



Department of
**Energy and Economic
Diversification**

Community Benefit Guideline Consultation Paper

Jai Thomas, Deputy Director General and Coordinator of Energy, Energy Policy WA

Wenona Hadingham, Director Planning and Coordinator, PoweringWA

Olivia Riches, Senior Policy Analyst, PoweringWA

Tuesday 15 July 2025



PoweringWA

Acknowledgement of Country

PoweringWA respectfully acknowledges Aboriginal peoples as the Traditional Custodians of Western Australia. We acknowledge the enduring connection Aboriginal people continue to share with the land, sea, and sky through both their ancestral ties and custodianship to Country. We pay our respect to Elders both past and present, and acknowledge the value brought to our department through the collective contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across Western Australia.



The Energy Transition and Regional Communities

- The State Government is committed to the target of Net Zero carbon emissions by 2050.
- All Government owned coal-fired generation will be phased out by 2030.
- Our households and industries are installing renewable energy and electrifying to decarbonise.
- The Government is committed to delivering a more resilient, diverse Western Australian economy – attracting new industries and delivering the Made in WA agenda.
- WA has world class renewable resources in regional areas.
- We know large-scale renewable energy developments can bring both challenges and opportunities to regional host communities.
- The State Government, through PoweringWA, is developing a Community Benefits Guideline.



PoweringWA



Community Benefits Guideline Consultation Paper

On June 12, PoweringWA released the Community Benefit Guideline Consultation Paper.

- This document includes a draft Guideline for public feedback.
- A period of consultation, where public submissions can be made providing feedback on the draft Guideline, is running until 18 August 2025.
- Consultation submissions will help shape the final Guideline.
- We encourage you to promote this via your communication channels so that we receive a wide range of opinions.



Proposed Parameters & Application

- Large-scale, grid-connected renewable energy generation and storage projects.
- It is not intended for behind the meter or embedded generation projects.
- The principles in this guideline are broad.
- Note: projects in the North West Interconnected System (NWIS) may require tailored approaches due to different network characteristics and community contexts.
- Benefits arrangements need to balance community and developer needs, and at the same time ensure electricity prices remain affordable.
- Effective community engagement is crucial to developing meaningful benefit solutions.
- An Aboriginal perspective should be included in engagement and development of benefit solutions.



Benefit Value Guideline

A suggested \$ benefit value per Megawatt (MW)

The draft Guideline outlines a suggested range for community benefits values, informed by best practice arrangements from across Australia:

- \$500–\$1,500 per MW per annum for wind projects
- \$150–\$800 per MW per annum for solar projects

The final \$ per MW community benefit value of a project should be informed by considerations. Considerations might include:

- Community size and population
- Scale of the project
- Neighbouring benefit arrangements
- Strain on community infrastructure from the project
- Cumulative impact of multiple projects on a community or region



Governance and administration

There are several options for the administration and governance of a community benefits fund. The model applied in the context of a specific project should suit both the needs and capacity of the host community and Local Government Authority (LGA). The draft Guideline outlines three possible models:

- LGA administered model: Suitable where a LGA has the capacity to manage a benefit program, but not to establish and manage a separate trust.
- Community trust fund model: Suitable when a host community has capacity to establish and manage its own trust fund on an ongoing basis.
- LGA-led community trust fund model: Suitable when a LGA has the capacity to establish and oversee a community trust fund.

There may be others.



Other considerations

- Community benefit arrangements should extend across the full lifecycle of a project. Ongoing benefits are crucial to maintaining social licence; ideally some benefits from the commencement of construction.
- All community members should have the opportunity to share in the benefits over time.
- Benefits should be linked to the project itself, rather than the developer, ensuring they continue even if ownership changes.
- The draft Guideline outlines several considerations to inform effective evaluation, reporting and review mechanisms.
- The final Guideline will set out the State Government's expectations for renewable energy generation project developers.
- The Guideline will represent a policy position rather than a legal requirement – mandating remains in play and adherence to the Guideline will be monitored by PoweringWA over time.





Department of
**Energy and Economic
Diversification**

Thank you

If you haven't submitted your feedback, we encourage you to
submit your feedback by 18 August at:

wa.gov.au/renewable-energy-community-benefits



PoweringWA