

Advancing Solar Technology Regulations in Ontario (ASTRO)

Time Frame: June 2018 – June 2019

Contribution Required to Participate: \$5,000

Project Aim and Objectives

The aim of the *Advancing Solar Technology Regulations in Ontario (ASTRO)* project is to cement solar technology as a mainstream energy source in Ontario by strategically creating and implementing enduring electricity sector regulations that will a) grow the solar electricity market, and b) improve solar electricity economics, working collaboratively with government departments, energy agencies, and other stakeholders. It is important for the industry, and member participants through the project's Advisory Committee, to take swift action as urgent opportunities are emerging for the industry to position itself within the larger Ontario electricity sector.

Targeted Outcomes:

- Achieve solar electricity soft cost reductions through the elimination or streamlining of regulatory and technical implementation barriers, thus enhancing solar electricity economics.
- Achieve a robust Virtual Net Metering (VNM) pilot program, through the IESO Renewable Distributed Generation Demonstration Projects program, which will later lead to the creation and implementation of broader VNM regulations in a timely manner.
- Achieve a favourable position for solar electricity within OEB regulatory discussions and proceedings.

Industry Context

The Ontario solar electricity industry is now operating within a more market-driven and regulation-based context due to several factors including: a) governments are gradually moving away from technology-specific incentive programs; b) solar electricity costs continue to rapidly decline, and; c) public funds and rate payer impacts are increasingly scrutinized. Thus, this squarely positions solar electricity amongst the other incumbent and emerging generation resources within Ontario's competitive electricity sector.

Both the Ontario Energy Board (OEB) and the Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO) have released their Long-Term Energy Plan (LTEP) implementation plans. Over the course of 2018 and beyond, Ontario electricity sector agencies will be creating new technology and innovation pilot programs as well as reviewing and updating electricity regulations and processes. Areas that may be affected include the transmission and distribution system codes, rate design for commercial and industrial customers, Local Distribution Company (LDC) rate applications, Net metering regulations, Virtual Net Metering programs and regulations, amongst other regulatory discussions. Changes in any one of these areas can have significant impacts on how electricity distributors and generators operate and function within Ontario. As competition in the Ontario electricity generation space intensifies, CanSIA recognizes that the solar industry now must focus its attention on positioning, designing and implementing enduring electricity sector regulations to cement solar as a mainstream energy source in the province.

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.

Scope of Work and Deliverables

Members who join the project will help lead it through an Advisory Committee. This 14-month project intends to build upon CanSIA's past Ontario Strategic Projects including the Distributed Generation Task Force (DGTF), our current regulatory efforts regarding net metering and virtual net metering, and our ongoing government relations activities. Although a significant portion of the work expected to be performed is identified below, these activities may change as we learn more about the OEB and IESO LTEP implementation plans and based on the direction provided by the Advisory Committee. To kick-start our work, the ASTRO project will host strategic planning session with the Advisory Committee in March 2018 to identify key priorities and action items.

Anticipated Milestones	Completion Date
Strategic planning meeting to determine Advisory Committee priorities.	June 2018
Creation and Execution of a Solar Regulatory Barriers & Solutions Report and Advocacy Plan	June 2018 – June 2019
Submission to IESO re: Virtual Net Metering Demonstration Program	July-August 2018
Participate in OEB stakeholder engagements (e.g. consultations, submissions)	July 2018 – June 2019

Project Fund Allocation

The majority of funds will be directed towards research/analytics, regulatory recommendation development and government relations support. No more than 20% will be allocated to project management, administration and travel expenses.

Project-Specific Opportunities

Participants, by leading the Advisory Working Group, will have the opportunity to contribute their industry knowledge and expertise to ensure that positions align with contributing company priorities and the broader needs of the industry. Participants will receive regular briefings on research undertaken by external consultants, be asked to participate in the development of industry recommendations and will be asked to participate on an as needed basis in meetings with decision-makers from government, agencies, utilities, and other stakeholders.

CanSIA Influencers

CanSIA's Strategic Projects rely exclusively on the contributions of participating companies who deserve recognition for their contribution to the industry. CanSIA Members who contribute to and participate in this and other Strategic Projects will be recognized as CanSIA Influencers and access additional benefits.