

Building Public Support for Solar (BPSS)

Time Frame

July 2017 – July 2018

Contribution Required for Participation

\$ 5,000.00

Project Aim and Objectives

Leveraging last year's Building Public Support for Solar (BPSS) efforts, this initiative will focus on growth of market opportunities for solar energy through increased public demand. This initiative will educate the public on the benefits of solar energy and demonstrate how they can get involved with the solar programs in their region while highlighting the advantages of working with a CanSIA member on their project(s). Increased public awareness and demand will be channeled into multi-partisan support for solar energy – informing political leaders and decision makers of the importance of solar energy.

In anticipation of the upcoming provincial election in Alberta (May 2019), building non-partisan support for solar in Alberta will be particularly essential to the success of this project. Additionally, CanSIA and the project advisory committee will engage the newly elected Ontario government after the election in June to secure continued support and momentum for a growing solar industry in Ontario. CanSIA will demonstrate solar energy's financial benefits of lower electricity costs, economic benefits of building clean, sustainable jobs and, finally, the environmental benefits of lowering carbon footprints.

The BPSS project will enable CanSIA to take a proactive communications approach and achieve the following objectives:

- Promote the benefits of current solar programs and CanSIA's consumer protection initiatives – educating the public on how they can get involved while working with trusted CanSIA Members
- Build multi-partisan support for solar with political leaders and decision makers
- Dispel commonly occurring myths and negative perceptions of solar energy with quality, fact-driven, and consumer-friendly content, improving public perception
- Engage and equip solar advocates and enthusiasts with the tools needed to vocalize their support for solar energy while influencing the beliefs of their peers

Industry Context and Public Perception Analysis

In an Abacus Data poll, 84% of Canadians want solar energy to be 'a much bigger part' or 'a bigger part' (46% and 38% respectively) of the future of Canada's energy mix. Furthermore, in a 2017 report, prepared by Environics Research, 93% of Canadians support solar energy. The support and interest in solar energy is already established, however solar enthusiasts and advocates are not being heard without the tools to vocalize this support to governmental policy and decision-makers across the country. The strong support for utility-scale solar in the electricity mix will be communicated through BPSS.

To learn more about this or other Strategic Projects and how your company can participate, please contact Lisa Hatina, Business Development & Member Relations Manager by email at lhatina@cansia.ca or by phone at 613-736-9077 x230.

2018-2019 Strategic Projects



At the consumer level, Canadians want options when it comes to energy services so that they can control costs and lower their carbon footprints. The solar industry has an opportunity to play a meaningful role in creating clean sustainable jobs while empowering consumers. This will be a central message CanSIA will discuss with government officials.

Progress on renewable energy policies in Canada is promising but fragile. Polls show Conservative voters want a climate change plan, and Ottawa will impose one, nonetheless, conservative political leaders promise to scrap the carbon levy and climate action initiatives. This is particularly pertinent in Alberta and Ontario wherein the solar incentives are reliant on carbon revenues. Political leaders and decision-makers need to understand the important role solar plays in the province's economy and environment irrespective of funding sources.

Scope of Work and Deliverables

This one-year project will leverage CanSIA's existing BPSS communications initiatives, communication channels, extensive reach and collaborative relationships with other organizations. CanSIA will disseminate robust and powerful messaging and strengthen our reach to target audiences through the following expected outcomes:

- Essential Communications - create high quality, fact-driven and consumer-friendly content to share through CanSIA's various communications channels
- Enhanced Publicity - promote CanSIA's messaging through earned media and paid digital advertisements, broadening and strengthening our public reach
- Advanced Advocacy - seek public participation to demonstrate the importance of solar energy to multi-partisan political decision maker

Project Fund Allocation

Most project funds will be directed towards materials for political meetings, quality content creation and public/media relations support. No more than 15% will be allocated to administrative and travel expenses.

Project-Specific Opportunities

Participants will have the opportunity to contribute their knowledge and expertise of the industry to this project to ensure that key messaging and created content align with contributing company priorities and the broader needs of the industry. Where applicable or appropriate, participant companies will review commissioned research and may be featured in specific campaigns. Participants of this project will receive monthly briefings on the progress of the campaign with key metrics and have the opportunity to share content through their own networks.

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