

**AGRICULTURAL
CLIMATE
SOLUTIONS**



Grant Applicant Guide



Agriculture and
Agri-Food Canada

Agriculture et
Agroalimentaire Canada

Canada

Agricultural Climate Solutions (ACS) Grant Applicant Guide

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For more information reach us at www.agr.gc.ca or call us toll-free 1-877-246-4682.

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1.0 Agricultural Climate Solutions

Introduction

The Agricultural Climate Solutions (ACS) program is part of the Government of Canada's (GoC) plan to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to 30 percent below 2005 levels by 2030 and get to net-zero emissions by 2050. By supporting the development of climate solutions that work on the farm, ACS will help reduce net GHG emissions of the agricultural sector, mitigate climate change, and support environmental benefits, while increasing sector resilience.

ACS will provide support through grant and contribution funding over a ten-year period, starting in 2021-2022. Applicants will be able to seek support from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) on research and development activities if required to implement their ACS project. To meet its objectives, the program will follow the living labs innovation model.

A living lab is an integrated approach to agricultural innovation that brings together farmers, scientists, and other partners to co-develop, test, and monitor new beneficial management practices (BPMs) and technologies in a real-life context. The goal of a living lab is for farmers to work directly with scientists and others partners to conduct experiments right on their farms, which facilitates use and adoption of these BMPs and technologies in agricultural communities across Canada. More information about the living labs approach and its core principles can be found [here](#).

ACS will be delivered through a two-step application process and will provide two types of funding. Step 1 will provide grant funding to support applicants in building capacity, developing a network of participants and drafting comprehensive project proposals that will be submitted for Step 2. Second step will consist of contribution funding that will be awarded to implement comprehensive project proposals, which will follow the living lab approach. Applicants for Step 2 will also be able to seek collaborative research and development support from AAFC if needed to help them implement their comprehensive projects. This would mean that AAFC scientists could conduct research on your project submitted for Step 2 approval.¹

Please note that approval of funding under Step 1 is not a requirement for consideration of funding and support under Step 2.

This guide describes the application process for Step 1 to obtain grant funding, which successful

¹ Successful applicants under Step 2 will be required to enter into a Collaborative Research and Development Agreement (CRDA) with AAFC if collaborative research and development support is requested and approved as part of the Step 2 approval process. The CRDA outlines the deliverables, licensing options and payment schedule for the industry share of funding supporting the Project activities. This financial allocation is not paid to the applicant but provided within AAFC.

applicants will be able to use to support them in building their capacity to draft their application for Step 2 funding and/or support. Results of grant application process are expected to be announced in August 2021, when the Step 2 application process will open. Grant recipients will need to request a Step 2 application package to be able to develop and submit their comprehensive project proposal. It is anticipated that Step 2 application process will close in December.

Grant recipients will be subject to the same deadlines for submissions under Step 2 application process as those applicants who will be applying only for Step 2 funding and/or support.

To assist applicants in drafting their grant application, this guide also includes relevant information that may be requested under Step 2 process. .

1.1 Program Objective and Priorities

The objective of ACS is to support recipients to undertake projects that will accelerate the co-development, testing, adoption, dissemination, and monitoring of technologies and practices, including BMPs that sequester carbon, mitigate climate change, and support environmental benefits (including air, soil, water and biodiversity).

ACS will consider projects within the following two priority areas:

1. Carbon sequestration (e.g., cover crops, intercropping, conversion of marginal land to permanent cover, shelterbelts, inclusion of pulses in rotations, etc.); and/or
2. Greenhouse gas mitigation (e.g., nutrient management, feeding strategies, etc.).

Please note that during the 2021-22 funding cycle, the emphasis will be on supporting proposals that include the advancement of carbon sequestration as an important part of their project activities.

In addition, projects should indicate if they could support the achievement of other relevant environmental benefits, such as: improving soil health and water quality, water conservation, increasing biodiversity, maximizing habitat capacity, etc.

1.2 Application Process Overview

ACS will be delivered through a two-step application process and will provide two types of funding:

- Step 1: Grant funding to support applicants in building capacity, developing networks of participants and drafting comprehensive project proposals that will be submitted for contribution funding and/or collaborative research and development support; and
- Step 2: Contribution funding and/or collaborative research and development support to implement approved comprehensive project proposals, following the living lab approach.

Step 1 - Grant Funding: Optional support that can be requested by eligible recipients who wish to apply for Step 2. Grant funding will support you in building capacity and network of participants as well as developing a comprehensive project proposal required to apply for Step 2 funding and/or support.

Activities that could be funded by grant funding include: developing and/or expanding the network of project partners, formulating comprehensive project plans involving co-development² of research and innovation activities, and developing knowledge transfer plans and adoption strategies.

Recipients of grant funding will be expected to submit their comprehensive project proposals for contribution funding consideration to AAFC.³

The aim of the 2021 grant funding is to facilitate establishing a Canada-wide network of living labs. Eligible organizations in all provinces are welcome to submit their applications for 2021 grant funding to support the preparation of proposals leading to the development of living labs in their province. Please note that while the 2021 granting process is open across the country, the focus will be placed on helping organizations in provinces that currently do not host a living lab established as part of the Living Laboratories Initiative - Collaborative Program (LLI-CP, 2018-23). Currently, provinces of Prince Edward Island, Quebec, Ontario and Manitoba each host a living lab under LLI-CP. A second call for grant proposals will be offered in 2022.

Step 2 – Contribution Funding and/or Collaborative Research and Development Support: Application for contribution funding and, if requested, collaborative research and development support, is anticipated to open in August 2021 and close in December 2021; it is expected that approved projects will commence project activities in the spring of 2022.

It is anticipated that approved comprehensive projects will be 5 years in duration, although shorter timelines will be considered as long as a project proposal meets eligibility requirements and contributes to meeting program objectives.

Further details on contribution funding and collaborative research and development support will be published in a separate Guide, which will be made available in summer 2021. Please note that you will need to request the Step 2 application package to be able to develop the comprehensive project proposal and apply for contribution funding and/or collaborative research and development support. Nevertheless, relevant information for drafting comprehensive funding proposals that can guide you in developing your application for grant funding can be found in Section 3.

² For the purpose of this program, co-development is defined as the collaboration of agricultural producers in the development of BMPs. These relationships are applicant-driven and could involve collaboration of AAFC researchers through collaborative research and development support if the applicant believes this to be the best approach, but could also include collaboration with researchers from academia, not-for profit groups, or others.

³ If a grant recipient is unable to successfully build the capacity to submit a full project proposal, a written report outlining the barriers they faced in the work undertaken through the grant will be required.

Please note that approval of funding under Step 1 is not a requirement for consideration of funding and support under Step 2. Also, grant funding recipients will be assessed like all other applicants in Step 2 application process.

For both grants and contributions funding, eligible activities must be carried out within Canada.

1.3 Eligible recipients

The following organization types are eligible⁴ to apply for grant funding:

- Not-for-profit organizations, including producer organizations, and
- Indigenous groups.

Eligible applicants must be legal entities capable of entering into legally binding agreements.

Eligible recipients should indicate in their grant application whether they have received endorsements from any other organization for their grant proposal and indicate what their role will be in the development of the comprehensive proposal; for example, will they provide financial, technical or in-kind support. These organizations include:

- Indigenous groups;
- Producers;
- Not-for-profit organizations;
- For-profit organizations; Academic institutions;
- Other federal government departments;
- Provincial / territorial departments and agencies; and
- Municipal governments.

1.4 Eligible Activities

The following activities are eligible for grant funding:

- Conducting outreach activities to build networks among potential participants to build capacity to submit comprehensive project proposals for contribution funding and/or collaborative research and development support;
- Acquiring expertise to engage with researchers; and

⁴ The following organizations cannot be recipients of Federal Government funding under this program:

- Financial institutions, including but not limited to, credit unions, chartered banks, trust companies and Farm Credit Canada;
- Crown corporations controlled by provincial or territorial governments within Canada;
- Federal government departments and agencies; and
- Foreign governments including their department and agencies.

- Developing research as well as knowledge transfer and adoption plans.

1.5 Funding and cost-sharing

Available Grant Funding

Applicants may apply for a maximum grant amount of up to \$100,000 per project. The appropriate funding amount will be determined through:

- The application and assessment of the selection criteria included in this guide; and
- Availability of grant funding.

Successful applicants will enter into a grant agreement with AAFC.

Please note that even if a proposal meets all eligibility and assessment criteria, the submission of an application creates no obligation on the part of the Minister or of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada officials to provide support for the proposed project. The Minister retains discretion to determine, based on other public policy and public interest considerations, whether an application that meets the criteria identified in this guide will ultimately receive support.

Cost sharing

AAFC may provide up to 100 percent of eligible costs for eligible activities as approved by AAFC; however, applicants are strongly encouraged to contribute funding for eligible costs.

The maximum level of total government funding (federal, provincial / territorial and municipal) for the grant will not exceed 100 percent of the total eligible costs for the grant proposal.

Grant disbursement details will be outlined in the grant agreement that will be signed with successful applicants.

Eligible Costs

Eligible costs may include:

- Salaries and Benefits;
- Contracted Services;
- Travel;
- Other Direct Project Costs.

No eligible costs will be reimbursed before approval of the project and the signing of a funding agreement by both parties; however, it is at the Minister's discretion to reimburse eligible costs that a recipient has incurred after a funding proposal has been received by the program administration, but prior to the signing of a funding agreement if the Minister deems this necessary for the achievement of objectives under the project and if such costs are reasonable,

incremental and required to carry out the eligible activities to which they relate.

Additional information on cost categories can be found in Annex A.

1.6 Application and submission deadlines

The grant funding application process will be launched on April 1, 2021, and will close on June 15, 2021.

Information to be provided in your grant application needs to include:

- Applicant and contact information;
- Information establishing that the applicant is a recognized legal entity;
- Audited financial statements for the past two years;
- A description of the landscape or location (e.g. watersheds, specific ecosystems, eco-regions, etc.) and/or commodity based sector (i.e. geographic areas associated to a specific value chain such as swine, livestock, horticulture, etc.) in which a comprehensive project proposal will be conducted;
 - The proposal should also highlight the potential for carbon sequestration of the proposed landscape or location;
- An overview of which environmental priorities your comprehensive project intends to address, including carbon sequestration, and how it will support meeting program objectives;
 - The proposal should also demonstrate an understanding of the living lab innovation model and how it could be applied in comprehensive project implementation;
- Demonstration of the applicant's ability to develop a comprehensive project proposal considering their background and experience;
- If applicable, support letters from partner organizations and their role in the development of a comprehensive project proposal; if no letters are submitted, an overview of the network of potential participants and their respective roles;
 - The proposal should also indicate whether and to what extent collaborative research and development support from AAFC will be required to implement a comprehensive project;
- A work plan, encompassing activities that will need to be carried out to develop a network of participants and a comprehensive project proposal; and
- A budget for the proposed grant project, including supporting documentation (e.g. consultant fee estimations).

AAFC has developed [a tool](#) that provides an overview of areas for potential soil carbon sequestration opportunities across Canada. You may use this tool to guide you in the development of your proposal and refer to it when providing a rationale for the landscape(s) or location(s) with regards to your proposed project activities. Other tools and datasets can also be used to guide your location selection.

For more information on how to complete a grant application, contact ACS at aafc.acs-sac.aac@canada.ca or 1-877-246-4682.

Applicants are to complete, sign and submit a grant application form by email to AAFC at aafc.acs-sac.aac@canada.ca or by mail (tracking number is recommended) to the address listed in section 7 of this guide.

If the application submitted is deemed incomplete, the applicant will be notified and will have 10 business days to provide the missing information before the file is closed. Applicants will be able to re-submit their application before the application process closing date. Please note that grant applications cannot be modified after the closing date (June 15, 2021)

Applicants may be contacted throughout the review process to provide additional information or clarification to assist with the assessment.

2.0 Expected results

If approved for a grant, the expected result will be a comprehensive project proposal submitted for contribution funding. To that end, successful applicants will need to request a contribution funding application package at aafc.acs-sac.aac@canada.ca or 1-877-246-4682 once the contribution funding application process has opened; it is anticipated that Step 2 application process will open in August and close in December 2021 (the exact dates of the start and close of the contribution funding application process will be published on the ACS program website). Please note that grant recipients will be subject to the same deadlines for submissions under Step 2 application process as those applicants who will be applying only for Step 2 funding and/or support.

If a grant recipient is unable to successfully build the capacity to submit a full project proposal, a written report outlining the barriers they faced in the work undertaken through the grant will be required.

To assist with the grant application process, please note that eligible activities under contribution funding and/or collaborative research and development support may include:

- Conducting research and development related to carbon sequestration, greenhouse gas mitigation and, if applicable, environmental benefits;
- Facilitating approaches and solutions by co-developing, testing, piloting, demonstrating and supporting adoption of processes and technologies that can be more broadly applied;
- Engaging producers and ensuring their participation in on-farm co-development of BMP;
- Implementing knowledge transfer plans and adoption strategies to incent and support BMP adoption by producers; and
- Assessing project impact, including data collection and analysis.

Moreover, the comprehensive project proposal submitted for contribution funding and collaborative research and development support may include:

- A demonstration of the organization's capacity to undertake the project;
- Project details, including a project description and how the project will use the living labs innovation model;
- The deliverables and dates of completion (work plan) as well as the indicators that will be used to monitor progress and performance;
- A description of the landscape or location (e.g. watersheds, specific ecosystems, eco-regions, etc.) and/or commodity based sector (i.e. geographic areas associated to a specific value chain such as swine, livestock, horticulture, etc.) in which the project will be conducted;
- Endorsement letters from project participants, and their role in comprehensive project implementation, including a description of producers and their willingness to participate;
- A description of project results / benefits;
- A demonstration of the organization's capacity to provide performance information to monitor progress and assess outcomes;
- Identification and understanding of risks of the project and their mitigation measures;
- A knowledge transfer plan and adoption strategy to incent and support BMP adoption by producers; and
- Detailed project budget.

More information on contribution funding will be published at a later date in a separate Applicant Guide.

3.0 Project assessment criteria

For grant funding, assessments will consider the overall quality of the application, applicant's contribution towards eligible costs, and the extent to which it will meet important criteria, such as:

- How does the grant proposal and proposed activities support program objectives, including carbon sequestration, and does it support the achievements of other relevant environmental benefits;
- Demonstration of the applicant's ability to develop a comprehensive project proposal, with support of grant funding, considering their background and experience;
 - This includes the quality of the network of potential participants that will support eligible recipients in the development of their comprehensive project proposals;
- Sufficient demonstration of the applicant's understanding of the ACS priorities and living labs innovation model, including producer involvement in a comprehensive project proposal supported by contribution funding and/or collaborative research and development support; and
- The feasibility of the grant proposal in meeting its timelines and outcomes.

4.0 Reporting on your Project

Should you be approved for grant funding, you will be required to provide at a minimum one progress performance report in fall 2021, describing eligible activities performed to date and progress made in the development of a comprehensive proposal. Details will be provided in the grant agreement.

5.0 Other considerations

5.1 M-30 Act (Quebec organizations only)

The Province of Quebec's M-30 legislation may apply to Québec-based applicants only. It is the *Act Respecting the Ministère du Conseil exécutif* (R.S.Q., c. M-30).

More information on the Act is available online or by contacting the Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation (MAPAQ) at dpci@mapaq.gouv.qc.ca.

M-30 applies to various types of Quebec organizations, for example, organizations located in Québec and receiving more than half of their financing from the Government of Québec may be subject to the Act.

All Québec based organizations will have to address this matter and demonstrate their compliance with the Act during the project assessment process, and prior to entering into a contribution agreement.

5.2 Intellectual property

Should the funding proposal be approved the following intellectual property requirements relevant to the project may be included in the grant agreement:

All title to intellectual property arising as a result of AAFC's provision of the funding, in whole or in part, shall vest in the Recipient or in a third party, as may be negotiated by the Recipient.

A grant of license provision will be included in the grant agreement requiring that the Recipient grant, or ensure that third parties grant (including ultimate recipients, if applicable) a fully paid, non-exclusive, worldwide, perpetual, royalty-free license to the Crown to such material, in whole or in part, in any form or medium, for internal government program administration purposes.

The Minister may also, at his or her discretion, include a provision in the grant agreement requiring that the Recipient agrees to make an offer to the department or agency to negotiate, at a later date and on reasonable separate terms, the acquisition of a license for the materials produced as a result of the contribution for purposes that do not constitute internal government program administration purposes of including without limitation research and development, publication purposes.

5.3 Official Languages

The program administration will take into account the relevant official language obligations and comply with all applicable official language requirements stipulated in Canada's *Official Languages Act* (OLA) and the related regulations, as well as federal government policies in this regard. If the program is delivered by a third party acting on behalf of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada pursuant to Section 25 of the *OLA*, a language clause will be included in the agreement to ensure the provision of services and communications in either official language in conformity with Part IV of the *OLA*.

If Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada determines that the recipient's government funded activities may have an impact on official language minority communities or be susceptible of promoting linguistic duality, the funding agreement must specify the recipient's linguistic commitments and ensure that additional expenses incurred as a result of these commitments are considered eligible for funding. Commitments relating to the development of minority communities will be determined based on the needs of the community (determined after consultations with the community, if appropriate). The expected results and performance measurement indicators will be identified and included in the Performance Information Profile (PIP).

5.4 Use and/or Disclosure

The personal information in this application is being collected under the authority of the Department of Agriculture and Agri-Food Act and may be used by AAFC, or disclosed to third parties including other Government Departments, to:

- assess and review the eligibility of the applicant and the project under the applicable AAFC program;
- verify the accuracy of the information provided in the application form, as well as accompanying documents;
- determine eligibility for other AAFC, Government of Canada or provincial programs from which the applicant might benefit; and
- evaluate the scope, direction and effectiveness of agricultural programming and research in Canada.

The Applicant consents that the information may also be used for the purposes of:

- contacting you should additional information be required;
- validating your credentials;
- facilitating payment of the contribution in the event your application is successful;
- program administration;
- and evaluation, reporting, and statistical analysis.

Personal information will be treated and disclosed in accordance with the Privacy Act. You have the right to access your personal information held by AAFC and to request changes to incorrect

personal information by contacting the AAFC Access to Information and Privacy Director at aafc.atip-aiprp.aac@canada.ca. You also have the right to complain to the OPC concerning the management of your personal information, should you have any concerns.

Should you request additional information about AAFC's privacy practices, you may refer to the following Personal Information Banks: Accounts Receivable PSU 932 and Accounts Payable PSU 931, related bank number [PRN 914](#).

6.0 After you apply

Once a grant application has been submitted, an acknowledgment notice will be sent to the applicant. Applicants should not consider their application as submitted to the program until they receive this acknowledgement notice; if it is not received within 2 business days, please contact us.

In order to begin the assessment, an application must be deemed complete by AAFC. After an application has been received, AAFC verifies that all required forms and declarations have been completed and there is sufficient detail in the application for a full assessment. When the application has been deemed complete and ready for assessment, notice will be provided to the applicant.

Subsequently, a full review and assessment of the grant application will be carried out by AAFC and, if an applicant is successful, AAFC will provide a written decision letter which will outline the level of assistance awarded and any other conditions if applicable (for example, reduced funding or activities). Unsuccessful applicants will be contacted by AAFC and will receive a notification letter explaining the reasons for rejection.

Our goal is to:

- Respond to general inquiries made to our phone number or email address before the end of the next business day;
- Acknowledge receipt of your application within 1 business day;
- Assess your application and send you an approval or a rejection notification letter within 40 business days of the close of the application process;
- Send you a payment within 30 business days of receipt of a duly completed documented claim. This is applicable only if an agreement is signed

As program demand fluctuates, these standards may be updated to provide more accurate timelines. Updates will be posted on the program website.

Please note that even if a project meets all eligibility criteria, the submission of an application creates no obligation on the part of the Minister or AAFC officials to provide funding for the proposed project. The Minister retains discretion to determine, based on other public policy and public interest considerations, whether an application that meets the criteria identified in this guide will ultimately receive funding.

7.0 Contact us

For more information on the Agricultural Climate Solutions (ACS), please contact us by:

E-mail: aafc.acs-sac.aac@canada.ca

Telephone: 1-877-246-4682

TDD/TTY: 613-773-2600

Mail:

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

Agricultural Climate Solutions

Industry Development Division

Programs Branch

Tower 7, Floor 8, Room 223

1341 Baseline Rd,

Ottawa, ON K1A 0C5

End of Guide.

8.0 Annex A: Financial Information

The following information on cost categories provide details on cost eligibility and requirements that you will need to follow at the application step and during the grant project implementation, should your application be approved and a grant agreement signed.

Cost Categories

- Salaries and Benefits
- Contracted Services
- Travel
- Other Direct Project Costs

Salaries and Benefits	
Eligible cost items	Limitations/ineligible costs
Salaries and benefits directly related to completing the activities in the Work Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • benefits are to be considered up to 25%, and include the employer's portion of CPP, QPP; EI; group insurance, vacation pay and pension benefits, statutory holidays, etc. • losses to investments or pensions due to stock fluctuations or other unforeseen events are not eligible • performance pay (such as a bonuses), severance pay and retiree settlements are not eligible • discretionary employee benefits (for example, parking at employer's location, gym membership fees, daycare costs, etc.) are not eligible • relocation costs for employees hired for the Project are not eligible

Contracted Services	
Eligible cost items	Limitations/ineligible costs
Professional or specialized services for which a contract is entered into, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • consultant/expert services • science co-ordination services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all services, including research work, should be established under a contract • recipients must use a fair and competitive or otherwise justifiable and generally accepted sound business

	<p>process that results in competent and qualified contractors working on the Project activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • all such contracts should include a description of the work, due date(s) for deliverables, detailed budgets, and payment terms • overhead costs cannot exceed 15% of total other eligible costs invoiced • contracts for project management and administration services may be used
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Travel (based on the AAFC Directive – subject to periodic revisions)	
Eligible cost items	Limitations/ineligible costs
<p>Travel costs directly related to the Project, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accommodations, meals, local or in-city transportation (buses, taxis, vehicle rentals, etc.), ground transportation (including parking, transportation to and from the public carrier terminal), and incidentals up to the authorized per diem amounts • transportation (e.g., air, train) <p>Travel costs are eligible for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • personnel travelling for Project activities, who are on travel status • Hospitality costs are eligible when they are necessary to organize an event required to develop the project <p>Note: transportation costs incurred for Project activities are eligible, even if the individual is not on travel status.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • only economy airfare for travel is eligible; bookings should be made as far in advance as possible; seat selection and baggage costs are eligible (upgrades are not eligible) • National Joint Council Travel Directive should be followed when organizing your travel arrangements • for hospitality, allowances included in National Joint Council Travel Directive need to be followed • alcohol is not an eligible expense under hospitality • travel insurance (such as medical, accident, cancellation) is not eligible • non-essential options for rental vehicles (such as GPS and roadside assistance) are not eligible • travel and accommodation expenditures for federal government employees are not eligible

Other Direct Project Costs	
Eligible cost items	Limitations/ineligible costs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • shipping 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • any Canadian government related fees

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • translation • conference or registration fees • knowledge transfer associated costs • stipends 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • such as visas, patents, etc. are not eligible • costs associated with the hosting of conferences or working sessions with potential project participants are considered eligible
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Other ineligible costs include, but are not limited to:

- land acquisition, leasing land, buildings (acquisitions and leasing), renovation or construction, and other facilities, real estate fees and related costs
- financing charges, legal fees and loan interest payments
- lobbyist fees
- capital items
- audit fees related to the organization's financial statements
- bank fees
- insurance (fire, theft, liability)
- membership fees
- legal fees
- property taxes
- normal costs of establishing a commercial operation
- costs for activities that are deemed to be part of normal business practice for any Recipient
- costs for activities intended to directly influence/lobby governments
- costs related to marketing activities and business promotion
- refundable portion of the GST/HST, value added taxes, or other items for which a refund or rebate is received
- depreciation charges for capital assets
- other costs not specifically required for the Project