

A photograph of a wind farm on a rolling hillside. Several white wind turbines are visible against a sky with soft, golden light from a low sun, likely at sunset or sunrise. The foreground shows a grassy slope with some trees. The image is framed by a dark, curved border at the top.

Green Choice Program Participants Application Guide

Natural Resources and Renewables
Province of Nova Scotia | March 2024

March 1, 2024



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1. Introduction

Welcome to the **Green Choice Program (GCP)**, a groundbreaking and collaborative initiative that empowers organizations to make sustainable choices in energy consumption. It allows participating customers to purchase **up to 100%** of their electricity use from local renewable energy sources contributing to a greener future while enjoying the benefits of renewable energy. We appreciate your interest in creating a positive impact through the Green Choice Program.

The Program is collaborative initiative developed and jointly managed by the Department of Natural Resources and Renewables (NRR), Nova Scotia Power Inc. (NSPI) and the appointed Procurement Administrators – Coho Climate Advisors. The Participant application is a collaborative effort between NRR and NSPI.

2. Application Process

2.1 Expression of Interest

The Expression of Interest (EOI) preceded an intake applications process in the spring of 2023. Submission of an EOI is not a pre-requisite for application to the Green Choice Program.

2.1.1 Application Requirements

Prior to filling out the application, review the following items:

1. [Green Choice Program Participant Guide](#) – offers a detailed overview of the program, policy, eligibility, and process and has been updated to reflect the latest program information.
2. Checklist in **Appendix I** on **page 9** of this Application Guide
3. The Participant Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) on the [GCP website](#)

Additional information may be requested from applicants, if in doubt, please contact NRR at greenchoice@novascotia.ca prior to your application.

2.1.2 Minimum Requirements for Acceptance

Applicants must meet certain minimum requirements to be accepted into the Program, as follows:

1. Must be a new or existing customer of NSPI, and within NSPI's service territory.
2. Private organizations and public institutions must subscribe a minimum of 10,000 MWh per year per application.
3. For eligible public organizations applying as an aggregate partnership of two or more separate public institutions, each partner in the aggregate must have electricity consumption of no less than 1,000 MWh per year, and the partnership must subscribe to a minimum of 10,000 MWh per year in aggregate.

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4. Application form must be complete by answering all relevant questions and providing all required supporting documents.
5. For existing customers of NSPI, customer electricity account information must be verified by NSPI, and must be deemed in good standing by NSPI.
6. For new customers of NSPI, customer electricity account information must be deemed in good standing by your current public utility, and/or pass a credit check.
7. For new customers that are new businesses, a business plan and market analysis must be provided in addition to other potential requested information such as energy modeling.
8. For an applicant that is a new customer of NSPI and for applicants applying to enroll new consumption, proof of anticipated energy use is required and must include an energy model that provides the estimated annual consumption of the new facility or facilities and/or consumption.
9. Must be an eligible organization, as defined in **Section 2.3 – Types of Participants** in this Applicant Guide.
10. Must subscribe only eligible energy, as defined in Section 2(2) of the *Green Choice Program Regulations*. Further information is available in the [Green Choice Program Participant Guide](#).

2.1 Types of Participants

Eligible Public Institutions:

1. Federal, provincial, and municipal governments including its departments, crowns, board, authorities and agencies.
2. Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia or wholly owned subsidiaries
3. Registered charity and charitable organizations
4. Public schools, school authority, post-secondary institutions
5. Hospital or hospital authorities

Eligible Private Organizations:

1. Commercial (retail, financial institutions), industrial (manufacturing, processing, construction), and corporate businesses registered, located, and operating or planning to operate in Nova Scotia.

Ineligible Organizations, Facilities, and Accounts:

1. Wholesale customers as defined in the *Electricity Act*.
2. Hydrogen facilities and operations.
3. Electricity customer accounts within Municipal Electric Utilities service territory.

2.2 Application Completion

The high-level requirements for each Section of the Application Form are summarized as follows:

1. **Section 1** – The organization must designate a primary and secondary contact to whom all communications related to the Green Choice Program application and participation will be directed. The primary and secondary contacts must also be listed in this section. Applicants

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must indicate whether account holders/authorized contacts are different from primary or secondary contacts in **Section 1** of the Application Form.

2. **Section 2** – All applicants give a brief description of the organizations mandate including contact information.
3. **Section 3** – This section is only required to be completed if the applicant is a **new customer** of NSPI. New customers of NSPI are to provide a business plan with market analysis, and credit reports, in addition to other documents specified on the application form and application guide checklist provided in **Appendix I on page 12** of this Application Guide. For more information contact greenchoice@novascotia.ca.
4. **Section 4** – **new customers** of NSPI and **existing customers** that are applying to enroll new electricity consumption are required to submit an **energy model** that provides estimated annual consumption.
5. **Sections 3 & 4** – total electricity usage can be calculated by using the average total annual consumption of the previous three (3) calendar years (i.e. 2021, 2022, and 2023) or annual energy consumption in the year directly proceeding the year in which application was made (i.e. 2023 calendar year). Your application should include the **greater** of the two figures once calculated. Your application should include the information expressed in kilowatt hours and megawatt-hours (MWh). To convert kWh to MWh divide your total by 1,000.

Example: Company A's Annual Consumption

Electricity Usage	kWh	MWh
Jan - Dec 2021	11,000,000	11,000
Jan- Dec 2022	68,000,000	68,000
Jan - Dec 2023	72,000,000	72,000
Total Annual Consumption	151,000,000	151,000
Total Annual Average	50,333,333	50,333

In this example you would enroll **72,000 MWh** per year, as the annual consumption in the 2023 calendar year was greater than the total average annual consumption over three-years.

6. **Section 4&5** – state the percent of the organization's annual electricity consumption subscription requirements in MWh. Using the sample company from the table above, if Company A's goal is to achieve a **60%** reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from electricity by 2030, Company A would request to subscribe:

$$72,000 \text{ MWh per year} \times 60\% = 43,200 \text{ MWh per year}$$

7. **Section 5: Aggregate Partnership Applicant** – aggregate partnerships in this context refer to collaborative agreements between two or more separate eligible public institutions. These institutions form a partnership to aggregate (combine) their electricity consumption

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for the purpose of meeting the minimum requirements for subscription volume of 10,000 MWh per year. Aggregate Partnerships must be formalized in writing, signed by all parties in the partnership, and submitted as part of the application process. All separate public institutions in the partnership must agree to the same terms and conditions of participation and participate for the same term length. Example document for partnerships can be found here: [Draft Memorandum of Agreement \(MOA\)](#). If applying as an aggregate partnership, a lead partner must be identified to act on behalf of the partnership. The MOA, or other formalized document signed by the parties in the aggregate partnership, must include the following:

1. Legal name of lead partner in the aggregate partnership.
 2. Grant authorization to the lead partner to speak on behalf of all (as needed).
 3. Proof that the contact has the permission to represent all parties the agreement; and
 4. Provide written authorization for the lead partner to access NSPI account information for the purposes of the Green Choice Program application intake processes on behalf of all partners within the aggregate partnership.
8. **Section 6** – provide the total number of facilities and electricity meters you wish to enroll in the Green Choice Program.
9. **Section 7** – applicants are required to indicate how many years their organization intends to subscribe to the Green Choice Program. The enrollment terms are permitted in five-year increments, to a maximum of 25 years, to match Power Purchase Agreements (PPA). The term starts when the renewable energy projects serving your needs achieve commercial operation; anticipated no later than December 31, 2028. For example, if commercial operation was achieved mid-year in 2028, enrollment terms would be as follows:

Term Period ↓	Term Duration (in Years)				
	Five	Ten	Fifteen	Twenty	Twenty-five
First Term	2028 to 2033	2028 to 2038	2028 to 2043	2028 to 2048	2028 to 2053
Second Term	2033 to 2038	2038 to 2048	renewed as five- or ten-year term	renewed as five-year term	n/a
Third Term	2038 to 2043	renewed as five-year term	n/a	n/a	n/a
Fourth Term	2043 to 2048	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Fifth Term	2048 to 2053	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

These are not meant to be prescriptive and may change depending on when the electricity from the first projects is operational, and you begin to receive benefits.

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10. **Section 8** – applicants are to state their organization’s climate change and emission reduction targets and timelines. For instance, the Province of Nova Scotia has a [Climate Change Plan for Clean Growth](#) which contains a series of emissions reductions goals and the *Electricity Act* and the *Environmental Goals and Climate Change Reduction Act* contain specific targets that guide the provinces emissions reductions targets and renewable energy targets. Please attach the complete plan to your application, and in section 8 highlight any relevant sections and information pertinent to your application such as, but not limited to, amount of greenhouse gas emission reductions, renewable energy targets, and timelines.

2.3.1 Applicant Responsibilities

Applicants are responsible for collecting electricity consumption information across all buildings and/or facilities applied for in the application. This must include the following for each facility:

1. all NSPI account number;
2. all NSPI meter numbers;
3. full service address;
4. name of company/customer name, and;
5. all account holders/or names of authorized contacts.

It is recommended that you engage with NSPI early in the process to better understand the verification process and what information you may need to provide to ensure you have time to collect it in the application window.

Due to [protection of privacy laws](#), NSPI will only provide the requested account information to authorized contacts or the electricity account holder for the accounts and/or meters the data is requested. This includes the verification of account information for the purposes of applying to the Green Choice Program. If you are leading the application process on behalf of your organization, or are applying as an aggregate partnership (i.e., on behalf of multiple account holders/customers), and are not an authorized contact on all NSPI accounts for which data is being requested, authorization to access this data may be fulfilled by one or more of the following:

1. A copy of any legal documentation (e.g., [Memorandum of Agreement](#)) that lists each partner, or facility, for which data is requested and provides written authorization for the lead partner to access NSPI account information for the purposes of the Green Choice Program application intake processes on behalf of all partners within the aggregate partnership or leading representative of the organization’s application. The document must be signed by duly authorized officer(s) or authorized contact(s) of the account(s) or partner(s).
2. Where there are multiple account holders under one collective application (e.g., governments, or aggregate partnerships) a legal document from each entity for which the account information is requested must be provided to NSPI to access the data. Without this, verification cannot occur, and your application will be rejected.

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3. If your organization (e.g., Department) is leading on behalf of an organization, please provide proof of the mandate to do so to NSPI signed by suitable authorized representative (e.g., Minister, CEO, President etc.).

Note: Please work with NSPI's Key Accounts & Customer Solutions team to confirm and verify your account information and your total electricity consumption across your electricity meters as part of the application process. Contact NSPI for Green Choice Program enquiries by email to: greenchoice@nspower.ca

2.3.2 Account Verification

When requesting to verify electricity consumption, the Green Choice Program application only requires NSPI to review and validate the accuracy of electricity consumed in the following timelines unless specifically requested otherwise. Please use the calendar years below:

1. **January - December 2021**
2. **January - December 2022**
3. **January - December 2023**

It is up to the applicant to collect and quantify their own electricity consumption through reviewing your billing information. At a minimum, it is required that you include either the account or meter numbers for every facility applied to the program, full-service address for all facilities, and the name of company/customer on the account. If known, please list the authorized contacts for each account. NSPI is available to support and verify this effort with applicants.

Note: Please work with NSPI's Key Accounts & Customer Solutions team to confirm and verify your account information and your total electricity consumption across your electricity meters as part of the application process. Contact NSPI for Green Choice Program enquiries by email to: greenchoice@nspower.ca

Department of Natural Resources and Renewables may also connect with NSPI about your application for verification, clarification, or to determine good standing as it relates to your electricity account information and customer accounts.

2.4 Application Timelines

We recommend contacting NSPI early to understand the specific requirements and timelines for accessing and verifying account information – all requests must be received by **February 16, 2024**. For intake round 1, the timelines are presented below:

GCP Milestone	Date
Notice of Application Open Date	November 16, 2023
Application Open Date	December 15, 2023
GCP Participant Application Webinar	January 24, 2024
Deadline for Verification of Account Requests to be submitted to NSPI	February 16, 2024
Application Submission Deadline	March 25, 2024

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NRR Verification of Complete/Incomplete applications and notify NSPI Date	April 10, 2024
Applicant Additional Information Requested Delivery Date	April 24, 2024
NSPI Account in Good-Standing Check Completion Date	N/A*
Notice of Withdrawal from Consideration Date	May 3, 2024
Minister Decision Date (45 business days after close of application)	May 30, 2024
Participant Agreement Discussions and Negotiations Date	May – August 2024
Project Commercial Operation Date (Final deadline – some projects may achieve commercial operation prior to this date)	December 31, 2028

**This process has now been integrated into account verification process and no longer has a separate date.*

2.5 New Customers

2.5.1 Business Plan Guide and Market Analysis Minimum Requirements

Executive Summary:

1. Company profile
2. A business description -Briefly describe your company, what it does and where it's located.
3. Clarify whether it's a new venture, an expansion of an existing company or an acquisition.
4. Provide a detailed description of your product or service. This should include unique features; how much it costs and how it's delivered.

Sales and Marketing:

Outline your market, industry, competition, and trends. This important section consists of a lot of elements and is often broken out into a separate section of its own in many business plans. It should cover:

A market overview:

How the market works, who is serving it, what gap you're filling and key challenges you face. Focus on the local market opportunity, not big-picture stats for the whole industry.

Target market:

A detailed description of your customer. Again, be specific.

Competitors:

Who currently serves this market in your area. Identify three to five companies you admire or see as competitors who are slightly ahead of you in maturity.

Operations:

Location: Explain your company's location and why it's right for your business. Some businesses may need to give more information than others.

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For example, a work-from-home consultant could simply say they have a home office, why that makes sense and where they're located relative to customers. A restaurant, on the other hand, needs to include a lot more detail—e.g., the layout, square footage, a neighbourhood description, parking availability, street visibility, number of tables, even photos.

Assets and production:

List your assets, including equipment, machinery, real estate and key technology. Walk the reader through the production process. Again, different businesses may need to give more extensive detail depending on how operationally heavy they are.

A consultant could simply explain their quoting and work processes. Meanwhile, a manufacturer should explain all the steps of their production from materials to manufacturing and shipping.

Financials:

Include cash flow forecast, <https://www.bdc.ca/en/articles-tools/entrepreneur-toolkit/templates-business-guides/cash-flow-projection-tool> usually broken-down on a monthly basis and presented as a spreadsheet. Also add financial statement <https://www.bdc.ca/en/articles-tools/entrepreneurtoolkit/templates-business-guides/glossary/financial-statements> (balance sheet, income statement, cash flow statement and statement of retained earnings). And if you're a new business, list startup costs.

2.6 Withdraw of Application:

An applicant may withdraw their application, with written notice, on or before **May 3, 2024**, without penalty. Please contact NRR at greenchoice@novascotia.ca

2.7 Program Costs and Credits

There are no fees associated with your application to the program.

The only costs for Participants relate to the costs and credits that are applied to your customer electricity bills once the renewable energy projects are operational and accepted Participants are receiving the benefits of the electricity. These details are provided in **page 16** of the [GCP Participants Guide](#).

Upon commercial operation of the subscribed projects, your NSPI bill will include an administration fee of up to \$1 per MWh (applied per customer bill) up to an annual maximum of \$100,000 per participant. You will also be exempt from paying costs related to carbon compliance (i.e. Output-based Pricing System, or OBPS) in the amount of your GCP delivered energy, which will be adjusted per MWh per participant and is not capped annually.

The final cost and credit figures will be determined following Nova Scotia Power's application to the regulator.

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The exact amount of this carbon cost exemption is unknown; however, NSPI has prepared a five-year carbon cost forecast, using the latest Evergreen Integrated Resource Plan (IRP) model results (as of April 2023). An uncertainty range (+/- 35%) has been added to the Evergreen IRP reference plan scenario (i.e. Scenario CE1-E1-R2) to the carbon cost forecast. Note that, OBPS costs for Nova Scotia are not known beyond 2030, therefore, years 2031 to 2035 escalated 2030 OBPS by 2% annually. NSPI intends to update this forecast annually. To view the latest forecast, please visit [GCP website](#). For questions or clarifications, please contact NSPI by email to: greenchoice@nspower.ca

2.8 Request for additional information:

The Minister may request to clarify information submitted in the application. **April 24, 2024**, is the deadline to return any requested information to ensure your application can remain part of the Minister's consideration for applications. Failure to provide the requested information in the timeline will result in a rejection of the application as an incomplete application or potential deferral. [Green Choice Program Regulations](#).

2.9 Evaluation and deferral of participant applications from Green Choice Program:

(1) The Minister may consider all of the following when evaluating applications from eligible participants:

- (a) whether an eligible participant has made a public climate change or emissions reduction commitment;
- (b) the date by which an eligible participant must meet the climate change or emissions reduction commitment described in clause (a);
- (c) the total aggregate nameplate capacity available under the Green Choice Program;
- (d) for an eligible participant that is a new NSPI customer, the long-term economic viability of the eligible participant and the accuracy of the energy modelling for the eligible participant's new facilities;
- (e) any other information the Minister deems appropriate.

(2) The Minister has the discretion to determine the total number of eligible participants and the total amount of subscribed electricity enrolled in the Green Choice Program.

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- (3) If an eligible participant submits a complete application but is not selected to participate in the Green Choice Program, the Minister may defer the eligible participant's acceptance and hold their application on file for up to 3 years.
- (4) If capacity becomes available within the Green Choice Program during the 3-year period referred to in subsection (3), the Minister may select a deferred eligible participant to participate in the Green Choice Program and enrol the eligible participant's requested amount of subscribed electricity in the Green Choice Program with the eligible participant's consent.

3.0 Minister's decision on participant's application

- (1) The Minister must, no later than 45 business days after the close of the intake window for applications from eligible participants, provide written notification to an eligible participant that their application has been accepted, deferred or rejected.
- (2) Before accepting, deferring or rejecting an application, the Minister may request additional information from an eligible participant to clarify the information submitted in their application.
- (3) All additional information requested by the Minister under subsection (2) must be submitted within a time frame specified by the Minister.
- (4) If the additional information requested under subsection (2) is not received within the time frame specified by the Minister, the Minister may deem the application incomplete and reject it.
- (5) The Minister must notify NSPI of all eligible participants accepted into the Green Choice Program and all eligible participants deferred.

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3.1 Appendix I

Application Checklist

- Follow procedures required for new or existing customer of NSPI
- Additionally, if you are a first time, new customer to NSPI, you must submit the buildings anticipated electricity consumption based on energy modeling and timelines for connection and the long-term economic viability of the organization within Nova Scotia.
- Person(s) with signing authority within your organization to bind you to an agreement.
- Person(s) responsible for NSPI electricity accounts within your organization
- Contact person for the application if different from above.
- If participating as an Aggregate Partnership, identify the lead contact for the partnership.
- All addresses of facilities and buildings within the Province of Nova Scotia intended to be applied for in the Program.
- All NSPI account numbers and/or NSPI meter numbers associated with the buildings and facilities to be applied for in the Program.
- The total actual electricity consumption of your organization to be calculated by using the larger of 1) consumption in the year directly preceding the year in which the application is made; or 2) average annual consumption of previous 3 years.
- Verification from NSPI of account and energy consumption for applicant(s) and all facilities applied for in the program.
- The total amount of electricity in percentage of your total you are applying for under the program, up to a maximum of 120% of your actual electricity consumption.
- The term length for subscription (5, 10, 15, 20, or maximum of 25 years).
- Any public facing corporate commitments to greenhouse gas reductions including total % or amounts (MWh) and timelines.
- Any public facing long-term climate change goals of the organization or further emissions reductions targets of the organization.
- Any long-term economic or social economic considerations for the organization pertinent to the organization's participation in this program.
- Aggregate Partnerships: A document that demonstrates two or more separate public institutions have entered into an agreement for the purpose of this program. A draft MOA is available on the GCP website.
- Confirmation that all partners within the aggregate agree to the same terms and conditions and term length subscription.
- Additional information may be required for new customers to NSPI applying under this program.

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New Customers

- Credit check from a credit rating agency
- Business plan
- Market analysis for Nova Scotia
- Proof that the new facility or building will be built and interconnected with the utility, consuming the applied electricity by no later than December 31, 2028.
- Energy modelling or estimated capacity requirement for new building or facility
- Timelines for interconnection
- Additionally, if you are a new customer to NSPI, you must submit a business plan and market analysis.