

Large-scale solar knowledge sharing

How project data is collected and shared

Why should I share data with ARENA?

ARENA invests public money, and knowledge sharing is one of the returns that we expect on our investment. ARENA is expecting to support approximately 200 MW of large-scale photovoltaic (PV) plants not just to lower the cost of large-scale solar PV by supporting increased capacity, but also to assist the next wave of large-scale solar PV developers do things better, more efficiently, and at lower cost, and to build confidence in the institutions that fund them.

To achieve this, it is crucial that we back up our knowledge sharing messages and key findings with real data that has been aggregated and anonymised from funded projects.

How will ARENA protect the confidentiality of commercially sensitive data?

ARENA respects the need to keep some project data confidential. We will treat project data according to the following principles:

- All knowledge sharing data that is provided to us will be treated in accordance with the Funding Agreement, which contains provisions to protect confidentiality.
- Any confidential data will be aggregated and anonymised for publication. How this is done will vary depending on the data in question: Anonymisation may require that different data is treated differently.
- ARENA will provide funding recipients (FR) with an opportunity to view aggregated and anonymised data representations (such as graphs or tables to be included in public reports) before they are released to the public. ARENA will provide a reasonable window of opportunity for FRs to provide feedback on any aggregated and anonymised data representations. ARENA will take feedback into consideration prior to publication.

How will ARENA process my project data?

ARENA and/or its Knowledge Sharing Agent (as defined in Schedule 2 of the Funding Agreement) will process data according to the following steps:

1. **Define.** Establish definitions for data so that we can ensure comparability of data across projects. ARENA has done this through the Large Scale Solar (LSS) Data Specification, which is available on the ARENA Large Scale Solar Programme website.
2. **Store.** Create a central, searchable, scalable repository for project-level data that can only be accessed by ARENA and its Knowledge Sharing Agent.
3. **Synthesise.** Bring datasets together for analysis.
4. **Analyse.** Use data that has been aggregated across projects and anonymised to prepare public reports, presentations, videos, infographics and other knowledge sharing products.

What if I can't provide all the information required by the LSS Data Specification, or I can't provide data in that exact form?

ARENA has structured the LSS Data Specification to reflect the kind of information that would normally be collected by large-scale solar PV projects. We expect that FRs should be able to comply with most (if not all) of the LSS Data Specification.

Where an FR cannot provide data in exactly the same form as the LSS Data Specification, the FR should ensure that this is explained clearly in the application process, and discuss the constraints in detail with ARENA prior to finalising the Project Funding Agreement.

Will project data be shared with a Knowledge Sharing Agent?

Yes, ARENA may choose to hire an external ARENA Knowledge Sharing Agent to collect and analyse template and raw data from projects and turn this data into knowledge sharing products. The ARENA Knowledge Sharing Agent will have access to project data that is equal to ARENA's level of access. The ARENA Knowledge Sharing Agent will also be bound by the same confidentiality obligations as ARENA. ARENA will select a Knowledge Sharing Agent with due consideration for issues such as conflicts of interest and the integrity of internal information firewalls (where applicable).

If I am already providing data according to the LSS Data Specification, why do I also need to provide financial models for knowledge sharing purposes?

ARENA requires that FRs allow ARENA and the ARENA Knowledge Sharing Agent access to updated financial models for three reasons:

1. **To ensure financial transparency.** Like any other investor, ARENA expects a high level of financial transparency throughout the terms of the agreement, and provision of updated financial models is an important measure to achieve this.
2. **To obtain additional data and information for new questions.** ARENA cannot foresee all of the most valuable potential knowledge that will help the development of large scale solar in Australia. Allowing access to raw data, such as financial models, will give ARENA the opportunity to explore issues that are yet to be identified, and have not planned for as part of the LSS Data Specification.
3. **To validate template data.** Allowing access to financial models will allow us to understand potential differences in calculation methodologies between companies, which may affect LCOE calculations. This will allow for better harmonisation of data across projects and provide a more accurate picture of where costs in utility-scale solar are heading and why.

Will the data I provide for knowledge sharing be used to assess the performance of my project? Will it affect access to grant payments and/or distribution payments from the special purpose vehicle to parent company/s?

Data and information provided for knowledge sharing in accordance with the Funding Agreement will not affect distribution of grant funds from ARENA.

Should FRs fail to provide data and information as agreed under the Project Funding Agreement, ARENA may choose to exercise the Distribution Lock-Up mechanism outlined in Part 3, Clause 8 of the Funding Agreement.