

ARENA ADVISORY PANEL

APPLICANT GUIDELINES FOR
ASSESSORS AND ADVISORS

MARCH 2024



Australian Government
Australian Renewable
Energy Agency

ARENA

INTRODUCTION

Are you a community member with knowledge and experience relating to First Nations peoples and communities.

We are seeking Expressions of Interest to join ARENA's Advisory Panel and help shape the future of the renewable energy sector.

There are two distinct service engagements - as Assessors or as Advisors.

As an advisor you will have strong skills and knowledge relating to First Nations Peoples and communities. This will include First Nations engagement, rights, interests and equitable agreement making.

As an assessor in the AAP you will contribute to the assessment of project funding applications, bringing skills and experience you've gained from working in the renewable energy or related sectors. This could include solar and wind energy, electric vehicles, hydropower, smart grids, renewable energy finance and consulting services, green buildings, environmental monitoring and assessment, and others.

ABOUT ARENA

ARENA is Australia's renewable energy innovation agency. ARENA plays a crucial role in advancing and facilitating Australia's transition to renewable energy, and the global goal of net zero by 2050. ARENA supports the Government's efforts to reduce emissions and limit climate change, in line with the global goal of holding the increase in the global average temperature to well below 2°C and as close to 1.5°C as possible.

The ARENA Advisory Panel is a group of experts with diverse experience in the renewable energy industry, who offer guidance on project proposals under various ARENA programs.

ARENA is looking to build capability that supports the agency to identify opportunities for First Nations People to thrive through, and as a result of, the clean energy transition.

As part of this work the agency will develop a better understanding of how renewable energy initiatives can empower and deliver outcomes for and with First Nations communities. This includes supporting access to clean energy, creating new employment opportunities, and fostering a more robust connection to cultural heritage.

Currently, there are three ARENA programs that engage with First Nations interests in their guidelines - the Hydrogen Headstart Program, the Industrial Transformation Stream Program under the *Powering the Regions Fund*, and the Regional Microgrids Program however all programs require proponents to consider broad stakeholder consultation and impact, which should include First Nations communities

SERVICE PROVISION 1

ARENA ADVISORY PANEL ADVISOR - FIRST NATIONS RIGHTS AND BENEFITS

As an Advisor within the AAP, you will play a crucial role in supporting ARENA to evaluate project funding applications and assess their impact on Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander communities. The focus will be on respectful and genuine engagement that ensures Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) and self-determination, while identifying opportunities for the inclusion and participation of First Nations communities, and the generation of meaningful benefits and outcomes. You will provide advice on best practice approaches for promoting a culture of community engagement and benefit-sharing, which may include financial benefits, skills and capacity building, and improved social outcomes.

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

The Advisor's primary role is to provide recommendations on the merit and suitability of the applicant's approach, serving as a valuable contributor without formal decision-making authority regarding funding opportunities.

Other responsibilities include:

- › Advise on and critically assess, the merit of the community benefits, community engagement, and Applicant cultural competency proposed.
- › Following the review of the Applicant's Community Engagement Plan and Community Benefit Plan or similar proposal, make recommendations to the ARENA Executive, ARENA Workers and ARENA Advisory Panel regarding the appropriateness of any proposed financial and/or non-financial benefits intended to be provided/established, and whether the applicant is applying First Nations engagement best practice. ARENA expects that these benefits may include, but are not limited to - reduced electricity costs, financial payments, equity, community projects, education, training, employment, and/or local procurement.
- › The ongoing engagement methodology used (or proposed to be used) by the applicant to appropriately communicate and engage with the First Nations community(ies) affected by the proposed project.
- › The cultural competency of the Applicant and its partners to appropriately engage with First Nations communities.
- › Reporting of any issues or gaps in the proposed materials relating to community benefits.
- › Assist ARENA to develop feedback to applicants on the merit of their proposed First Nations community engagement methodology and the proposed benefits.
- › Help assess project milestone reports relating to First Nations engagement and benefits for funded projects.
- › Provide ad hoc advice and support to ARENA relevant to the Advisors expertise regarding program and project development.

As an Advisor to the AAP you will have one or more of the following skills and/or knowledges.

- › First Nations Community Engagement
- › First Nations cultural heritage
- › First Nations land management
- › First Nations STEM
- › Equitable agreement making with First Nations peoples and communities

REMUNERATION FOR THE ADVISOR:

- › Rates can be negotiated but start from the hourly rate of \$385 (inc. GST) per hour.
- › Meeting attendance is paid at the same rate.
- › Reasonable travel and accommodation costs reimbursed or booked by ARENA on request.

SERVICE PROVISION 2 ASSESSOR - ARENA ADVISORY PANEL MEMBER

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

As an Assessor within the AAP, you will play a crucial role in assessing applications, providing recommendations, and shaping the direction of renewable energy initiatives in Australia without formal decision-making authority regarding funding opportunities. Other responsibilities include:

- › Provide expert advice and critical assessment of Expressions of Interest (EOI) and Full Application submissions across various ARENA funding programs and initiatives aligned to your expertise.
- › Make recommendations to ARENA regarding funding offers, terms and conditions, and application improvements.
- › Assist in the development of feedback for applicants, highlighting areas of merit or improvement.
- › Assess complex milestone reports for funded projects and offer ad hoc advice as needed.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

We are seeking individuals with knowledge and expertise in the following areas:

- › Solar PV
- › Electric vehicles
- › Bioenergy/biofuels
- › Commercial/financial
- › Energy markets

- › Energy storage
- › Hydrogen
- › Low emissions metals and minerals
- › Process heat
- › Energy efficiency
- › Industrial decarbonisation
- › Grids and infrastructure (including microgrids)
- › Energy management

In addition, knowledge and/or experience in one or more of the following areas would be highly regarded:

- › First Nations Community Engagement
- › First Nations cultural heritage
- › First Nations land management
- › First Nations STEM
- › Equitable agreement making with First Nations peoples and communities

REMUNERATION FOR THE ASSESSOR

- › \$385 per hour up to a maximum of \$3080 per day (figures include GST)
- › Meeting attendance is paid at the same rate.
- › Reasonable travel and accommodation costs reimbursed or booked by ARENA on request.

TIME COMMITMENT

An estimated time commitment for both of these opportunities is as follows:

- › Attendance at formal monthly meetings (via teleconference when necessary) when projects have been assigned for assessment during that month.

ADVISORS

- › Up to 3 hours per funding application depending on the volume of materials provided. Additional time may be allocated by ARENA where required.
- › In addition, the Advisor can request a project briefing session with the ARENA transaction team to gain an overview of the energy/innovation components of the project, if required.

ARENA is aiming to build a cohort of First Nations experts to support this work. At this stage, it is expected that there will be a total of 10 - 20 project proposals over the course of 2024 which will require assessment on the basis of their engagement and benefit-sharing plans for First Nations people. Your individual workload would depend on the number of non-conflicted experts available, and the number of projects requiring assessment for First Nations interests. Your allocation to a specific project will be informed by your specific knowledge of the project or Country, potential conflicts of interest and availability.

ASSESSORS

- › Up to 3 to 5 hours per funding application assessment, depending on project complexity and information for review. Additional time may be allocated by ARENA where required.
- › Additional out-of-session advice may be requested on an ad hoc basis and only when agreed in advance by the Assessor.

ARENA will communicate with AAP members at least one week in advance of issuing work requiring members to declare any potential conflicts and nominate their available capacity for the upcoming month. Panel members will typically receive one to three applications to review each month based on the breadth of their expertise, availability, or conflicts.

ENGAGEMENT MODEL

If your submission is successful you will be engaged under a contract as a service provider to ARENA. Successful respondents will be required to hold an Australian Business Number (ABN) and relevant insurances. Please refer to the contract template provided for more detail.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Your contributions will be assessed based on:

- › Quality of written assessment comments
- › Contributions at Advisory Panel meetings
- › Timeliness of written assessment comments
- › Responsiveness to ARENA's requests
- › Value for money

REQUIRED SERVICE PROVISION ARRANGEMENTS

- › Undertake assessments of applications as directed.
- › Willingness to undertake ad-hoc tasks relevant to your expertise.

CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

All members of ARENA's Advisory Panel are required to make a conflict of interest declaration against each project proposed for assessment. A material conflict of interest (such as close professional or personal relationship with an applicant or its partners) will preclude the Assessor or Advisor from completing the assessment.

SUBMISSION PROCESS

ARENA is partnering with Tiffanie Ireland from Messenger Bird Collective to support this search process.

Questions can be directed to Tiffanie Ireland:

E: tiffanie@messengerbirdcollective.com.au

P: 0412 952 379

To submit an expression of interest for either opportunity, please submit your resume and a brief cover letter (1-2 pages) to Tiffanie at the email address above, describing your expertise and knowledge and why you'd like to join the ARENA Advisory Panel. Short listed applicants will be interviewed by a panel which will include ARENA team members.

ARENA is an equal opportunity employer and strongly encourages applications from First Nations Australians.

Further information is available at
arena.gov.au

Australian Renewable Energy Agency

Postal Address

GPO Box 643
Canberra ACT 2601

Location

2 Phillip Law Street
New Acton ACT 2601

Engage with us

ARENAWIRE



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