



Net-Zero Communities Accelerator Program

QUEST, Eco-West Canada, and the Community Energy Association are seeking small- to mid-sized communities¹ interested in accelerating projects and plans to save energy and emissions to participate in a 2-year **Net-Zero Communities Accelerator Program**.

The purpose of the program is to establish a community energy and emissions accelerator to equip a group of communities in Western Canada with the tools and knowledge to develop and implement high-impact projects and community energy and emissions plans, and understand the economic benefit they can provide.

Why Participate?

- ✓ Get tailored services to help you develop and/or implement a community energy plan or initiative
- ✓ GHG emissions reductions - communities directly and indirectly account for 51% of GHG emissions in Canada
- ✓ Every 1% reduction in energy use = \$5-\$14M kept in your local economy
- ✓ Every \$1M spent on community energy plan implementation = minimum net increase of 3 jobs

Tools & Services²

Tools and services fall under two categories:

- 1) **Capacity Building** - this category involves building the foundational knowledge and plans you need to action community energy and emissions plans and initiatives. It also provides coaching and navigating services, and connects you with others learning about and actioning community energy and emissions planning.

All communities receive an Accelerator Plan	Seeker	Doer	Leader
Smart Energy Communities Benchmark Assessment (initial + final)	✓	✓	✓
Community Energy Mapping workshop	✓	(✓)	
Community Energy Development and Climate Action Planning Workshops	✓	(✓)	
Energy and Emissions Inventory	✓	✓	
Virtual Community Energy Planning (CEP) Course for Planners	✓	✓	✓
Land-based Renewable Energy Mapping Assessment		✓	✓
CEP Implementation Workshop		✓	✓

¹ A 'community' can be defined by the boundary of a local government (e.g. municipal boundary or First Nations community boundary), but can also include clusters of communities in a region, and/or community-led or other organizations tasked with community energy planning.

² Services will vary based on level of maturity with community energy planning.

CEP Economic Impact Analysis		(✓)	✓
Recommendation and Prioritization Report	✓	✓	✓
Support and Navigation services (existing tools, resources, energy advisors, funding from partners, webinars) and Personalised Coaching for staff and elected officials (highly variable dependent on participant needs)	✓	✓	✓
Powered by Communities (publications, social media)	✓	✓	✓
Participation in relevant working groups and communities of practice	✓	✓	✓
Webinar Series	✓	✓	✓

- 2) **Project Initiation** - this category involves building the foundation to launch a program (such as community-wide retrofits), a project (such as a regional electric vehicle charging network) or a policy that will result in reduced emissions across the community or region. It also provides coaching and navigating services, and connects you with others learning about and actioning community energy and emissions planning.

All communities receive a Readiness Assessment	Seeker	Doer	Leader
Build the Case: Estimation of emissions reduction potential, economic development potential, energy cost savings potential, risks, and examples from other communities	✓	✓	
Internal Alignment: One-on-one and group meetings to develop staff support and assistance in council / board presentation	✓	(✓)	
External Alignment: One-on-one meetings or up to two online workshops to convene & engage stakeholders to develop understanding and momentum. Stakeholders may include neighboring local governments, industry, other levels of government, residents, and/or utilities.	✓	(✓)	✓
Project Plan: Refining project / program / policy definition and workplan to get to launch		✓	✓
Funding: Identification of grants and support in grant development		✓	✓
Contracting: development of requests for proposal and manage procurement process if needed (additional cost)		✓	✓

Timeline & Time Commitment

Anticipated Program Timeline (April 2022 – March 2024)

- Apr – Aug 2022: Accelerator Foundations (Terms of Reference, introductory webinars, Smart Energy Community Benchmarking)
- Aug 2022 – Dec 2023: Accelerator Tools and Services, Recommendation and Prioritization Report
- Jan 2024 – Mar 2024: Program Wrap Up (Summary Report, Recommendations and Next Steps)

Time Commitment

Capacity Building Category

The time commitment varies depending on the number of services the communities receive but include the following:

- A point of contact to:
 - Serve as the primary liaison with the Net-Zero Communities Accelerator team
 - Identify and engage local distribution companies, real estate sector stakeholders, and/or other local organizations (e.g., relevant community groups organizations) to provide information and/or participate in program workshops and/or meetings
 - Participate in meetings and service workshops via teleconference / webinar and/or in-person
 - Participate in evaluation activities
- Allocation of 24 days (some for hourly and/or half day meetings and/or workshops) or equivalent human resource time between April 2022 to March 2024 to undertake the activities identified under 'Tools and Services' above.

Project Initiation Category

The time commitment varies depending on the number of services the communities receive but include the following:

- A point of contact to:
 - Serve as the primary liaison with the Net-Zero Communities Accelerator team
 - Identify and engage internal and external stakeholders to provide information and/or participate in program workshops and/or meetings
 - Participate in meetings and service workshops via teleconference / webinar and/or in-person
 - Participate in evaluation activities
- Allocation of 30 days (some for hourly and/or half day meetings and/or workshops) or equivalent human resource time between April 2022 to March 2024 to undertake the activities identified under 'Tools and Services' above.

Cost

Participating communities will confirm their participation in the program by paying a small fee based on population.

Capacity Building

Community Population	Fee
Less than 2,000	\$2,000
2,000 – 5,000	\$3,000
Greater than 5,000	\$4,000

Project Initiation

Community Population	Fee
Less than 2,000	\$1,000
2,000 – 5,000	\$3,000
Greater than 5,000	\$5,000

Interested?

To submit an expression of interest, please enter your details [here](#) by **September 26, 2021**. For more information about the program please contact Ericka Wicks, Managing Director at QUEST at ewicks@questcanada.org or 866-494-2770 e.701.

Eligible applicants include local governments (Indigenous, municipal, regional or a group of small municipalities and/or bands), or organizations applying on behalf of a local government or a group of local governments (e.g. a local energy distributor or not-for-profit organization).