

2023

Proposals for Atlantic Salmon Conservation Fund (ASCF) Funding

Eligibility Requirements and Procedures

Prior to submitting your proposal, please read the following information carefully and contact ASCF if you have questions. Contact information is provided below.

Failure to address project eligibility categories, provincial conservation priorities, and/or the terms and conditions outlined in this document may result in your proposal being screened out.

Proposals can be submitted by using the “2023 Application for ASCF Project Funding” form, along with a completed budget form and other pertinent materials via email:

- Send proposals or obtain information regarding **New Brunswick and Quebec** projects to henri@salmonconservation.ca
- Send proposals or obtain information regarding **Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island** projects to gert@salmonconservation.ca

You will receive an email confirming receipt of your application. If you do not receive a confirmation within 24 hours of submitting your application, please call 506-455-9900 to ensure your proposal has been received.

The final submission date for receipt of all proposals is:

Friday, 17 November 2022 by 5:00 PM AST

Please note:

Interprovincial funding applications are no longer being accepted by ASCF except in response to a specific applied scientific research Request for Proposals.

<https://www.salmonconservation.ca/applications/request-for-proposals/>

Applied scientific research projects may be submitted under any of the provincial streams, however, only 20% of available provincial grant funds is allocated to research initiatives. Considering multi-year projects, this may mean that limited funds are available for new research projects in some provinces.

For further information specific to applied scientific research projects, see Appendix A.

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Background

The Atlantic Salmon Conservation Foundation (ASCF) is an independent, federally incorporated, non-profit organization, which was established through a one-time grant of \$30 million from the Government of Canada. The interest generated from investment of the grant is used to support activities related to the conservation of the wild Atlantic salmon and its habitat.

The goal of the Foundation is to help achieve healthy and sustainable wild Atlantic salmon stocks in Atlantic Canada and Quebec through partnerships among volunteer conservation groups, Indigenous organizations, governments, and others.

A. Proposal Review and Selection

Our Advisory Committees are composed of expert individuals representing conservation organizations, Indigenous organizations, and federal and provincial governments. They will review proposals to determine if they address provincial conservation priorities and contribute to ASCF goals and objectives. Projects will then be ranked and prioritized, and recommended proposals forwarded to the ASCF Board of Directors for approval. It is important that your proposal be clear and complete in providing requested information on the grant application form as this is the only basis on which proposals for funding can be assessed.

The results and outcomes of funded projects are expected to contribute to improving conservation of wild Atlantic salmon. Therefore, successful proposals for funding must incorporate clear and concrete objectives, and you must specify **measurable** performance indicators to assess each of the stated results and improvements in conservation.

B. Project Eligibility and Priorities

i. Eligibility Criteria for Applicants:

The following groups and partnerships among these groups are eligible to submit proposals to the Foundation:

- Non-governmental organizations (e.g. community-based conservation organizations, cooperatives, watershed-based organizations, etc.)
- Municipalities
- Educational institutions
- Indigenous organizations

ii. Eligible Project Categories:

The Foundation is interested in funding innovative projects that will have a high probability of success with measurable results for on-the-ground conservation of wild Atlantic salmon and its habitat. As the basis for promoting the most effective use of, and accountability for, grant funding, we wish to promote and improve conservation planning and management at the watershed level.

The Foundation will consider eligible projects from the following categories:

- **Planning:** Development of salmon and salmon habitat conservation plans for a watershed or sub-watershed (watershed planning)
- **Habitat:** Conservation, rebuilding and restoration of wild Atlantic salmon habitat
- **Populations:** Conservation and restoring of wild Atlantic salmon stocks and populations
- **Access:** Restoring access of wild Atlantic salmon to salmon habitat
- **Education:** Public education and awareness of the importance of conservation of wild Atlantic salmon and its habitat

iii. 2023 Provincial Conservation Priorities:

IMPORTANT: Recognizing that wild Atlantic salmon and habitat conservation issues and needs vary according to each province, we strongly encourage that proposals address the priorities below. Review and scoring of proposals will take into consideration the degree to which the project addresses provincial priorities.

- **New Brunswick:** Priority will be given to projects derived from a watershed management, restoration or recovery action plan that identifies, prioritizes and seeks to address limiting factors impacting salmon production and/or survival.

Newfoundland & Labrador: Further to eligible project categories, priority will be given to projects that:

- improve habitat, freshwater connectivity, and/or water quality;
 - assess/increase salmon populations;
 - promote education and public awareness;
 - encourage watershed planning.
- **Nova Scotia:** Priority will be given to projects based on an existing watershed management plan, or to projects seeking to create a watershed management plan
 - **Prince Edward Island:** Priority will be given to projects focusing on creating a management plan, that are guided by the Renewed Conservation Strategy for Atlantic salmon, or derived from a watershed management plan, action plan, or restoration plan
 - **Quebec:** Priority will be given to projects that develop or implement a plan or strategy for the conservation of Atlantic salmon and their habitat. Projects that focus on

awareness and education, and knowledge of salmon population abundance, as well as characterization, enhancement and protection of salmon habitat will be given priority.

- **Applied Scientific Research:** To strategically direct applied scientific research, ASCF's Scientific Advisory Committee has identified key topics that will be top priority going forward. (see Appendix A).

iv. Other eligibility requirements and considerations:

- a. **Project Location:** The proposed project must be located in a watershed within or between the provinces of New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, or Quebec.
- b. **Partnership:** Proposals demonstrating partnership among the eligible groups are very important to the Foundation, therefore proposals demonstrating real, working partnerships involving cash and/or in-kind contributions will be considered favourably.

Partnerships with Indigenous organizations are encouraged where reasonably possible. All applicants are required to indicate if they have made an effort to attract an Indigenous or community organization, as the case may be, to partner in the proposed project.

If an Indigenous organization is not immediately adjacent the project area, please consider partnerships with regional Indigenous groups (e.g. AAROMs, Indigenous councils, etc.).

If in-kind partnership contributions have been confirmed, please include a letter of support with your application.

- c. **Transferability:** Proposals that offer transferability of information or illustrate broadly applicable benefit to other groups and jurisdictions are encouraged and will be given additional weighting in scoring.
- d. **Past experience:** A demonstrated track record of success in carrying-out salmon conservation initiatives will be considered favourably.
- e. **Proposal length and Support materials:** Proposals should provide a clear and concise overview of the project. The total length of your written application **must not exceed 15 pages** including support materials and budget spreadsheet. **Materials in excess of 15 pages will be excluded.**

Please note that letters of support must be included in your proposal package and will **not** be accepted after the application deadline has passed.

- f. **Research Projects:** Multi-year, applied research projects will be required to publish at least one article in the primary, peer-reviewed scientific literature. In the case that funding has been received for multiple years for a research project, no further applications for funding will be accepted until such the project has produced the required publication.
- g. **Legal Capacity:** The proponent organization must possess the legal capacity to enter into a binding contract with the Foundation. Proof of incorporation or registration of your organization under provincial or federal law will support this requirement. If your organization is not incorporated, it is suggested that you find a partner organization that is incorporated with which to present your proposal.
- h. **Signatures:** The person who signs the contract (Funding Agreement) must have the binding authority to sign a contract on behalf of that organization.

In situations whereby an organization requires two or more signatures under their own by-laws, this can be accommodated on the ASCF contract.

- i. **Pre- and Post-Monitoring:** Proponents may be requested to provide a monitoring plan for both pre-project and post-project conditions. The overall monitoring plan and program should be of sufficient scope and duration to document whether or not project objectives were achieved.

C. Financial requirements and information

i. Proposals and Grants:

- a. **Submissions for individual projects must not be less than \$5,000 per year nor exceed a maximum of \$50,000 per year.**
- b. Long-term (up to 3 years) grants are possible (maximum funding \$50,000 per year).
- c. **Matching Contribution Requirements:** All grants require **at least a one-third cash or in-kind contribution** from the proponent and/or other funding sources. The contribution may be in cash, time, goods, or services. Projects that do not provide for at least one-third cash or in-kind contribution from other sources **will not be accepted or considered for funding.**

If your project partners are also submitting a proposal to the Foundation for a different project, please ensure that matching in-kind support from these partners is independent of their funding request (i.e. Foundation contributions to another organization cannot be counted as in-kind match). Similarly, where multiple organizations are contributing to a single project, a proposal will be accepted from only one organization.

ii. Eligible Costs:

Eligible costs include the following:

- a. Reasonable and properly itemized and substantiated costs directly incurred and paid by the recipients of grants to carry out their projects, as determined by the Foundation, and approved by the Board.
- b. Contribution to the acquisition of office equipment and other project equipment (e.g. capital assets such as buildings, vehicles, boats, motors, etc.), to a maximum of \$1,000 per item, and only where expressly approved in the funding agreements between the Foundation and the recipients. On an exceptional basis, the Board may authorize an amount which exceeds \$1,000 where the Board is of the opinion that the nature of the project justifies a higher amount.
- c. GST and PST are eligible costs (net of any other refund to which the recipient is entitled).
- d. Indirect or overhead costs for community groups, indigenous organizations and municipalities may be acceptable provided they **do not exceed 20%** of the total grant request. Examples of indirect or overhead costs include administrative salaries, general software and office supplies, postage, etc. that are not directly related to the grant, but are not necessarily limited to these categories.

Note: In the case of **universities and research institutions**, indirect or overhead costs for institutional administration **shall not exceed 15%** of the total grant request. Justification for this expenditure shall be given in the form of a detailed breakdown showing how funds will be used. Preferentially, grant funds will be used exclusively for research expenditures with no overhead or indirect costs.

iii. Ineligible costs:

Funds may not be used to support major capital costs (including capital leasing costs); permanent staffing costs (however, a reasonable level of staff overhead during the grant period is acceptable); scholarships to individuals; deficit reduction activities or funding of projects that have already been completed; or for those activities that constitute legally required mitigation for the adverse effects of an activity regulated or otherwise governed by federal, provincial or municipal law.

iv. Accounting:

- a. Recipients of funds will be expected to maintain books of account and proof of expenditures following generally accepted accounting principles, which may be subject to review by the Foundation.
- b. A detailed financial report that accounts for project expenditures must be provided with the Final Report (and, in the case of multi-year projects, year-end reports) as required and agreed upon in the grant contract. The financial report must be submitted in the format as provided by ASCF and be supported by copies of payrolls, receipts and/or other expenditure documentation. Project expenses may not predate the contract approval date.

D. Project Reporting

Progress reports and Final reports, detailing work completed and including required financial information, are to be completed within the grant's approved time frame. Scheduling will be determined by mutual agreement according to the project. Project expenses may not predate the contract approval date.

IMPORTANT: Unless by prior agreement, new applications for funding in subsequent years will not be accepted if a project final report has not been received by the agreed upon date.

E. Payments

Payments will be made as follows:

1-Year projects:

- Upon approval of the contract, 50% of the grant will be paid up-front.
- 25% will be paid after a satisfactory progress report is submitted and approved.
- The remaining 25% will be paid after final reporting requirements are met.

Multi-year projects (2 to 3 years – not applied scientific research):

- Each year, 50% of that year's funding will be paid at the beginning of the year
- The remaining 50% will be paid after the required report at the end of the year has been submitted and approved.

Applied Scientific Research Projects:

- Funding for multi-year applied scientific research projects is paid out in the same manner as stated above (see section which applies to your project). The **exception** to this is that 20% of the funding in the final year of the project will be withheld until a publishable manuscript and evidence of submission to a peer-reviewed scientific journal has been received and approved.

All payments require an invoice to the Foundation.

Long-term and applied scientific research projects may be paid on a different schedule depending on the specific circumstances.

F. Government Regulatory and Permitting Requirements

We strongly urge applicants to confer with appropriate federal and provincial agency personnel during the development of their proposals, to facilitate securing any necessary permits or approvals.

Please keep in mind that activities at watercourse and public roadway intersections, such as culvert remediation, will likely require additional authorization from government agencies (e.g. Transportation, Environment, etc.). As part of the initial scoping process, proposed project sites should be investigated for other special designations, such as critical habitats or protected areas status, and appropriate government personnel consulted, to ensure the feasibility of the project. Where remediation to existing infrastructure is planned (e.g. culverts), consultation with the property owner or responsible agency should be undertaken prior to proposal development to ensure that the planned activities are feasible and in line with their plans and goals.

Projects that involve the introduction, transfer or collection of fish should be reviewed with the appropriate regulatory personnel, early in project planning, to assess if the project corresponds with accepted or prioritized activities and to determine the authorization and permits that will be required. A letter from the regulatory agency's management group indicating their awareness of and support for the project should be submitted with your proposal. In addition, under the Project Schedule and Methods section of the application form (Q.19), please indicate the permits required, associated timelines, and plans for assessment of success (e.g. marking stocked individuals, genetic analysis, etc.).

G. Contracts (Funding Agreements)

It is anticipated that awards could be made for successful proposals **in April, 2023**.

Successful applicants will enter into a legally binding contract with the Foundation that specifies budget details, describes the project, defines measurable objectives, and sets forth reporting requirements.

Contracts must be signed by an authorized signatory of the proponent organization. For more information, see *Project eligibility and priorities* section – “h. Signatures”, page 5”.

Contracts will be approved and finalized by the authorized signatory of the proponent organization and the Executive Director of ASCF by means of an e-signature process as provided and approved by ASCF.

The deadline to notify ASCF that a group intends to accept the grant offer and sign the Funding Agreement is June 1 in the year the grant is offered. The Funding Agreement must be approved and signed by July 1 of that same year. Failure to sign the Funding Agreement by July 1 may result in the funding being re-allocated.

Dependent on the duration of the contract, work conducted for the project is to be completed within 9 to 33 months of contract approval:

- 1-Year Projects: Duration depends upon the timing of the completion of the Funding Agreement and the expectations of the project. Maximum 9 months, with completion by December 1 of the same year the Funding Agreement was signed.
- 2-year Projects: Maximum 21 months, with completion by December 1 of the second year of the project.

- 3-year projects: Maximum 33 months, with completion by December 1 of the third year of the project.

Progress reports will be required at agreed upon intervals.

Eligible costs will be paid for work done no earlier than contract approval dates.

Appendix A

Key Topics for Applied Scientific Research*

Please note: Topics are not in order of priority. Bullets (◦) under each of the key topics below are suggested examples only.

- How do freshwater ecosystems influence wild Atlantic salmon populations?
 - What are the causes and the consequences of variable parr and smolt size and/or abundance?
 - Development of a watershed-based risk assessment of land use practices (e.g. forestry, agriculture, urbanization, mining) for the protection of Atlantic salmon habitat.
 - Identify key habitats and risks and recommend specific multi-faceted land-use management practices that protect these features.
- What are the consequences of aquaculture on wild Atlantic salmon in eastern Canada?
 - What is the influence of pathogens and parasites on the survival of wild Atlantic salmon?
 - What are the consequences of interbreeding between farmed and wild salmon on wild salmon?
- What are the consequences of climate change on wild Atlantic salmon?
- What are the impacts of native, introduced and invasive species on wild Atlantic salmon?
- What are the contributions of different life history strategies to overall population viability?
- What are the effects of freshwater mitigation measures on wild Atlantic salmon?
 - Does stream restoration and/or barrier removal positively affect wild salmon?
 - Do stocking programs improve wild Atlantic salmon populations?
- Modelling wild Atlantic salmon populations.
- Development of a decision-tree to guide stream restoration interventions.
- Are current management regulations and protocols effective in conserving and sustaining salmon populations?

***Applied scientific research: Research that is practical – i.e. that can be applied to a well-defined problem. It's the opposite of pure or theoretical research for which no specific application has been identified. Applied research is**

systematic in collection and examination of facts involving the practical application of science. Applied research focuses on solving specific problems or answering specific questions.

Applied research is field or laboratory study, or analysis of existing information that addresses a well-defined question or tests a specific hypothesis such that there is unique information produced, or confirmatory findings with a strong likelihood that the results could be published in primary scientific literature.

Applied research projects can be carried out in any province.

Note:

Multi-year applied research projects will be required to publish at least one article in the primary, peer-reviewed scientific literature. In the case that funding has been received for multiple years for a research project, no further applications for funding will be accepted until such the project has produced the required publication.