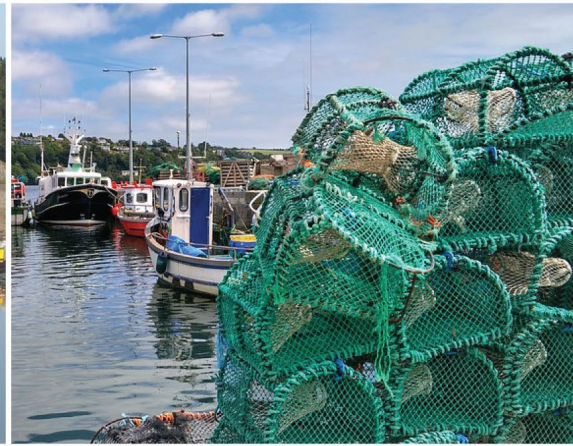




AQUACULTURE DEVELOPMENT

ATLANTIC INTEGRATED COMMERCIAL FISHERIES INITIATIVE



Program Application Guide

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Introduction

The Atlantic Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative (AICFI) provides funding and support to the interested 35 Mi'kmaq, Maliseet and Peskotomuhkati First Nations (MMPFN) in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and the Gaspé region of Québec, affected by the Supreme Court of Canada *Marshall* Decision to maximize the potential of their commercial communal fishing enterprises (CFEs).

The objective of the program is to develop self-sustaining CFEs: Indigenous groups which are fully capable of taking complete ownership of fisheries operations and becoming successful, self-sustaining harvesters. There are four components of the AICFI program:

1. Capacity Building (Business development).
2. Harvester and Enterprise Management Training.
3. Expansion and Diversification.
4. Aquaculture Development.

This document describes the application process to receive **Aquaculture Development** funding, including support to help CFEs develop and implement their Business Development Plan. It will explain how applications are to be submitted and how they will be assessed.

A copy of the AICFI- Aquaculture Development - Application Form is attached in Appendix A.

Aquaculture Development Overview

Funding is available to help Indigenous communities and groups develop sustainable aquaculture operations. This includes costs to expand or upgrade existing aquaculture facilities, for materials required in new and expanded operations, and those associated with entering into an aquaculture business. The intent of this funding is to support capacity-building, revenue and profit generation, employment generation, and self-sustainability of aquaculture operations.

Each project submitted for AICFI aquaculture development funding must be aligned with the community's or CFE's business development plan. It must also support capacity-building and sustainability in aquaculture and related activities.

Funding for AICFI Aquaculture Development include projects relating to:

- Expansion or upgrades to existing marine finfish, shellfish, or freshwater/land-based aquaculture facilities where the expansion or upgrades has already been approved under the aquaculture license (in some cases this may require amendments to an existing license)
- Equipment, gear and infrastructure for new or expanded aquaculture operations, where the equipment, gear and infrastructure has already been approved under the aquaculture license
- Acquisition of an existing aquaculture operation
- Business Plan development (includes technical and management advisory costs)
- Other start-up costs funded on a one-time basis (administration, salaries & wages for project management/technical advisory, training etc.)

The following projects are not eligible for Aquaculture Development funding:

- Working capital projects (subsidizing ongoing operational expenditures)
- Scientific studies

Roles and Responsibilities

The AICFI Aquaculture Development funding has been designed as a collaborative process involving a number of partnerships. The roles and responsibilities of these partners are as follows:

Organization	Role / Responsibility
Fisheries and Oceans Canada – DFO (AICFI Program Authority)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ultimate decision-maker for all funding-related matters.• Verifies applications have all the information needed to be able to evaluate proposed activities.• Reviews applications to ensure alignment with the revenue and profit generation, capacity-building, employment creation, and sustainability goals of AICFI.• Reviews applications to ensure applicant capacity to complete the work within the Fiscal Year.
Business Development Team (BDT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Provides advisory services to prospective applicants and assists with project implementation processes including:<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Helping to refine and analyze a proposed project- Providing application support by reviewing and providing feedback on draft business cases- Reviewing application packages for quality, completeness- Providing project implementation support

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not play a role in the evaluation of business cases and has no decision-making authority
Third Party Evaluator (TPE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verifies applications for completeness of information needed to carry out evaluation of the proposals. • Evaluates the application and assesses its alignment with revenue and profits generation, employment creation, capacity-building, and sustainability goals of AICFI, and determines applicant capacity to complete the work within the Fiscal Year. • Meets with applicants and associated representatives to discuss proposed projects and learn about applicant operations. • Prepares reports for DFO outlining results from evaluation and provide recommendations. • Presents reports and recommendations to the Application Review Board (ARB) and AICFI Program Authority.
Application Review Board (ARB)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviews project applications and the TPE's findings in order to make recommendations to the AICFI Program Authority including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - whether or not to support a proposal, the funding amount, and any funding conditions - concerning details that may be referred back to the applicant for further work, revisions, and/or resubmission. - identifying other possible sources of complementary project funding for the proposed work or activity. • The ARB is composed of representatives from Indigenous Groups. DFO is an ex-officio participant.

Program Flexibilities

The Aquaculture Development component of the AICFI program is proposal driven. It has flexibilities to assist eligible recipients. These include:

1. CFEs are able to move their notional funding from AICFI component's business development, harvester training or expansion and diversification into aquaculture. Any request for the movement of notional funding must be discussed with the BDT and TAC prior to submission.
2. Flexible options may include multi-year contribution agreements that provide the opportunity for projects to be implemented in stages with secured funding. Multi-year contribution agreements may extend 1-5 years.

All decisions on funding flexibility requests are the decision of the AICFI Program Authority.

General Application Requirements

Project Objectives – Funding for aquaculture within AICFI expansion and diversification supports capacity building, revenue and profit generation, employment generation, and self-

sustainability. Activities must be aligned with the CFE's Business Development Plan and support its development and implementation.

Eligibility – AICFI can only be accessed by the 35 Mi'kmaq, Maliseet and Peskotomuhkati First Nations (MMPFN) in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and the Gaspé region of Québec, affected by the Supreme Court of Canada *Marshall* Decision.

Application Form – All applications are to include a completed AICFI Application Form (See Annex A)

Business Cases - All prospective applicants are to work with the Aquaculture Business Development Team member (BDT) to develop associated business cases and ensure applications are complete, including all supporting information, prior to submission to the AICFI Program Authority. Note that there is no cost to the applicant for the services provided by the BDT. Business cases should include the following:

- Project Description / Purpose
- Linkage to business development plan
- Level of impact (direct and in-direct) to community/CFE (employment, revenue, etc.)
- Quotes
- Detailed budget that includes immediate and longer-term costs to the project
- Consideration of alternative sources of funding
- Technical / scientific /regulatory requirements* and other factors that could affect project success
- Any other information that could be relevant to the review of the proposal

**Note: it is the responsibility of each applicant to ensure they have met the necessary regulatory requirements before initiating a project. Approval of funding under AICFI does not constitute approval of any requests for permits, licences, assessments, etc.*

Financial Details - All applications must include detailed budget information, outlining the complete costs for each project, and the sources of funding expected. Specifically, each application must include a minimum 10% cash contribution from the applicant to the total project costs.

Letter of Support - All applications must include a letter of support from the Chief/or Band Council Resolution (BCR) from their community CFE, authorizing the submission of an application under AICFI.

Application Deadline – The deadline for AICFI Aquaculture Development is November 30.

Confidentiality

All information provided by an applicant in the Application and supporting documentation will be held in confidence by the Program Authority and the Third Party Evaluator (TPE). The

evaluation of Applications will be carried out under strict confidentiality by those involved. Application and project details will remain confidential even after projects are approved and the TPE's report and recommendations will only be made available to the Program Authority and the Application Review Board (ARB), unless otherwise instructed by the applicant.

Application / Review Process

Step 1 - Interested community will work with their Aquaculture BDT member to develop project work plans and supporting business cases for submission along with their completed AICFI Aquaculture Development Application Form. At this time prospective recipients should investigate all possible sources of funding for the project.

Step 2 - Once complete, each applicant should submit the application documents to the AICFI Program Authority (see Contact Information), along with a letter of support from their Chief or BCR from their community CFE.

Step 3 - DFO will refer the application to the Third-party Evaluator (TPE) to review; especially the technical and economic feasibility and practicality of the work proposed. This evaluator will also contact the community representative to schedule a meeting in the community in order to evaluate and draft a project assessment report.

Step 4 – The TPE's report and the community's application will be forwarded to the Application review Board, which includes Indigenous representatives, for further evaluations and recommendation. The evaluation will be based on the strength of the project and business case and the recommendation, including recommended levels of support, will be conveyed to DFO.

Step 5 – DFO will review the Application Review Board's recommendation and make the final determination regarding funding support under AICFI. If a project is approved for support, DFO will send a Letter of Offer to the applicant outlining the level of support available, as well as any conditions associated with the funding.

Note: Each project will be reviewed solely on project merit for funding approval.

Step 6 - If the applicant is in agreement with the Letter of Offer, the authorized representative (e.g. Chief) must indicate acceptance of the offer and the associated conditions in writing to the Program Authority.

Step 7 - Once the work and level of funding are agreed, DFO develops a Contribution Agreement for ratification by the Chief and DFO.* Proceeding with a project prior to issuance of a Contribution Agreement, without pre-approval from the AICFI Authority, is done so at the risk of the CFE.

**Note: Project expenses incurred prior to the ratification of a CA are done so at the Applicant's risk, and are not guaranteed for reimbursement.*

Program Policy

While it is recognized that very large projects may involve several phases or steps, acceptance of a project by AICFI implies no commitment to provide support for follow-on work or projects submitted for consideration in subsequent years.

While it may be helpful to describe the entire undertaking when applying to AICFI Aquaculture Development funding support, approval will be limited to the work outlined in the Letter of Offer.

Permit and Licence Requirements

Applications for NICFI Aquaculture Development funding will not be approved until all necessary permits and licences have been obtained, and copies have been forwarded to the NICFI Program Authority.

Applicants are responsible for obtaining the appropriate permits and licences and these permits and licences must remain valid for the duration of the project. Depending on the nature of the project and type of activities, there may also be requirements such as land/marine/foreshore tenure, Navigable Waters Protection Licence, Introduction and Transfers Licence, discharge permits, etc. Permits and licences may take time to arrange, therefore, applicants should address this need several months before the project start date.

Note that a successful NICFI aquaculture project funding proposal does not guarantee permits or licences will be issued by DFO or by any other government departments or agencies.

Contact Information

Applications should be submitted to:

AICFI Program Authority
Indigenous Affairs Directorate (IAD)
Fisheries and Oceans Canada
200 Kent Street
Ottawa, ON, K1A 0E6
AICFI-IPCI.A.XNCR@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

ANNEX A – AICFI Aquaculture - Application Form

Section 1: Applicant Information			
Organization: Federal aquaculture licence holder name:			
Mailing Address: Business Address: (if different from Mailing Address) Aquaculture facility number AND location address or landfile tenure number:		Date:	
		Application Contact:	
		Phone:	
		Email:	

Section 2: Confirmation of Application Attachment and Pre-Requisites	
Financial statements from the most recent 3 years	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Resume(s) for the individual(s) involved in implementation of the project activities	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Regulatory approval documents (e.g. permits, licences etc.)	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Minimum 10% Cash Contribution Requirement Met	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

Section 3: Applicant and Partners	
Identify the principal applicant, as well as the name(s) of Nation(s) in the aggregate group and any affiliated business entities who are the partners in this project.	
Organization	Nature of the Relationship

Section 4: Goals and Objectives	
Note: Use a separate document if more space is needed	
Complete the following table to identify the goals and objectives of the project on how they relate to the AICFI Aquaculture funding objectives – support revenue and profits generation, capacity building, employment creation, and economic sustainability of Indigenous aquaculture operations and facilities.	
1. Employment: How many new jobs will be created from this project?	
2. Indigenous employment: Of the new jobs that are created from this project, how many of those would be Indigenous staff?	

3. Capacity Building: How many personnel will be trained from this project? For how many days?	
4. What level of revenue will be generated from this project?	
5. What level of profit is expected from this project?	
6. Self-sustainability: How will the project sustain itself beyond AICFI funding?	

Section 5: Summary of Project

ACTIVITY DETAILS: PLEASE INDICATE THE CATEGORY THIS APPLICATION APPLIES TO

PROJECT CATEGORY:	1. EXPANSIONS OR UPGRADES ON EXISTING AQUACULTURE FACILITIES	<input type="checkbox"/>
	2. EQUIPMENT, GEAR AND INFRASTRUCTURE ACQUISITION FOR NEW AQUACULTURE OPERATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/>
	3. OTHER	<input type="checkbox"/>

PROVIDE A BRIEF PROJECT OVERVIEW

Provide, in a non-technical manner, a description of the proposed project activities, including:

- Work completed to date (if applicable)
- Describe the aquaculture-related activities and type of expenditures that you are requesting for funding, and whether these activities are already licensed under your federal aquaculture licence. Note: New aquaculture activities as well as aquaculture infrastructure changes or expansions may require a licence amendment or a new licence.
- Project planning process
- Measures that will be implemented to ensure the long-term economic sustainability of the project beyond the AICFI aquaculture project lifecycle

Section 6: Work Plan

Using the table below, in chronological order, identify and describe the project's major milestones, indicators of success, and the targeted completion dates.

- Project milestones are defined as the achievement of specific activities necessary for the completion of the project (i.e. critical path to project success) and may span several of the project's activities.
- These milestones can be related to any aspect of the project (e.g. technical, financial, management, etc.)

Major Milestones Description	Indicator of Milestone Success	Anticipated Completion Date

Section 7: Schedule and Breakdown of Estimated Costs and Financing

Costing Details (By Activity)

#	ACTIVITY TITLE	BUDGET
1.		\$
2.		\$
3.		\$
4.		\$
5.		\$
6.		\$
7.		\$
8.		\$
TOTAL COST OF ACTIVITIES:		\$
SUPPLEMENTARY FUNDING SOURCES (E.G., MINIMUM 10% OWN-SOURCE CASH CONTRIBUTION, FINANCING, OTHER SOURCES)		
Funding Source		\$
Funding Source		\$
Funding Source		\$
TOTAL SUPPLEMENTARY FUNDING:		\$
TOTAL AICFI AQUACULTURE FUNDING REQUESTED:		\$

Section 8: Regulatory and/ or Other Approvals:**PERMITS AND LICENCES**

Where applicable, applicants are responsible for obtaining the appropriate permits and licences prior to the receipt of any AICFI aquaculture funding support. Further, permits and licences must remain valid for the duration of the project.

Regulatory Approvals	Completion Date

Section 9: Declaration and Signature(s)

The information provided is an accurate description and accounting of the request for Business Development Fund support.

Authorized Representative	Position
Signature	Date

Please Note: This Application and supporting documentation may be shared, in confidence, by the AICFI Project Authority, with the Third Party Evaluator, Business Development Team and Application Review Board as appropriate.