



Application Guidelines - Oyster Infrastructure and Training Program

Purpose

The purpose of Oyster Infrastructure and Training (OIT) Program is to assist oyster aquaculture operations to:

1. **Purchase of equipment** intended to address labour shortages through increased product handling capabilities, expand oyster seed rearing capacity, enhance traceability and record keeping, or improve the maintenance of product quality during harvesting and transport;
2. **Access training and educational opportunities** to enhance oyster grower's professional and business skills and to prepare their employees with necessary basic skills.

Eligibility

An eligible applicant is any individual (Canadian Citizen or Permanent Resident), company, partnerships and sole proprietorships registered in PEI, involved in oyster aquaculture in Prince Edward Island. Applicants must hold all necessary permits and lease contracts and must also be a signatory to the Aquaculture Environmental Code of Practice (AECOP). Other authorizations may be required depending upon the nature of the project.

No applications will be accepted from any leaseholder not in good standing with the DFO Aquaculture Leasing Division, (i.e. in compliance with all the terms of the lease contract) which includes but is not limited to having lease(s) marked properly, arrears in payment of lease fees, and/or submission of Annual Lease Reports.

The intent of the Program is to ensure funds are directed to separate business entities and that each business entity receives no more than the maximum allowable funding under the OIT Program.

Situations where applicants have leases with multiple owners, several leases in one family with different owners, or business entities whose shareholders also hold leases, may require further review after the completed application is received. To determine an applicant's eligibility, as a single business entity, for funding under the OIT Program, the PEIAA reserves the right to request additional information from an applicant, including but not limited to:

1. Identification of all leases owned, and other lease owners, by the applicant;
2. Information as to the nature of the applicant's involvement in the operation and the proposed activities, as described in the application, may be verified by the following:
 - a) Listing and description of the assets owned that will allow the lease holder to fulfill their oyster aquaculture expansion plans;
 - b) Information demonstrating sales of oysters in the applicant's name that demonstrates activity in the industry;

- c) Financial statements related to their oyster aquaculture business and/or income tax returns associated with their oyster aquaculture business that show related income and expenses;
- d) Information as to whether the applicant has a valid Revenue Tax Exemption Certificate;
- e) Information as to whether the applicant has a valid HST registration number.
- f) A copy of the applicants site development plan submitted to DFO, or the applicant's approval to obtain a copy of such from DFO Leasing.

Providing false information to the program will result in the immediate rejection of the application and ineligibility for the life of the program.

Assistance Provided

The OIT is a three-year program, which may provide to successful applicants a financial contribution in form of a grant, as follows:

Workstation platforms, associated equipment, and floating nursery systems

- One-time contribution of 75% of eligible equipment expenditures, up to a maximum of \$50,000 per year.
- Minimum project contribution from the OIT Program will be \$5,000
- The maximum assistance each applicant is eligible for over the life of the Program is \$50,000.

Growers operating on sublet lease acreage must provide a notarized, legal sublet agreement, valid for at least the duration of the current lease approval, to be eligible for funding under this portion of the OIT Program.

Insulated Containers and Farm Management / Inventory Tracking Systems

- One-time contribution of 50% of eligible equipment expenditures, up to a maximum of \$5,000 per year.
- The maximum assistance each applicant is eligible for over the life of the Program is \$5,000.

Employee Training

- 50% of eligible employee training costs, normally up to a maximum of \$500 per individual employee and \$2,500 per applicant.
- The maximum assistance each applicant is eligible for over the life of the Program is \$5,000.

Professional Development:

- 80% of eligible course costs, up to a maximum of \$1,000 per course.
- The maximum assistance each applicant is eligible for over the life of the Program is \$2,000.

Eligible Expenses

- Equipment must be incremental to existing equipment (not replacement equipment).
- Project proposals must fulfill the purposes of the Program.
- The space available on the lease must coincide with the project description submitted in the project application.

Eligible expenditures may include:

- Workstation platforms and/or associated equipment (graders, tumblers, hydraulics etc.) for on lease or land-based aquaculture activities.
- Floating nursery systems, e.g. FLUPSY

Note: Workstation Platforms and/or FLUPSYs MUST be anchored, and operated on, an approved water column lease

- Insulated product handling containers (trays, boxes, etc.)
- Farm Management / Inventory Tracking systems (equipment only, ongoing operational costs are not eligible)
- Employee training for regulatory required certifications (e.g. First Aid, WHMIS, MED, SVOP)
- Educational courses pertinent to the business development of aquaculture operations (e.g. Business plan development, budgeting, IT skills development, AECOP Responsibilities, Regulatory requirements for leasing, Farm Management)

Not eligible are:

- Real Estate, including buildings,
- Boats
- Vehicles (Including Recreational Vehicles Such as ATVs and Trailers),
- Outboard Motors,
- Security systems,
- Oyster Cages, Bags, and associated gear (Including Rope, Anchors),
- Seed Collectors,
- Buoys,
- Used Equipment,
- Seed Stocks,
- Consumables,
- Equipment Related to Hatcheries, or Processing,
- Salaries and Wages.

Application Guidelines

1. The proposal must be submitted in accordance with a prescribed application form with any required supporting documentation. The proposal must show enough detail to allow satisfactory assessment by the Program Administrator and the Program Management Committee.
2. **Applications are not considered received until they are complete, as assessed by the Program Officer.**
3. The applicant must present their plan for increasing production, improving the quality of cultured oysters to market or their plans for improved efficiencies. The proposal must detail the long-term plans for the expansion of their operation and increased production.
4. The applicant must agree to allow access to the operation by the Program Administrator or a representative of the PEI Aquaculture Alliance for the purpose of monitoring the progress of the project.

5. Any assets purchased prior to the date of the receipt of the **completed** application will not be eligible for assistance. Purchases following the date of receipt and prior to the possible approval of the project are at the applicant's own risk.
6. If the proposal meets the satisfaction of the Program Management Committee, a letter of approval will be forwarded to the applicant. The Management Committee reserves the right to limit financial assistance.
7. A Project Contract will be forwarded with the approval letter outlining terms and conditions of the assistance. The applicant will have 14 days to accept the contract in writing or the contract will be rescinded.
8. The project must be carried out and completed within 12 months of the contract being signed or prior to the end of February 28th, 2022.
9. The applicant must submit paid original invoices and acceptable verification of payment (such as copies of cheques).
10. Cash payments in excess of \$500 will require verification of payment. A payment verification form will be provided and must be signed by both the vendor and the program applicant.
11. Taxes paid on items assisted under this Program are not eligible for assistance.
12. In any matter of difference between the Program Management Committee and the applicant through the life of the project, the Program Management Committee's decision will be final.
13. The Program expires May 31, 2022 and no applications or claims for funding will be accepted with expenditures incurred after that date.
14. If there are more applications than funding can provide for within that financial year applications will be held until the following year. If there are more applications than funding can provide for over the life of the program completed applications will be assessed in order of receipt.

**The OIT Program funded by the Atlantic Fisheries Fund (AFF) and administered
by the PEI Aquaculture Alliance.**