



# Accelerating Business Networks for Low Carbon Canadian Communities

## Executive Summary

In recent months Canada has taken great strides to reclaim its position on the world stage as a leader in addressing climate change. From signing the Paris Agreement to establishing a pan-Canadian framework to strategically achieve emissions reductions, Canada is readying itself to realize the benefits of a low-carbon economy.

While tackling climate change from the top down through policies and regulations is absolutely necessary, it will not be enough to get a critical mass of businesses and communities taking decisive action at the pace that will be necessary for Canada to meet its global commitments. With this in mind a new national initiative, working under the banner of **The Low Carbon Partnership**, has emerged to unlock action from the bottom up—helping businesses and communities identify opportunities for emissions reductions and develop innovative business models and practices at the organizational, industry/sector and systems levels that will be the foundation for a clean energy economy.

**The Low Carbon Partnership**, a strategic collaboration between QUEST - Quality Urban Energy Systems of Tomorrow, The Natural Step, Climate Smart and Sustainability CoLab, is well positioned to quickly and effectively mobilize thousands of business leaders, as well as hundreds of communities and businesses collectively worth an estimated \$100+ billion in revenue. Our partnership offers a unique opportunity to quickly scale-up existing networks, engage businesses and communities across the country and, in doing so, innovate new energy solutions and achieve measurable GHG reductions.

Now, rather than working in silos, we have begun thinking and acting on ways we can work together to reduce GHG emissions sooner at an even greater scale. Today we are keen to accelerate our individual and collective capacity to achieve greenhouse gas reductions across sectors and to grow Canada's low-carbon economy.

We're excited by the extent to which financial support from the Federal Government could accelerate the ways that our partnership can contribute to Canada's transition to a prosperous, low-carbon economy and in reducing Canada's GHG emissions by 30% by 2030. Together we will reach more businesses, communities and decision-makers and meaningfully engage Canada's doers, leaders and innovators.

## About the Low Carbon Partnership

The Low Carbon Partnership (TLCP) is a national collaboration between four proven, results-oriented organizations – ideally positioned to help Canada achieve its ambitious emissions targets. We have a distribution network of over 55,000 individuals and have directly engaged 6,000+ business leaders, 200+ communities and 1,200+ businesses to reduce their GHG emissions, develop new business models and collaborate to find innovative low-carbon solutions.



## Addressing Climate Change Through Proven Programs

TLCP's four partners are active across Canada addressing climate change solutions from innovation to implementation:

- Sustainability CoLab: Builds the low-carbon economy across Ontario by supporting eight (and growing) target-based sustainability programs, each of which connects local networks of businesses setting & achieving GHG targets.
- The Natural Step: Blends best-in-class multi-stakeholder collaboration with a 25-year tested, science-based framework for sustainability that enables individuals and organizations to better understand what it means to be truly sustainable and to use this knowledge to drive cross-sector innovation and business development through its Sustainability Transition Labs.
- Climate Smart Business: Works with government, transportation hubs & corporate host-partners to train up small and medium sized businesses to reduce their carbon footprint while cutting costs. This includes developing interactive web-based Business Energy & Emissions Profiles (BEEPs) that help communities map out and identify industry sectors with the greatest potential for GHG reductions.
- Quality Urban Energy Systems of Tomorrow – QUEST: With a national grassroots network of local government, utilities, building and land owners and clean tech companies, QUEST is the leading organization in Canada advancing Smart Energy Communities. Smart Energy Communities reduce GHG emissions, lower energy use, drive the adoption of clean technologies and foster local economic development.

## Helping Canadian communities and businesses

TLCP provides programs and services that build a strong and successful Canadian economy by helping businesses to reduce their GHG emissions, innovating new solutions to climate challenges, and building social capacity amongst business and community leaders supportive of Canada's low carbon economy. TLCP has proven successes working with small and medium sized businesses, large energy utilities, municipalities, port authorities, universities, and national corporations. With ready-to-implement programs in Canada's urban, rural and remote communities, TLCP helps residents and businesses determine GHG reduction solutions that work for them.

With existing programs already successfully engaging businesses and communities across the country, TLCP is well positioned to help the Government of Canada reach its climate change commitments, create jobs, grow the clean economy, and build social capacity for policy change. We propose that the Government of Canada provide funding that allows our partners to scale up these existing programs, engaging even more businesses and communities to reduce their GHG emissions.



## Investing in the Low Carbon Partnership through Budget 2017

TLCP proposes that the Government of Canada create a fund that provides significant financial support to positively engage Canadian businesses in the transition to a low carbon economy. This fund should support organizations to extract value from existing programs and engaged networks ready to reduce GHG emissions, bring together business leaders to innovate climate solutions, and share knowledge across sectors.

As one example, with an investment of \$25M TLCP would deliver the following as part of helping the Government meet its existing GHG commitments:

- Scaling up existing target-based sustainability programs to reach even more businesses and communities;
- Developing an incentive fund that invests in businesses to complete emissions saving projects they could not otherwise afford;
- Helping more communities develop and implement community energy plans;
- Developing more Business Energy Emissions Profiles (BEEPs) and conducting research to improve energy efficiency, cut costs and reduce GHG emissions; and
- Expanding existing networks of thought leaders and expanding sustainability labs to innovate solutions to Canada’s energy needs.

If it is of interest to the Standing Committee on Finance TLCP would be pleased to speak as a witness during the pre-budget hearings.

## Conclusion

Canada is ready to realize the benefits of a low-carbon economy, and it is going to take both top down and bottom up approaches in order for goals to be met. Our partnership offers a unique opportunity to quickly scale-up existing networks, engage businesses and communities across the country and, in doing so, innovate new energy solutions and achieve measurable GHG reductions. With financial support from the federal government our partnership can play a key role in Canada’s transition to a prosperous, low-carbon economy and in reducing Canada’s GHG emissions by 30% by 2030.

Kindly,

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