



Polar Knowledge Canada

Guide for applicants 2026-2029

Country Foods and Food Security

Call for Proposals



Polar Knowledge
Canada

Savoir polaire
Canada

Canada

Table of contents

Table of contents.....	2
Summary	4
Science and Technology Pillars	4
Funding objectives	4
Available funding	4
Timeline	4
Eligibility.....	5
Part A – Application form	5
Applicant information	5
Principal investigator information.....	6
Project information.....	6
Part B – Project proposal.....	7
1. Project summary.....	7
2. Project objectives, research methods, outcomes, and results	7
3. Organizational capacity.....	8
4. Community engagement	8
5. Link to local food security priorities.....	9
6. Project activity workplan	9
7. Project budget	10
Part C – Declaration and signature	13
Submitting your application.....	13
Submission deadline	13
Questions.....	13
Appendix I – Eligible expenses.....	14
1. General principle	14
2. Eligible activities	14
3. Eligible costs	14
4. Ineligible costs	15
5. Goods and Services Tax or Harmonized Sales Tax	16

6. Patent and copyright costs	16
Appendix II – Frequently asked questions	17
How can I learn more about Polar Knowledge Canada and the work it does?	17
Where does POLAR fund projects?	17
Do I need to demonstrate that I have matching funds in my proposal to be eligible?	18
When will POLAR communicate the results of my application?	18
What permits and licenses are needed?.....	18

Summary

Polar Knowledge Canada (POLAR) is accepting applications for the POLAR Country Foods and Food Security Call for Proposals. A maximum of \$100,000 per year, to a total project maximum of \$300,000 over three years will be provided for projects that increase knowledge regarding the health, availability, and sustainability of country foods.

Science and Technology Pillars

POLAR disburses funds in support of three Science and Technology Pillars. Projects seeking funds under the Call for Proposals must meet the following goal:

- Increasing understanding of the connections between Northern community wellness and environmental health.

For more information, read the [Science and Technology Framework](#).

Funding objectives

The objective of the Call for Proposals is to contribute to food security in Northern and arctic regions through support of research projects that increase knowledge regarding the health, availability, and sustainability of country foods, which are defined as locally harvestable plants, animals, and fish.

Funds flowed under this initiative must be aligned with [POLAR's Science and Technology Framework](#), [Canada's Arctic Foreign Policy](#), and [Canada's Arctic and Northern Policy Framework](#).

Available funding

Projects can be funded for up to three fiscal years between approximately summer 2026 and March 31, 2029.

Funding amounts are allotted based on the financial needs of each project in relation to the proposed activities. Considerations will include the:

- amount of funding available,
- project scope and amount of funding required to achieve expected project results,
- volume of applications received, and
- merit of a specific application as determined by the evaluation criteria for this funding call.

Timeline

1. The Call for Proposals opens on April 1, 2026.
2. Applications will be accepted until 23:59 EDT on May 13, 2026.
3. Only successful applicants will be contacted.
4. POLAR will publicly announce successful recipients after Contribution Agreements are signed.

Eligibility

Eligible applicants include non-federal Canadian government departments, Canadian institutions and organizations, and Indigenous organizations with Principal Investigators whose proposed research will be based in the Canadian Arctic (Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut, Nunavik, Nunatsiavut).

To be eligible for this contribution program, the Principal Investigator must be based at a Canadian institution, organization, or department.

To apply, you must create an account on the [Polar Knowledge Canada's Online Application and Reporting site](#). Once you have registered, you will receive a confirmation email. Use your account to submit your application.

An application package contains the following:

1. [Part A – Application form](#)
2. [Part B – Project proposal](#), which includes:
 - [project workplan](#),
 - [project budget](#),
3. [Part C – Declaration and signature](#)

Special note

We recommend you keep copies of any source files submitted. Successful applicants may need to adjust their project proposal before finalizing contribution agreements. Please note, we will only review fully completed applications.

Do you have questions? We are here to help! Contact us at: grants-contributions@polar-polaire.gc.ca.

Part A – Application form

You must complete the different parts of the application package below.

Applicant information

Fill out the fields below.

Table 1 Applicant information

Field	Description
Name of applicant organization or institution	Enter the official name of Canadian institution, organization, or department applicant is affiliated with.
Mailing address of the organization	Enter the mailing address of the organization.
Certificate of incorporation of affiliated research institution	Insert file or provide web link to certificate of incorporation or equivalent.

Principal investigator information

Table 2 Contact information

Field	Description
Principal Investigator contact	This is the primary contact for the application
Alternate application contact	This person may be contacted when the main contact person is unavailable.

Special note

You must update us if there is a change in contact persons/information. Please note, we may be unable to move forward with the funding request if we are not able to communicate with either the main contact or the alternate contact.

Project information

Provide information on the project related to the funding request.

Table 3 Project information

Field	Description
Project title	Provide the project title.
Total project cost	Provide the total estimated cost for the project including other sources of funding in Canadian dollars.
Amount requested from POLAR	Identify the funding amount requested from this funding call in Canadian dollars.
Geographic location(s) of the project	Choose the primary region where the project will take place from the drop-down menu and list specific geographic location(s) where the project activities will be undertaken.
Members of the project team	List of everyone who is actively involved in the project. This could include the Project lead (if different from the Principal Investigator), Research Assistant, Program Coordinator, Communications Coordinator, etc. For each member, provide their name, role, and affiliation.

Part B – Project proposal

Provide the following information:

Table 4 Summary of criteria and evaluation weight

Criteria	Maximum length	Weight
1. Project summary	250 words	5%
2. Project objectives, research methods, outcomes, and results	750–1000 words	40%
3. Organizational capacity	500 words	20%

Criteria	Maximum length	Weight
4. Community engagement	250 words	10%
5. Description of how project links to local priorities (mandatory) and letter of support (optional)	250 words + 1 page letter	10%
6. Project activity workplan	Template provided	10%
7. Project budget	Template provided	5%
Total	7 sections	100%

1. Project summary

Provide brief a summary of the project (maximum 250 words). It should present a clear, nontechnical overview of the project’s purpose and anticipated impact and outcome. Do not include detailed objectives, methods, or alignment with community priorities; this information can be provided in Sections 2–5.

Required information

Include these elements in this section:

1. A brief description of the project, its objectives, and approach.
2. The geographic location(s) where the project will take place.
3. A brief description of how the project will support local food security needs, policies, or priorities.
4. Anticipated project outcomes and key deliverables.

2. Project objectives, research methods, outcomes, and results

Describe the project objectives, research methods, outcomes, results, and measures of success in under 1000 words or less.

Use this section to describe the scientific and methodological foundation of the project. Do not include community priority alignment here, this is addressed in Section 5.

Required information

Include these elements in this section:

1. A general description of how the project will contribute to “Increasing understanding of the connections between Northern community wellness and environmental health”.
2. A detailed description of the research methods.
3. A detailed description of how the project will improve knowledge regarding health, availability, and sustainability of an identified country food.
4. A description of how the project will integrate Northern and Indigenous research principles and protocols, and Indigenous Knowledge in its design and delivery.

3. Organizational capacity

Use this section to describe your organization's and project team's capacity to deliver the proposed project in 500 words or less.

Required information

1. Relevant experience with similar projects or activities.
2. Expertise of key team members.
3. Organizational ability to manage federal funding (providing relevant examples).
4. Any risks to successful completion of project objectives and how they will be mitigated.
5. Audited financial statements for the last year (web link or upload document).
6. If applicable to the project, complete the partner organization(s) table.

4. Community engagement

Use this section to describe the community engagement elements of your project in 250 words or less.

Required information

1. How the local community will be participating in the project.
 - a. Provide details on who will be engaged, how they will participate, and for what purpose, and whether participation is meaningful and appropriate to the project.
2. Any plans to improve Northern and/or Indigenous community research capacity as part of this project. Identify whether the project will build skills, knowledge or capacity and if these benefits will extend beyond the project timeline.
 - a. Provide details on who will be engaged, how they will participate, and for what purpose, and whether participation is meaningful and appropriate to the project.

5. Link to local food security priorities

Describe how your project aligns with local community food security priorities in 250 words or less. Focus only on **why** the project is needed locally or how this project aligns with priorities or needs identified in your study area.

Reference to a specific document or report is required. Provide a link to the document or upload a copy of it. If there is no specific document or report that identifies food security priorities, provide a letter of support from the local community or Indigenous group highlighting the need for the project.

Required information

1. Description of how your project aligns with local community food security priorities.
2. Reference to a specific document or report highlighting local community food security priorities **or** a letter of support from the local community or Indigenous group highlighting the need for the project.

6. Project activity workplan

The Government of Canada’s fiscal year runs from **April 1 to March 31** and is used for planning, budgeting, reporting, and financial administration across all federal programs. Applicants must align project timelines, workplan activities, and budget entries with this fiscal year structure.

Download the Microsoft Word project activity workplan template linked in the application form. Fill in the document using the instructions below, then upload your final file.

You must complete an activity table for every fiscal year for which funding support is requested. Follow the instructions provided in Table 5 below.

Required information

1. A clear description of all proposed activities, limited to activities directly supported by the requested program funding.
2. Timelines for each activity that indicate when the work will take place and account for any travel, allowing assessment of whether activities can be completed within the project period.
3. Identification of the expected results from each activity, described in measurable terms.
4. Identification of the tangible outputs for each activity, including the number of outputs.
5. Confirmation that each responsible team member listed in the application package is involved in at least one activity listed in the workplan.

Table 5 Project Activity Workplan Table

Line	(A) Activities	(B) Timelines	(C) Outputs	(D) Expected Results	(E) Person(s) Responsible
Instructions	Describe the activities directly supported by POLAR funding.	Identify timelines for each activity by fiscal year.	List measurable deliverables.	Describe measurable expected results.	Identify responsible team members.
Example	Deliver stakeholder engagement sessions to gather project input	June 1 to July 15, 20XX	2 engagement sessions; 1 summary report	Stakeholder feedback collected	Project Lead; Engagement Coordinator

7. Project budget

The Government of Canada’s fiscal year runs from **April 1 to March 31** and is used for planning, budgeting, reporting, and financial administration across all federal programs. Applicants must align project timelines, workplan activities, and budget entries with this fiscal year structure.

Budget considerations

When reviewing project budgets, POLAR will assess whether the expenditures:

- Demonstrate a clear and direct link to the proposed project activities.
- Are consistent with program objectives and represent an efficient and economical use of resources.
- Reflect only essential travel requirements, specifically travel necessary to conduct project activities, fieldwork, or community engagement.
- Advance benefits to Northern communities, such as employment of Northern staff, community participation, communications support, and translation.

Download the Microsoft Excel project budget template linked in the online application and reporting portal. Fill the document using the instructions below, then upload your final file.

The budget has five labelled worksheets. Instructions are organized by worksheet.

Note

The worksheets contain built-in formulas. Start with 'worksheet 1_Organization details' and continue to complete the rest of the worksheet tabs at the bottom of the document in chronological order. Information from one worksheet will populate lines in other worksheets automatically.

Do you have questions? We are here to help! Contact us at: grants-contributions@polar-polaire.gc.ca.

Worksheet 1 – Organization details

Enter the organization's name and the project title.

Leave the agreement number blank—POLAR will add this information if the funding request is approved.

Worksheet 2 – POLAR funding

Complete a budget for each year funding is requested. A separate table must be completed for each fiscal year of the project.

From the drop-down menu, identify the fiscal year. Complete the budget lines for each expenditure planned as part of the project.

The table below explains how to fill out each row and column in the POLAR funding worksheet.

Column	Description of information to include in each column or cell
A	From the drop-down menu, identify the expenditure class that corresponds to the activity that will be funded. See Appendix I - Eligible expenses for a description of each expenditure class.

Column	Description of information to include in each column or cell
B	Identify the corresponding activities from column A in your completed project activity workplan template. More than one workplan activity can be assigned to a budget line. These linkages will be used during the assessment of value for money and project feasibility.
C	Provide a short description of what will be funded specifically. For example, if the expenditure class is a boat rental for water sampling, identify the cost of the boat rental per day, week, or hour.
D	Enter the amount, to the nearest dollar. The yearly budget summary totals will auto-populate based on the amounts entered in column D.

Worksheet 3 – Other sources of funding

Report other sources of funding that contribute to the direct costs of the project. This support can be in the form of financial (cash) or non-financial (in-kind) contributions and can come from project partner(s), other funding sources, or your organization. Amounts should reflect fair market values.

From the drop-down menu, identify the fiscal year for each year funded. Complete the budget lines for each expenditure covered by other sources of funding.

Column	Description of information to include in each column or cell
A	From the drop-down menu, identify the expenditure class that corresponds to the activity that will be funded. See Appendix I - Eligible expenses for a description of each expenditure class.
B	Identify the corresponding activities from column A in your completed project activity workplan. More than one workplan activity can be assigned to a budget line.
C	Provide a short description of what will be funded specifically. For example, if the expenditure class is a boat rental for water sampling, identify the cost of the boat rental per day, week, or hour.
D	Name of source providing the funds or in-kind support.
E	Identify if the funding is financial or in-kind. Financial contributions are donations of money. In-kind contributions are non-monetary goods or services (resources) provided to the project by sources other than POLAR, which, if not donated, would have to be purchased with project funds. Examples include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ the use of office space, equipment, or materials. ▪ supplies and services provided by professionals on a voluntary basis.
F	Enter the amount, to the nearest dollar. Both financial and in-kind contributions must have a dollar amount identified. The yearly budget summary totals will auto-populate based on the amounts entered in column F.

Worksheet 4 – Yearly budget summary

The yearly budget summary calculates the budget total by year for [POLAR funding](#) and the budget total for [other sources of funding](#).

From the drop-down menu, identify the fiscal year for each year funded. Total amounts from [POLAR funding](#) and [other sources of funding](#) will auto-populate into the yearly budget summary **only** if expenditure classes were selected from the drop-down menu in column A in [POLAR funding](#) and [other sources of funding](#).

Note

Expenditure classes must be assigned in column A for worksheets 2 and 3 for total amounts to correctly display in the yearly budget summary.

Do you have questions? We are here to help! Contact us at: grants-contributions@polar-polaire.gc.ca.

Worksheet 5 – Multi-year budget summary

Select the fiscal years from the drop-down menus that indicate the start and end of the project fiscal year.

Worksheet 5 is also the signature page for Budget.

Part C – Declaration and signature

Read the statements and check the box to confirm your declaration and submit the application form. By doing so you are confirming that you are authorized to submit this proposal on behalf of your organization.

Submitting your application

The applicant must ensure that the application package is complete at the time of submission. Note that applications must meet **all the eligibility criteria and be fully complete** to be considered for funding.

Submission deadline

Application packages must be received by May 13, 2026, at 23:59 (EDT). Applications received after the submission deadline will not be considered.

Questions

[Find the answers to frequently asked questions.](#) For any other questions relating to the Call for Proposals, write to POLAR's [Grants and Contributions team](#).

Checklist

- Project application is fully completed and signed
- Workplan is fully completed
- Budget template is fully completed and signed
- Articles of incorporation
- Audited financial statements for the last year
- Evidence of local community food security priorities
 - Report or document highlighting local community food security priorities (upload or weblink); **or**
 - a letter of support from the local community of Indigenous group highlighting the need for the project.

Appendix I – Eligible expenses

This section provides instructions to assist you with completing the Project Budget Excel template.

Note

If approved for funding, the expenditure classes you identify in your application budget will be the same as those that appear in the contribution agreement.

Do you have questions? We are here to help! Contact us at: grants-contributions@polar-polaire.gc.ca.

1. General principle

The eligible costs are direct costs that POLAR determines are reasonable and necessary to carry out the project. These costs must be supported by your organization's financial records and must follow normal accounting practices. Only actual costs may be claimed; all eligible costs are subject to verification and audit by POLAR.

2. Eligible activities

The activities funded through these contributions will support POLAR's mandate by supporting:

- Science and technology activities as outlined in POLAR'S [Science and Technology Framework](#);
- Coordination and collaboration among the polar research community;
- Knowledge management activities related to polar science and research; and
- Activities that strengthen the next generation of researchers specifically Northern and Indigenous youth.

3. Eligible costs

Materials, equipment, and supplies

Costs for office/laboratory supplies, electronic devices, lab/field consumables, miscellaneous field supplies/equipment, repair, maintenance, and upgrade costs.

Postage and shipping

Costs for postage and shipping of supplies, materials, and equipment.

Professional fees and services (contracts)

Fees for consultants, contractors, specialists, or community members providing specialized services. Applicants must follow fair procurement practices and select service providers through an open and transparent process. Contractors must be at arm's length from the recipient and do not retain rights to

any work produced under the project. Travel costs for contractors must be included under this expenditure class.

Rentals

Costs include equipment, meeting rooms, and pre-approved hospitality costs.

Salaries, benefits, wages, and honoraria (employees)

Includes salaries for full or part-time staff directly involved in carrying out project activities, and stipends or honoraria for trainees or others involved in the project (including youth, Elders, students, and researchers).

Only time worked directly on the project is eligible; indirect time (such as vacation, holidays, general administration, or paid sick leave) cannot be claimed. Paid overtime may be eligible if considered reasonable.

Labour must be based on the employee's actual gross pay rate (before deductions) and time claimed must be tracked in hours. Employment benefits of up to 20% of direct labour costs may be included.

Travel

Travel costs necessary to complete project activities. This includes transportation, accommodations, meals, and incidentals. Costs must follow the Government of Canada's [National Joint Council Travel Directive](#) rates. **Travel for contractors is to be included under Professional Fees and Services.**

Administration fee

A maximum of 15% administrative fee of the total eligible expenses can be applied as an expense line to the budget.

4. Ineligible costs

Ineligible expenditures include but are not limited to the following:

- The costs of the organization's ongoing operational activities. POLAR funding is not intended to support long-term activities that should be carried out as part of the organization's mandated activities;
- Any costs that are not directly related to the project;
- Travel and hospitality expenditures that exceed those explained in the Government of Canada's [National Joint Council Travel Directive](#); and
- Rental charges for space and equipment that is owned by the recipient organization.

5. Goods and Services Tax or Harmonized Sales Tax

Only the portion of:

- the Harmonized Sales Tax that **cannot be recovered** as an Input Tax Credit or as rebate; and
- any Provincial Sales Tax that can be claimed.

6. Patent and copyright costs

Relevant searches and filing fees related to North American or worldwide rights are eligible when detailed in this [Appendix I – Eligible expenses](#).

Appendix II – Frequently asked questions

How can I learn more about Polar Knowledge Canada and the work it does?

POLAR is responsible for advancing Canada’s knowledge of the Arctic, strengthening Canadian leadership in polar science and technology, and promoting the development and distribution of knowledge of other circumpolar regions, including Antarctica. POLAR operates the Canadian High Arctic Research Station (CHARS) and conducts world-class cutting edge Arctic research out of this extraordinary facility.

Learn about:

- [POLAR and its mandate](#)
- [Conducting research in Canada’s North](#)
- [The Antarctic](#)

Where does POLAR fund projects?

POLAR funds projects in the Canadian Arctic, also referred to as “the North”, and the Antarctic. For the purposes of POLAR’s Science and Technology funding programs, “the North” refers to the three Canadian territories (Yukon, Northwest Territories, Nunavut) and Inuit Nunangat. Inuit Nunangat extends across the Canadian territories and includes Nunavik (Quebec) and Nunatsiavut (Newfoundland).



Caption: Map of Canada with Northern regions highlighted in yellow.

Specifically, the North includes the locations listed below:

- Qikiqtaaluk, Nunavut
- Kitikmeot, Nunavut
- Kivalliq, Nunavut
- All Nunavut
- Nunavik, Quebec

- Nunatsiavut, Newfoundland
- Gwich'in Settlement Region, Northwest Territories
- Sahtu, Northwest Territories
- Tlicho, Northwest Territories
- Inuvialuit Settlement Region, Northwest Territories
- Northwest Territories
- Yukon

Do I need to demonstrate that I have matching funds in my proposal to be eligible?

POLAR does not require confirmation of matching funds to be eligible to apply for funding.

When will POLAR communicate the results of my application?

Public announcements will be made after all successful applicants have signed their contribution agreements. [Consult our website](#) and social media and sign up for our [mailing list](#) to receive the latest updates.

What permits and licenses are needed?

The applicant must identify and obtain all applicable permits, ethics approvals, and licenses required by territorial, federal, or Indigenous governments and land claim organizations before conducting project activities. These may include but are not limited to:

- Research ethics
- Environmental assessments
- Permitting and licensing (e.g., regional, community-specific)

[Learn more on research ethics, permits, and licensing requirements.](#) Go to the “Gathering Information” tab.