

Cleaner Fuels Program

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Funding program archive

This page preserves a dated funding-program record and links it to current project-planning guidance.

Publication date: the source publication date.

Status note: This archive does not confirm that applications are open, funds remain available or the earlier eligibility and co-funding settings still apply. Verify the current administrator page and guidelines.

What this article reported

The Cleaner Fuels Program is a \$1.1 billion Australian Government initiative designed to accelerate the development of Australia's low carbon liquid fuels (LCLF) industry. Delivered by the Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA), the program is intended to support advanced projects moving towards final investment decision and near-term production, helping establish domestic fuel production, strengthen Australia's fuel security and support new opportunities in the net zero economy.

The Cleaner Fuels Program is still in development, with ARENA currently preparing the Program Guidelines, including the final eligibility and merit criteria. Expressions of interest have been accepted through ARENA's stakeholder engagement and registration process to help inform the program's design.

Who is this for?

Location: Australia-wide

Industry sectors: Renewable energy, low carbon fuels, sustainable aviation fuel, biofuels, transport fuels and clean energy manufacturing.

The Cleaner Fuels Program is expected to target low carbon liquid fuel projects that are already advanced in development, are progressing towards a final investment decision (FID), and are targeting production in the near future.

How much funding is available?

The Australian Government has committed up to \$1.1 billion in funding through the Cleaner Fuels Program.

The program is expected to provide production-linked incentives over a 10-year period to encourage the establishment and growth of a domestic low carbon liquid fuels industry.

Specific funding amounts available to individual applicants have not yet been announced.

What can the funding be used for?

The Cleaner Fuels Program is being developed to support domestic production of low carbon liquid fuels.

Based on the current program information, support will be targeted towards advanced projects approaching final investment decision and near-term production.

For businesses preparing projects for the Cleaner Fuels Program, Northmore Gordon can assist with areas relevant to progressing an energy project towards investment and implementation, including:

Energy and project feasibility assessments

Renewable energy and decarbonisation planning

Energy efficiency assessments

Business case development

Technical analysis to support investment decisions

Measurement, analysis and verification of energy and emissions outcomes

Final eligible expenditure will be confirmed when the Program Guidelines are released.

Eligibility: You can apply if you:

Final eligibility requirements have not yet been released.

Based on the current program information, the Cleaner Fuels Program is expected to target entities with low carbon liquid fuel projects that:

Are located in Australia

Support the development of domestic low carbon liquid fuel production

Are advanced in their development

Are progressing towards a final investment decision

Are targeting production in the near future

These points reflect the current direction of the program and should not be treated as final eligibility criteria. ARENA is still developing the Program Guidelines, including the eligibility and merit criteria that will apply to applicants.

When do applications close?

Applications are not yet open and an application closing date has not been announced.

The earlier Australian Government policy consultation ran from 13 November to 19 December 2025 and is now closed.

ARENA was named as the program delivery agency in May 2026 and is currently developing the Program Guidelines. ARENA has accepted registrations of interest and stakeholder feedback as part of this development process. Further program documentation may be released as the guidelines are finalised.

How to apply

The Cleaner Fuels Program is still in development, so formal grant applications are not yet open.

If your organisation is developing a low carbon liquid fuels project, now is an opportunity to assess potential eligibility and start preparing the technical and commercial information that may be required once the final guidelines and application process are announced.

Contact Northmore Gordon to discuss your project and how we can assist you in preparing for the Cleaner Fuels Program.

How to use this information now

Before relying on a grant, confirm the current round, applicant and project eligibility, eligible expenditure, co-contribution, assessment process, closing date and evidence obligations. Build the technical case so the project remains understandable with grant support shown separately.

Separate source-reported facts from forecasts, targets and commentary. For a current project, retain the official source, version, effective date, assumptions and decision record in the evidence file.

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Contact Northmore Gordon

What is the Cleaner Fuels Program and why does it matter for Australian industry?

The Cleaner Fuels Program is a \$1.1 billion Australian Government initiative delivered by ARENA to accelerate development of a domestic low carbon liquid fuels (LCLF) industry. It targets advanced projects progressing towards final investment decision with near-term production plans. The program supports fuel security, establishes new domestic production capacity, and creates opportunities in the net zero economy. For eligible entities in renewable energy, biofuels, sustainable aviation fuel and related sectors, it represents a significant opportunity to access production-linked incentives over a 10-year period to reduce project capital barriers and support commercial viability.

What types of projects and organisations should consider applying to the Cleaner Fuels Program?

The program targets entities Australia-wide operating in low carbon liquid fuels, renewable energy, sustainable aviation fuel, biofuels, transport fuels and clean energy manufacturing. Eligible projects must be located in Australia, support domestic LCLF production, be advanced in development, and be progressing towards final investment decision with targeting of near-future production. Projects still in early feasibility or conceptual stages are unlikely to meet the current positioning. Organisations should assess their project maturity, technical readiness, production timeline and alignment with LCLF sector priorities before preparing an application.

How can energy performance and carbon assessment support a Cleaner Fuels Program application?

Energy performance and carbon assessment are critical to demonstrating project merit and eligibility. We can assist by conducting energy and feasibility assessments, developing renewable energy and decarbonisation strategies, creating business cases with verified economics, and performing technical analysis to support investment decisions. These assessments establish the credible baseline, project boundary, emissions reduction potential and operational assumptions that funding bodies expect to see. Strong technical evidence of performance, carbon benefit and economic viability significantly strengthens an application and supports confidence in achieving stated project outcomes.

What role does measurement and verification play in demonstrating Cleaner Fuels Program outcomes?

Measurement and verification establishes credible evidence that a funded project delivers its intended energy, carbon or production outcomes. For a Cleaner Fuels Program project, this involves agreeing on project boundaries, baselines, monitoring approaches and calculation methods before implementation.

We provide measurement and verification services including baseline modelling, project impact assessment, and verification reporting. Having a clear, agreed M&V; plan before investment approval demonstrates to funders that outcomes will be demonstrated, supports contract performance management, and reduces the risk of project performance disputes or funding clawback.

Why is project timing important when preparing for the Cleaner Fuels Program?

The Cleaner Fuels Program applications have not yet opened; final eligibility criteria and guidelines remain in development by ARENA. Project timing decisions made now—including commissioning dates, investment commitments, and evidence collection—will determine whether a project can meet final eligibility requirements when they are announced. Organisations should document their project chronology precisely, including feasibility approval dates, equipment commitments, and construction schedules. Early engagement with advisers helps identify timing-sensitive pathways and preserve evidence that demonstrates project newness and eligibility under schemes that have specific commencement or registration requirements.

How can a business prepare for the Cleaner Fuels Program before applications open?

Organisations can begin by assessing project technical and commercial readiness, including energy performance, carbon footprint, capital requirements, operating economics and production timeline. Develop a robust business case with realistic assumptions, clear investment milestones and verified savings or production projections. Gather evidence of site conditions, equipment specifications, market viability and regulatory approvals. We can assist with feasibility assessments, business case development, technical analysis, and energy or carbon measurement planning. ARENA's process has included expressions of interest; checking current registration or stakeholder feedback opportunities helps ensure awareness when formal guidelines are released.

What does 'advanced in development' and 'progressing towards final investment decision' mean for Cleaner Fuels Program eligibility?

These terms indicate that the program targets projects beyond early concept or feasibility phase. An advanced project typically has completed technical design, secured necessary approvals or permits, validated commercial viability, and identified financing or capital sources. Progressing towards final investment decision (FID) suggests the project sponsor has approved moving forward with funding, committed to a development timeline, and is preparing for construction or implementation. Projects still seeking to validate core technical assumptions, confirm market viability or resolve key regulatory uncertainties may not yet meet this maturity threshold. ARENA's final guidelines will clarify specific readiness indicators.

How does Northmore Gordon's energy optimisation and feasibility work support Cleaner Fuels Program projects?

Our six-stage delivery approach—assess, build the case, capture value, deliver, procure and perform—aligns with project development stages that funding bodies evaluate. We provide energy and renewable heat assessments, feasibility studies, investment case development, measurement planning, procurement strategy and ongoing performance support. For Cleaner Fuels Program projects, these capabilities help establish technical merit, demonstrate economic viability, quantify carbon benefits, identify complementary funding pathways, and plan how outcomes will be measured and verified. Starting with a project brief enables Northmore Gordon to scope appropriate assessment depth for the funding stage and decision required.