Project Greenlight

Guide to submitting solutions to calls for innovation

Project Greenlight Applicant Handbook

VANCOUVER
ECONOMIC
COMMISSION

Applicant Handbook

This handbook was designed for innovators interested in submitting their solutions to Project Greenlight. It provides prospective proponents with additional information on how to apply, and what to expect from the process.

Project Greenlight's members are committed to innovation within infrastructure, energy, sustainability, the built environment, health and safety, and the circular economy.

VANCOUVER ECONOMIC COMMISSION

Why Apply?

The pace of our transition to a cleaner and smarter future depends, in part, upon the pace at which public and private enterprises advance their own innovation and sustainability agendas. **Project Greenlight** aims to accelerate this transition by simplifying our members' access to innovative solutions. By participating in the Project Greenlight demonstration platform, you will:

- Fast-track your pilot project discussions

- Increase awareness of your technology

- Obtain feedback from potential clients

- Pitch to test your solution at scale

- Make connections in Metro Vancouver's cleantech community

Participating in Project Greenlight connects you with organizations committed to fast-tracking innovation and deploying solutions through the Project Greenlight process, and delivering on their smart and sustainable goals.

›› Refer to the Project Greenlight website for the full list of **public and private enterprises looking for innovative solutions**.

The Process

Step 1: Get to know our members

Your journey begins at the Project Greenlight website (**www.projectgreenlight.io**).
Here, you'll find profiles of our members that explain their values and strategic priorities.
We also recommend you spend time on their individual websites, which feature
sustainability reports and environmental, social, and governance (ESG) goals, as well as
insights into their business planning. This research will help you develop an understanding
of where your solution can be helpful, and how to frame your pitch appropriately.

Step 2: Review the calls for innovation

Project Greenlight members issue two types of calls for innovation:

- **Open calls** are for members who wish to collect and regularly review proposals
  in key areas related to their sustainability and smart and digital goals.

- **Targeted calls** are available to members seeking a specific solution to a defined
  problem. These calls for innovation include clearly defined timelines and
  implementation goals.

We recommend companies seeking to participate in Project Greenlight begin by reviewing
and submitting to the open calls. These are generally broader and offer more opportunities
to engage with members. Also, open challenge timelines are often flexible: members
regularly review open challenge submissions, but typically with less frequency and more
loosely defined timelines.

Targeted challenges are typically marketed towards certain innovator networks, though
we encourage you to share these challenges with companies and entrepreneurs in your
own network. Targeted challenges will generally have a defined timeline, desired outcome,
and detailed evaluation criteria. In these cases, the member knows what they are looking
for and when they'll need it. If your solution fits with a targeted challenge call, we strongly
recommend you apply.

Step 3: Registration

Once you have reviewed the challenges, you can register for an account on the Project Greenlight website. After creating your account, you can complete your company profile and submit proposals to member challenges.

Step 4: Submit a proposal

Each challenge has a two-part proposal form: a company profile that is common to all challenges, and a proposal specific to each challenge. You only need to complete the company profile once; we'll store it for future proposals. If you want to update your company profile, you can log in to your account and click "My Company Profile" in the "Account" menu.

Submission Guidelines

Applicants must be over 19 years of age. Submissions will be accepted from anywhere in the world, but must be submitted in English. Submissions must be sent by registered or otherwise incorporated companies. Proponents cannot be employees, or relations of employees, of the member for which they are submitting a challenge.

Company Profile

The company profile is divided into four sections: Point of Contact, Company, Financials and Technology.

A. Point of Contact

This section includes basic information about the team member who will be the lead point of contact for the proposal process. If you wish to name a secondary contact, please include this information under a separate submission.

B. Company and Financials

This section helps us understand your company's size and development stage, and whether it's right for Project Greenlight. We look at the following key factors:

- Are you a growth-oriented company with year-over-year growth in jobs or revenue

- Is your solution field-trial ready, and do you currently have the resources to implement your solution

- Are you in a position to scale up your technology via pilots in partnership with members

If your venture is pre-commercial with no current sales but you see alignment with a member's challenge you can still apply. But please refer to each member's page under Evaluation Criteria as each member's selection criteria and risk tolerance varies. If you are not pilot-ready, you are unlikely to successfully advance; it is important to recognize that the purpose of Project Greenlight is to identify solutions that are ready for piloting and scaling on commercial infrastructure. Conversely, a company with over $50 million in revenue from commercially available products will unlikely proceed, unless the test is novel, within a new market vertical and / or a partnership exists with a small-to-medium sized venture.

These are important Project Greenlight litmus tests. If your company has yet to meet these requirements this program might not be the right fit.

Guidance on how to answer key member questions:

What is your company's business model?	Explain how your company intends to make—or is making—money. Tell us about your technology development pathway, your revenue model, your expenses, and your sales and marketing plan. Share when you'll break even in the context of a five-year plan, and explain your next 18 months. You can refer to information in a pitch deck to reduce the length of this response.
What are your sources of funding and revenue?	Responses to the funding questions are optional, but we encourage you to submit as much information as you can. All information will be kept confidential to the Project Greenlight team and members. To further validate your company and technology, we may ask to connect with any government agencies from which you have received funding.
What are your primary business risks and how will you manage them?	Explain using a table with separate columns for risk, risk level (high, medium, or low), and your mitigation strategy.

Guidance on key technology section questions:

What is your technology solution?	Tell us about your technology. What makes it innovative relative to others? What level of development is it at? Where do you want it to be a year from now?
What problem does this technology solve?	What market demand is your solution meeting? Can you quantify its total potential and accessible markets, and share your plan to reach those markets?
What are the benefits?	Explain how your technology will benefit the member. How will it reduce their costs while improving sustainability or other performance metrics? How do you envision it having a positive impact in the world?
What are the primary technology risks and how will you manage them?	Explain using a table with separate columns for risk level (high, medium, or low), and your mitigation strategy.
What is your company's intellectual property strategy?	Explain any existing intellectual property protections. If you are seeking such protections, please explain the status of your proposals and expected timeline. Explain any risks to your IP strategy.

Guidance on challenge-specific questions

Beyond the company profile, each challenge contains a section outlining questions pertinent to the challenge itself. These questions will typically address:

- **The economics of your technology**. This could include, for example, how long it will take an investment in your technology to pay for itself and begin generating dividends. The best responses will clearly explain a payback period in years; members typically expect a break-even period below five years.

- **Adherence to specific standards and compliance levels**. You may be required to include proof of compliance to submit a proposal; be ready to provide this on request. If you don't comply with a specific standard, it's probably best to hold off on applying until you do. Consider an open call challenge submission instead!

- **Benchmark of your technology's environmental, social, and governance sustainability benefits.** Be prepared to explain how your solution measurably improves performance across these criteria. Ideally, you should be able to provide either relative or absolute industry or regional benchmarks, and show how your technology meets or exceeds them. You might also use lab or trial results, customer validation, or other market research to demonstrate effectiveness.

- **Performance of the technology in a "real-world" environment.** How ruggedized is it? How long does it last? How can you otherwise characterize its performance?

- **Outline of your ideal partnership.** Your response should envision a pilot or trial stage, which includes the resources you will need, what you will contribute, the scale and duration of the trial, and the risks and benefits. You can also include this as an attachment.

Please keep your responses brief. Limit your attachments to core additional documentation, such as graphs and figures. Limit any additional information pertaining to question responses to two pages, assuming single spacing on 11-point font. Members prefer bullet points and clear summaries.

Step 5: Participate in the evaluation process

The Project Greenlight team (Vancouver Economic Commission and Foresight sector leads) has divided evaluation criteria into three investment gates. We summarize them briefly here, and provide more detailed information below.

- **Assessment 1** is a pre-screening of incoming submissions. This ensures proponents meet minimum eligibility thresholds before the Project Greenlight team shares shortlisted submissions with the member.

- **Assessment 2** is related to operational risk. At this step, the Project Greenlight team will work with the member to assess a number of go/no-go criteria before proceeding.

- **Assessment 3** is a more detailed evaluation. It combines information from your proposal with feedback obtained via a dynamic company pitch session. The member will compile this input into a proposal profile, and use it to decide whether to formally launch a project with you.

Assessment 1 is designed to take approximately 30 days from the date of your submission. Assessments 2 and 3 may take up to 90 days total, depending on the complexity of the challenge. Members offering open challenges may choose to evaluate proposals on a rolling basis, or group them into quarterly or biannual reviews. The Project Greenlight team will regularly email applicants with updates on their proposal. All evaluations will be kept strictly confidential.

We encourage applicants to view the evaluation process as an opportunity for coaching, improvement, and development. The process of submitting a proposal and undergoing scrutiny highlights opportunities and creates feedback loops that improves companies and helps their owners understand how best to respond to the needs of large enterprises. Seen in this light, a challenge process is less a win-lose proposition, and more of a journey of refinement towards developing a successful enterprise that powers an innovative technology.

A. Assessment 1

During the Assessment 1 process, the Project Greenlight team will review the proposal for completeness and score it based on the team, technology, and plan. If the team identifies gaps in the proposal, it may send clarifying questions to the proponent.

Following Assessment 1, the team will advise proponents as to whether they can progress to the secondary evaluation, or if their proposal has been rejected. Proponents in the latter category may request feedback from the project team, which will be provided at the team's discretion. Successful applicants will receive an explainer document outlining the next steps in the process.

B. Assessments 2 and 3

Assessments 2 and 3 involve both the Project Greenlight team and a member evaluation team. Representatives from the member's administrative (i.e. legal and IT) and technical (i.e. innovation and operations) departments will evaluate submissions against their strategic goals and challenge objectives. The Project Greenlight team will facilitate the evaluation process.

If a proposal interests a member, a representative of the organization may request a one-on-one interview with the proponent, to pitch their solution to the evaluation team. This is generally structured as an online session, with time allocated for a pitch and Q&A. These sessions typically run to 90 minutes. Members may prefer a different assessment format; in such cases the Project Greenlight team will advise proponents of timing and offer guidance on the preferred approach.

Proponents should expect a decision within 30 days of a one-on-one interview, though this may vary from member to member and change depending on the type of call. Successful candidates will move to more in-depth partnership discussions as directed by the member and supported by the project team. The project team will endeavour to provide feedback to finalists whose submission was rejected.

Next Steps

Project Greenlight encourages unsuccessful proponents to integrate feedback into their business planning, and re-apply as their company and solution evolve. If you've applied before, please reference previous proposals and explain how your company or technology has progressed, and how your proposal differs from the previous one.

Successful proponents will work with Project Greenlight members to pilot their solutions within a certain context. With the support of the project team, these solutions will either be proven, identified as needing improvements in particular areas, or fail. All of these outcomes are useful in validating the hypothesis of the proponent's proposed solution.

Project Greenlight is particularly interested in gaining feedback from proponents on the proposal and evaluation process. Participants can provide feedback directly through the platform, or get in touch with the project team to offer comments and suggestions on the recruitment, proposal and evaluation process, as well as next steps.

Entrepreneurship, sustainability, and innovation are all journeys. We look forward to working with you on our common goal of building a sustainable future for all, and in particular to your engagement with Project Greenlight and our members. Best of luck!