

Green Economy Hub Application Guide

Green Economy Canada's 2019 National Recruitment



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About Green Economy Canada

Our Story

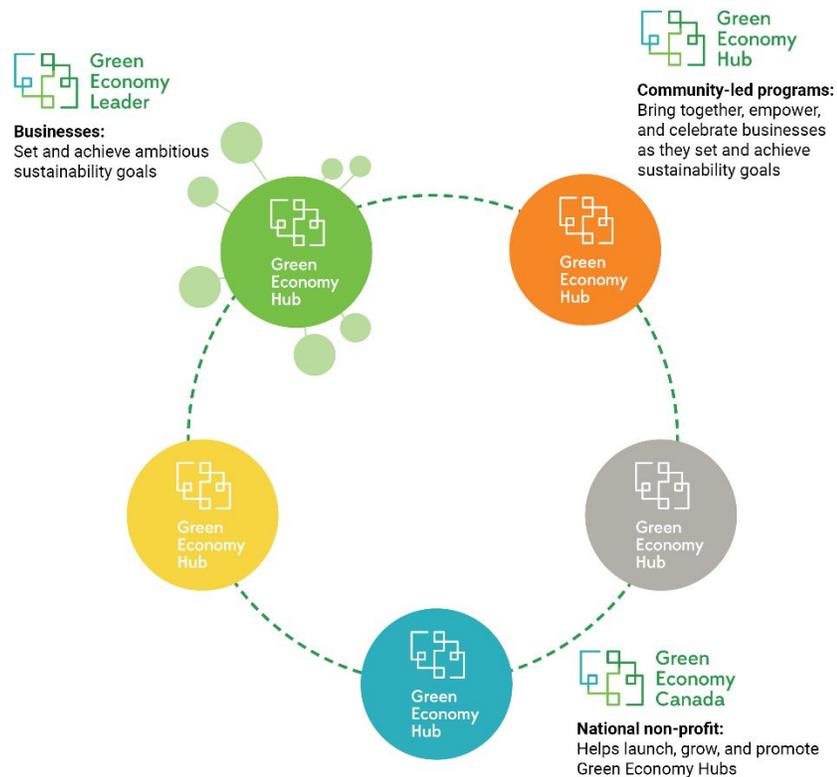
Green Economy Canada is a non-profit organization that works with community organizations to launch, grow, and promote Green Economy Hubs across Canada. Green Economy Hubs support local networks of businesses, called Green Economy Leaders, to set and achieve sustainability targets. Hubs bring together, empower, and celebrate businesses as they achieve their goals.

We build capacity in community organizations to launch and grow Green Economy Hubs by providing training and resources, tailored support, amplified impact, and a supportive community of practice.

We leverage the collective impact of Green Economy Hubs to mobilize network-wide funding, engage in policy discussions, and share stories of success to demonstrate that a sustainable economy is possible.

Green Economy Canada was created in response to widespread interest in the first Green Economy Hub, which launched in 2009 in Waterloo Region: the Regional Sustainability Initiative. Within five years, its' members represented 14% of the region's workforce and had committed to reduce 55,000 tonnes of greenhouse gases. The Hub was also earning enough revenue through membership fees to cover the majority of its operating costs. .

There are now **7 Hubs across Ontario**, engaging over 250 Green Economy Leaders.





Collectively, Green Economy Hubs have:

- Engaged over 250 businesses, the majority of which are SMEs (as of June 30, 2018)
- Helped businesses complete 151 GHG inventories (as of June 30, 2018)
- Committed to reduce 102,874 tonnes of GHG emissions (as of June 30, 2018)

- Supported businesses in setting 56 GHG reduction targets (as of June 30, 2018)
- Reduced 59,105 tonnes of GHG emissions (as of December 31, 2017)



Our Vision

We envision an economy where environmental sustainability, human well-being, and business success are synonymous.

Our basic premise is that sustainability is in businesses' best interest. Since businesses set targets on everything that matters, why not on sustainability too?

Green Economy Hubs impact sustainability in their communities in the following ways:

- 1) Businesses enjoy benefits like cost savings, more engaged employees, and an enhanced brand.
- 2) The reductions they make in their environmental impacts lead to healthier and more sustainable economies.
- 3) As more organizations participate, the community expects more of other businesses.
- 4) The local green economy also grows as a result of business demand for green products and services.

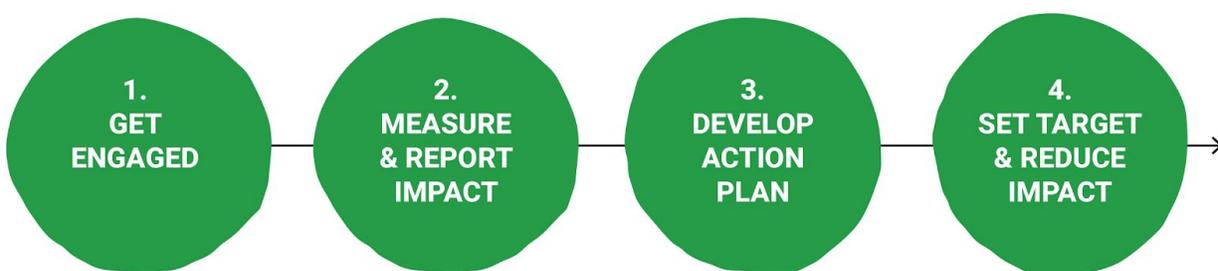
Green Economy Canada's **long term goal** is for Hubs to be engaging a critical mass of businesses to accelerate Canada's transition towards a low carbon economy. Our **five year objectives** include expanding to a network of 20 Green Economy Hubs across Canada, and collectively engaging 1,000 Green Economy Leaders who are demonstrating that a more sustainable economy is possible.



About Green Economy Hubs

Green Economy Hubs help businesses set and achieve sustainability targets. Hubs provide support, direction, and accountability to help businesses reach their goals, while publicly celebrating progress made. Businesses pay fees to participate, therefore Hubs generate revenue over time to cover a significant portion of their operating costs.

While each Hub is designed and adapted to the needs of the local community, all businesses that are members of Green Economy Hubs are supported through this general process:



The local networks that Hubs build in their communities allow best-practices to be shared, celebrated, and built upon, establishing a foundation for deep sustainability transformation. Media coverage and public events highlight Green Economy Leaders' progress to reduce their environmental impact. This public recognition raises the profile of participants, while also holding them to account if targets are not being met, and leaving those not participating to be conspicuous by their absence.

In [Appendix 1](#), you will find an overview of each of our Hubs. You can find links to their websites there for a more in-depth look at Hubs and what they do.

Hub Finances

The Hub Launch Process described [below](#) helps ensure the groundwork is complete to enable you to make the case for investing further to launch and grow a Hub in your community – an important aspect of securing start-up funding for a Hub.

Most Hubs are supported by a combination of membership fees, event revenue, sponsorship, and grants in their first five years and beyond. Hubs are designed to be revenue-generating programs. Over time as more businesses sign on, the proportion of operating costs covered by membership fees grows to between 50-75%. Green Economy Canada helps Hubs find the right mixture based on their community make up and provides coaching and support at each stage of development.



Annual costs to run a Hub vary, based on their size, staff complement, membership fees, the services provided, etc. The average annual cost to run a Hub amongst our 7 existing Ontario-based Hubs is approximately \$210,000 a year.

Green Economy Hub Standards

Each community supported by a Green Economy Hub is unique in its size, make up, and needs, and so no two Hubs look exactly the same.. However, all Hubs in the network follow some common Green Economy Canada Standards that ensure a minimum level of quality and consistency across Hubs and are rooted in the following core approaches:



The Green Economy Hub Standards help to:

- Ensure that Hubs maintain their focus on community, action, impact, and network collaboration.
- Prevent competition between Hubs.
- Set a minimum bar around quality and consistency that Hubs can expect from one another and funders, sponsors and partners can expect from the network.
- Distinguish Hubs from other sustainability programs

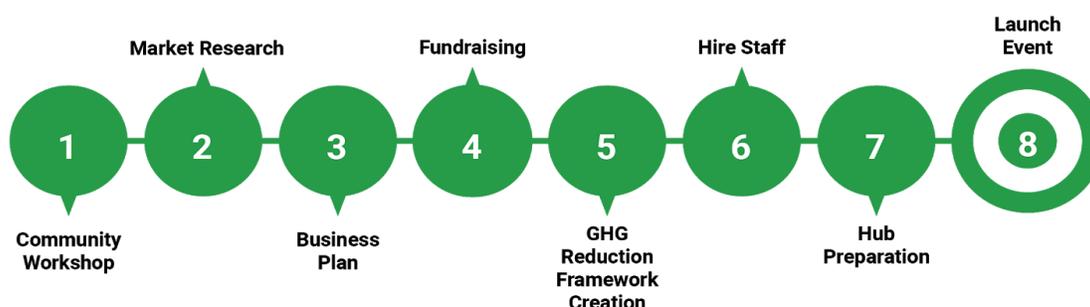
See [Appendix 2](#) for further details on the requirements and benefits of network membership.



Interested in Launching a Hub?

Hub Launch Process

The Hub Launch Process is a guided 8-step milestone process that integrates the experience and best practices we have gleaned from working with Ontario-based communities to launch and grow seven other successful Green Economy Hubs.



Hub Exploration Milestones	Timeline*
Milestone 1: Community Workshop Host a workshop to share vision and test interest from local leaders in the proposed Green Economy Hub.	Month 1-3
Milestone 2: Market Research Get 1:1 feedback from community and business leaders about a Green Economy Hub.	Month 3-5
Milestone 3: Business Plan Write the initial business plan to determine Hub feasibility.	Month 4-7
<i>Note: application to receive an official Green Economy Hub license and to join the Green Economy Canada network occurs after the successful completion of Milestones 1 - 3.</i>	
Hub Development Milestones	Timeline*
Milestone 4: Fundraising Write funding applications for Hub development and launch.	Month 5-10**



Milestone 5: Target-Setting Framework Creation Present recommendations, get feedback and finalize the rules for how members will set sustainability targets.	Month 7-12
Milestone 6: Hire Staff Hire staff and volunteers to complete remaining launch milestone work and to power the Hub after launch.	Month 8-14
Milestone 7: Program Preparation Ensure seed funding is secured, develop local service offerings, confirm first members, and prepare all Hub communication.	Month 10-16
Milestone 8: Event Launch Launch your Green Economy Hub.	Month 12-18

** Total timeline for completing Milestones 1 - 8 in the Hub Launch Process vary from 12-18 months
**Dependent on application timelines*

Green Economy Canada will support you each step of the way, with guidance materials, templates, checklists, and samples from Hubs that have gone through the same process. We will be your coach and touch point and provide up to 5 days of in-person support throughout the entire milestone process, including helping you to host your community workshop. You will gain access to our network's online community, the Green Economy Commons, where you will find direction on the steps required to complete each milestone, and our toolbox of resources to help you succeed.

Proceeding to the next milestone is not an automatic process. Because each milestone builds a critical foundation for each Hub's success once it launches, you will be required to report back and share your outputs with Green Economy Canada. We guide you to help achieve the requirements to meet each milestone (see below for an example for Milestone 1).




Commons

[NETWORK INFO](#) ▾ [NEWS & EVENTS](#) ▾ [TOOLKIT](#) ▾ [... MORE](#) ▾

Toolkit > Hub Launch Process >

Milestone 1: Community Workshop

M1: Host a workshop to share vision & gauge interest from local stakeholders about the value of a Green Economy Hub in your community.

Minimum Outputs	Ideal Outputs	Support Available
<p>At least 1 workshop held with a total of 20 people including at minimum one rep from local government, a utility, a chamber of commerce, and the private sector.</p> <p>Local businesses and government should be among the sectors better represented.</p>	<p>1-3 workshops held with a total of 40-60 people from all sectors highlighted in Overview tab of the Stakeholders Tracking spreadsheet.</p> <p>At least 25% of attendees are businesses, and key business and municipal leaders are in attendance.</p> <p>Completed feedback forms from workshop attendees.</p>	<p>Biweekly checkins with the Hub Development Manager;</p> <p>Hub Success Director is available to review the outreach list, make connections, and facilitate the community workshop in-person if needed.</p> <p>Resources:</p> <p>Stakeholder Tracking.xls;</p> <p>Communications templates, Workshop Facilitation Guide, and template presentation;</p> <p>Training:</p> <p>Hub Essentials Training (may be included earlier/later than this milestone, depending on specific needs);</p>

Hub Host

Any organization that is non-profit corporation is eligible to apply to launch and operate a Hub. A Hub typically operates like a program or division of the organization that hosts it. The host organization enables the Hub’s success by providing direction and resources and is, likewise, recognized for enabling its positive impact in the community. For that reason, a number of the **criteria** we assess about prospective applicants look at the strength of the host organization.

We find that local governments are often the initial champions keen on bringing a Hub to their community. While a Hub cannot be run by a municipality, they play a critical role in building community support and can provide some valuable funding to help explore Hub development. Their ongoing support of the Hub via participation and partnership is also critical to the long-term success of the Hub. If you are a local government that is interested in Hub exploration, connect to a local non-profit that you think might be a strong Hub host. In rare cases where no obvious host organization exists, we have seen municipalities create a local non-profit for this purpose. The potential Hub host organization should lead on this application but make clear the municipality’s support.



What Makes a Strong Hub?

There are a number of criteria that we assess when deciding whether to accept a new applicant. These criteria, shared below, are not absolute. Rather, we look at the degree to which each applicant aligns with them. Green Economy Canada developed these criteria based on lessons learned while launching and supporting 7 Hubs to date about the key factors that determine a Hub's success. The [Application Form](#) is based on assessing the factors below.

Community Fit

Does a Hub have potential for significant impact in the community?

Criteria	Indicators
Community is large enough to make a Hub viable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Size of the employee workforce at least 80K, or • Ideal community size between 100K and 1M in population*
A strong sense of community identity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People spend the majority of their time living and working in the community • Community has key anchor organizations: major academic institutions, a chamber of commerce, utility, municipality, and local media outlets • Demonstrated sense of community pride
High potential for impact with the business community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diversity of sectors represented within the business community • Applicant's understanding of the business make up of the community

**We understand that in certain provinces population densities might be lower and so community size as small as 60K would be considered.*

Community Support for a Hub

Is there cross-sectoral support for a Hub in the community?

Criteria	Indicators
Existing support for a Hub within the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wide variety of different organizations (NGOs, municipalities, businesses) have expressed interest in or support for Hub development • Applicant has a sense of which other key community organizations and businesses would need to be engaged to make a Hub work
Hub would fit well with existing municipal and community goals, plans, and initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Municipal government has a community-wide GHG reduction plan and target, including a focus on the industrial, commercial and institutional (ICI) sector • Other key municipal or community goals and plans are in place that the Hub would support (i.e. Community Energy Plan, Integrated Community Sustainability Plan)



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No significant competing initiatives already underway that would decrease the need for / success of a Hub ● Political representatives support action on climate change
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Quality of the Applicant

Does the community organization have a strong reputation and track record of success? Are they financially and organizationally healthy?

Criteria	Indicators
Applicant is financially healthy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● No major flags across the Applicant's income statement or balance sheets ● Applicant has good financial controls in place
Applicant's board is supportive and has strong governance practices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Board meets regularly (at least once a quarter), keeps up-to-date minutes and has board policies and term limits in place ● Executive Director is supported by an engaged board
Applicant has skilled and competent staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Executive Director is a strong leader charismatic, a skilled networker and partnership builder, and able to assemble a strong staff team ● Staff are skilled and knowledgeable, organized, responsive, and professional ● Applicant has had relatively low turnover in the last 5 years at both leadership (1 new ED or less) and staff levels
Applicant has experience working with the business community and bringing groups together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Applicant has a business network to tap into (e.g. relationships with influential employers in their community) ● Applicant has delivered programming to businesses before ● Applicant has experience with community engagement and bringing diverse stakeholder groups together ● Applicant has professional organizational branding
Hub fit with the organization's mission and strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Hub would be a core priority for the Applicant ● Running a Hub aligns with the Applicant's strategic priorities
Applicant's reputation within the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Applicant has an operational history within the community (ideally 5 years) ● Applicant has a strong reputation for professional and high quality work, and is well respected
Applicant has resources to dedicate to Hub launch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● One staff person dedicated to move your organization through the Hub Launch Process. <p>Note: we estimate that Milestones 1 - 3 can take up to 7 months to complete with 30-50 hours of staff time needed per milestone. Additional staff will be hired in Milestone 6 once funding is secured.</p>



What Does Applying to Green Economy Canada's National Recruitment Mean?

Green Economy Canada's National recruitment round that is now open which provides the opportunity for communities across Canada to apply for **subsidized support to complete the Hub Exploration Milestones (Milestones 1 - 3)** outlined in the [Hub Launch Process](#) section above. This subsidy covers Green Economy Canada's time, intellectual property, and resources to support your community through the milestones to explore Hub feasibility.

If your application is successful, you will sign a contract with Green Economy Canada setting out our commitments and obligations to each other as you work through the Hub Exploration Milestones. We will **commit to working exclusively with you to explore the viability of a Hub within the community that you identify in your application.**

As noted, proceeding through the milestones is not automatic – you must satisfy the requirements of one milestone before proceeding to the next. Once the selected communities successfully complete the Hub Exploration Milestones (1-3), they will be provided with a license to launch a Hub in their select geography, and continue completing the remaining milestones to develop and launch their Green Economy Hub.

What Does This Cost?

Human Resources

We advise applicants to have one staff person who will be dedicated to moving your organization through the Hub Exploration Milestones. The process can take up to 7 months to complete Milestones 1 - 3 and we estimate 30-50 hours of time needed per milestone. As well, the Executive Director or designate on your leadership team will be expected to support this staff person, to lend credibility and help develop community and business sector connections and profile.

If a Hub is found to be feasible, the additional staff needed to launch and support the Hub are usually retained during Milestone 6, after successful fundraising to support the Hub's post-launch stability. In the first year, Hubs generally require a full-time Program Manager and Business Development Manager and part-time Communications and Marketing Manager. Green Economy Canada will provide you with advice on when new positions are typically required and can be sustained in the years thereafter based on Hub growth patterns.



Costs

As Green Economy Canada has obtained funding from the Government of Canada to support this national expansion, selected communities will work through the Hub Exploration Milestones (and Hub Development Milestones should they proceed) at no additional cost.

The costs that communities will contribute are as follows: to cover the **human resources** outlined above, to cover costs of in-person community engagements (e.g. space rental, refreshments, and materials to host the Community Workshop in Milestone 1), and to cover half of their staff travel costs to attend an in-person peer learning session in the Toronto-area in Fall 2019.

Once your Hub has launched, license fees for the Green Economy Canada network are currently \$12,000 a year. Hubs are able to cover this through a mix of Hub earned revenue from membership fees, funds raised by Green Economy Canada for Hubs from time to time, and Hub seed funding.



How to Apply

Please note that while Green Economy Canada is accepting applications from all geographies in this recruitment round, preference will be given to organizations outside of Ontario.

Applications are due by March 4, 2018 at 11:59pm EST. Please download and complete the [Application Form](#) and send along with any relevant attachments to Elanor Waslander, Network Director, at hubrecruitment@greeneconomy.ca. Early submissions of applications are welcomed and encouraged, but will not be given any advantage over others.

We are hosting a webinar on February 20, 2018 from 1-2pm EST to give prospective applicants an opportunity to have their questions answered, and learn more about this opportunity. Please [register in advance](#). If you cannot attend the webinar, let us know, and we will make a recording available to you. Please send any questions you may have in advance to hubrecruitment@greeneconomy.ca.

Select applicants may be asked to attend a virtual meeting, or answer clarifying questions, in follow-up to their application, from March 5 through March 14.

The three new communities will be selected by mid-March and will promptly kickstart work with Green Economy Canada on Milestone 1: Community Workshop. We will advise applicants that were not selected for this opportunity, at that time.



Appendix 1: Current Green Economy Hubs



Sustainable Business Initiative
Org: [Sustainable Hamilton Burlington](#)
Launch Date: Sept 2016
Current Members: 30



Carbon 613
Org: [EnviroCentre](#)
Launch Date: June 2015
Current Members: 34



ClimateWise Business Network
Org: [Windfall Ecology Centre](#)
Launch Date: Sept 2016
Current Members: 32



Regional Sustainability Initiative
Org: [Sustainable Waterloo Region](#)
Launch Date: Jun 2009
Current Members: 66



Green Economy Program
Org: [Sustainable Kingston](#)
Launch Date: Mar 2018
Current Members: 31



Green Economy North
Org: [reThink Green](#)
Launch Date: Apr 2016
Current Members: 44



Green Economy London
Org: [London Environmental Network](#)
Launch Date: Coming Spring 2019!



Appendix 2: Joining the Network: Benefits & Requirements

Benefits of Joining the Network

Beyond the support you will receive through Green Economy Canada's 8-milestone roadmap for launching a strong, credible, and revenue generating Hub, you will gain access to the following benefits once you have successfully joined the network*.

***Note:** application to receive an official Green Economy Hub license and to join the Green Economy Canada network occurs after the successful completion of the Hub Exploration Milestones (Milestones 1 - 3).

Training and Resources

- **Trainings:** Interactive training modules based on learnings and best practices from all Green Economy Hubs.
- **Resources:** Hundreds of guides, samples, and templates so that Hubs don't have to reinvent the wheel.

Tailored Support

- **Coaching:** One-on-one support to work through Hub challenges.
- **Connections:** A speakers bank, network advisors, and industry connections.
- **Partnerships:** Discounted or free access to software and services.

A Supportive Community of Practice

- **Green Economy Commons:** An online community for learning, training, and connection.
- **Peer Learning:** Multiple peer learning webinars bring Hub staff together each quarter.
- **Green Economy Days:** An annual retreat to connect, collaborate, and share key learnings in-person with colleagues across the network.

Amplified Impact

- **Increased Profile:** Green Economy Canada highlights the efforts of Green Economy Hubs and Green Economy Leaders by sharing and celebrating our collective impact across the province.
- **Network Fundraising:** While funding support is not guaranteed, Green Economy Canada has a strong fundraising track record, and continues to secure funding for the network from government funders and corporate sponsors.



Requirements of Hubs:

In accordance with our Green Economy Hub Standards and Core Approaches:

- All Hubs are given a license to operate within a particularly geographic boundary, agreed to with Green Economy Canada (the geography does not necessarily need to be limited to municipal boundaries and could be defined by a common sense of identity and belonging). This standard is meant to protect the sense of community identity that is integral to each Hub's ability to build a local movement toward a more sustainable economy, and to prevent competition between Hubs. Should a Hub wish to expand its catchment area, it must get approval from Green Economy Canada.
- Hubs are open to businesses and other organizations in the community from a wide range of sectors and sizes, but not the residential sector.
- Hubs must have a plan that they follow toward financial self-sufficiency.
- All Green Economy Leaders must measure, report, and work to address their impact for at least one sustainability metric, like greenhouse gases, water or waste. Some Hubs only support their members on greenhouse gases, which is okay. Hubs must have a framework that provides direction on how Leaders measure, report, and set a target for each metric that they help Leaders address. That framework must follow any Green Economy Canada standards for that metric (for example, we require that any Leader working on greenhouse gases set a reduction target within 3 years of joining a Hub).
- Hub must use environmental impact assessment tools, like carbon accounting software, that meet set criteria so that all Green Economy Leaders in the network receive consistent support and there is integrity behind the network's data.
- Hubs must report a number of metrics to Green Economy Canada annually, which we use to measure and profile the network's collective impact and attract investment and support for Hubs. Hubs must also publicize their association with Green Economy Canada and as a Green Economy Hub on their website and in their annual report.