

Interest Free Loans for Solar and Storage Scheme - Combined Solar and Battery Program - Guidelines for Applicants

1. Introduction

The Queensland Government is committed to making electricity more affordable for Queenslanders.

Under the Affordable Energy plan, financial assistance under the Interest Free Loans for Solar and Storage Scheme is now available.

The scheme will assist households and small businesses to take control of their electricity consumption and help establish and grow a solar and battery energy storage industry in Queensland.

This will be achieved by providing households and small businesses with access to upfront capital to invest in a *combined solar and battery energy storage system*.

1.1 Assistance available under the program:

| | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| • <i>Residential premises</i> | Loans up to \$10,000 and/or Grants up to \$3,000 |
| • <i>Business premises</i> | Grants up to \$3,000 |

1.2 Loans require monthly repayments for a period of up to ten (10) years. Loans and grants are offered with no interest, fees or charges.

2. Eligibility criteria

To be eligible for assistance under the program:

2.1 Applications must be for the supply and installation of an *eligible combined solar and battery energy storage system* at a *residential premises* or a *business premises* located in Queensland;

2.2 The system must be installed by an *eligible battery energy storage system supplier*;

2.3 For *residential premises* (loan and/or grant):

- (a) applications must be submitted in the names of no more than two persons and the premises must be their principal place of residence;
- (b) at least one person applying must be the owner or *joint owner* of the premises;

2. Eligibility criteria (continued)

- (c) each person applying must be an Australian citizen or a permanent resident of Australia; and
- (d) for loan applications, applicants must demonstrate they can repay the loan

2.4 For *business premises* (grant only):

- (a) the applicant must own and operate a *small business* at the premises; and
- (b) must own the *business premises* (if the owner is not the applicant a sufficient connection must exist i.e. the applicant is a director of a company that owns the premises or the applicant's self-managed superannuation fund owns the premises)

2.5 A *body corporate* may also apply for a grant only in relation to common property under a *community titles scheme (CTS)*.

2.5 Applicants are **not eligible** for assistance if:

- (a) the system is installed before an application is received by QRIDA
- (b) assistance under the Interest Free Loans for Solar and Storage Scheme has previously been received
- (c) an existing solar PV system is installed at the premises
- (d) the system is financed via a Lease or Solar Power Purchase Agreement

3. How to apply

3.1 Applications can be made online at www.qld.gov.au/batteryloans.

3.2 The following documents are required to support an application:

- (a) a quote from an *eligible battery energy storage system supplier* to supply and install an *eligible combined solar and battery energy storage system*;
- (b) most recent council rates notice for the property at which the system is to be installed;
- (c) most recent electricity bill for the property at which the system is to be installed

3. How to apply (continued)

- (d) **for loans** - proof of income which includes:
- (i) for salaried individuals – two most recent consecutive payslips;
 - (ii) for self-employed individuals – two most recent tax returns; and
 - (iii) for self-funded retirees – annual superannuation statement; and
 - (iv) for pensioners/government assistance recipients – Centrelink payment summary.

4. Application assessment

- 4.1 QRIDA will assess complete applications in order of receipt.
- 4.2 Successful applicants will receive a pre-approval certificate and may then proceed to engage an *eligible battery energy storage system supplier* to supply and install an *eligible combined solar and battery energy storage system*.
- 4.3 After installation of the system, the following documents must be completed and returned to QRIDA:
- (a) A tax invoice for the supply and installation of the system
 - (b) Loan Letter of Offer (for approved loans)
 - (c) Direct Debit Request (for approved loans)
 - (d) Direct Debit Agreement (for approved loans)
 - (e) Authority to Pay

These documents can be accessed from the online application portal.

- 4.4 The tax invoice for the supply and installation should be returned to QRIDA showing the final amount due which needs to be consistent with the approved amount shown on the pre-approval certificate.
- 4.5 Upon receiving completed documentation, QRIDA will pay funds to the *eligible battery energy storage system supplier*.

5. Conditions

- 5.1 Applications must be received by 30 June 2019.
- 5.2 The availability of loans and grants are subject to funds being available.
- 5.3 The amount of assistance provided cannot be more than the supply and installation cost.

5.4 If a loan along with a grant is to be provided to an eligible applicant, QRIDA may determine how the loan and grant funds are apportioned.

5.5 Funds cannot be used to reimburse payments made by applicants to suppliers i.e. deposits.

5. Conditions (continued)

5.6 QRIDA may cancel an approval for assistance if the applicant does not provide evidence the system has been installed within six months after the approval.

5.7 Approved applicants must agree to a free-of-charge safety inspection of the installed system to be undertaken by an approved inspector and provide information required to:

- (a) undertake the safety inspection;
- (b) enable an evaluation of the system; or
- (c) enable an evaluation of a program under the Interest Free Loans for Solar and Storage Scheme.

6. Definitions

Body corporate means a body corporate as described in the *Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997*, schedule 6.

Business premises for a *small business*, means premises in Queensland used by the business to conduct business activities

Community Titles Scheme (CTS) is a strata title or group title as described in the *Body Corporate and Community Management Act 1997*, section 10

Eligible battery energy storage system supplier means a supplier listed on the website of the department administering the *Electricity Act 1994* as an eligible battery energy storage system supplier for the scheme.

Eligible combined solar and battery energy storage system means a *solar PV system* that is coupled with a battery energy storage system; and

- (i) the *solar PV system* is not a replacement or augmentation of an existing solar PV system; and
- (ii) the battery energy storage system is listed on the website of the department administering the *Electricity Act 1994* as an eligible system for the scheme; and
- (iii) it is approved by QRIDA.

Joint owner of premises in which the eligible system is to be installed, means a person who is an owner under a joint tenancy or tenancy in common.

Residential premises means a class 1a building under the Building Code of Australia.

Solar PV system means a solar photovoltaic system.

6. Definitions

Small business under the program, means a business that:

- (a) is carried on by a sole trader, partnership, proprietary company or trust;
- (b) holds an Australian Business Number (ABN);
- (c) is not operated by a public company within the meaning of the *Corporations Act*;
- (d) uses less than 100 megawatt hours of grid electricity each year at the premises; and
- (e) employs fewer than 20 full-time employees (or fewer than 20 equivalent full-time employees).

Note – full-time employee means an individual who ordinarily works at least 35 hours each week for the business.

More information

For information on the combined solar and battery program and application process, visit www.qld.gov.au/batteryloans or call 07 3032 0595.

These guidelines are based on the Solar PV and Battery Energy Storage Assistance Scheme as described in Schedule 9 of the *Rural and Regional Adjustment Regulation 2011*.