

Community Engagement and Social Value

Engagement and Benefits Plan
– Submission Guide

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1 Background and context

VicGrid is developing the Victorian Access Regime, a new framework for managing how renewable energy generation and storage projects access Victoria's transmission network, known as the Declared Transmission System (DTS).

The Victorian Access Regime introduces new requirements to manage how generation, storage and hybrid projects access Victoria's electricity transmission network, also called the declared shared network (DSN), both inside and outside renewable energy zones (REZs).

It is designed to:

- Coordinate generation, storage and transmission assets
- Reduce the risk of excessive network curtailment in REZs
- Ensure all projects, both inside and outside of REZs engage with, and create social and economic value for communities, Traditional Owners, landholders and neighbours in accordance with the Victorian Government's Community Engagement and Social Value (CESV) Guidelines.

The CESV Guidelines set out expectations for how renewable energy and storage developers should engage with and create social value and economic benefits for communities, Traditional Owners, landholders and neighbours across the lifecycle of a project.

Once the Victorian Access Regime is live, applications for access to the grid will be assessed against the expectations in the CESV Guidelines. Under the interim framework, VicGrid, as the party responsible for managing Connection Agreements across Victoria, has a role in supporting and encouraging developers to meet the CESV Guidelines.

VicGrid invites Connection Applicants to submit an **Engagement and Benefits Plan** in accordance with the CESV Guidelines which includes:

1. **Community Engagement and Benefits Plan** (refer to the guidance in section 2 of this document)
2. **Traditional Owner Partnership and Benefits Plan** (refer to the guidance in section 3 of this document).

VicGrid will work with Connection Applicants to help align engagement and social value delivery with the expectations in the CESV Guidelines to improve outcomes for community, Traditional Owners, landholders and neighbours who are hosting and/or impacted by energy infrastructure, over time.

STRENGTHEN YOUR PROJECT THROUGH EARLY ENGAGEMENT PLANNING

The inclusion of an Engagement and Benefits Plan offers several advantages for Connection Applicants, including:

- Demonstrating Applicants' commitment to building social licence for the project through alignment with best practice engagement principles, including transparent engagement and the delivery of social value and benefits initiatives.
- Offering the opportunity to Applicants to help shape VicGrid's approach to implementing the Community Engagement and Social Value (CESV) Guidelines as part of the Victorian Access Regime. Industry experience and feedback will inform VicGrid's efforts in ensuring that the Victorian Access Regime is fit for purpose and provides a valuable process for industry.
- Helping transition industry stakeholders towards compliance with the additional obligation in new Connection Agreements for developers to use reasonable endeavours to meet the expectations set out in the CESV Guidelines.
- Providing the opportunity for Applicants to obtain feedback from VicGrid regarding the alignment of their plans with the expectations in the CESV Guidelines, and to work collaboratively to establish a practical and proportionate approach to engagement and benefits.
- Helping Applicants to gain confidence in their project's compliance with the CESV Guidelines, should a Connection Agreement not be secured prior to the commencement of the Victorian Access Regime.
- Placing Applicants in a stronger position for future projects.

2 Community, landholder, neighbour, local government and local industry engagement requirements

2.1 Introduction

The primary objective of VicGrid's approach to setting expectations for community, landholder, neighbour, local government and local industry engagement is to promote meaningful and authentic engagement that builds community trust and social acceptance of renewable energy and transmission projects.

2.2 Expected outcomes for communities, landholders and neighbours

2.2.1 Expected outcomes for communities

Projects are expected to contribute to the following outcomes for communities:

- The project builds trust and connection between the community and the developer.
- The project uses community feedback to inform decisions, helping address community needs and priorities.

2.2.2 Expected outcomes for host landholders

Projects are expected to contribute to the following outcomes for host landholders:

- Landholders are empowered to negotiate fair and reasonable agreements to host renewable energy and transmission projects.
- The relationship between landholders and developers is equitable, with landholders able to influence project design and development.

2.2.3 Expected outcomes for neighbours and nearby landholders

Projects are expected to contribute to the following outcomes for neighbours and nearby landholders:

- The project builds trust and collaboration between developers and neighbours.
- Neighbours and nearby landholders have early and ongoing opportunities to participate in project design and development, are supported to understand potential impacts and options, and can see how their input has been considered to avoid, reduce or manage impacts on them and their property.

2.2.4 Expected outcome for local industry engagement

Projects are expected to contribute to the following outcome from local industry engagement:

- Developers, where possible, enhance the capacity of and create meaningful opportunities for local industry and workforce participation in the delivery of the project.

2.3 Community Engagement and Benefits Plan

In addition to providing a Community Engagement and Benefits Plan with a Connection Application, VicGrid asks the Applicant to commit to:

- Engaging with the community, landholders and neighbours in a manner consistent with the expectations in the CESV Guidelines.

- Reporting on the implementation of the Community Engagement and Benefits Plan to VicGrid.
- Sharing the plan with relevant landholders and community representatives as identified in the plan to assist with reporting progress against the plan.
- Participating in an issues resolution process where disputes, complaints or other issues arise.

VicGrid recognises that Applicants are at different stages of community engagement and the development of benefits. Some may have well-developed plans in place, and may already be actively engaging with communities, while others may be at an earlier stage.

VicGrid's approach therefore does not require all Applicants to start from scratch or to immediately align their plan to every element of the CESV Guidelines. Instead:

- An existing engagement plan may form the substantive basis of the Community Engagement and Benefits Plan and be attached to the Connection Agreement. VicGrid will not require that plan to be re-structured to align with the documentation guidance included in Section 4 of the CESV Guidelines, however we will encourage Applicants to make improvements that may lead to revisions to the plan.
- Where an existing plan is not in place, VicGrid encourages the Applicant to prepare the Community Engagement and Benefits Plan to align with Section 4 of the CESV Guidelines.
- Whether the Community Engagement and Benefits Plan is new or existing, VicGrid encourages the Applicant to provide an accompanying document addressing the Victorian Government's minimum expectations for engagement with the project's host and impacted communities, landholders and neighbours, and for the provision of meaningful and lasting social value and economic benefits (refer to Table 1 below).
- The plan should be proportionate to the project scope, scale and impacts.
- The plan should be aligned with the project development maturity.
- The plan should be informed by community expectations and local context, with reference to key resources as outlined in Appendix A.
- The plan should be scalable as the project progresses.

2.4 Victorian Government minimum expectations for community engagement and social value

In reviewing the plan, VicGrid will consider the extent to which the Applicant's proposed approach meets Victorian Government expectations for engagement with the project's host and impacted communities, landholders and neighbours, and provides meaningful and lasting social value and economic benefits, as measured by the following considerations:

- (i) **Engagement with communities surrounding the project.** The quality, depth and appropriateness of engagement undertaken and to be undertaken with their project's surrounding community. The Applicant is expected to identify the groups, rights holders, stakeholders and partners making up their project's surrounding community as part of engagement planning. This should also include organisations, local government and peak bodies that represent the community's interests and needs, including the groups referenced in Section 1 of the CESV Guidelines.
- (ii) **Engagement with host landholders.** The quality, depth and appropriateness of engagement undertaken and to be undertaken with landholders who host generation, storage and transmission infrastructure (private or as part of the transmission system). Victorian Government expectations for engagement with host landholders apply to all host landholder negotiations and agreements related to hosting generation infrastructure, transmission line easements, construction access and road access.
- (iii) **Engagement with neighbours and nearby landholders.** The quality, depth and appropriateness of engagement undertaken and to be undertaken with the project's neighbours and nearby landholders. Neighbouring and nearby landholders are those both directly adjoining the land hosting project infrastructure, and those within close proximity. These will be different for every project and need to reflect the project's size, scale, location and impacts.

- (iv) **Social value and economic benefits.** The extent to which commitments are designed to deliver meaningful and long-term outcomes for communities, landholders and neighbours, and align with local and regional priorities and opportunities, as outlined in documents such as renewable energy zone readiness studies and place-based plans/strategies; and the strength and credibility of commitments to local employment, training and development.

The Applicant's Community Engagement and Benefits Plan should demonstrate how the Applicant plans to meet all expectations in the CESV Guidelines.

To ensure that the plan is complete and to support VicGrid's efficient review of the Community Engagement and Benefits Plan, the Applicant is requested to complete Table 1 below and provide a reference to the relevant section in the Community Engagement and Benefits Plan and/or other relevant document that details how the Applicant is meeting these requirements.

Recognising that projects will vary in maturity, community expectations and local context, the Applicant may explain any gaps or partial compliance, and/or demonstrate how and when the expectation will be addressed.

VicGrid intends to provide the Applicant with feedback and the opportunity to improve and update their Community Engagement and Benefits Plan and/or other relevant documentation. Once finalised, the Community Engagement and Benefits Plan will form part of the Connection Agreement if the application is successful.

Table 1: Minimum expectations for community, landholder, neighbour, local government and local industry engagement

CESV expectation reference #	Minimum expectations for community, landholder, neighbour, local government and local industry engagement	Plan or document section reference
Engagement with communities surrounding the project		
1	Engage early in the planning process, before the submission of planning permit applications or referrals under the <i>Environment Effects Act 1978</i> or <i>Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999</i> .	[Insert]
2	Provide timely and transparent information at the earliest opportunity about how the project will be planned, its impacts and risks, what can and can't be influenced through negotiation, when decisions will be made, and the role of consultation.	[Insert]
3	Integrate community feedback, interests and concerns (including about environmental hazards such as fire risks, flooding and biosecurity) into project development and plans for creating social value and economic benefits.	[Insert]
4	Provide diverse, regular and ongoing engagement opportunities, supported by locally accessible staff, and tailor communication and engagement approaches to reflect local context, priorities and community needs. Examples could include, but are not limited to, having a project hotline that is always staffed, a project-specific website where people can lodge concerns and offering in-person drop-in days, community events and meetings to share information at key project stages and as requested by communities.	[Insert]
5	Coordinate engagement across industry and through shared networks where possible, to increase knowledge-sharing and reduce consultation fatigue for communities.	[Insert]
6	Respect community members' requests about whether they would like to be contacted and their preferred method of communication.	[Insert]
7	Establish and implement processes for enquiries, complaints management and dispute resolution.	[Insert]
8	Ensure communities know how their contributions have been used to influence outcomes.	[Insert]
Engagement with host landholders		
9	Negotiate transparently with and between landholders and prevent contractual clauses from unreasonably restricting landholders from discussing details of the project with other community members.	[Insert]

CESV expectation reference #	Minimum expectations for community, landholder, neighbour, local government and local industry engagement	Plan or document section reference
10	Provide adequate supports to landholders, including sufficient time to consider commercial agreements, and cover reasonable costs incurred by landholders in accessing independent legal, financial, tax and insurance advice before entering into any agreement.	[Insert]
11	Provide timely and transparent information at the earliest opportunity about key project features and potential impacts to enable landholders to make informed contributions and decisions about the project design and how impacts are managed.	[Insert]
12	Ensure preliminary agreements do not place long-term obligations on landholders beyond what was originally intended. For example, preliminary licence agreements should not commit landholders to host the infrastructure or limit them from sharing information with other parties.	[Insert]
13	Ensure agreements are clear and fair regarding renewals or extensions and include provisions that allow landholders to terminate the agreement for valid reasons once the agreed-upon term has ended.	[Insert]
14	Clarify who is responsible for paying increased costs or new costs associated with hosting the infrastructure, such as insurance premiums, rates, levies, land taxes or duties.	[Insert]
15	Specify the developer's responsibilities and commitments on decommissioning, remediation and any other end-of-life arrangements through host landholder agreements. This process should include negotiation of landholder protections and financial safeguards including in the circumstances the developer or project owner becomes insolvent or is otherwise wound up before the end of project life.	[Insert]
Engagement with neighbours and nearby landholders		
16	Provide timely and transparent information at the earliest opportunity about the project's impacts and risks, what can and can't be influenced through negotiation, and the role of consultation.	[Insert]
17	Consult with neighbouring and nearby landholders on potential environmental, physical and operational impacts and risks, and seek to address these and related concerns (including about amenity and land use) through project design and delivery, including ways to minimise, mitigate and manage them.	[Insert]
18	Consult with neighbouring landholders on addressing insurance matters, and provide transparent information on any perceived or potential implications and risks.	[Insert]
19	Inform neighbours about planning scheme requirements, including setbacks, and discuss any implications and impacts.	[Insert]
20	Consult with neighbours on how agreements regarding impacts and benefits will be managed, including how agreements are developed, and where appropriate, formalised.	[Insert]
Landholder public liability		
21	Make sure host landholders and neighbouring landholders do not face an increased liability position as a result of new renewable energy or transmission projects.	[Insert]
Social value and economic benefits		
33	Work with communities to design a mix of initiatives that respond to their priorities and deliver both immediate and strategic or long-term social value and economic benefits.	[Insert]

CESV expectation reference #	Minimum expectations for community, landholder, neighbour, local government and local industry engagement	Plan or document section reference
35	Develop community capacity, including through opportunities that build on local strengths, assets, capabilities and resources.	[Insert]
36	Design social value and economic benefits that consider the needs, project impacts, priorities and strategies identified by local communities, government, community foundations, industry and research.	[Insert]
37	Collaborate with other developers, local industry, community and government to achieve collective impact, including coordinating on resourcing, initiatives, information-sharing and engagement, and leveraging project opportunities, economies of scale and shared networks. This may include opportunities to coordinate with the Renewable Energy Zone Community Energy Fund or existing community foundations to deliver benefits.	[Insert]
38	Provide transparent information to community, landholders and neighbours about the project's social value and economic benefit commitments, including by publishing a Social Value and Economic Benefits Plan.	[Insert]
Local industry engagement		
39	Engage with government agencies (including Regional Development Victoria), local industry, Traditional Owner Corporations, neighbouring landholders and other relevant stakeholders to understand local capabilities and identify opportunities to procure local content and social and First Peoples procurement opportunities.	[Insert]
40	Communicate early with local industry and relevant stakeholders about procurement and workforce opportunities that will be available at each stage of the development cycle.	[Insert]
42	Engage with local suppliers and, where appropriate, other developers to explore opportunities to support local suppliers' capacity to participate.	[Insert]
43	Collaborate with stakeholders, including education and training providers, to explore opportunities for vocational education and workforce development.	[Insert]

3 Traditional Owner engagement requirements

3.1 Introduction

The primary objective of VicGrid's approach to setting expectations for Traditional Owner engagement is to ensure that all partnerships and engagement activities undertaken by developers are culturally safe and informed by Traditional Owner self-determination so that they can shape, participate in and benefit from the renewable energy transition.

3.2 Expected outcomes for Traditional Owners

Projects should aim to contribute to the following outcomes for Traditional Owners:

- Traditional Owner rights, values and interests are recognised and integrated into the project design and development, through Traditional Owner-determined agreement-making.
- Opportunities have been explored and agreed with Traditional Owners and/or their representative bodies for collaboration on social value, cultural, Healing Country and economic benefit initiatives that are tailored and proportional to the scale of the project, and that leave a legacy beyond the project's delivery.

3.3 Traditional Owner Partnership and Benefits Plan

In addition to providing a Traditional Owner Partnership and Benefits Plan with a Connection Application, VicGrid asks the Applicant to commit to:

- Developing partnerships with Traditional Owners in a manner consistent with the expectations of Traditional Owners which may be expressed through renewable energy strategies, statements and dialogue; and the Victorian Government expectations as outlined in the CESV Guidelines
- Reporting on the implementation of the Traditional Owner Partnership and Benefits Plan to VicGrid
- Sharing the Traditional Owner Partnership and Benefits Plan with relevant Traditional Owners as identified in the plan for monitoring and reporting purposes
- Participating in an issues resolution process where disputes, complaints or other issues arise.

VicGrid recognises that Applicants are at different stages of partnering with Traditional Owners, with some having well-developed plans in place and already actively engaging with Traditional Owners while others may be at an earlier stage.

VicGrid's approach therefore does not require all Applicants to start from scratch or to immediately align their plan to every element of the CESV Guidelines. Instead:

- An existing plan may form the substantive basis of the Traditional Owner Partnership and Benefits Plan and be attached to the Connection Agreement. VicGrid does not require that plan to be re-structured to align with the documentation guidance included in Section 4 of the CESV Guidelines, however we will encourage Applicants to make improvements which may lead to revisions to the plan.
- Where an existing plan is not in place, VicGrid encourages Applicants to prepare the plan to align with Section 4 of the CESV Guidelines.
- Whether the Traditional Owner Partnership and Benefits Plan is new or existing, we encourage Applicants to provide an accompanying document addressing the Victorian Government's minimum expectations for partnership development with the project's host and impacted Traditional Owners, and for the provision of meaningful and lasting social value and economic benefits (refer to Table 2 below).

- The Traditional Owner Partnership and Benefits Plan should be proportionate to the project scope, scale and impacts.
- The Traditional Owner Partnership and Benefits Plan should be aligned with the project development maturity.
- The Traditional Owner Partnership and Benefits Plan should be informed by Traditional Owner interests, priorities and self-determined processes, with reference to key resources as outlined in Appendix A.
- The Traditional Owner Partnership and Benefits Plan should be scalable as the project progresses.

3.4 Traditional Owner and Victorian Government Minimum Expectations for Traditional Owner Partnership Development and Benefits

In reviewing the plan, VicGrid will consider the extent to which the Applicant's proposed approach meets Traditional Owner and Victorian Government expectations for engagement with the project's host and impacted Traditional Owners, and provides meaningful and lasting social value and economic benefits, as measured by the following considerations:

- (i) **Approach to partnership development (previous and future).** The quality, depth and appropriateness of partnership development undertaken and to be undertaken with the project's Traditional Owners; and the extent to which the Applicant's approach demonstrates a clear understanding and willingness to align with the identified needs and self-determined priorities of Traditional Owners including partnership protocols, cultural safety and cultural strengthening, and Healing of Country.
- (ii) **Social value and economic benefits.** The extent to which the Applicant's commitments deliver meaningful outcomes for Traditional Owners and align with identified priorities and opportunities.
- (iii) **Governance, reporting, compliance and complaints management.** The robustness and appropriateness of how the Applicant proposes to monitor, evaluate and report progress on commitments, and handle complaints throughout the project lifecycle.

The Applicant's Traditional Owner Partnership and Benefits Plan should demonstrate how the Applicant plans to meet all expectations in the CESV guidelines.

To ensure that the Traditional Owner Partnership and Benefits Plan is complete and to support VicGrid in efficiently reviewing the plan, the Applicant is requested to complete Table 2 below, and provide a reference to the relevant section in the Traditional Owner Partnership and Benefits Plan and/or other relevant document that details how the Applicant is meeting these requirements.

Recognising that projects will vary in maturity, Traditional Owner expectations and local context, the Applicant may explain any gaps or partial compliance, and/or demonstrate how and when the expectation will be addressed.

VicGrid intends to provide the Applicant with feedback and the opportunity to improve and update this document. Once finalised it will form part of the Connection Agreement if the application is successful.

Table 2: Minimum expectations for Traditional Owner Partnership and Benefits

* Further detail has been provided to expand on expectations outlined in the CESV Guidelines to give Applicants greater detail and clarity on Traditional Owner requirements, while ensuring alignment with the intent of the CESV Guidelines, Victorian Government policy and legislation.

CESV expectation reference #	Minimum expectations for Traditional Owner Partnership and Benefits	Plan or document section reference
Self-determined Traditional Owner agreement-making		
22	Prioritise working in genuine partnership with the Traditional Owner Corporation to support self-determined engagement and agreement-making, ensuring decisions that affect their rights, interests and connection to Country and Sea Country are led by Traditional Owners. * Develop a framework to ensure that Traditional Owner self-determined engagement approaches, rights, knowledge and values are embedded throughout the project lifecycle. This should include taking steps to avoid or reduce impacts on Country and Sea Country through project design and delivery. Implement processes for monitoring, evaluation and adaptation over time (refer to Appendix B for the template) (*see note above the table).	[Insert]
41	Consider opportunities, in the context of partnership agreements, to offer right of first refusal to Traditional Owner Corporation enterprises to deliver works and services on Country as part of your procurement processes, such as for activities during construction, operation and decommissioning.	[Insert]
Respectful and informed engagement with Traditional Owners		
23	Research and understand the rights, interests, aspirations and protocols of Traditional Owners as expressed through Whole of Country Plans, organisational strategies, renewable energy statements, and engagement protocols.	[Insert]
24	Undertake cultural safety and cultural competency training and education appropriate to the Traditional Owners on whose lands the project is intended to be developed.	[Insert]
25	Before engaging, research best practice and industry standards for Traditional Owner engagement and social value creation.	[Insert]
26	Recognise and uphold the legislated rights of Traditional Owners.	[Insert]
27	Engage early in the project planning stage to understand the level of engagement, collaboration and participation with Traditional Owners. Engagement is expected to include relevant Traditional Owner Corporations and may also include Traditional Owners who are not formally recognised but assert connection to the area.	[Insert]
28	Provide timely and transparent information at the earliest opportunity about the project, including about impacts, risks and opportunities, and how Traditional Owner input can influence decisions.	[Insert]
29	Undertake engagement and knowledge sharing with Traditional Owners in alignment with principles of data sovereignty.	[Insert]
30	Support Traditional Owners with flexible resourcing to enable them to participate in engagement in ways that best meet their priorities.	[Insert]
31	Provide appropriate remuneration where Traditional Owners are engaged. This may be through partnerships, expertise, knowledge and/or services.	[Insert]

CESV expectation reference #	Minimum expectations for Traditional Owner Partnership and Benefits	Plan or document section reference
32	Explore opportunities with the Traditional Owner Corporation for collaboration on social value and economic benefits within broader First Peoples communities, including local community-controlled organisations, chambers of commerce, health organisations, support services or education, training and employment providers.	[Insert]
34	Engage with Traditional Owner Corporations following a self-determined approach to co-design initiatives that respond to their priorities for immediate and strategic or long-term social value and economic benefits. These initiatives should build on Traditional Owner strengths, assets, capabilities and resources, and align with the needs, priorities and strategies already identified by Traditional Owners. * Explore opportunities to contribute to the healing of Country through restoration, protection and rejuvenation activities, guided by the cultural knowledge, priorities and authority of Traditional Owners.	[Insert]
39	Engage with Traditional Owner Corporations to understand local capabilities and identify opportunities for First Peoples procurement.	[Insert]
40	Communicate early with Traditional Owner Corporations about procurement and workforce opportunities that will be available at each stage of the development cycle.	[Insert]
7	Establish and implement processes for enquiries, complaints management and dispute resolution. * Develop an appropriate Traditional Owner complaint handling system and process, in compliance with the <i>National Electricity (Victoria) Act 2005</i> and the <i>Australian Standard 10002:2022</i> guidance on complaint management.	[Insert]

Appendix A: Reference Materials

A1. Traditional Owner Partnership Development

In the development of the Applicant's approach to Traditional Owner partnership development, and in preparation for engagement with Traditional Owners, Applicants should refer to key resources which include **but are not limited** to the following:

- **Traditional Owner Corporation resources** – Each Traditional Owner Corporation is unique, and a tailored approach should be applied. It is up to Traditional Owner Corporations to determine whether, how and at what level they wish to engage with the Applicant. The Applicant is expected to reach out directly to the Traditional Owner Corporation(s) for the land on which their project will be built. Table 3 below provides links and contacts details as of July 2026. The Applicant is expected to undertake their own research and refer to the relevant Traditional Owner Corporation websites for up-to-date information.
- **Non-formally recognised Traditional Owner groups** – In some cases, a Traditional Owner group may not have formal recognition. In this situation, the Applicant should take a respectful approach by identifying relevant groups, engaging early and allowing time for Traditional Owners to determine how they wish to be represented.
- Note that engagement is expected to include relevant Traditional Owner Corporations and may also include Traditional Owners who are not formally recognised but assert connection to the area.
- The Applicant should consider Traditional Owners that are directly or indirectly affected by, or have an interest in a project.

A Traditional Owner Corporation is a legally incorporated Aboriginal organisation that represents Traditional Owners or First Peoples of a particular area or Nation, often established to manage cultural heritage, land rights, Native Title, settlement agreements, community governance, and broader social, economic or cultural interests. Traditional Owner Corporations may hold various legal statuses (such as Registered Aboriginal Party, Native Title body, or Registered Corporation) depending on their recognition under different laws or agreements.

A Traditional Owner is an Aboriginal person or group with ancestral, cultural, spiritual and historical connection to a specific area of Country, recognised through traditional laws, customs, kinship, and ongoing responsibility for caring for that land, waters and cultural heritage. Traditional Owners are the original custodians of their Country and hold enduring rights, interests and obligations regardless of contemporary legal recognition frameworks.

Table 3: Traditional Owner Corporation details

The below table is not an exhaustive list. The Applicant should undertake their own research in identifying host and impacted Traditional Owners and Traditional Owner Corporations, and relevant documentation.

TOC	Website	Other Resources	Contact
Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corp.	https://www.bunuronglc.org/		cultural.values@bunuronglc.org.au
Barengi Gadjin Land Council	https://www.bglc.com.au/	https://bglc.com.au/reports/	engage@bglc.com.au
DJAARA (Dja Dja Wurrung Clans Aboriginal Corporation)	http://djadjawurrung.com.au/	https://djadjawurrung.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/04/Dhelkunya-Dja-Country-Plan-2014-2034.pdf	info@djadjawurrung.com.au
Eastern Maar Aboriginal Corp.	https://easternmaar.com.au/	https://easternmaar.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/eastern-maar-country-plan.pdf	OnCountryGuardians@easternmaar.com.au
First Peoples Millewa Mallee Aboriginal Corp.	https://fpmmac.com.au/		admin@fpmmac.com.au

TOC	Website	Other Resources	Contact
Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corp.	https://gunaikurnai.org/	https://gunaikurnai.org/pathways-to-partnerships/	admin@glawac.com.au
Gunditj Mirring Traditional Owner Aboriginal Corp.	https://www.gunditjmirring.com/		reception@gunditjmirring.com
Taungurung Land and Waters Council	https://taungurung.com.au/	https://taungurung.com.au/cesg-certification-framework/	communications@tlawc.com.au
Wadawurrung Traditional Owners Aboriginal Corp.	https://www.wadawurrung.org.au/	https://www.wadawurrung.org.au/_files/ugd/d96c4e_72611327c6a54d3198c0499ac5c26e54.pdf	admin@wadawurrung.org.au
Wamba Wemba Aboriginal Corp.	http://wambawemba.com/		admin@wambawemba.com
Wurundjeri Woi Wurrung Cultural Heritage Aboriginal Corp.	https://www.wurundjeri.com.au/	https://www.wurundjeri.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/Wurundjeri-Woi-wurrung-Whole-of-Country-Plan-2025-2035.pdf	rapofficer@wurundjeri.com.au
Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corp.	https://yynac.com.au/	https://yynac.com.au/yorta-yorta-whole-of-country-plan-2021-2030/	reception@yynac.com.au

- [Victorian Map of RAPs](#) – Includes RAP contact details and websites which contain RAP specific guidance and/or engagement protocols.
- [CESV Guidelines](#) – VicGrid and DEECA Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines for Renewable Energy and Transmission Projects.
- [Best Practice Network Guides](#) – A suite of best practice First Nations Clean Energy Network guides.
- [Leading Practice Principles: First Nations and Renewable Energy Projects](#) – Clean Energy Council's guidance on principles for First Nations engagement, participation and benefit-sharing for renewable energy projects.
- [First Peoples' State Relations: Guidance on engaging Traditional Owners](#) – Victorian Government guidance on engaging Traditional Owners.
- Victorian State Government strategies or other strategies, such as [The Victorian Cultural Landscape Strategy](#).
- [Framework for Governance of Indigenous Data](#) – Guidance for Australian Government agencies on how to practically implement and embed those areas of data governance where the objectives of the Indigenous Data Sovereignty movement and the Australian Government align.
- [National Electricity \(Victoria\) Act 2005 \(NEVA\)](#) – Part 5 Div 2A ss 33A and Part 5 Div 2C ss 33K outlines community and Traditional Owner consultation and engagement requirements for Applicants.
- Australian Standard 10002:2022 Complaints Handling – based on ISO 20002:2028. Guidance on complaint management. Note that the NEVA requires the consultation and engagement plan to include a complaint handling system and process

A2. Community engagement

In the development of the Applicant's approach to community engagement, the Applicant should refer to key resources which include **but are not limited** to the following:

- [CESV Guidelines](#) – VicGrid and DEECA Community Engagement and Social Value Guidelines for Renewable Energy and Transmission Projects.
- Local engagement protocols, community / council readiness studies and place-based plans/programs – Several council readiness studies are completed or currently in progress. Table 4 below is up to date as of July 2026. The Applicant should undertake their own research and reach out to the relevant local councils and organisations for the most recent REZ readiness studies and place-based strategies or plans. The Applicant should consider groups, stakeholders and partners, including local government and organisations that are directly or indirectly affected by, or have an interest in a project.

Table 4: Local Government Authority details

The below table is not an exhaustive list. The Applicant should undertake their own research in identifying host and impacted communities, stakeholders and partners, and relevant documentation.

LGA	Website	Other Resources	Contact
Ararat	https://www.ararat.vic.gov.au/	Ararat Council Plan 2025-29	council@ararat.vic.gov.au
Ballarat	https://www.ballarat.vic.gov.au/	Ballarat Council Plan 2025-29	info@ballarat.vic.gov.au
Benalla	https://www.benalla.vic.gov.au/		council@benalla.vic.gov.au
Buloke	https://www.buloke.vic.gov.au/	North-Western Victoria Energy and Mining Impact and Readiness Strategy Renewable energy projects in Buloke Shire Buloke Council Plan 2025-2029	buloke@buloke.vic.gov.au
Campaspe	https://www.campaspe.vic.gov.au/	Campaspe Council Plan 2025-29	shire@campaspe.vic.gov.au
Colac	https://www.colacotway.vic.gov.au/	Colac Council Plan and Budget 2025-29	Specific Councillor email list inq@colacotway.vic.gov.au
Corangamite	https://www.corangamite.vic.gov.au/	Corangamite Council Plan 2025-29	shire@corangamite.vic.gov.au
Darebin	https://www.darebin.vic.gov.au/	Our Darebin Plan 2025-29	mailbox@darebin.vic.gov.au
East Gippsland	https://www.eastgippsland.vic.gov.au/	Council Plan 2025 - 2029	feedback@egipps.vic.gov.au
Gannawarra	https://www.gannawarra.vic.gov.au/	North-Western Victoria Energy and Mining Impact and Readiness Strategy Gannawarra Shire 2025-2029 Council Plan and Community Vision	council@gsc.vic.gov.au
Glenelg	https://www.glenelg.vic.gov.au/	Glenelg Council and Wellbeing Plan 2025-29	enquiry@glenelg.vic.gov.au
Golden Plains	https://www.goldenplains.vic.gov.au/	Council Plan 2025-2029 (incorporating the Municipal Public Health and Wellbeing Action Plan)	enquiries@gplains.vic.gov.au
Greater Bendigo	https://www.bendigo.vic.gov.au/	Council Plan Mir wimbul 2025-2029	requests@bendigo.vic.gov.au
Greater Geelong	https://www.geelongaustralia.com.au/	Geelong Council Plan 2025-29	contactus@geelongcity.vic.gov.au

LGA	Website	Other Resources	Contact
Greater Shepparton	https://greatershepparton.com.au/	Council Plan 2025-2029	council@shepparton.vic.gov.au
Hindmarsh	https://www.hindmarsh.vic.gov.au/	North-Western Victoria Energy and Mining Impact and Readiness Strategy Council Plan	info@hindmarsh.vic.gov.au
Horsham	https://www.hrcc.vic.gov.au/	North-Western Victoria Energy and Mining Impact and Readiness Strategy Council Plan 2025-29	Specific Councillor email list council@hrcc.vic.gov.au
Latrobe	https://www.latrobe.vic.gov.au/	Renewable Energy Impact and Readiness Study Latrobe City Council Transition Plan Council Plan 2025 - 2029	latrobe@latrobe.vic.gov.au
Loddon	https://www.loddon.vic.gov.au/	North-Western Victoria Energy and Mining Impact and Readiness Strategy Community Vision 2035 - Council Plan 2025-2029	loddon@loddon.vic.gov.au
Mansfield	https://www.mansfield.vic.gov.au/	Mansfield Shire Council Plan 2025-29	council@mansfield.vic.gov.au
Mitchell	https://www.mitchellshire.vic.gov.au/	Council Plan 2025-29	mitchell@mitchellshire.vic.gov.au
Mildura	https://www.mildura.vic.gov.au/	Community Vision & Council Plan	mrcc@mildura.vic.gov.au
Moorabool	https://www.moorabool.vic.gov.au/	Council Plan - 2025-2029	info@moorabool.vic.gov.au
Mount Alexander	https://www.mountalexander.vic.gov.au/	Council Plan 2025-29	info@mountalexander.vic.gov.au
Moyne	https://www.moyne.vic.gov.au/	Moyne Shire Council Plan 2025-2029	moyne@moyne.vic.gov.au
Murrindindi	https://www.murrindindi.vic.gov.au/	Council Plans Guidelines for Successful Renewable Energy in Murrindindi Shire Draft	customer@murrindindi.vic.gov.au
Northern Grampians	https://www.ngshire.vic.gov.au/	North-Western Victoria Energy and Mining Impact and Readiness Strategy Council Plan	ngshire@ngshire.vic.gov.au
Pyrenees	https://www.pyrenees.vic.gov.au/	Council Plan 2025-2029	pyrenees@pyrenees.vic.gov.au
South Gippsland	https://www.southgippsland.vic.gov.au/	South Gippsland and Latrobe City Renewable Energy Impact and Readiness Study : Council Plan 2025-29 Gippsland Offshore Wind Community Assembly Report	council@southgippsland.vic.gov.au
Southern Grampians	https://www.sthgrampians.vic.gov.au/	Council Plan 2025-29	council@sthgrampians.vic.gov.au

LGA	Website	Other Resources	Contact
Surf Coast	https://www.surfcoast.vic.gov.au/	Council Plan	info@surfcoast.vic.gov.au
Swan Hill	https://www.swanhill.vic.gov.au/	North-Western Victoria Energy and Mining Impact and Readiness Strategy Council Plan	council@swanhill.vic.gov.au
Wangaratta	https://www.wangaratta.vic.gov.au/	Council Plan 2025-29	council@wangaratta.vic.gov.au
Wellington	https://www.wellington.vic.gov.au/	Wellington Renewable Energy Impact Study Structure Plans Council Plan 2025-29 Community Vision 2041 Gippsland Offshore Wind Community Assembly Report	enquiries@wellington.vic.gov.au
West Wimmera	https://www.westwimmera.vic.gov.au/	North-Western Victoria Energy and Mining Impact and Readiness Strategy Council Plan 2025-2029	council@westwimmera.vic.gov.au
Wyndham	https://www.wyndham.vic.gov.au/	Council Plan 2025-29	council@westwimmera.vic.gov.au
Yarriambiack	https://www.yarriambiack.vic.gov.au/	North-Western Victoria Energy and Mining Impact and Readiness Strategy Council Plan 2025-29	info@yarriambiack.vic.gov.au

- [National Electricity \(Victoria\) Act 2005 \(NEVA\)](#) – Part 5 Div 2A ss 33A and Part 5 Div 2C ss 33K outlines community and Traditional Owner consultation and engagement requirements for Applicants.
- Australian Standard 10002:2022 Complaints Handling – based on ISO 20002:2028. Guidance on complaint management. Note that the NEVA requires the consultation and engagement plan to include a complaint handling system and process.

Appendix B: CESV Guidelines Monitoring Framework Template

PROJECT DETAILS

Project name: [developer to complete]

Developer: [developer to complete]

Reporting period: [developer to complete]

Project stage: [Choose an item.]

Reporting contact: [developer to complete]

Note: VicGrid will seek written reporting on a quarterly basis, with verbal updates to be provided in regular pre-existing project meetings.

OUTCOME MONITORING

Community engagement monitoring and reporting

Projects are expected to contribute to the following outcomes for communities:

- The project builds trust and connection between the community and the developer.
- The project uses community feedback to inform decisions, helping address community needs and priorities.

Key commitments

Key commitments are set by the developer. Key commitments can be updated over time as the project progresses.

[Developer to complete - Summarise key commitments as documented in your relevant plans relating to engagement with the broader community]

Examples:

- *Deliver regular, transparent updates to the community on project progress*
- *Provide accessible opportunities for stakeholder input (in-person and online)*
- *Respond to community concerns in a timely and documented manner*
- *Maintain ongoing communication channels throughout development*

Key indicators

These are the key indicators set by VicGrid to monitor performance against the requirements set out in the CESV Guidelines.

Developers are to report on relevant indicators as they relate to the relevant stage and maturity of the project.

- Number of community engagement activities undertaken
- Stakeholder participation levels
- Understanding of community priorities
- % of complaints and enquiries resolved within agreed timeframes
- The project is addressing community feedback, priorities and impacts

Performance against indicators this period

Developers should provide a concise, evidence-based narrative describing their performance against the key indicators across the reporting period. The narrative should demonstrate what was done, what was changed and the outcomes, supported by data where appropriate. For any areas of underperformance, include corrective actions to address them.

[Developer to complete – Summarise performance against each of the relevant indicators.]

Example:

During this reporting period, the project team conducted 5 community engagement activities, including 2 in-person drop-in sessions, 1 online webinar and 2 targeted meetings with local council.

Approximately 120 stakeholders participated across these activities. Key themes raised included concerns about visual impacts, construction traffic and local employment opportunities.

In response:

- *Visual impact concerns were addressed through updated photomontages shared with community*
- *A draft traffic management plan was presented and we gathered feedback, which we will consider before finalising the plan*
- *We've committed to publishing a local procurement and employment strategy in the next reporting period.*

We received 10 enquiries and no complaints. 100% of enquiries were responded to within the agreed timeframes.

Alignment to commitments

For each of the commitments, provide a concise summary of how the commitments were maintained during this period. For any issues, identify the corrective actions required.

[Developer to complete – Summarise the status of each commitment for this reporting period.]

Examples:

- *Regular updates were delivered via newsletters and public sessions*
- *Multiple engagement formats (online and in-person) were provided*
- *Community concerns were documented and responded to within agreed timeframes*
- *Communication channels remained active and accessible*

Evidence/attachments

Developers are to provide any additional evidence as needed to support their reporting for this period.

[Developer to complete – List evidence here and attach separately.]

Example:

- *Community engagement log*
- *Summary report of stakeholder feedback and responses*

Landholder engagement monitoring and reporting

Developers are expected to meet the following expectations when engaging with landholders:

- Landholders are empowered to negotiate fair and reasonable agreements to host renewable energy and transmission projects.
- The relationship between landholders and developers is equitable, with landholders able to influence project design and development.

Key commitments

Key commitments are set by the developer at the beginning of the process. Key commitments can be updated over time as the project and commitments develop.

[Developer to complete - Summarise key commitments as documented in your relevant plans relating to engagement with landholders]

Key indicators

Key indicators are set by VicGrid. Developers are to report on relevant indicators as they relate to the relevant stage and maturity of the project.

- Landholders receive clear and timely information about impacts, agreements and changes
- Landholders are given sufficient time and independent support to review and negotiate agreements and changes
- Landholders are engaged early and consistently throughout project planning and delivery
- Number and nature of disputes, complaints or escalations
- Project design, delivery or operations demonstrably reflect landholder input

Performance against indicators this period

Developers should provide a concise, evidence-based narrative describing their performance against the key indicators across the reporting period. The narrative should demonstrate what was done, what was changed and the outcomes, supported by data where appropriate. For any areas of underperformance, include corrective actions to address them.

[Developer to complete – Summarise performance against each of the relevant indicators.]

Alignment to commitments

For each of the commitments, provide a concise summary of how the commitments were maintained during this period. For any issues, identify the corrective actions required.

[Developer to complete – Summarise the status of each commitment for this reporting period.]

Evidence/attachments

Developers are to provide any additional evidence as needed to support their reporting for this period.

[Developer to complete – List evidence here and attach separately.]

Neighbour and nearby landholder engagement monitoring and reporting

Projects are expected to contribute to the following outcomes for neighbours and nearby landholders.

- The project builds trust and collaboration between developers and neighbours.
- Neighbours and nearby landholders have early and ongoing opportunities to participate in project design and development, are supported to understand potential impacts and options, and can see how their input has been considered to avoid, reduce or manage impacts on them and their property.

Key commitments

Key commitments are set by the developer at the beginning of the process. Key commitments can be updated over time as the project and commitments develop.

[Developer to complete - Summarise key commitments as documented in your relevant plans relating to engagement with the neighbours and nearby landholders]

Key indicators

Key indicators are set by VicGrid. Developers are to report on relevant indicators as they relate to the relevant stage and maturity of the project.

- Developers respond to neighbour concerns and issues in a timely and transparent manner
- Structured and timely opportunities are provided for neighbours to participate in project planning and provide feedback
- Information about potential impacts and mitigation options is communicated clearly and early.
- Neighbour feedback is documented, considered and responded to as part of project planning
- Project design or delivery demonstrates changes made to avoid, reduce or manage impacts on neighbours

Performance against indicators this period

Developers should provide a concise, evidence-based narrative describing their performance against the key indicators across the reporting period. The narrative should demonstrate what was done, what was changed and the outcomes, supported by data where appropriate. For any areas of underperformance, include corrective actions to address them.

[Developer to complete – Summarise performance against each of the relevant indicators.]

Alignment to commitments

For each of the commitments, provide a concise summary of how the commitments were maintained during this period. For any issues, identify the corrective actions required.

[Developer to complete – Summarise the status of each commitment for this reporting period.]

Evidence/attachments

Developers are to provide any additional evidence as needed to support their reporting for this period.

[Developer to complete – List evidence here and attach separately.]

Social value and local economic development monitoring and reporting

Projects are expected to contribute to the following social value and economic benefit outcomes and outcomes from local industry engagement:

- Transparent, coordinated and locally aligned social value and economic benefits that address the needs and priorities of host and impacted communities, landholders and neighbours, and shared in a way that is responsive and proportional to impacts.
- Developers, where possible, enhance the capacity of and create meaningful opportunities for local industry and workforce participation in the delivery of the project.

Key commitments

Key commitments are set by the developer at the beginning of the process. Key commitments can be updated over time as the project and commitments develop.

[Developer to complete - Summarise key commitments as documented in your relevant plans relating to social value and economic benefits]

Key indicators

Key indicators are set by VicGrid. Developers are to report on relevant indicators as they relate to the relevant stage and maturity of the project.

- Social value and economic benefits are demonstrably aligned with local community priorities
- Benefits are distributed transparently and in proportion to project impacts
- Committed social value and economic benefits are delivered as planned
- Structured and ongoing engagement activities with local industry and workforce stakeholders to identify and promote opportunities
- Collaboration with local industry, training providers and other relevant stakeholders to build capability and enable participation in project delivery

Performance against indicators this period

Developers should provide a concise, evidence-based narrative describing their performance against the key indicators across the reporting period. The narrative should demonstrate what was done, what was changed and the outcomes, supported by data where appropriate. For any areas of underperformance, include corrective actions to address them.

[Developer to complete – Summarise performance against each of the relevant indicators.]

Alignment to commitments

For each of the commitments, provide a concise summary of how the commitments were maintained during this period. For any issues, identify the corrective actions required.

[Developer to complete – Summarise the status of each commitment for this reporting period.]

Evidence/attachments

Developers are to provide any additional evidence as needed to support their reporting for this period.

[Developer to complete – List evidence here and attach separately.]

Traditional Owner engagement monitoring and reporting

Projects should aim to contribute to the following outcomes for Traditional Owners:

- Traditional Owner rights, values and interests are recognised and integrated into the project design and development, through Traditional Owner-determined agreement-making.
- Opportunities have been explored and agreed with Traditional Owners and/or their representative bodies for collaboration on social value, cultural, Healing Country and economic benefit initiatives that are tailored and proportional to the scale of the project, and that leave a legacy beyond the project's delivery.

Key commitments

Key commitments are set by the developer at the beginning of the process. Key commitments can be updated over time as the project and commitments develop.

[Developer to complete - Summarise key commitments as documented in your relevant plans relating to engagement and agreement-making with Traditional Owners]

Key indicators

Key lead indicators are set by VicGrid. Developers are to report on relevant indicators as they relate to the relevant stage and maturity of the project.

- Traditional Owners determine and lead culturally appropriate engagement and agreement-making processes
- Traditional Owners receive clear and timely information about impacts, agreements and changes to support informed decision-making by Traditional Owners
- Traditional Owners are supported with appropriate resourcing, remuneration and access to expertise to participate in engagement and agreement-making
- Engagement and decision-making processes align with Traditional Owner cultural protocols, governance structures and data sovereignty principles
- Relevant project design, delivery and processes demonstrably reflect Traditional Owner input
- Collaboration with Traditional Owners and/or their representative bodies to build capability and enable participation in project delivery

Performance against indicators this period

Developers should provide a concise, evidence-based narrative describing their performance against the key indicators across the reporting period. The narrative should demonstrate what was done, what was changed and the outcomes, supported by data where appropriate. For any areas of underperformance, include corrective actions to address them.

[Developer to complete – Summarise performance against each of the relevant indicators.]

Alignment to commitments

For each of the commitments, provide a concise summary of how the commitments were maintained during this period. For any issues, identify the corrective actions required.

[Developer to complete – Summarise the status of each commitment for this reporting period.]

Evidence/attachments

Developers are to provide any additional evidence as needed to support their reporting for this period.

[Developer to complete – List evidence here and attach separately.]

