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*

Q: Is there a limit on how many projects a First Nation can participate in through the program?



***Answer:** We will most likely have a limit of one application per Nation, as with most NRT programs. We will share the broader eligibility parameters later in the process. (NRT)

**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*

Q: Are the funding applications currently open and ongoing?



***Answer:** No, not yet. This is the pre-program information session. We will be opening the program for applications and enrollment later in the fall. (NRT)

**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*

Q: You mention this intake; is this expected to be the first intake, with similar intakes taking place in the future?



***Answer:** We are anticipating at least two intakes. (NRT)

**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*

Q: Can you clarify the maximum per project of \$1,200/kW? For 2-15MW projects, this is a small total value. Is this just for the early planning?



***Answer:** This would be for the later construction and capital costs. (NRT)

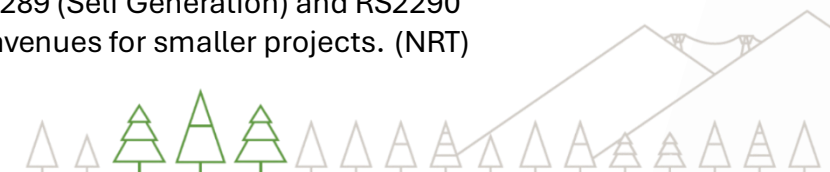
**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*

Q: Is 2 MW the minimum size of the project that's applicable for this? Would smaller-scale solar projects (100kW - 500kW) not apply to this?



In Session Answer: The project must inject more than 2MW at the POI for FNEP 2026. For smaller ones that are 100 kW or 500 kW would be eligible under our existing BCICEI, where we have a Small-Scale Clean Energy funding stream. Additional details could be found at this link: [Indigenous Clean Energy Initiative](#) (BC Hydro & NRT)

Supplementary Answer: BC Hydro Tariff RS2289 (Self Generation) and RS2290 (Community Generation) may be alternative avenues for smaller projects. (NRT)



Q: On the “Program having more than one launch”, is the \$140M in funding (3-4 projects) for this round expected to be topped up for future rounds? Round 2 gets another \$150M?



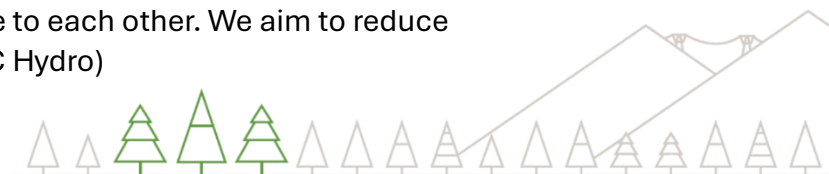
***Answer:** The total funding is \$140 million that will be disbursed. There is no other re-capitalization at this point. (NRT)

**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*

Q: Will BC Hydro support innovative distribution solutions—including direct load-to-generation connections, generation-to-load connections, community microgrids, and battery energy storage system (BESS)-supported sectionalized islanding—to improve reliability while reducing the need for traditional grid upgrades?

***Answer:** All projects within each intake are assessed relative to each other. We aim to reduce complexity so that more projects can access the funding. (BC Hydro)

**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*

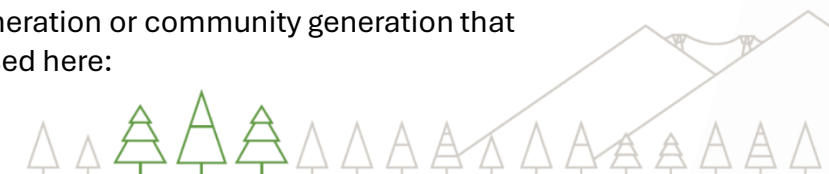


Q: We are urban, and most of our land is covered in houses already or agricultural land. The single connection policy is limiting for us, whereas multiple connections could support. Will there be any options for projects that utilize all those rooftops with multiple connections?

***Answer:** This particular project is ideal for either the self-generation or community generation that will open up in about two weeks. Links to both can be accessed here:

[Customer Generation](#) (BC Hydro)

**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*



Q: In terms of First Nation equity ownership being 51%, how is that being evaluated?

***Answer:** We will require proponents to submit an attestation stating the total amount of First Nations equity ownership to be held by the Nation by the COD. (BC Hydro)

**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*



Q: Does this mean that U.S. equipment (switchgear, transformers, controls) are not allowed?

***Answer:** We are requiring the developer to be non-U.S., but not the equipment (BC Hydro)

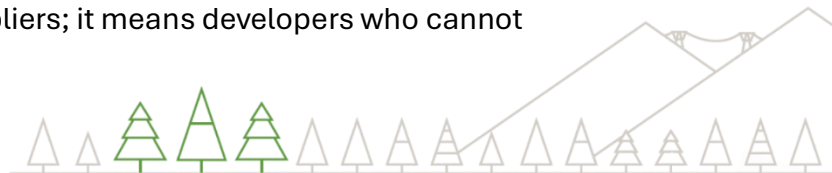
**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*



Q: Please provide more context for the non-eligibility of U.S. “Suppliers”. What is meant by “supplier” here?

In Session Answer: Suppliers does not mean equipment suppliers; it means developers who cannot be a U.S. entity. (BC Hydro)

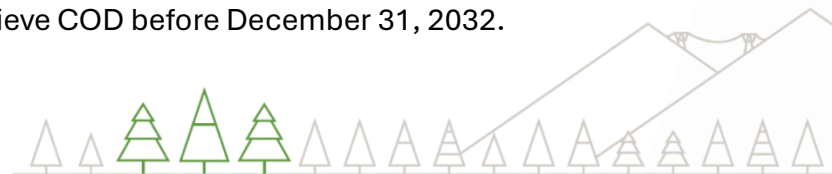
**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*



Q: Can projects that can meet a COD of 2029 or earlier be acceptable?

***Answer:** Yes, we are looking for all successful projects to achieve COD before December 31, 2032. (BC Hydro)

**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*



Q: Are there consideration incentives for majority-owned or First Nation-only-owned projects?

***Answer:** Yes, we will incentivize projects with a higher First Nation equity ownership percentage. They will receive a higher score for that criterion in the evaluation. (BC Hydro)

**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*



Q: Is the project size (2-15MW) measured at POI or the generator nameplate, before losses?

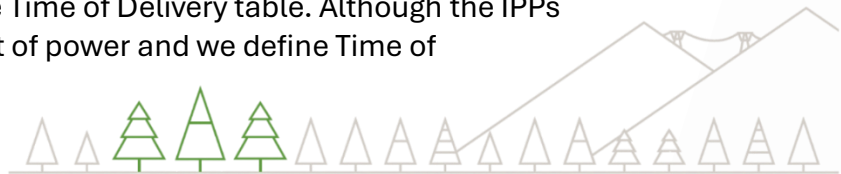
In Session Answer: It's based on the nameplate of the generator. (BC Hydro)

Supplementary Answer: For additional clarity, the maximum power the plant can inject into the BC Hydro distribution system at the POI must be greater than 2 MW and equal or less than 15 MW. (BC Hydro)



Q: Do you expect the Time of Delivery Factor (TDF) adjustments to be similar to the 2024 & 2025 CFP if the project is distribution connected? (Connecting to more of a steady state demand grid if the distribution grid is in a large town/municipality).

In Session Answer: They may be similar to the 2024 and 2025 CFP, but may not be identical. We conduct an assessment for each of the EPAs and based on our requirements we define the Time of Delivery table. Although the IPPs will be connected to distribution grid but there is displacement of power and we define Time of Delivery table based on system needs. (BC Hydro)



Q: Can you speak to timing for Battery CFP? Is Canadian Infrastructure Bank (CIB) funding the process?

***Answer:** The session presented was focused on FNEP, any information regarding a battery procurement will be shared by BC Hydro at a future date. (BC Hydro).

Proponents are encouraged to reach out to CIB to inquire about financing. Questions can be directed to:

indigenous@cib-bic.ca

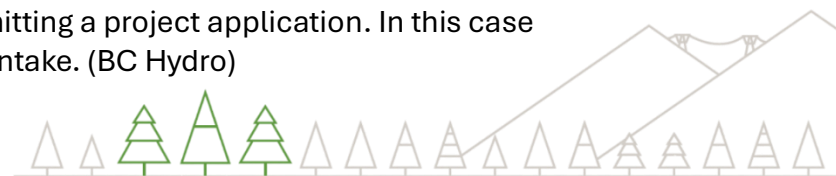


**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*

Q: If a Nation's preferred site is screened out only because BC Hydro infrastructure is constrained, is there a pathway to reserve that capacity while upgrades are planned rather than forcing the Nation to relocate the project?

***Answer:** There is no ability to reserve capacity ahead of submitting a project application. In this case it may make sense for a project to wait and submit in a future intake. (BC Hydro)

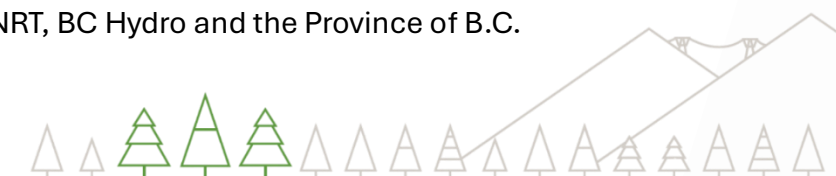
**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*



Q: How can the use of standards be implemented to streamline the program and drive efficiencies? Does BC Hydro have a plan for standards?

***Answer:** FNEP program framework was jointly developed by NRT, BC Hydro and the Province of B.C. to streamline the program and drive efficiencies. (BC Hydro)

**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*



Q: When will the benchmark price be available?

***Answer:** We will share the benchmark price for the 2025 CFP by the end of August or early September 2026. (BC Hydro)

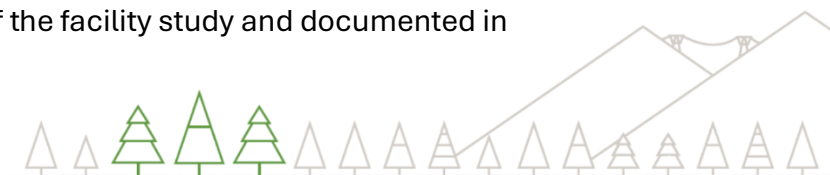
**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*



Q: Is there security required under the DGIA?

***Answer:** Yes, there is a security requirement on completion of the facility study and documented in the DGIA. (BC Hydro)

**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*



Q: Can you highlight the major differences with BC Hydro standard EPAs?

***Answer:** The EPA under FNEP is being specifically designed for 2-15 MW capacity size. We have highlighted some of the key provisions of EPA that we are drafting for FNEP in our presentation. (BC Hydro)

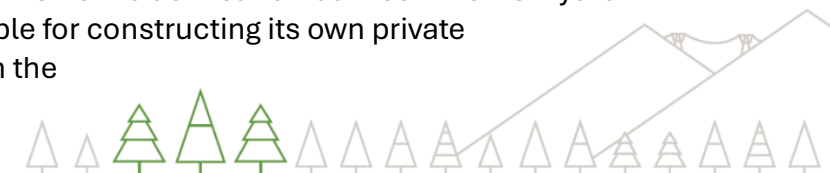
**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*



Q: Would that be similar to the Ontario First Nations Transmission Line? If B.C. First Nations were able to purchase/build a First Nations-owned transmission line?

***Answer:** This program is for distribution interconnections. The POI is the delineation between the BC Hydro system and the customer's private line. The Nation is responsible for constructing its own private distribution line from the facility to the POI. The Nation will own the private line. (BC Hydro)

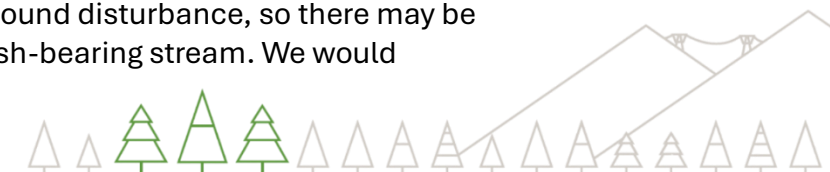
**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*



Q: So, what I heard was that my First Nation would have to consult another First Nation that is claiming up to our land on whether they are impacted or not. This will determine if a project moves forward? Or am I mistaken?

***Answer:** To be clear: if any part of the project is on Crown land, then you are impacting Crown land, which means you will need to consult with any Nation that has claimed that land as well. Where we would likely see that is with the interconnection: you will be building structures that result in ground disturbance, so there may be impacts if the disturbance is near an archaeological site or a fish-bearing stream. We would review your consultation information and our assessment of the adequacy of that will determine whether your Nation will receive an EPA for the project. (BC Hydro)

**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*



Q: Can the First Nation own the new distribution line from the generator site to the BC Hydro POI?

***Answer:** Yes. (BC Hydro)

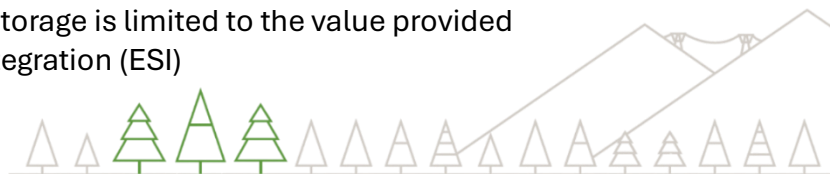
**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*



Q: Can a generation project under the Program be combined with BC Hydro's Energy Storage Integration (ESI) program to include battery energy storage, allowing the project to optimize the timing of energy delivery, provide grid support services, and improve overall system value?

***Answer:** Information relating BC Hydro's Energy Storage Integration (ESI) can found here [Energy Storage Incentive](#). The IPPs can combine energy storage with the power generation however the total connected capacity should be above 2 MW and less than or equal to 15 MW. The compensation for IPP and connected Battery Storage will be as per the terms of EPAs issued under the FNEP. The economic benefit of battery storage is limited to the value provided in the Time of Delivery table. The BC Hydro's Energy Storage Integration (ESI) program is a separate program and cannot be combined with FNEP EPAs. (BC Hydro)

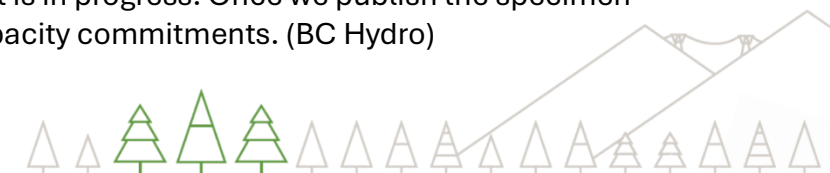
**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*



Q: My take on the 2025 CFP was that there was no financial incentive to bid capacity (capacity was a qualitative consideration in bid evaluation) but you were exposed to liquidated damages if you don't meet capacity. More downside than upside. Are you considering a different approach for the specimen EPA for this program?

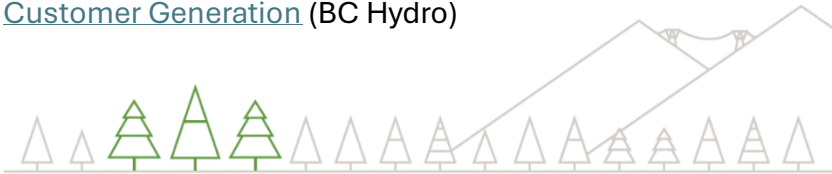
***Answer:** The work on credits for Winter Capacity commitment is in progress. Once we publish the specimen EPA, we will explain the details on how we evaluate Winter Capacity commitments. (BC Hydro)

**This question was not addressed during the session and was provided with a written response in this report.*



Q: This is more of a statement than a question, with BC Hydro needing power for all the AI data centres; that last report I read said it would be like 50% of all the power generated from Site C. Wouldn't it be more prudent to promote more community generation?

In Session Answer: BC Hydro acknowledged that there are concerns over AI loads and that's why the Provincial government came up with the energy allocation framework, which limits the AI loads that can connect to the BC Hydro grid. Please note, RS2290 Community Generation was recently approved by the BCUC. For more information: [Customer Generation](#) (BC Hydro)



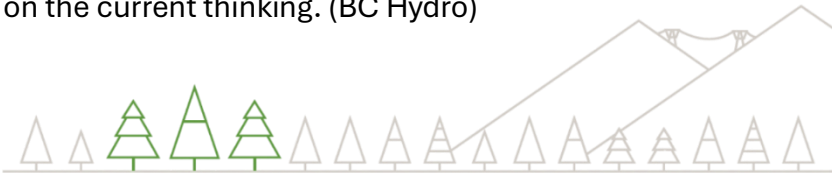
Q: Are the funding applications currently open and ongoing?

In Session Answer: No, not yet. This is the pre-program information session. We will be opening the program for applications and enrollment later in the fall. (NRT)



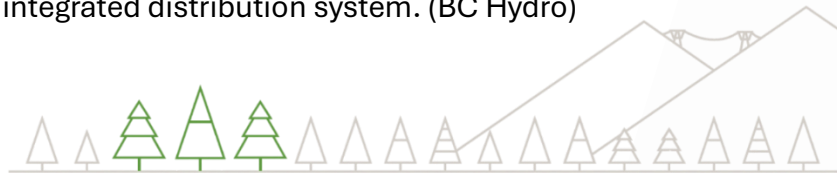
Q: What is the target amount of MW's through this program that BC Hydro will procure?

In Session Answer: There are differences between the FNEP and CFP processes. There is no specific target amount that we are looking for in this program. The constraint for this program is that we are limited by the funding cap, the \$140 million and the per-intake funding cap of \$35 million based on the current thinking. (BC Hydro)



Q: Can someone speak to the difference between the 2024 and 2025 CFP?

In Session Answer: In the 2024 and 2025 CFP projects, the focus was on projects greater than or equal to 40 MW and connecting to the integrated transmission system. For the FNEP, we are looking for projects greater than 2 MW and less than or equal to 15 MW that can be connected into our integrated distribution system. (BC Hydro)



Q: Alternating current nameplate size if the project is solar, I expect?

In Session Answer: Yes, the panels are usually oversized for deterioration. (BC Hydro)

Supplementary Answer: In addition, the study for solar (and other inverter-based) generation will focus on the total number and nameplate size of invertors. (BC Hydro)

Q: Does this mean that U.S. equipment (switchgear, transformers, controls) are not allowed?

In Session Answer: We are requiring the developer to be non-U.S., but not the equipment. (BC Hydro)



Q: Did I hear \$35,000, not \$35 million "\$35M" per project a few slides ago for maximum total funding?



In Session Answer: Per project, the funding will be based on \$1,200 per kW and we are estimating \$35 million per intake. (NRT)

Comments:

- “Many First Nations are planning this work in their energy plans and will be leading the province and federal government in the infrastructure development. We have to push for comprehensive support of governments and BC Hydro of territorial plans.”
- “[Redacted Nation] has energy plans that may fall outside the energy generation model. They are recognized as the regulator and authority in their territory. BC Hydro will follow their lead. The community energy plans have to be the priority for the territory, and the funding can come through the First Nation to do that work.”
- “\$140M total funding at \$35M per intake = 4 intakes.”
 - **Response:** It could be four. We are thinking about three. Once the program is open, we will be able to better able to determine how the funding will be disbursed. (NRT)

Written Submissions

Participants were encouraged to submit written questions following the Information Sessions. These questions have been outlined and addressed below.



Q: What is NRT's target funding/investment period for FNEP - is this a 10-year funding window, or any other term in mind?

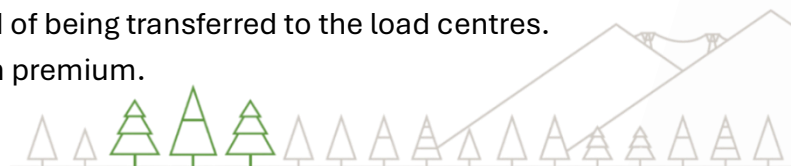
A - NRT: Successful FNEP projects must have a COD before December 31, 2032. The NRT funding will flow along this same timeline.

Q: Regarding Price:

1. Benchmark pricing – BC Hydro has this number currently based on the EPAs awarded under 2025 CFP. The anticipated announcement is in September, but proponents need this number as soon as possible to assess the project's financial feasibility.
2. Will the Time-of-Day table be the same as what we saw in the CFP?
3. Regional premium should be added, as it was for the SOP – The stated objective of FNEP is to "meet the growing demand for power in B.C.," which indicates that the procured projects are expected to contribute at the grid level, not just offsetting local consumption. It would make sense to incentivize projects in the regions where "growing demand" is occurring, including Vancouver Island, Lower Mainland, and North Coast.
4. Any incentives (credits/premium) for achieving early COD?
5. What kind of credits can we expect on the winter capacity commitments?

A – BC Hydro:

1. The Benchmark Price for 2025 CFP will be shared as soon as it is available.
2. We are currently evaluating the Time of Delivery table, and it will be published as part of specimen EPA.
3. The IPPs selected under FNEP will be connected to BC Hydro's distribution grid. The electricity produced by the IPPs is expected to be consumed locally instead of being transferred to the load centres. Hence, we do not anticipate providing a location premium.



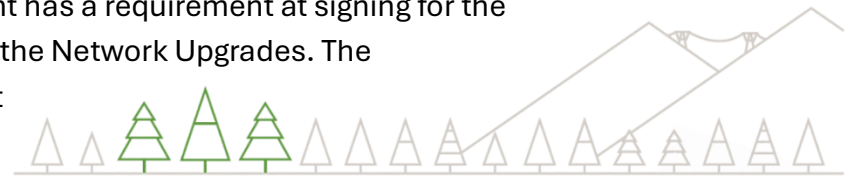
4. We are currently planning for no incentives for achieving early COD and no penalties for delay in achieving COD.
5. We are currently evaluating the credits to be provided for winter capacity commitments. More information will be available in the Specimen EPA.

Q: Regarding Interconnection:

1. What is the expected turnaround for a Basic D request?
2. SIS – How would BC Hydro assess the grid-edge benefit of battery storage during SIS?
3. Will BC Hydro require bond payment after or at the DGIA signing? For small projects, this bond payment could be cost-prohibitive.

A – BC Hydro:

1. Once intake begins, submissions should expect a results letter in approximately two weeks depending on BC Hydro workload.
2. The response depends on what the purpose of the battery is.
3. The Distribution Generation Interconnection Agreement has a requirement at signing for the Customer to provide security for the estimated cost of the Network Upgrades. The security format could be an irrevocable Letter of Credit or other form of security that is acceptable to BC Hydro.



Q: Have you initiated discussions with BC Energy Regulator (BCER) on the permit process aligned with FNEP? Would approved projects receive priority as is for CFP projects?



A – NRT: As of July 1, 2025, the BCER) is the primary authority for issuing natural resource authorizations for all wind and solar projects (i.e., land, water, wildlife, forests, heritage conservation, aggregate mining (for renewables) and agricultural land).

- High-output wind and solar energy projects (>5 MW nameplate capacity) are required to hold a permit under the *Energy Resource Activities Act*.
- BCER will be releasing updated guidance materials to support understanding of the new Renewable Energy Projects Regulation (REPR). Interim guidance can be found here: [Renewables | BC Energy Regulator](#) (BCER).
- Applications to construct or operate a renewable energy project must be submitted via the BCER's [Application Management System](#) (AMS).
- Provincial natural resource ministries will continue as the primary regulatory authority for other forms of Clean Energy, such as biomass and hydropower.
 - [FrontCounterBC](#) is the first point of contact.
- It is the applicant's responsibility to know and uphold all legal and regulatory responsibilities.

Q: Have you initiated discussions with CIB? Would CIB consider project financing or only First Nation equity financing? When can proponents expect to begin meaningful engagement with CIB? Is there a plan to continue with the procurement program after the \$140m is exhausted?

A – NRT: Proponents are encouraged to reach out to CIB to inquire about financing. Questions can be directed to: indigenous@cib-bc.ca – CIB is an option for project financing while the NRT grant funding can be used for First Nations' equity participation.

The Province of B.C. has also initiated the [First Nations Equity Financing Program](#).

At this time there is no plan to continue with procurement after the NRT funding is exhausted. This may be reassessed at a later date.



Q: Will BCICEI funding will be available to support the costs of the System Impact Study with BC Hydro within the timeframe of the FNEP process?

A – NRT: BCICEI funding timing may not align with FNEP 2026. For First Nations interested in participating in FNEP 2026 there will be funding through the program for up to 80% of SIS costs.



Q: If a Nation hasn't yet submitted their SIS, it seems like they would need to do so quickly to have it complete (or in process) in time for the Application Period. However, I believe the BCICEI funding window is currently closed until late 2026. Is there a strategy for how communities can access BCICEI funding in time to support their SIS applications or should we be looking towards other funding means to facilitate that for smaller communities with limited internal resources?

A – NRT: FNEP 2026 funding timing for up to 80% of SIS costs will align with the BC Hydro timeline for completion of the SIS and the closing of the Request for Proposals.

Q: Our project will have much more than 15 MWs. Would our project still be eligible under this program?

A – NRT: No, the maximum size eligible is 15 MWs.

Q: Will application intake be rolling in the Fall, or will all applications be assessed after the deadline by early Spring 2027?

A – NRT: The evaluation process will start in Spring 2027 when the BC Hydro RFP and NRT funding application intake close.

Q: Can an applicant apply to BCICEI Stream 2 or Stream 3 for one project, while at the same time applying to the First Nations Electricity Program for a different project? Or does applying to FNEP for a project restrict eligibility for Stream 2/3 funding on other projects within the same intake period?

A – NRT: Yes. Applicants can apply to an existing BCICEI stream for one project and apply to FNEP for a different project within the same intake period. Applying to FNEP does not restrict eligibility to apply to BCICEI if the two projects are distinct and the Nation does not already have an active project in another BCICEI stream.

Q: For FNEP specifically, if we apply this year with a project sized to fit the program's current scale, and our territory has capacity for a second, similarly sized project on an adjacent site, would we be eligible to apply again in a future intake (e.g., two years ahead) for that second project? Or is there a restriction on the number/frequency of FNEP applications per Nation or per territory?

A – NRT: The FNEP will likely have a limit of one application per Nation, as with most NRT programs. We will share the final eligibility requirements later in the process.



Q: “...We would encourage the program to accommodate the following:

- 1. Support and encourage First Nations with existing ownership to increase their ownership interest;**
- 2. Consider mechanisms to allow for acquisition of a portion of an existing project;**
- 3. Consider refinancing or restructuring where these could strengthen the long-term sustainability of First Nations ownership?**
- 4. Consider mechanisms to assess long-term ownership, economic development and reconciliation outcomes under the program?**
- 5. Provide for some flexibility to consider the project and nations specific circumstances in the final eligibility criteria.”**

A – NRT: The FNEP development team appreciates receiving these policy recommendations. They highlight the many ways First Nations are approaching their involvement in the clean energy sector. The FNEP is a program that focuses on new generation projects connecting to the BC Hydro integrated grid. Projects with an existing EPA, or a previous EPA, will not be eligible. It is expected that there will be an evaluation process to assess how the FNEP was able to achieve program objectives.



Comments:

- “Subsequent RFPs – First Nation’s and industry require a more defined and predictable procurement cycle.”
- “Minimum project size - there is a gap between the max project size under BC Hydro's community generation program (2MW) and the 2MW minimum under FNEP.”
- “30% CPI escalation is too low - SOP used 50% escalation, as small projects require higher escalation than CFP projects.”
- “Term – 40-year EPA term should be considered to increase amortization period.”
- “SOP created significant economic development opportunities for many communities, and FNEP can effectively create similar positive impacts.”