



Climate Ready B.C. Seafood Program

Request for Proposal

Informational document



August, 2023

Prepared by the Ocean Decade Collaborative Center for the Northeast
Pacific

Climate Ready B.C. Seafood Program RFP Informational Document

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OVERVIEW

With support from British Columbia's Ministry of Agriculture and Food, the Tula Foundation's Ocean Decade Collaborative Center for the Northeast Pacific is delivering the Climate Ready B.C. Seafood Program. This program will provide \$1.7 million in funding to support actions identified in the B.C. Ocean Acidification and Hypoxia (OAH) Action Plan. The B.C. OAH Action Plan was developed with support from an advisory committee and input from scientists, community members, aquaculture and fisheries representatives, Indigenous, Local, Provincial, and Federal governments. The Action Plan highlights the impacts of ocean acidification and hypoxia on marine organisms and ecosystems, with resulting effects on aquaculture and wild capture fisheries.

Read the B.C. OAH Action Plan:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/download/91B75C87A0A14521A490CDE8CC3BB70E>

The B.C. OAH Action Plan is supported by a comprehensive scientific assessment:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/download/A88625836B9843DFB3ED91DF71F9>

The Climate Ready B.C. Seafood program is addressing priorities identified in the Action Plan and aims to fund projects to support coastal communities in understanding, mitigating, and adapting to the impacts of OAH on B.C.'s oceans and coasts. In particular, the program will fund projects that support four key program areas:

- Advancing scientific understanding of ocean acidification and hypoxia (OAH)
- Collaborations, knowledge transfer, awareness and understanding related to OAH
- Mitigation, adaptation and resilience to OAH
- Interactions between Marine Carbon Dioxide Removal approaches and OAH

Ocean Decade Collaborative Center for the Northeast Pacific Approach

The Ocean Decade Collaborative Center for the Northeast Pacific (ODCC) envisions B.C. waters where ecosystems and coastal communities are thriving, connected, and resilient, now and into the future. The relationships, knowledge, and caretaking of B.C.'s ocean include diverse Indigenous and western worldviews, and are informed by ancestral and lived experience, collaborative learning and equitable partnerships.

The ODCC supports connections and exchanges across communities, knowledge systems, and boundaries, strengthening respectful relationships and processes. We promote science that advances ocean knowledge and opportunities in B.C. to catalyze actions centered on community needs. These principles will guide the RFP process for the Climate Ready B.C. Seafood Program. We also encourage co-led projects with Indigenous partners, developing relationships with Indigenous partners and the inclusion of Indigenous perspectives on defining project success.

A Program Review Committee has been established by the ODCC to include a broad range of interested groups and perspectives, including provincial, federal, local government agencies, First Nations, and scientific subject matter experts. The Program Review Committee alongside ODCC staff will review proposals to determine successful awardees.

PROGRAM CRITERIA

The Climate Ready B.C. Seafood Program has identified seven key criteria that will act as guiding principles for selecting projects. Addressing all of these criteria is not mandatory for eligibility; however, projects that demonstrate a greater inclusion or advancement of these criteria will benefit during the evaluation process. Criteria are listed without any particular order or ranking.

1) Addresses knowledge and information gaps

The Climate Ready B.C. Seafood (CRBS) program aims to fill current knowledge gaps identified in the B.C. OAH Action Plan. Proposals should display an understanding of the current state of knowledge around B.C. OAH and where information gaps exist. Please refer to the [scientific assessment](#) for a comprehensive review of the current state of knowledge on B.C. OAH. Proposals that aim to address or fill in information gaps to support advancing understanding of OAH in B.C. and long-term objectives under the B.C. OAH Action Plan will be prioritized.

2) Foundational project

These are projects that build a foundation for future or long-term objectives related to B.C. OAH. The CRBS aims to fund projects that display how the outcomes or the processes developed in the proposed project will support future work, through lessons learned, outcomes, relationship building, data collection, and/or systems development. Where possible, include specific follow-up actions that can be taken as a result of the project.

3) Strengthens collaboration and partnerships

Collaborative partnerships with and/or between relevant stakeholders and/or rights holders is an important component of the CRBS program. The program is interested in funding advancement of established relationships and partnerships as well as new efforts that may be in early stages of collaboration. Leveraging partnerships and financial resources to enhance the effectiveness and impact of a project will also be seen as a benefit in evaluation. A detailed description of the approach to collaboration and partnership should be included.

4) Feasibility within the time frame

Funding for the CRBS program must be completed by March 31, 2026. For this reason, it is important that projects clearly demonstrate the ability to complete all activities within the two-year time frame. Proposals should include clear justification of time required to complete activities and highlight the risk mitigation strategies that have been considered and will be implemented. Projects that clearly articulate the ability to complete the project by March 31, 2026, will be prioritized.

5) Outreach and communications

An important next step identified in the Action Plan is to increase awareness and understanding of impacts regarding OAH to coastal communities, stakeholders and the general public. Outreach, communications, and knowledge sharing are a priority to the CRBS program. Proposals should describe the audience(s) they will reach and how they will approach communications and knowledge sharing.

6) Inclusion of diverse forms of knowledge

Projects that include diverse forms of knowledge, such as Indigenous Knowledge, or advance mechanisms to support bringing together diverse forms of knowledge will be prioritized in this program. Additionally, the program aims to fund projects that are led or co-led by Indigenous communities or organizations. Projects should also demonstrate understanding of protocols and/or permissions set by Indigenous communities, and where applicable, demonstrate approaches to ensure protection of Indigenous Knowledge.

7) Advances or strengthens B.C. Food Security

The CRBS program is committed to supporting projects that advance or strengthen B.C. food security. Projects that clearly demonstrate and describe how they plan on advancing resilience of B.C. food security in response to OAH will be prioritized.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible applicants include individuals and legal entities incorporated or registered in British Columbia, including for-profit and not-for-profit organizations, such as:

- Indigenous organizations or Groups
- Non-Governmental Organizations or Groups
- Local Communities
- Research Institutions/Enterprises
- Industry Associations
- Aquaculture Producers and Commercial Fishers

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

Up to \$1.7 million in contribution funding will be awarded through the CRBS program. Funds will be awarded based on the merits and feasibility of proposals received. Subsequent calls for proposals may be issued.

Projects requesting more than \$200,000 in funding will need strong budget justification and alignment with multiple program areas. There is no set minimum amount of funding required for eligibility.

Projects must have a start date no earlier than March 1st, 2024. The duration of the projects should be based on the scope of the work and must be completed no later than March 31, 2026. Expenses and budget will be determined and/or pre-approved by ODCC.

If a proposal requires permits or authorizations, it will be essential to provide documentation of approval or the expected timeline of approval in order to qualify for funding.

Eligible expenses that advance program areas may include expenses for:

- Salaries and benefits
- Professional, scientific and contracted services
- Scientific materials and equipment
- Travel expenses¹
- Other materials, supplies, and equipment costs
- Communications materials (publishing and printing)
- Conference and workshop fees
- Operations rentals (vehicles, boats and facilities)
- Honoraria

If your proposal requires expenses not included in the list above, you must contact the Ocean Decade Collaborative Center to receive approval of the expense prior to submitting your proposal.

ADDITIONAL FUNDING REQUIREMENTS

Contributions from proponents may consider both cash and in-kind contributions to increase the overall leveraging of the Program funds; however, minimum cash contributions will be required for projects to be eligible for program funds according to the cost shared model (see table).

Cash requirement does not have to be in hand at the time of proposal submission, but confirmation in the form of a letter of support must be provided with application forms.

¹ Travel expenses must follow Provincial government rates and policy. [Rates here](#)

Cost Shared Model	Funding Ratio per Eligible Group	Cash Requirement*
Indigenous Organizations or Groups	95%	5%
Non-Governmental Organizations of Groups	90%	10%
Local Communities	90%	10%
Research Institutions/Enterprises	85%	15%
Industry Associations	75%	25%
Aquaculture Producers and Commercial Fishers	75%	25%

*Note: Applicants are permitted to seek funding from other sources for the cost-shared portion that they are financially responsible for.

PROGRAM AREAS and PRIORITY ACTIVITIES

The Climate Ready B.C. Seafood program has identified four program areas, which serve as overarching categories that capture the different aspects and goals of the B.C. OAH Action Plan. **Proposals must address one, or more, of the four program areas to be eligible for funding.** CRBS will aim to fund a minimum of one project in each of the program areas, depending on the number and quality of applications received. All proposals must include substantial discussion about the planned approach and activities that the team will use to advance the program area. Proposals that demonstrate alignment with multiple program areas are preferred.

Included under each program area are priority activities identified in the B.C. OAH Action Plan. These activities are detailed and represent the specific goals that the CRBS program is looking to advance. Activities categorized as primary priority are particularly significant, often serving as foundational steps necessary to facilitate the progression of secondary activities or future endeavors. **Although all activities will be taken into consideration, including those not listed in the tables below, the program will give preference to activities identified as primary priority.**

PROGRAM AREA 1: ADVANCING SCIENTIFIC UNDERSTANDING OF OCEAN ACIDIFICATION AND HYPOXIA

As highlighted in the B.C. OAH Scientific assessment, B.C. lacks data and information to support informed decision making and resource management. There remains a significant knowledge gap for forecasting capacity on management-relevant time scales (i.e., months to seasons) and biological and chemical measurements in many regions. Advancing these

scientific understandings is key to increasing the understanding of OAH in B.C. and supporting coastal communities. Central to this is coordination among research entities such that rapid and holistic information can be generated to better predict local trajectories of OAH and specific impacts. Bringing together Indigenous Knowledge systems and western science will also be essential to better define shifts in biodiversity and species ranges, and to set priorities for evaluation of species where impacts are unknown. Supporting the advancement of scientific understanding of OAH in B.C. is directly in line with facilitating a more resilient future for B.C. as outlined by the Climate Preparedness and Adaptation Strategy: Actions for 2022- 2025. Activities identified in the B.C. OAH Action Plan that fall under Program Area 1 are listed below.

Priority Activities

<p>Primary priority</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Update OAH inventory, including model metadata and experimental facilities, and evaluate gaps and opportunities. ● Advance biological observations and/or best practices for assessing biological impacts. ● Develop pathways and protocols to bring together western science and Indigenous Knowledge to expand understanding of OAH impacts. ● Identify priority species impacted by OAH with input from First Nations and stakeholders. ● Advance understanding of OAH thresholds from species responses. ● Undergo biological and chemical benthic sampling for OAH. ● Conduct vulnerability assessments for fisheries, aquaculture, and cultural resources. ● Enhance measurements on existing observing platforms. ● Organize workshops to identify modeling issues and priorities and evaluate approaches to addressing gaps. ● Expand applications that integrate datasets to provide accessible knowledge for decision-makers and other end users. ● Collate and synthesize historical observations. ● Map OAH hot spots and undergo comparisons with the distribution of fisheries and conservation efforts.
<p>Secondary priority</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Establishment of high-precision indicator sites and a distributed array of lower precision sites. ● Expand sub-surface, near-shore, and river observing. ● Methodology that addresses capacity issues for model downscaling and seasonal and short-term forecast capacity. ● Establish priorities for modeling species impacts. ● Develop frameworks for engaging early career researchers and other interested groups.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undergo Cumulative effects research between OAH and other key stressors, such as harmful algal blooms, forest fires, heat domes, and floods. • Assess how impacts on individual species alter marine food webs.
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PROGRAM AREA 2: COLLABORATIONS, KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER, AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING RELATED TO OAH.

To ensure B.C.’s efforts are successful, awareness and understanding of OAH must be communicated to the public, as well as among stakeholders, resource managers and industry professionals making day-to-day operational and management decisions. The process of increasing awareness and understanding includes connecting to and building relationships with coastal communities, and cataloging concerns or management information needs. Materials, platforms and spaces that provide mechanisms for communications and collaboration across professionals and communities is an important step identified in the B.C. OAH Action Plan. Greater collaboration, awareness and understanding will lead to decision making that best supports communities and industries impacted by OAH.

Activities identified in the B.C. OAH Action Plan that fall under Program Area 2 are listed below.

Priority Activities

Primary priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organize recurring workshops/conferences for industry, research, and community groups that support identification of gaps and advancing shared knowledge. • Establish and implement B.C.-specific OAH messaging and information (e.g. speaker series, B.C.-specific species impacts graphics) • Collaboration with Indigenous communities to identify funding for data collection, support needs and/or opportunities assessments, information exchange, and stewardship decisions.
Secondary priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication platforms that highlight funding opportunities with links to national and international networks, and that facilitate shared knowledge between research, education, industry, First Nations, and coastal communities. • Develop OAH teaching modules for B.C. schools. • Directories that identify expertise and capacity needs for the research community, First Nations, seafood industry partners, and coastal communities. • Identification of new citizen science and industry partners, data contributors, and collaborators.

PROGRAM AREA 3: ENHANCE MITIGATION, ADAPTATION AND RESILIENCE TO OAH.

In addition to deep and rapid reductions in fossil fuel emissions, activities that mitigate the ongoing acidification process and foster adaptive measures will be vital for safeguarding marine ecosystems, coastal communities and the seafood industry. Important actions can be taken to mitigate adverse marine carbonate chemistry conditions, increase adaptive capacity, and build stronger resilience to current and future manifestations of OAH. Significant advancements are necessary to gain a deeper understanding of the mechanisms, methodologies, and effective strategies for mitigating and adapting to ocean acidification (OAH).

Activities identified in the B.C. OAH Action Plan that fall under Program Area 3 are listed below.

Priority Activities

Primary priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Investigations of restorative aquaculture as an OAH mitigation tactic.● Methodology development and determination of baseline carbon footprint of the fisheries and aquaculture sectors, including life cycle assessment studies or evaluations.● Establishment of regional pilot projects to develop and evaluate adaptation strategies for fisheries and aquaculture production.● Evaluate strategies and promote best practices for OA mitigation at a variety of spatial scales.● Support efforts to bring together Indigenous Knowledge and western fisheries and aquaculture management practices.
Secondary priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Develop pilot projects that would inform policy to modernize fisheries and aquaculture production relative to OAH.● Development of selective breeding initiatives targeting resilience to OAH.● Identification of point sources of pollution and runoff that act as co-stressors and mitigation actions that address them.

PROGRAM AREA 4: EVALUATE INTERACTIONS BETWEEN MARINE CARBON DIOXIDE REMOVAL APPROACHES AND OAH.

[B.C.'s Roadmap to 2030](#) and the recent [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Assessment Report](#) highlight the need to enhance atmospheric carbon dioxide removal, in addition to deep and rapid reductions in fossil fuel emissions, to reach climate targets. Proposed marine carbon dioxide removal approaches remain exploratory, largely untested, and could present a myriad of potential risks for the welfare of coastal ecosystems and communities. Significant research must be undertaken to evaluate the efficacy, potential remediation benefits, and permanence of these approaches in addition to the risks some strategies may pose that worsen the effects of OAH.

Activities identified in the B.C. OAH Action Plan that fall under Program Area 4 are listed below.

Priority Activities

Primary priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Determination of OAH impacts within, and downstream of, marine carbon dioxide removal pilot studies and natural analogues.● Characterization time and space variation of atmospheric carbon dioxide uptake in B.C. coastal ocean.● Pilot studies that work towards the development and standardization of methodology for determining sequestration, storage time, and carbon origin.● Assessment of carbon market feasibility, and linkages to provincial carbon credit schemes, for existing and future blue carbon projects.
Secondary priority	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Link existing efforts to inventory coastal ecosystem services and pathways to restoring or preventing loss of blue carbon habitats.● Cost-benefit analysis or Multiple Accounts Analysis (MAA) for natural climate solutions related to OAH.● Support scientific and socio-cultural evaluations of marine carbon dioxide removal approaches, building on national and international efforts targeting this research.

INELIGIBLE ACTIVITIES

Successful applicants must receive written approval from the ODCC prior to beginning the proposed work. Any projects started before receipt of written approval are not eligible for funding. Expenses incurred prior to project approval or after the project completion date are ineligible for reimbursement under the Program unless consent is received from ODCC in writing.

The following activities are ineligible for funding or reimbursement under the Program:

- Activities directed specifically towards federal and provincial government administration, policy and legislation change will be out of scope.
- Acquisition of new aquaculture or fishing production infrastructure to support a project.
- Proposals that are used to bring applicants into regulatory compliance.
- Expenses related to day-to-day operations, such as line expenses for running an office, organization, or a company. Expenses must be incremental costs related to the project. A maximum of 10% overhead may be charged.
- Regular or on-going operating or maintenance activities.
- Financing charges, loan interest payments, bank fees and related charges.

The Program has the sole discretion to determine ineligibility of activities not specified above, costs, establish values and to approve or limit payments.

HOW TO APPLY

Applicants must use the [application form](#) available on our [website](#). Applicants are requested to complete and save an electronic version of the form with the name “2024 CRBS–*lead organization name*”.

Prior to submitting the form please ensure that all required sections are completed to enable us to assess eligibility, alignment with program priorities, collaboration and feasibility. Late or incomplete applications may be removed from further consideration.

In addition to the application form, applicants will need to provide the following attachments with their application:

- Budget Attachment: [CRBS Budget OrgName](#) - Save and submit attachment using the lead organization name.
- Work Plan Attachment: [CRBS Workplan OrgName](#) - Save and submit attachment using the lead organization name.
- Attachment: Letters of support from each funding source that is making an in-kind or financial contribution to the project as described in the budget.
- Attachment: Letters of support for proposed projects by Indigenous communities or organizations.
- Attachment: Any necessary licenses, permits or authorizations related to your project.

Supporting documents (e.g. letters of confirmation of support, budget documents, etc.) should be included as attachments to the same email and can be attached in the appropriate source format (e.g. Excel, word,etc).

Applications and supporting documents must be submitted in a single email to nina.nichols@tula.org by November 15,2023.

Once submitted, we will confirm we have received your application within 3 business days. We may contact you for clarification or further information as necessary.

CONTRIBUTION AGREEMENT

Successful applicants will be required to enter into a Contribution Agreement with the Tula Foundation. A Contribution Agreement is a contract between the Tula Foundation and a recipient setting out the obligations and deliverables of both parties with respect to the contribution.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The Program Review Committee will evaluate the proposals based on the following parameters. As mentioned above, these criteria are not mandatory requirements, however, projects that demonstrate a greater inclusion or advancement of these criteria will benefit during the evaluation process.

- 1) Proposal comprehensiveness (10 points)**
 - Proposal clearly articulates the expected outcomes, impacts, and benefits of the project.
 - Budget form is completed and includes detailed budget breakdown, demonstrating the appropriate allocation of funds.
 - Work Plan attachment is clear, and activities, deliverables, and performance indicators are appropriate to overall proposal goals and outcomes.
- 2) Proposal relevance (20 points)**
 - Proposal outlines how it supports and advances identified program area(s).
 - Proposal clearly describes the activities and how they relate to program priorities.
- 3) Foundational project (10 points)**
 - Describes how it builds a foundation for future or long-term objectives under the B.C. OAH Action Plan. Mentions specific follow up actions that will/can be taken resulting from the project.
- 4) Strengthens collaboration and partnerships (10 points)**
 - Describes a feasible, inclusive and long term approach to building collaborations and partnerships.
 - Leverages existing or future planned support.
- 5) Outreach and communications (10 points)**
 - Includes clear outreach, communications and knowledge transfer approach.
- 6) Addresses knowledge and information gaps (10 points)**
 - Discusses and addresses relevant and current knowledge or information gaps.
- 7) Feasible within the time frame (10 points)**
 - Clearly demonstrates achievable activities within two years.
 - Outlines clear and effective risk mitigation strategies.
 - Demonstrates project team has capacity and expertise to complete project
- 8) Inclusion of diverse forms of knowledge or advances mechanisms to support bringing together diverse forms of knowledge. (10 points)**
 - Diverse forms of knowledge contribute to the project or the project advances mechanisms to support weaving together diverse forms of knowledge.
 - An inclusive and equitable approach to collaboration and partnership and strategy for protecting Indigenous Knowledge systems is included.
- 9) Advances or strengthens B.C. food security (10 points)**
 - Clearly outlines how outcomes and activities will contribute to strengthening B.C. food security.

In addition to the program criteria above, the Program Review Committee will also consider the following areas when making the final award selections:

- Balancing funded projects across geographies and program areas
- Avoiding duplication of similar efforts

CONTACT INFORMATION

Please contact Nina Nichols, Program Manager, at nina.nichols@tula.org with any questions about this Request for Proposals.