

Aboriginal Agriculture Initiative **Screening/Rating Criteria for Proposals**

The objective of the Aboriginal Agriculture Initiative (AAI) for the Agriculture sector is to increase economic development opportunities for Aboriginal Canadians within the Agriculture sector. This is intended to lead to greater participation by aboriginal peoples in the Canadian economy through: planned and integrated economic development activities; the identification of economic and business opportunities; capacity building; investment in economic infrastructure; the creation and expansion of viable businesses; and investments and partnerships in economic and resource opportunities.

The following provides an overview of the criteria that will be used to assess all proposals submitted to the **Aboriginal Agricultural Initiative**.

A) Screening Criteria

1. Proposal Eligibility

- Proposal is submitted by an eligible* applicant. (see definition at the end of rating guide).
- Proposal is complete and includes all required information as per the Request for Proposal template for the Aboriginal Agriculture Initiative.
- Proposal addresses the program objective; *-Increases Aboriginal involvement in the agriculture sector and associated economic opportunities.*

2. AAFC Program Principals

- Proposal supports Aboriginal values of environmental stewardship ** (see definition at the end of rating guide).
- Builds on current and past successes that have increased Aboriginal involvement in agriculture.
- Building on current and past successes that have increased Aboriginal involvement in Agriculture;
- Builds strong and trusted relationships by;
 - Ensuring community engagement to build appropriate opportunities for meeting the community's vision for Agricultural development.
 - Developing capacity through knowledge exchange, employment and awareness.

Note: Proposal is screened out if the above criteria are not met.

3. Priority Areas:

Proposal must address at least one of the following three **Priority Areas**:

1. Proposal supports Aboriginal focused innovation and competitiveness in the sector.
2. Proposal provides opportunities to develop capacity in Aboriginals for engaging in the Ag sector
3. Proposal provides for opportunities to engage and develop Aboriginal Youth in the sector.

Note: If answered YES to the above criteria, Proposal is screened in

B) Rating Criteria

4. Supporting Innovation and Competitiveness

Defining criteria:

- Developing and marketing specialty products (e.g. traditional and medicinal foods, etc.)
- Facilitate aboriginal branding of commodities for local/sustainable product supply
- Identifying and developing new and emerging markets.
- Developing local food production systems, under organic or natural food sources to create viable business opportunities and link growers to local food markets, (e.g. greenhouses etc.).
- Partnering with neighbouring communities and industry on new technology and improved/competitive practices.
- Developing and expanding Aboriginal agri-business.
- Other innovative ideas to be assessed separately for merit

5. Developing Capacity

Defining criteria:

- Fostering the transformation of local ideas and untapped assets into sustainable economic activities.
- Building capacity in agricultural land use planning and management including data capture and technical support for developing land and water management practices e.g. Beneficial Management Practices, including water source protection strategies.
- Benchmarking current land and water resource conditions, and identifying areas where improvement is needed.
- Building an entrepreneurial approach to create economic opportunities in their own communities (building knowledge about various business model ie: co-operatives)
- Building capacity in agriculture based business.
- Building capacity in environmental risk management.
- Building capacity in agriculture based business and environmental risk management and using beneficial management practices to mitigate risks
- Professional advisory services to build management e.g. book keeping and marketing capacity.
- Other innovative ideas to be assessed separately for merit

6. Engaging and Developing Aboriginal Youth

Defining criteria:

- Building awareness around Agriculture career opportunities
- Developing youth entrepreneurship capacity.
- Developing youth knowledge, and leadership skills.
- Providing mentorship opportunities.
- Other innovative ideas to be assessed separately for merit

7. Management Capacity

7.1 Project Work Plan and Milestones

Defining criteria:

Proposals must clearly demonstrate:

- Appropriate methods/approaches of achieving results.
- Key milestones and timelines.
- Appropriate resource utilization with prescribed time lines.
- Sufficient and appropriate personnel resources for completing the project.
- A plan to include a “lessons learned and summary report”.
- Business plan (including feasibility study, market/demand info, revenue and expenditure forecast)

7.2 Approach, Planning and Capacity

Defining criteria:

Proposals must clearly demonstrate:

- Capacity of the team to deliver (relevant expertise and experience)
- History and experience of the proponent (history of work in this area, history of projects with similar scope etc)
- Methods/approaches of achieving objectives are appropriate.
- Rigorous project methodology with clearly identified and appropriate goals and/or activities to reach the objectives.
- Potential limitations and risks to project completion identified and plans to address identified.

7.3 Project Deliverables

Defining criteria:

Proposals must clearly describe:

- Clear identifiable deliverables
- Appropriate communication or outreach plan.
- Impacts and benefits of the proposal.
- Plan identified to assess effectiveness of the project.
- Contributions to creating employment and sustainable business practises

8. Budget

The following elements must be included in the budget:

- Budget rationale and identification of needs and resources are clearly defined.
 - project costs are eligible and reasonable
 - Detailed breakdown of project costs.
 - Contributions from Aboriginal Agriculture Initiative, proponents and partners (cash and in-kind) clearly identified.
 - Project budget is efficient and represents good value for the work.
 - Other sources of support (cash and/or in-kind) clearly identified
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***Eligible Applicants**

- Aboriginal communities;
- Tribal Councils;
- Governments of self-governing First Nations;
- Local governments of Inuit communities;
- Aboriginal for profit and not-for-profit corporations, partnerships, associations, co-operatives and institutions
- which are majority owned and controlled by Aboriginal people
- Aboriginal businesses, partnerships and joint ventures.

**** *Aboriginal values of environmental stewardship (from section 2.1.1)***

Aboriginal Values as derived from their ethics (code of conduct) and their worldview (all interactions and relationships within our biosphere).