

Energy Support Programs - Background

Overview

The Energy Support Programs (ESP) offer a range of Indigenous funding opportunities that promote Indigenous leadership in the electricity sector and help make Ontario's electricity system more reliable, affordable and sustainable.

The funding programs promote broad equitable participation in Ontario's electricity sector through community capacity building, energy planning, renewable energy development and energy knowledge, awareness and skills building. They also generate economic development opportunities that help Indigenous communities improve energy resilience and independence.

Since the inception of the Energy Support Programs in 2009, the IESO has awarded \$71 million in funding to 177 Indigenous communities and organizations.

In 2022, the IESO awarded funding for 83 projects across all four programs to 53 Indigenous communities and organizations for a combined total of \$9.8 million in funding.

The four Energy Support Programs are:

- **Community Energy Champion:** Provides funding to Indigenous communities and organizations to hire a designated "Community Energy Champion" to help plan, implement and evaluate energy-related priorities.
- **Education and Capacity Building:** Provides funding to support awareness, education, training and capacity building initiatives that help prepare Indigenous communities and organizations to fully leverage electricity sector opportunities.
- **Indigenous Community Energy Plan:** Provides funding to Indigenous communities and organizations to develop and maintain an updated community energy plan that is designed to enhance energy security.
- **Indigenous Energy Projects:** Provides funding to Indigenous communities and organizations to assess and develop energy projects and partnerships.

In 2023, the IESO approved 93 projects across all four programs to 58 Indigenous communities and organizations for a combined total of \$12.14 million in funding.

2023 Funding Breakdown

Community Energy Champion Program

The following Indigenous communities and organizations have been awarded funding in 2023 to hire a Community Energy Champion for three years:

Community Energy Champion Program Recipients (15 projects)

Applicant	Funding Approved
Alderville First Nation	\$178,500
Batchewana First Nation	\$195,000
Brunswick House First Nation	\$180,000
Garden River First Nation	\$180,000
Henvey Inlet First Nation	\$175,000
Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation	\$172,500
Métis Nation of Ontario (2 projects)	\$343,000
Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte	\$180,000
Red Rock Indian Band	\$194,800
Taykwa Tagamou Nation	\$195,000
Thessalon First Nation	\$178,500
Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation	\$195,000
Wapekeka First Nation	\$180,000
Webequie First Nation	\$174,000
Total	\$2,721,300

Education and Capacity Building Program

The following Indigenous communities and organizations have been awarded funding in 2023 to support awareness, education, training and capacity-building initiatives.

Education and Capacity Building Program Recipients (35 projects)

Applicant	Project Description	Funding Approved
Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation	Developing an energy project management and skills building program to train community members how to build, maintain and operate renewable energy assets.	\$125,000
Brunswick House First Nation	Developing a training and skills building strategy to maintain and operate two rooftop solar photovoltaic systems (30kW) and to build the skills for future solar expansion.	\$125,000
Caldwell First Nation	Developing and distributing educational materials and hosting events focused on energy issues in order to build awareness and knowledge of energy-related issues faced by First Nations and the community.	\$125,000
Chi Mino Ozhitoowin	Hosting a conference developed and managed by a representative youth committee from eight First Nations communities to invigorate youth interest and participation in energy projects.	\$100,000
Chiefs of Ontario	Researching and developing an energy toolkit to help First Nations communities better understand energy systems in order to actively participate in the energy transition.	\$98,400
Chippewas of Georgina Island	Developing a series of workshops, events and educational materials in order to facilitate community participation in energy procurements.	\$99,000
Chippewas of the Thames First Nation	Delivering energy project management training and skills building in order to build, maintain and operate the community's growing number of renewable energy assets.	\$125,000
Fort Severn First Nation	Providing hands on training for local community members to operate and maintain a solar photovoltaic system.	\$125,000

Applicant	Project Description	Funding Approved
Ga Gitigemi Gamik	Training community members in solar panel installation and providing hands-on experience and job training.	\$74,765
Ginoogaming First Nation	Developing mentor-based energy training plans between community members, educators and industry stakeholders.	\$125,000
Indigenous Clean Energy Social Enterprise (2 projects)	Funding will support the development and delivery of the Bringing It Home Project Accelerator program for two communities that will catalyze community-wide energy efficiency projects.	\$250,000 (\$125,000 x2)
Indigenous Clean Energy Social Enterprise	Funding will support the participation of Indigenous energy leaders in Ontario in the 20/20 Catalysts Program, which provides practical and applied learning about renewable energy projects, community energy planning and energy efficiency.	\$125,000
Kasabonika Lake First Nation	Building capacity by utilizing drone technology to monitor the community's solar project and ensure the panels and inverter are operating sufficiently. In addition, drone equipment will support the community's biomass operation to assess optimal locations within forested areas to harvest sustainably.	\$124,967
Kashechewan First Nation	Developing a training and skills building strategy for their community energy team in order to operate and maintain their growing number of community energy assets. The focus is on monitoring, performance analysis, safety procedures, fault determination, preventative maintenance and troubleshooting.	\$125,000
Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug First Nation	Building capacity by utilizing drone technology to monitor the community's solar project and ensure the panels and inverter are operating sufficiently. In addition, drone equipment will support the community's biomass operation to assess optimal locations within forested areas to harvest sustainably.	\$124,967
Lac Seul First Nation	Developing an energy project management training and skills building program in order to build, maintain and operate their growing number of renewable energy assets.	\$125,000

Applicant	Project Description	Funding Approved
Magnetawan First Nation	Developing an energy project management training and skills building program in order to build, maintain and operate their growing number of renewable energy assets.	\$125,000
M'Chigeeng First Nation	Hosting community energy engagements for youth and community members, in addition to training and travel costs for their Community Energy Champion.	\$97,300
Michipicoten First Nation	Enhancing skills and providing purposeful training to elders and youth to support the community's energy projects and infrastructure.	\$124,000
Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte	Developing an energy project management training and skills building program in order to build, maintain and operate their growing number of renewable energy assets. A community energy team will also be created as part of this project and trained to manage and build new sustainable and renewable energy projects.	\$125,000
Ogemawahj Tribal Council	Delivering regional based training, fostering capacity building for six First Nations and further refining educational initiatives.	\$125,000
Ontario Aboriginal Housing Services (3 projects)	Funding will provide continued support to the OAHS Energy Team comprising an Energy Supervisor and two Regional Tenant Awareness Program Representatives to implement energy plans for urban and rural First Nations, Inuit and Métis people residing off reserve in Ontario.	\$375,000 (\$125,000 x3)
Onyota'aka Kahsatst [^] 'sla' Ltd	Developing a training and skills building strategy for the Oneida Energy Team to familiarize their community with the basics of battery storage systems and their applications.	\$125,000
Sagamok Anishnawbek First Nation	Delivering workshops and training for community members to get involved with renewable energy and energy conservation.	\$69,148
Sheshegwaning First Nation	Developing an energy project management training and skills building program in order to build, maintain and operate their growing number of renewable energy assets.	\$125,000

Applicant	Project Description	Funding Approved
Six Nations of the Grand River	Enhancing skills and providing purposeful training to elders and youth to support the community's energy projects and infrastructure.	\$125,000
Taykwa Tagamou Nation	Developing a training and skills building strategy for their community energy team to familiarize themselves with the basics of battery storage systems and their applications.	\$125,000
Temagami First Nation	Hiring 25 youth at the Esker Lakes Camp for a six-week program through which Indigenous youth gain valuable work experience, training and education in the energy sector.	\$125,000
Temiskaming Native Women's Support Group (TNWSG)	Funding will support a Residential Energy Auditor Training Program, a solar photovoltaic installation and maintenance training program and ongoing support for procurement participation.	\$94,625
Thessalon First Nation	Building energy related capacity and skills within the community and amongst its members through a series of engagement initiatives and training opportunities.	\$99,705
Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation	Developing an energy project management training and skills building program for community members in order to build, maintain and operate their growing number of renewable energy assets.	\$125,000
Whitefish River First Nation	Engaging the community through delivery of Solar PV Operation and Maintenance Training, an Energy Symposium Event and Youth Workshops.	\$109,000
Total		\$4,090,879

Indigenous Community Energy Plan Program

The following Indigenous communities and organizations have been awarded funding in 2023 to update their existing Community Energy Plans to help improve energy efficiency, reduce electricity consumption and promote greater interest, awareness and understanding of energy planning.

Indigenous Community Energy Plan Program Recipients (2 projects)

Applicant	Funding Approved
Chippewas of Georgina Island	\$25,000
Lac Seul First Nation	\$25,000
	\$50,000

Indigenous Energy Projects Program

The following Indigenous communities and organizations have been awarded funding in 2023 to support a variety of supply-side solutions that contribute to cleaner, more reliable and affordable energy systems:

Indigenous Energy Projects Program Recipients (41 projects)

Applicant	Project Description	Funding Approved
Alderville First Nation	Developing a small-scale, roof-mounted, solar photovoltaic system for Black Oak Savanna community building.	\$150,000
Algonquins of Pikwakanagan First Nation	Piloting an innovative community-based energy-as-a-service business model and implementation of a solar photovoltaic system.	\$200,000
Apitipi Anicinapek Nation	Assessing the installation of three 10 kW solar photovoltaic systems to serve the community's energy needs.	\$132,000
Beausoleil First Nation	Assessing and developing an 8 kW off-grid solar photovoltaic system for the community's waste transfer storage building.	\$119,828

Applicant	Project Description	Funding Approved
Biinjitiwaabik Zaaging Anishinaabek (Rocky Bay First Nation)	Conducting a feasibility study on the impact of installing solar panels on the existing community centre and to expand existing panels on the local school. The community is also evaluating the feasibility of solar streetlights.	\$50,000
Bingwi Neyaashi Anishinaabek First Nation	Completing retrofits on community buildings to be compatible with heat recovery ventilation systems which will be connected to the future district heating biomass system.	\$200,000
Brunswick House First Nation	Piloting an innovative community-based energy-as-a-service business model and implementation of a solar photovoltaic system.	\$200,000
Caldwell First Nation	Assessing the feasibility of renewable energy assets followed by the implementation of renewable energy projects.	\$150,000
Chapleau Cree First Nation	Installing off-grid solar LED street lights in residential areas of the community.	\$149,688
Chi Mino Ozhitowin	Working to build partnerships to support participation in activities related to the Waasigan Transmission Line Project.	\$50,000
Chippewas of the Thames First Nation	Piloting an innovative community-based energy-as-a-service business model and implementation of a solar photovoltaic system.	\$200,000
Couchiching First Nation	Assessing the feasibility of constructing a rooftop solar system on the local community arena to promote conservation and energy security.	\$50,000
Ginoogaming First Nation	Assessing the feasibility of renewable energy technologies to support the community's needs.	\$50,000

Applicant	Project Description	Funding Approved
Grassy Narrows First Nation	Assessing the feasibility of constructing rooftop or ground mounted solar photovoltaic systems in selected locations within the community.	\$50,000
Independent First Nations Alliance (4 projects)	Conducting four feasibility studies to determine the most cost effective way to enable energy savings for community buildings and for the implementation of renewable energy assets.	\$200,000 (\$50,000 x4)
Kashechewan First Nation	Implementing a micro grid to offset the reliance of the community arena on diesel fuel through scalable rooftop solar and battery storage systems.	\$200,000
Lac des Mille Lacs First Nation	Developing and implementing a cutting-edge micro-utility operating system to revolutionize the energy landscape of local communities.	\$200,000
Lac Seul First Nation	Piloting an innovative community-based energy-as-a-service business model and implementation of a solar photovoltaic system.	\$200,000
Magnetawan First Nation	Piloting an innovative community-based energy-as-a-service business model and implementation of a solar photovoltaic system.	\$200,000
Michipicoten First Nation	Conducting a feasibility study to identify applicable solar net-metering sites.	\$25,000
Mishkosiminiziibiing Ojibway Nation (Big Grassy River)	Designing and installing a 30 kW solar photovoltaic system, including assessment of net-metering capacity and battery storage.	\$150,000
MoCreebec Eeyoud	Launching phase one of a geothermal energy system installation for their community centre in Moose Factory. This phase will commission a feasibility study to determine the implications of converting their Cree Village Lodge to a geothermal heating/cooling system.	\$50,000

Applicant	Project Description	Funding Approved
Mohawks of the Bay of Quinte	Piloting an innovative energy-as-a-service business model and implementation of a solar photovoltaic system.	\$200,000
Nipissing First Nation	Installing two level three electric vehicle charging stations at the expanding Bineshii Business Park.	\$160,000
Northwest Angle #33 First Nation	Designing and installing a 30 kW solar photovoltaic system, including assessment of net-metering capacity and battery storage.	\$150,000
Onyota'a:ka Kahsats't'sla' Ltd.	Installing an innovative battery storage project at the Oneida Public Works Garage.	\$200,000
Pays Plat First Nation	Assessing the feasibility of constructing rooftop or ground mounted solar photovoltaic systems in selected locations within the community.	\$50,000
Saugeen First Nation	Conducting a community utilities hub feasibility study.	\$48,000
Sheshegwaning First Nation	Installing net-metered solar on two infrastructure buildings (20kW AC total) to offset the community's dependence on the grid and move towards energy independence.	\$150,000
Six Nations of the Grand River	Installing the first electric vehicle charging stations within the community.	\$200,000
Taykwa Tagamou Nation	Constructing an off-grid ground-mounted solar array (20 kW) that will be connected to a scalable battery storage system (38 kWh) and a server-connected control system to manage all electrical power supply and demand needs on site.	\$200,000
Temagami First Nation	Installing 5 to 10 kW of micro-embedded solar panels on five community buildings.	\$150,000

Applicant	Project Description	Funding Approved
Temiskaming Native Women's Support Group (TNWSG)	Installing three 10 kW solar systems throughout Keepers of the Circle's building stock.	\$141,600
Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation	Conducting a feasibility study aimed at establishing a micro-utility in the community and providing energy-as-a-service to on-grid and off-grid buildings in the community.	\$50,000
Wabigoon Lake Ojibway Nation	Designing and installing a 30 kW solar photovoltaic system, including the assessment of net-metering capacity and battery storage.	\$150,000
Wasauksing First Nation	Assessing the feasibility of constructing rooftop or ground-mounted solar in selected locations within the community.	\$50,000
Whitefish River First Nation	Implementing the community's first net-metering solar PV project at the community school.	\$200,000
Wikwemikong Unceded Indian Reserve	Installing two level 2 and two level 3 electric vehicle charging stations alongside a battery backup system at the community recreational complex.	\$200,000
Total		\$5,276,116