



Department of  
Energy and Economic  
Diversification



PoweringWA

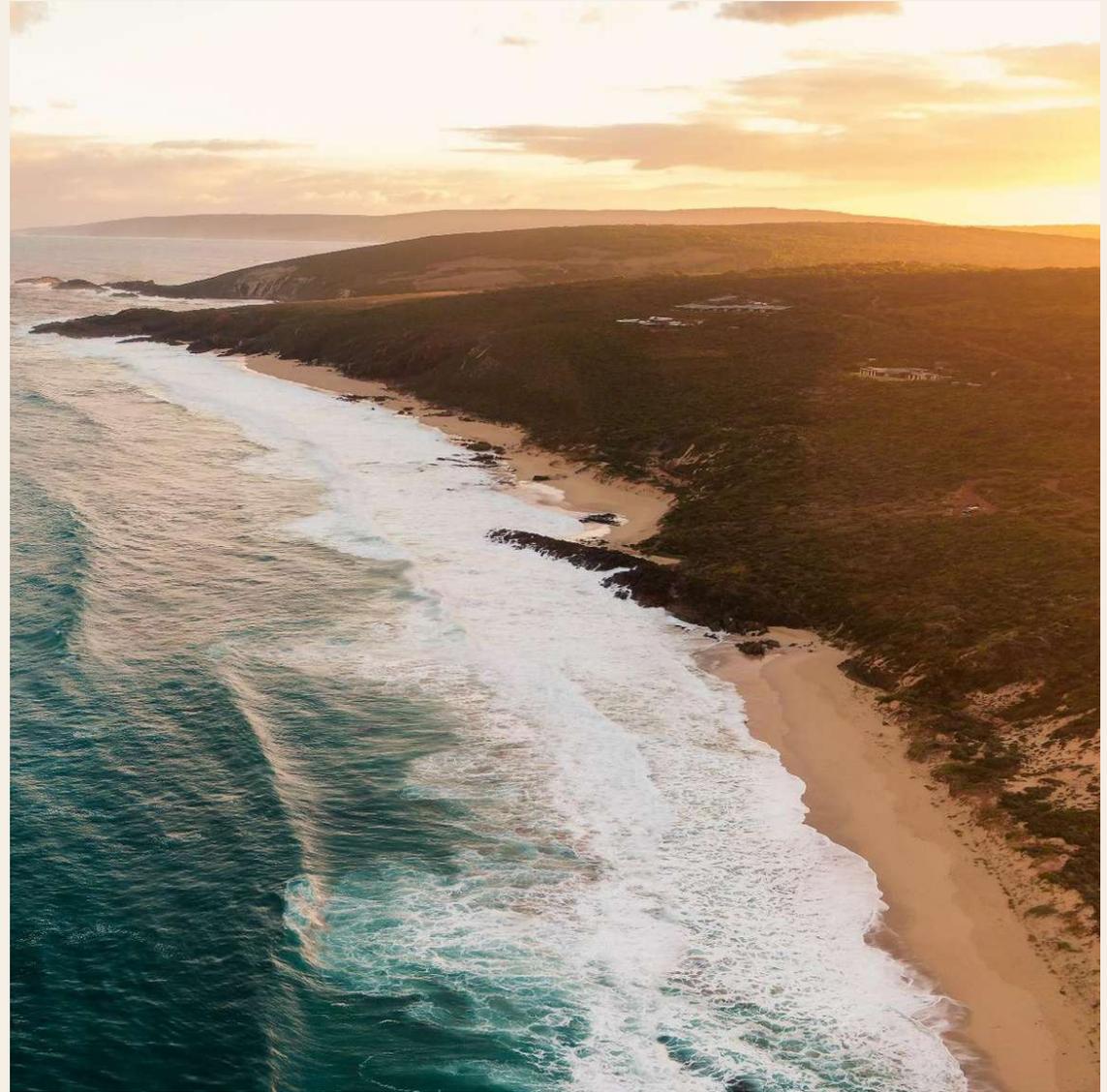
# Community Benefit Guideline for Large-scale Renewable energy projects in the South West Interconnected System

Public webinar hosted by PoweringWA  
16 March 2026

# Acknowledgement of Country

The Government of Western Australia acknowledges the traditional custodians throughout Western Australia and their continuing connection to the land, waters and community.

We pay our respects to all members of the Aboriginal communities and their cultures; and to Elders both past and present.



# PoweringWA: Key Priorities



Securing the  
2030 transition  
away from coal  
in the SWIS

Accelerating  
decarbonisation  
in the Pilbara  
and Goldfield

Helping industries  
transition and  
attracting  
investment

Building public  
understanding  
and trust in the  
transition

# Guideline: Key Objectives



To establish guidance for new community benefit arrangements

Ensure benefits are fair, transparent and consistent

To protect communities, support developers and strengthen social licence

# Community Benefits Guiding Principles

**Fair:** The arrangements should deliver benefits that are fair and appropriate given the specific circumstances of the project.

**Equitable and Inclusive:** The arrangements should include affected communities as much as practicable and distribute benefits equitably.

**Place-based:** The arrangements should be created with local input to address specific needs and concerns in the area.

**Transparent:** The arrangements should be clearly communicated, with local involvement and collaboration whenever possible.

**Efficiency and Simplicity:** Arrangements should be simple, efficient and effective to reduce potential friction points.



# South West Interconnected System (SWIS) Focus

This Guideline applies to projects and communities within the SWIS.

WA is a vast and diverse state - PoweringWA recognises that off-grid and projects in the North West Interconnected System (NWIS) face unique geographical and commercial challenges.

Communities in regions outside the SWIS will deal with different circumstances, and have different needs and priorities, than those within the SWIS footprint.

**Further consultation will commence in 2026 to develop a Guideline for projects outside of the SWIS.**

# Fixed Contribution Values

Set Values for Wind Solar and BESS based on nameplate generation capacity tied to the Consumer Price Index (CPI).

By utilising a tiered approach for wind and specific rates for solar and energy storage, the Guideline aims to:

- mitigate issues arising from negotiation ,
- ensure smooth project delivery; and
- balance meaningful benefits with project commercial viability.

Project Scale	\$ per Megawatt (MW) per annum
10 MW to 50 MW	\$1,500
51 MW to 1,000 MW	\$1,000
Above 1 Gigawatt (GW)	\$1,000 for the first 1 GW, then \$750 above the first 1 GW

Solar Project Scale	\$ per MW per annum
Over 10 MW	\$750

BESS Project Scale	\$ per MW per annum
Over 10 MW	\$125

\*BESS payments for standalone systems on rural land

\*\* Wind and solar generation is cumulative in hybrid projects, not including BESS.

## Application and Eligibility

Contributions should be based on the final nameplate capacity built and the recommended rates in the Guideline.

The duration of community benefits arrangements should be directly tied to the operational life of the project.

Payments are expected to continue for as long as the asset is generating power. Developers should ensure continuity of benefits through any change of ownership or if repowering or recommissioning, with benefit arrangements embedded contractually so that obligations can transfer seamlessly as needed.

## Timing and Agreements

Developers should make an in-principle commitment to community benefits contributions for their large-scale renewable energy projects before applying for Development Approval wherever possible.

Community Benefit Payments should begin when the project commences operation. Developers can begin payments prior to operation - for example, during the construction phase of a project - at their discretion.

This provides certainty to both proponents and communities.

# Agreements to support both industry and communities

Project Feasibility

Developer signs MOU to show intent to align with Guideline

Approvals

Construction

Operation

Community Benefit payments begin

# Regional Development Commissions as Fund Custodians

RDCs will take on an administrative role, acting as custodians for Community Benefit funds - but not directing expenditure.

This aims to promote operational efficiencies, consistency, transparency, and reduce resource impacts as much as possible.

# Community Benefits Plans

## Purpose of Plans

Strategic roadmap for benefit spending, helping ensure benefits are place-based and meaningful, and decision making is streamlined.

- PoweringWA will support communities in the development of Community Benefits Plans
- Reduce administrative burdens, but setting up consistent processes at the regional level, while still ensuring benefits are based on localised needs.
- Ensure benefits represent the wider community - developed with LGAs, community members, Aboriginal Peoples, and other key local groups to ensure plans reflect the priorities of the impact community.

# Community Benefits Pilot

## Purpose of Pilot

The State Government is driving the initial development of Community Benefits Plans through the Community Benefits Plan Pilot.

- Develop templates and processes allowing the Plans to scale with different types of communities in the SWIS.
- Ensure Plans can accommodate known and unknown (future projects) changes to projects.
- Test and optimise process to ensure best results.

# Ensuring Aboriginal Voices and Benefits

Community benefits will not replace matters relating to the Native Title Act 1993, the Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972 or other relevant legislation.

Community Benefits Plans will be developed by representatives from a cross-section of the affected community or communities, including local Aboriginal groups. This will be facilitated through the Community Benefit Plan process.

# Is your community in the pilot?

The Pilot will focus on two areas of investigation in the SWIS:

The Central Coast area including:  
**Shires of Dandaragan and Victoria Plains.**

Southern Wheatbelt area including:  
**Shires of Narrogin and West Arthur.**

Have questions or want to find out more?

Reach out to the PoweringWA Community Support on:  
[PoweringWAsupport@deed.wa.gov.au](mailto:PoweringWAsupport@deed.wa.gov.au)



## Timing and next steps



Projects should show intent to align with State expectations via their public website

Pilot to commence this year with broader rollout in 2027

Working with DPIRD and RDCs on agreement and funding arrangements

Consultation on NWIS and off-grid Community Benefits Guideline to begin later this year



# WESTERN AUSTRALIA State of Energy

**Launched on 10 March 2026**

State of Energy Campaign will be used as a tool to further build public understanding in the energy transition

[stateofenergy.wa.gov.au](https://stateofenergy.wa.gov.au)

# Questions

## Industry Questions:

- Liaise with your DEED contact

## General Questions:

- [PoweringWA@deed.wa.gov.au](mailto:PoweringWA@deed.wa.gov.au)

## Community/LGA Questions:

- [PoweringWAsupport@deed.wa.gov.au](mailto:PoweringWAsupport@deed.wa.gov.au)





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Thank You