



GETTING STARTED: WHAT TO ASK THE DEVELOPER?

Below is a list of preliminary questions to think about when approached by a developer or technology representative for developing clean energy resources on tribal lands. For more assistance, contact the DOE Office of Indian Energy at indianenergy@hq.doe.gov.

Resources:

- Which resources have been identified as being available?
- What data was used to identify the resources?
- Has the development of all available resources been evaluated separately as well as optimally combined with others?
- What is the effective resource capacity?

Development:

- What is the proposed scale (MW capacity) for the project?
- How will construction be accomplished?
- How long will development and construction to commercial operation date (COD) take?
- Where is the renewable energy (RE) generation development proposed to be sited?
- What will the initial project design and/or layout look like?
- What direct and surrounding land impacts are expected from on-site development and access routes?
- How will the community be impacted?

Economics:

- Who will pay for and manage the initial assessment and all phases of pre-construction development?
- How will funds be raised?
- Has an economic feasibility study been performed?
 - Is demand for power sufficient?
 - Is interconnection deemed to be cost-effective?
- How much will the project cost? By category:
 - Studies
 - Permits
 - Materials
 - Labor
 - Transmission
- Who will be the financially responsible party?
- Which tax credits and/or incentives (federal and state) are applicable to the proposed project?
- Which deal structure would be used to monetize incentives?
- Do you have any pre-existing relationships with investors, Tax Equity or otherwise?
 - What is your frequency of using outside Tax Equity?
- How much revenue is the project expected to generate?
- What is the expected rate of return of the project?

Operations and Maintenance (O&M):

- Who will operate the developed project?
 - Who will perform maintenance?
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- How will these responsibilities be determined?

Management, Operation, and Ownership:

- What are the anticipated O&M costs?
- Will training be made available to develop a local workforce?
- What role will the tribe play?
- What will the ownership structure look like?
- What opportunities will this project provide to members of the tribal community?
- How will the tribe be engaged in each aspect of the project?
- Who holds ownership of project assets and work products?
- Do you typically develop, own, and manage your projects or do you sell off your stake?
 - If you sell your stake, how long do you typically hold it before selling?

Permitting and Legal Issues:

- Has an analysis been performed of all applicable permitting requirements?
- Who will be responsible for securing permits?
- Tribe
 - Will a land lease be required?
- Federal
 - Will development comply with environmental protection laws such as National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), and Endangered Species Act (ESA)?
 - Has approval been obtained from the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) if Native lands are leased?
- State

Transmission and Interconnection:

- Is the necessary infrastructure currently in place?
- Are electric transmission and distribution lines adequate for load growth and additional power project needs?
- How will load and transmission studies be performed?
- Who will pay for a transmission system study?
- What is the plan for interconnection?
- Have interconnection issues been addressed with the utility company?
- Will upgrades to the transmission system be required to accommodate interconnection?
- Will an inspection by the state be required for final project integration?

Market:

- Has significant market need been identified for the project's anticipated output?
- Have potential buyers been identified for the output?
- Does the developer have a power sales agreement in place, or what strategy does the developer propose for obtaining one?

Miscellaneous:

- How does the project coincide with the tribe's long term energy plan?