



CAPACITY BUILDING (BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT)

NORTHERN INTEGRATED COMMERCIAL FISHERIES INITIATIVE



Program Application Guide

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Introduction

The Northern Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative (NICFI) provides funding and support to interested Indigenous groups and communities not eligible for the Atlantic and Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiatives, where Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) manages the fishery¹, to develop and maximize the potential of their community-based communal commercial fishing enterprises (CFEs). This includes redistributive-model enterprises which may sell products only to the community or local area.

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 NICFI program:

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

This document describes the application process to receive **Capacity Building (Business 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 [NICFI – Capacity Building \(Business Development\) - Application Form](#) is attached in Annex A.

Capacity Building (Business Development) - Overview

Funding is available to support the development and implementation of a CFE's Business Development Plans and related activities, such as offsetting the cost of hiring qualified staff and other business development activities. The intent of this funding is to facilitate increasing the knowledge and skills-base needed to operate a successful commercial fishery, local redistributive fishery, or combined commercial/redistributive fishery, over the long-term and to maximize economic benefits for communities, including job creation.

NICFI features three different capacity-building models to tailor program support to the needs of the community. The three models are:

- *Commercial*: Honing enterprise governance and business management skills, building capacity in commercial fisheries and aquaculture operations, and ensuring a resource co-management role.
- *Local Redistributive*: Developing business management skills, building capacity in redistributive fisheries operations, and improving indicators of health and food security.

¹ Geographic restrictions do not apply to NICFI eligible groups that participate in the Aquaculture Development component.

- *Combined Commercial/Redistributive*: Ensuring program design flexibility for redistributive businesses moving into small-scale commercial activities.

The Business Development Team (BDT) will help Indigenous groups develop their CFE Business Development Plan and applications for NICFI Capacity Building (Business Development) funding. Note that there is no cost to the applicant for these BDT services. A BDT member that specialises in the Local Redistributive capacity building model is available to program participants with documented food security challenges.

All applications must be reviewed and verified by the BDT before they are eligible to receive NICFI funding. Activities within the application must be aligned with the CFE Business Development Plan as well as the CFE’s overall objectives of capacity building and sustainability of their commercial fisheries activities.

Eligible activities for Capacity Building (Business Development) funding support may include:

- Hiring dedicated resources to work in the business operations of the CFE, such as: a Fisheries Director, Fisheries Coordinator; Assistant Fisheries Coordinator, Bookkeeper or Fisheries Management System (FMS) Coordinator.
- Other capacity building support, such as business and technical assistance, governance design, help with management practices, accounting or overall accountability using an enterprise risk management approach.

Note: Only activities supported by the BDT are eligible for support.

NICFI participants are encouraged to submit applications for funding as early as possible in the fiscal year.

Roles and Responsibilities

The NICFI program is 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 (NICFI 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 NICFI. • Reviews applications to ensure applicant capacity to complete the work within the Fiscal Year.
Business Development Team (BDT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specialised expertise in the Local Redistributive capacity building model is available to all interested program participants.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does not play a role in the evaluation of workplans and has no decision-making authority. • Provides advisory services to prospective applicants such as assisting with work plan development, mentorship and implementation.
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General Application Requirements

Project Objectives – The activities must be aligned with the CFE’s Business Development Plan and support its development and implementation.

Eligibility – The NICFI program can be accessed by all Indigenous communities/groups not eligible for Atlantic or Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative (AICFI or PICFI) in all areas where DFO manages the fishery².

Application Form – All applications must include a completed NICFI Application Form (see Appendix A).

Workplan – All prospective applicants must work with the Business Development Team (BDT) to develop a workplan, which includes all supporting information, prior to submitting their application to the NICFI Program Authority. Workplans should include the following:

- Description of the activities or position(s) being funded.
- Implementation plan identifying all projected deliverables.
- Action Plan describing how the workplan will be carried out.
- Budget.

Financial Details – All applications must include detailed budget information outlining the complete costs for each activity and the sources of funding expected.

The eligible cost categories for activities under the NICFI Capacity Building (Business Development) component include Salaries, Wages and Related Costs; Communications; Professional Services; Travel; and, Administration.

Letter of Support - All applications must include a letter of support from the authorized representative of the applicant, e.g. Leader, Chief, Executive Director, President, Mayor, or Band Council Resolution (BCR), etc., authorizing the submission of an application under NICFI.

Application Deadline - Applications should be submitted to the NICFI Program Authority by July 31st of the given fiscal year. After this date, the NICFI Program Authority cannot guarantee that notional funding will not be re-allocated to other program priorities. Applications may be submitted to the NICFI Program Authority prior to April 1st so they may be implemented when the new fiscal year begins.

² Groups eligible for the Atlantic or Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiatives are not eligible for NICFI funding.

Confidentiality

All information provided by applicants in the application and supporting documentation, as well as all collaboration with the BDT, will be held in confidence by the NICFI Program Authority even after the projects are approved. The evaluation of applications will also be carried out under strict confidentiality by those involved.

Application / Review Process

Step 1 - Interested communities works with their BDT member(s) to develop workplans and supporting business cases, to submit with their completed NICFI Capacity Building (Business Development) Application form.

Step 2 - Once completed, each applicant should submit their application documents to the NICFI Program Authority (see Contact Information), along with a letter of support from the their authorized representative such as the Leader, Chief, Executive Director, President, Mayor, or Band Council Resolution (BCR), etc.

Step 3 - DFO will refer the application to the BDT Leader to confirm: that the BDT supports the application, has worked with the applicant on its development, and the workplan in the application supports the implementation of the CFE's Business Development Plan.

Step 4 – At the same time, DFO will review the application for completeness.

Step 5 – After verification by the BDT, and the application is approved by the NICFI Program Authority, DFO will develop a contribution agreement for ratification by the authorized representative of the funding recipient (applicant) and DFO.

Contact Information

To begin working with the program, please contact the NICFI Program Authority at the address below. The NICFI Program Authority will direct you to the BDT member for your community.

Applications should be submitted to:

NICFI Program Authority
Indigenous Affairs Directorate (IAD)
Fisheries and Oceans Canada
200 Kent Street
Ottawa, ON, K1A 0E6
DFO.NICFI-IPCIN.MPO@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

ANNEX A – Northern Indigenous Commercial Fisheries Initiative Capacity Building (Business Development) - Application Form

Section 1: Applicant Information			
Organization:			
Mailing Address:		Date:	
		Application Contact:	
		Phone:	
		Email:	

Section 2: Confirmation of Application Attachment and Pre-Requisites	
NICFI CFE Business Development Plan is active.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
BDP Implementation Work Plan is attached.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Detailed budget information is included.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Supporting letter signed by the authorized representative is attached.	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>

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

Section 4: Summary of Workplan		
ACTIVITY DETAILS: PLEASE INDICATE THE CATEGORY THIS APPLICATION APPLIES TO		
PROJECT CATEGORY:		
PROJECT OVERVIEW:		
Please provide, in a non-technical manner, a description of the proposed project activities, including:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction and work completed to date (if applicable). • Objectives and Work Plan. • Action Plan/Deliverables. • Funding request breakdown. 		

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Section 5: Declaration and Signature(s)	
The information provided is an accurate description and accounting of the request for NICFI Capacity Building (Business Development) funding support.	
Authorized Representative	Position
Signature	Date

Please Note: This application form and supporting documentation may be shared, in confidence, by the NICFI Program Authority with the Business Development Team, as appropriate.