



BEST

CHALLENGE

Biotechnology, Electricity,
& Sustainable Transportation

ONLINE SUBMISSION:
www.eraadmin.ca

DEADLINE:
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5 p.m. MDT

Frequently Asked Questions



Investing in technologies
for a lower carbon future.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

1. Why were these focus areas chosen?

ERA's [Technology Roadmap](#) helps guide investment decisions and inform our portfolio mix. The Roadmap aligns stakeholders around common priorities and goals that can reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) in Alberta. Strategic areas of focus were chosen to deliver maximum GHG reductions in the province, including Alberta's electricity, transportation, and biological industries (including forestry, agriculture, and waste management). These areas have a significant impact on the economy and account for more than 40 per cent of the province's annual GHG emissions.

2. Does a project need to be specific to one of the focus areas?

Significant opportunities exist in each area and at the intersections between them. ERA is inviting proposals that involve one or more of these focus areas. ERA expects to select a diverse portfolio of opportunities for funding.

3. What are some examples of projects you are looking for?

Some examples include:

- novel technologies that reduce the cost and increase the effectiveness of renewable electricity generation
- next-generation bioenergy and biofuel opportunities for waste-to-energy and renewable natural gas technologies
- new low- or non-emitting transportation solutions for commercial, industrial, freight, rail and aviation use
- Low-carbon biomaterials, biochemicals, and bioproducts including use of agriculture, forestry, and municipal wastes for value added products and processes.

4. If I have already received funding from ERA, can I still apply?

Projects that have received funding or funding approval from ERA/CCEMC are not eligible to receive further ERA funding. Past recipients are eligible for funding for new projects or technologies, or for follow on projects.

5. Does the applicant need to be incorporated in Alberta? Do all project partners need to be from Alberta?

No. The applicant, technology, and consortium partners can come from anywhere. However, the project must be piloted, demonstrated, or implemented in Alberta. All projects supported through this Call must demonstrate a clear and justified value proposition for reducing GHG emissions in Alberta.

6. Can you submit multiple applications?

Yes. There is no limit on the number of submissions from any party. We encourage applicants to present their highest quality applications.

7. Can the BEST Challenge be used as provincial support for other programs? How should pending applications for other grants be addressed in the proposal? Should the full amount be requested if a portion of the grant funding could come from elsewhere? Are projects that have received other government funding eligible?

Yes. ERA can fund projects in partnership with other organizations. ERA does not have a strict "stacking" limit for government funds if ERA's contribution is matched at least 1:1 by industry dollars. However, other funding organizations may restrict stacking of government funds.

If the intent is to apply to other grant programs with the same project, ERA recommends that this is noted when completing the financing table in the ERA application. Having other grant proposals in progress can improve ERA's assessment of the project's financial viability. ERA reserves the right to award less funding than was asked, so it is incumbent upon applicants to justify the amount requested from ERA, taking into consideration the likelihood of securing other grant funding.

8. For calculating GHG reductions, what timeline should we consider (savings per year and cumulative to 2030?) or another date?

Typically, ERA will base our assessment on annual emissions reductions for the project life. Including cumulative estimates by 2030 and (if applicable) 2050 can be helpful as well. Further information is available in the Call for Expressions of Interest Guidelines.

9. If a project is accepted, does the IP become public?

No, under normal circumstances all IP remains with the original owner. ERA does require public reporting of the project outcomes and learnings, but business/competitive confidentiality is maintained.

10. If an applicant has agreed to have their application shared with ERA's partners, should the applicant still submit independent applications to those partnering organizations?

Yes, applicants should still submit applications to other programs where appropriate.

11. Is emissions reduction potential assessed for the project only or on a market basis?

The size of opportunity and potential for widespread GHG and economic benefits will be taken into consideration during ERA's project selection. ERA considers both the project-level emissions reductions as well as the potential for reductions from market adoption. Applicants must justify the assumptions used in all GHG reduction estimates.

12. If an application is shared with a trusted partner who decides to fund the project, would the funding be additional to ERA's funding?

Generally, funding from ERA's trusted partners will be in addition to the amount awarded by ERA. However, there could be situations where a trusted partner's funding is used to offset a portion of the funding request to ERA, for example, if ERA is unable to fund the entire request amount.

13. What criteria are used for decision making? Does ERA share the relevant Key Performance Indicators?

Proposals are assessed based on the criteria described in the "Call for Expressions of Interest Guidelines" document that is posted on ERA's website. Specific targets for key performance indicators are not used due to the diversity of proposals expected and the need for all proposals to stand on their own merits in addition to competing amongst each other.

14. Would a portfolio of projects qualify or is it preferable to submit as individual projects?

ERA funds "projects," with clear timelines, objectives, deliverables, and milestones. Proposals may include multiple technologies and multiple sites; however, ERA recommends that each proposal be kept as focused as possible, with a clear objective. Having a large "portfolio" of technologies within a single project risks diluting the value of the most compelling elements of the portfolio.

15. Are project details kept confidential throughout the entire application process? Or does the project become public at some point?

Project details are kept confidential during application process. When funding is announced, ERA will publicly share a non-confidential summary of only the projects selected for funding. At the end of the project, public reporting of outcomes and learnings is required.

16. What constitutes 1:1 matching? Can patents be considered a matchable contribution? Can debt financing be used to match ERA funds?

ERA will only match contributions related to actual eligible expenses incurred during the term of the project and related to the project. Use of patents would not be eligible for matching. Applicants may use debt or equity financing to provide their share of funds. Please refer to the eligible expense guidelines on the ERA website for more detail.

17. If a pilot location has not been finalized for the technology can an EOI still be submitted for consideration or must it already be finalized?

Proposals may be submitted without a host site finalized, however applicants should be aware that having a site confirmed will be viewed positively during the review process. Potential sites and plans to finalize the project site should be indicated in the proposal.

18. Do all project team members, partners, and consultants need to be finalized prior to the application?

No, ERA recognizes that some project elements may not be finalized at the time of EOI submission. Applicants are encouraged to provide as much details as possible about the core project team, plans to acquire expertise where needed, and planned subcontracting to provide ERA's review team with confidence that the right expertise is available to successfully execute the project.

19. How long does ERA monitor the project? What ongoing verification and validation is required?

ERA requires that a third-party verification report be submitted one year after commissioning of the project technology/installation to verify the emissions reductions. In addition, ERA requires that funding recipients provide a short update annually for a short period after the project is complete (typically three years). Details of the post-completion reporting requirements will be detailed in the contribution agreement between ERA and the successful recipients.