Program Details and Background: Question & Answer
Remote Electrification Readiness Program - Question & Answer

Q1: What is the purpose of the Program?
Ontario’s 2013 Long-Term Energy Plan (LTEP) identified the connection of remote First Nation communities in northwestern Ontario as a priority for the province. The Ontario Power Authority is considering transmission connections for First Nations in northwestern Ontario that currently rely on diesel for electricity generation. The LTEP also recognized that Aboriginal participation in the energy sector is one of the keys to economic development for Aboriginal communities.

The Remote Electrification Readiness Program (the Program) is a new, 3-year targeted program ($1M/year from 2014-15 – 2016-17) to assist remote First Nation communities that are set to be impacted by proposed electrification investments in northwestern Ontario and connection to renewable energy sources.

The Program will aim to assist these communities to quantify gaps and develop and implement community readiness plans; and, to build community capacity to retain economic development opportunities in the communities.

Q2: Who is eligible for funding under the Program?
The following 25 remote First Nations who currently rely on diesel fuel for power generation can submit joint applications for program funding. Alternately, the following Tribal Councils can submit joint applications on behalf of the member communities listed below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eligible Tribal Councils</th>
<th>Eligible First Nation Communities</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Independent First Nations Alliance</td>
<td>Kitchenuhmayoosib Inninuwug</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Muskrat Dam</td>
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<td>Pikangikum</td>
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<td>Whitesand*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Keewaytinook Okimakanak</td>
<td>Deer Lake</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Fort Severn*</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Keewaywin</td>
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<td></td>
<td>North Spirit Lake</td>
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<td>Poplar Hill</td>
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<td>Matawa First Nations Tribal Council</td>
<td>Eabametoong</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Marten Falls</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Neskantaga</td>
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<td>Nibinamik</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Webequie</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Weenusk*</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Kiashke Zaaging Anishinaabek*</td>
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<td>Sandy Lake</td>
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<td>Shibogama First Nations Council</td>
<td>Kasabonika Lake</td>
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<td>Kingfisher Lake</td>
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<td>Wapekeka</td>
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<td>Wawakapewin</td>
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<td>Wunnunimin Lake</td>
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<tr>
<td>Windigo First Nations Council</td>
<td>Bearskin Lake</td>
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<td>Weagamow</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Sachigo Lake</td>
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Exceptions*: Exceptions to the requirement for joint applications are allowed for the following remote First Nations (Weenusk, Fort Severn, Whitesand, Kiashke Zaaging Anishinaabek) to apply individually. These 4 communities are not a part of the Long-term Energy Plan (LTEP) and will not be connected to the grid, however, opportunities to pursue renewable energy projects will still require them to identify community programming needs that will allow them to benefit from economic development opportunities.

Q3: What are the Program objectives?
The objectives of the Program are to assist remote First Nation communities in identifying, prioritizing accessing and participating in programs that address their specific social programming needs. This can be achieved through the development of Community Readiness Plans in order to fully benefit from the socio-economic opportunities associated with planned connection to transmission lines or renewable energy sources.

Q4: What is a Community Readiness Plan?
A community readiness plan is a planning tool that outlines baseline data on a series of identified socio-economic indicators; compiles an inventory of existing programs and resources; identifies programming needs and develops an action plan that prioritizes a community’s needs in order to benefit from future economic development opportunities.

Elements of a Community Readiness Plan could include:
- Extensive community communications and engagement;
- Research to develop a baseline on community well-being data (addiction rates, mental health supports, employment and training needs, etc.,);
- Analysis and identification of existing or needed government programming and a strategy to implement programs in communities;
- Job-specific training;
- Relevant health programs; and
- Business innovation/incubation mentoring.
See Appendix 1 for a sample Community Readiness Plan.

Q5: What is the application process for the Program?
A holistic, multi-community, aggregate approach to identifying and securing programming needs creates the best opportunity for First Nation success. As such, joint applications are required except for the 4 communities noted above.

Applications will be accepted from Tribal Councils or from other groupings of First Nations (e.g. 3 or more communities). Band Council Resolutions are required for individual and group applications to demonstrate community agreement and to delegate authority to the Tribal Council to develop the community readiness plan. Eligible First Nations can only be represented in one application for Program Funding, whether the application is joint or individual.

Q6: Can a First Nation be represented in multiple applications such as through a Tribal Council and a joint First Nation application?
No, eligible First Nations can only be represented in one application for Program Funding.

Q7: Who manages the Remote Electrification Readiness Program?
The Program is administered by the Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs.
Q8: How much funding is available?
The Ontario 2014-15 Budget allocated $1M per year for 3 years (2014-15 to 2016-17) towards this program.

Q9: Is there a maximum level of funding under the Program?
Funding for Program activities will be determined through a competitive process with joint applications receiving proportionate funding.

Depending on the number of successful applicants and the nature of community readiness planning outlined in proposals, funding amounts may be adjusted following the evaluation period. Any increase or decrease in funding will be discussed with successful applicants in advance of entering into a Funding Agreement. The Ministry may also adjust funding amounts to ensure adequate community readiness planning in northwestern Ontario.

Q10: Are multi-year funding agreements allowable under the Program?
For the first year of the program (2014-15) one-year funding agreements will be established. Multi-year funding agreements will be considered under the Program in 2015-16 for two-year funding.

Q11: What activities are eligible under the Program?
To support the development of Community Readiness Plans, eligible activities could include:

1. **Identifying community resources:** including skills, resources, facilities, capacities and capabilities that currently exist within the community(ies) (e.g., through community engagement sessions).

2. **Undertaking a gap analysis:** through which communities can identify their programming needs (e.g., supports for: mental health, wellness and life skills programs, addictions recovery, academic upgrading, skills training, etc.) to better capture future benefits of transmission connection.

   **Note:** For communities that have already completed a gap analysis or who have identified and prioritized their community needs, Program funds could be used to build on these activities to develop the community readiness plan. MAA would require submission of the prior community gap analysis/needs assessment along with the Program application.

3. **Developing an action plan:**
   - Researching other funding and programs to leverage;
   - Building on existing resources and planning initiatives;
   - Developing new partnerships or leveraging existing; and
   - Investments in new or existing economic and social programs, business development opportunities required to enable First Nation communities (either individually or as a collective) to capture maximum value from the transmission line projects.

4. **Implementing and monitoring:** implementing the actions identified above within a coordinated community framework. Monitoring and evaluating progress with appropriate criteria.
Q12: What expenditures are eligible under the Program?
Eligible costs that CAN be funded include:

- Partnering with an institution that has expertise in developing gap analysis and the community readiness plan in partnership with the community;
- Staffing to coordinate the development of the community readiness plan at the community or Tribal Council level;
- Costs related to developing the knowledge and skills needed to collaborate, partner, and work jointly with other communities/institutions on initiatives related to the identified community priorities;
- Enhancing existing planning or initiatives that are not fully funded and that support the objectives of the Program;
- Travel costs for activities directly related to the work plan including those charged by consultants;
- Professional fees, consultants and/or technicians for technical expertise relating to the project work plan activities e.g. to develop the community readiness plan;
- Honoraria, payments to Elders for their attendance at a meeting/event or to individuals for their Aboriginal ceremonial participation at a meeting/event. The definition includes payments made to Elders for their specialized knowledge (e.g. on cultural sites, sacred knowledge);
- Community Outreach, for activities such as community meetings, presentations and workshops related to the work plan. (e.g. printing materials, room rates, etc.);
- Administration costs must be directly related to the work plan. Eligible costs include: utilities; telephone/fax charges; network charges; postage/courier charges; photocopying charges; financial institution service fees; office supplies. A maximum of 10% of the transfer payment’s total budget (pre-administration) may to allotted to administration, and the costs must be specified.

Q13: Can consultants be hired to help develop the Community Readiness Plan?
Yes, applicants could work with external partners or institutions which have expertise to work with communities, to develop the community readiness plans.

Q14: What expenditures are ineligible under the Program?
Costs that CANNOT be funded include:

- Costs related to any initiative that is already fully funded through other sources;
- Costs related to initiatives that do not meet the Program Objectives (see Section A-2 OBJECTIVES of this Guide);
- Honoraria to individuals already receiving a salary from the applicant and/or a represented community or institution;
- Capital asset costs other than the initial purchase of eligible office equipment for new staff funded by the Program;
- Litigation or other legal costs;
- Research undertaken for the purpose of pursuing land claims or litigation;
- Debt reduction costs; and
- Purchasing of goods for resale.
Q15: What is the evaluation process for the Program?
Applications will be assessed on a competitive basis. Priority will be given for applications that:

- Build on existing initiatives and community planning
- Leverage community resources and existing programs to meet community priorities
- Demonstrate efficient use of resources
- Demonstrate expertise in community planning and capacity-building

Q16: What stages are involved in the evaluation process for the Program?
The evaluation process for Program applications will be in two stages as follows:

Stage 1: Initial review of applications will include:
- Eligibility and financial viability of the organization;
- Application meets program objectives; and
- Work plan and budget.

Stage 2: Multi-ministry panel review:
- Applications that meet the organizational and proposal requirements through the initial review will then be reviewed and prioritized by a multi-ministry panel that will make recommendations to MAA; MAA will make the final decisions regarding successful applications.
Q17: What application materials/documents are required to be submitted as part of the application?
You can use this chart as a tool to ensure that your application is complete.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information/Document Requirements for a Complete Submission</th>
<th>Completed?</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Review the Remote Electrification Readiness Program Applicant Guide</td>
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<tr>
<td>Review the Remote Electrification Readiness Program: Question and Answer Document</td>
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<tr>
<td>Complete and submit the Application Form in Grants Ontario by November 14, 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>Complete and submit the Budget document as an attachment by November 14, 2014</td>
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<tr>
<td>List of Chief and Council or Board of Directors (as applicable) with portfolio information</td>
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<td>Copy of Letters Patent/Certificate of Incorporation (if applicable)</td>
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<td>Organizational Chart(s) (if available)</td>
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<td>Proof of Insurance</td>
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<td>Complete and unabridged audited financial statements from the most recent available fiscal year are required (no earlier than 2012-13). The audited financial statements must include:</td>
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<td>• Auditors’ cover letter</td>
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<td>• Auditors’ Management letter</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Balance Sheet</td>
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<td>• Income Statement</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Statement of Changes in Net Assets</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Statement of Changes in Fund Balances</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Summary of Significant Accounting Policies</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Notes to the Financial Statements</td>
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<tr>
<td>• All Schedules of Revenue and Expenditures from all sources of funding</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Schedules of Salaries, Honoraria, Travel and Meal Expense</td>
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<tr>
<td>If incorporated for less than two years, a copy of your organization’s by-laws, constitution and mandate; information on your governance structure, and information on your membership requirements</td>
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**Additional Documents and Information**

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<tr>
<td>Band Council Resolutions for individual and group applications</td>
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<tr>
<td>Current contact list(s) of Executive Committee</td>
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</table>
Q18: What are the requirements for successful applicants of the Program?

Successful applicants will be required to:

• Sign an Ontario Funding Agreement with the Ontario Government outlining the terms and conditions for receiving and using funds;

• Seek at least $2 million commercial general liability insurance coverage, and to add “Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Ontario as represented by the Ontario Government” as a co-insured on this coverage before the Ontario Funding Agreement can be executed;

• Report back to the ministry on the use of funds, service deliverables and outcomes achieved. Applicants must submit Final Expenditure and Work Plan Report form and RERP Audited Schedule to provide this information; and

• Permit the Province to verify/audit information submitted (at the discretion of the Province) to ensure that it is complete and accurate, and that funds were used for the purpose(s) intended.

Q19: What is the deadline to apply?

Remote Electrification Readiness Program DRAFT applications for 2014-2015 must be received by November 14, 2014 on Grants Ontario.

For those DRAFT applications received by November 14, 2014 an additional 7-days will be provided to applicants to finalize your application through Grants Ontario with a closing deadline date of November 21, 2014.

Q20: Who do we contact about the Program?

Email or telephone enquiries about the program may be directed to:

Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs
Aboriginal Relations and Ministry Partnerships Division
Aboriginal & Ministry Relationships Branch
160 Bloor Street East, 9th Floor
Toronto, ON M7A 2E6

Telephone: 416-326-4740
Toll-free: 1-866-381-5337

TTY/Teletypewriter (for the hearing impaired):
1-866-686-6072

Or

Corwin Troje
Telephone: 416-325-4044
Email: Corwin.Troje@ontario.ca

Trish Malone
Telephone: 416-327-9594
Email: Trish.Malone@ontario.ca
## Appendix 1: Sample Community Electrification Readiness Plan

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Readiness Plan</th>
<th>Activities</th>
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| Step 1: Identify community resources | • Undertake community surveys to establish/collect baseline data  
• Leverage baseline data that may exist for:  
  • Education (i.e. student attendance/ participation, student achievement, EQAO, etc.);  
  • Well-being (e.g. life expectancy, health outcomes, family violence, birth rates, language retention, etc.)  
  • Well-being studies;  
  • Child Welfare data;  
  • Labour Force and Composition;  
  • Wait times for services offered;  
  • Mental Health/ Addictions (e.g. prescription drug abuse, youth suicide, etc.) as well as other health indicators; and  
  • Public Safety (e.g. victimization, crime reduction, etc.). |
| Step 2: Undertake a gap analysis and prioritize community needs | • Develop a research plan including priority setting activities  
• Identify community needs e.g.:  
  • Health/Social Supports  
  • Education (academic upgrading)  
  • Employment and Training  
  • Business mentoring  
  • Community engagement on electrification opportunities |
| Step 3: Develop an action plan to leverage programs, services and community resources to address identified gaps/community needs | • Identify existing programs and services (federal, provincial, non-profit etc.)  
• Develop an action plan |
| Step 4: Implementation and on-going monitoring | • Develop a protocol to enable on-going community assessment and monitoring of community readiness/preparedness |