

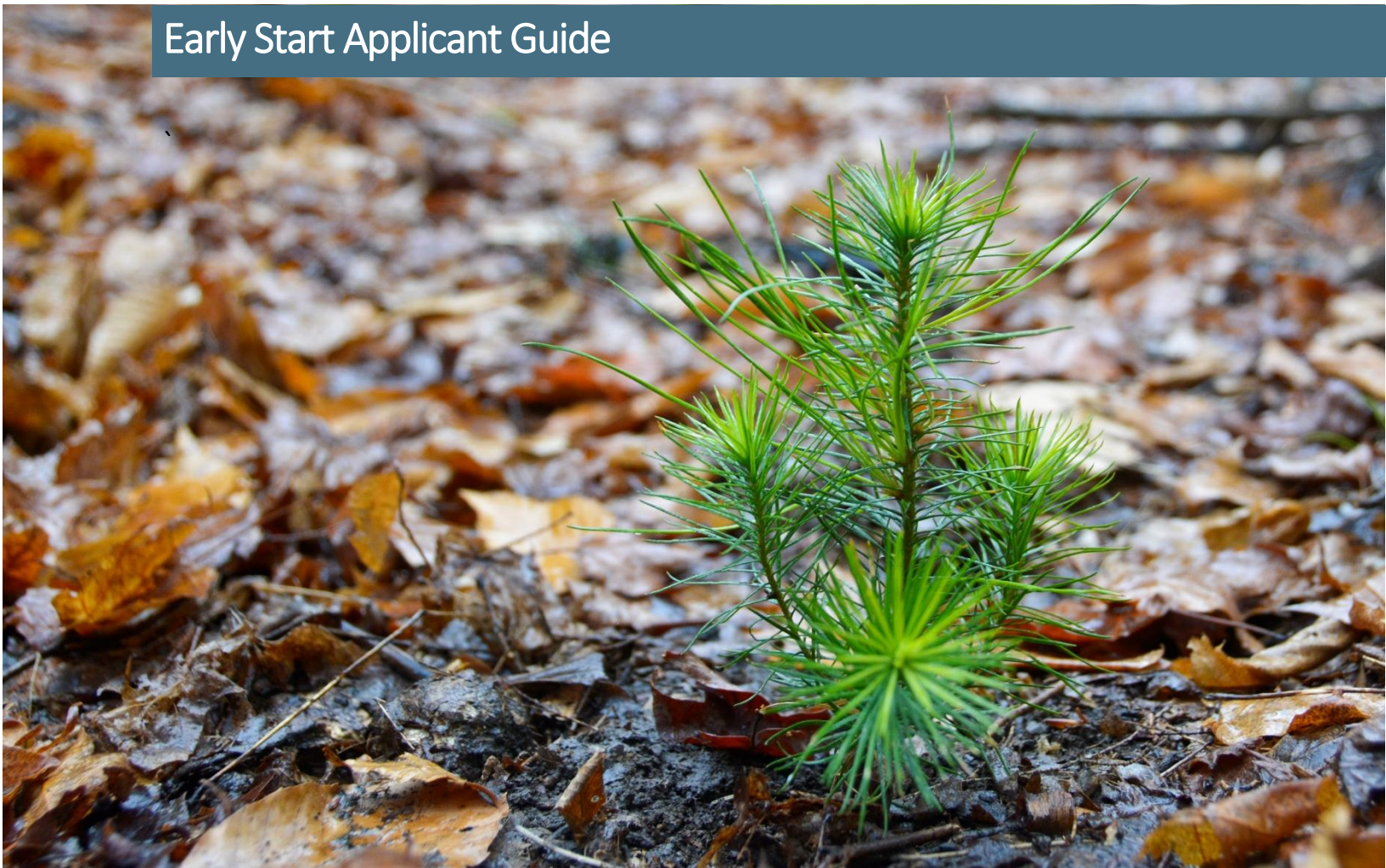


Natural Resources  
Canada

Ressources naturelles  
Canada

# Growing Canada's Forests Expression of Interest:

## Early Start Applicant Guide



Canada 



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# **Growing Canada's Forests**

## **Expression of Interest:**

Early Start Applicant Guide

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## 1. Purpose of the Expression of Interest (EOI)

In 2020, the Government of Canada committed to planting an additional two billion new trees over the next 10 years as part of a broader approach to nature-based climate solutions. To help identify potential Early Start tree planting projects, the [Growing Canada's Forests \(GCF\) program](#), a financial assistance program of the Government of Canada, is accepting Expressions of Interests (EOIs) to identify new tree planting projects across Canada for 2021. Submissions can include adding trees to existing tree planting projects this year.

This process is the first step in letting the Government of Canada know that your organization has the experience, capacity and expertise to deliver cost-shared tree planting projects in 2021.

As growing season is fast approaching, applicants will need to demonstrate proven capacity to deliver a tree planting program and outline projects that:

- Result in a minimum of 5,000 new trees being planted in 2021,
- Monitor tree survival and report on project outcomes, and
- Demonstrate compliance with applicable COVID-19 health and safety protocols.

Following an assessment of submitted EOIs, applicants demonstrating experience, capacity, and expertise in delivering tree planting projects will be invited to proceed with a Full Project Proposal for funding for projects in 2021.

Please note that this Expression of Interest is not a Request for Proposal (RFP). Participation in the current EOI process does not guarantee that Natural Resources Canada (NRCan) will enter into a funding agreement with you.

## 2. Mandatory requirements

### 2.1. Minimum tree planting

Proposed projects must meet a minimum project threshold of 5000 trees.

### 2.2. Eligible recipients

You can apply to the **Early Start EOI** if you have the ability to secure trees and land to do new tree planting projects in 2021 and are:

- a municipal or local government or one of their agencies, or a regional municipal organization;
- a not-for-profit organization (legally incorporated and registered in Canada), such as a charitable organization, volunteer organization, community, professional, industry or other association, land conservation organization, or non-government organizations;
- a for-profit organization (legally incorporated or registered in Canada);

- an Indigenous organization<sup>1</sup> (for profit and not-for-profit) or community.

*Priority will be given to recipients who can demonstrate proven capacity to deliver tree planting projects in early 2021.*

### 2.3. Eligible activities and costs

Eligible activities would consist of activities directly related to tree planting, managing trees and forests, and monitoring the health and growth of planted trees. Eligible activities would not cover any such costs where the planting, management and monitoring is legally required following commercial activity or as a condition for impact assessment approval.

Eligible expenditures are those directly related to implementing the proposed project. Eligible expenditures for program funding would include:

- Salaries and benefits, and employee recruitment and training;
- Professional, technical, and capacity building services;
- Community and landowner engagement;
- Purchase or lease of land for nurseries to grow seedlings;
- Translation, production, printing, publication and distribution, and media services;
- Contractors, such as for tree planting and silviculture;
- Materials and supplies, such as seeds and trees for planting;
- Transportation;
- Facilities;
- Machinery and equipment;
- Travel expenses including accommodation and venue expenses;
- Honoraria and ceremonial costs where Indigenous recipients or Indigenous partners are involved;
- Overhead expenditures provided they are directly related and essential to the conduct of the project, up to 15% of eligible expenditures; and
- GST, PST or HST, net of any tax rebate to which the recipient is entitled.

### 2.4. Cost sharing

Cost-sharing<sup>2</sup> information is required as part of this EOI. While subject to change, the maximum NRCan contribution for eligible project costs is 50% of eligible expenditures. Indigenous organizations are encouraged to contact NRCan for further information on cost sharing.

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<sup>1</sup> Indigenous nations entities (as self-defined and representing nation-based collectives - could be linked by cultural or linguistic background, geographical area or historical treaty lines), nation member communities or member organizations on behalf of nation entities, Section 35 rights-bearing Métis entities, national and regional Indigenous organizations, self-governing Indigenous governments, Indigenous owned or operated businesses, other Indigenous organizations.

<sup>2</sup> In this document, the terms “cost-shared” and “cost-sharing” refer not to official cost-sharing agreements, but to situations where the Government of Canada will fund a portion of a project through a contribution agreement and the recipient will be required to also provide a portion of the funding.

### 3. EOI Process

#### 3.1. Selection process

- Submissions will be assessed as they are received until the end of the EOI intake period.
- Depending on the number of EOIs received, priority for further selection may be based on the scale of the project (see [minimum requirements](#)), an organization's demonstrated capacity, and projects that can take advantage of the early part of the tree planting season.
- Applicants selected for further consideration under this EOI will be contacted for additional information, which will include the requirement to complete a Full Project Proposal for funding.
- To avoid duplication, the information in both the EOI and the Full Project Proposal may serve as a basis of a contribution agreement for single-year tree planting projects taking place in 2021.

#### 3.2. EOI assessment criteria

All EOIs will be screened for eligibility through a preliminary assessment based on the criteria detailed below. At any time during the intake and assessment process, an NRCan Officer may contact the applicant for additional information.

When reviewing the EOI, NRCan will be seeking to understand better the elements outlined in the table below:

EOI Assessment Criteria	
Assessment questions	Relevant sections of the Form
Do the expected project outcomes align with the GCF priorities? (visit <a href="#">About the program</a> )	Project Overview; Goals and Objectives
Are the project activities achievable within the time frames of the project?	Proposed approach; Readiness; Forecasted Project Costs
Is there a detailed budget for the project?	Forecasted Project Costs
Do the expected benefits of the proposed project meet program objectives and are they realistic? (visit <a href="#">About the program</a> )	Benefits
Does the applicant have the capacity to deliver the project? (e.g., financial leveraging, partnerships, resources)	Project Information, Partners/Supporters, Forecasted Project Costs

### 4. Information for Completing the Early Start EOI Form

It is the responsibility of the applicant to complete all sections of our form as accurately and completely as possible. The main sections of the form are:

- Applicant and contact information
- Project information

- Forecasted project costs and funding sources
- Diversity and inclusion
- Authorization
- Project submission and primary contact information

A description of each section is included below to assist you in completing your EOI. The numbered segments within each section correspond with the numbering in the EOI Form.

It is recommended you save your work often, prior to submitting your application to the GCF program.

### Applicant and contact information

1. **Legal Name of Applicant:** The legal name is the official name of the Organization or Business at registration or incorporation. This may be different from the organization's operating name (e.g. Legal Name 123456 Northern Ltd, operating publically as ABC Moving Services).
2. **Project Name:** Provide a short, clear and concise name describing your proposed project. You can include some details on the nature of your project. For example, Planting a Greenbelt around Cityville.
3. **Primary Contact Name:** Enter the person authorized to represent the business or organization. This person will be the main point of contact regarding your EOI.
4. **Phone Number (Primary Contact):** Be sure to include the area code of the primary contact's phone number.
5. **Email Address (Primary Contact):** Include the direct email address for the primary contact and not a generic email address for the organization.
6. **Applicant Type:** This information is important to determine if the applicant is an eligible recipient.
  - **Municipal or Local Government** includes local forms of government with elected authorities (e.g. mayor and council).
  - **Indigenous Governments or Organizations:** Indigenous nations entities (as self-defined and representing nation-based collectives - could be linked by cultural or linguistic background, geographical area or historical treaty lines), nation member communities or member organizations on behalf of nation entities, Section 35 rights-bearing Métis entities, national and regional Indigenous organizations, self-governing Indigenous governments, Indigenous owned or operated businesses, other Indigenous organizations.
  - **For-Profit** includes businesses such as incorporated companies, corporations or co-operatives.
  - **Non-Profit** includes organizations such as tree planting charities, community associations and organizations, and industry or sector associations.
7. **Brief Description of Organization and its Mandate:** This information will be used in part to determine if the applicant has the mandate and capacity to undertake a project of this nature.
8. **Years of tree planting experience:** Enter the number of years your organization has been involved in tree planting activities, not the number of years your organization has existed or been operating.

9. **Number of trees planted or area planted:** Enter the number of trees (to the nearest thousand) or area (to the nearest hectare) successfully planted by your organization.

Project information

10. **Project Location (Community):** Provide the name of the province(s)/territory(ies) and the region or city where the proposed project would take place. For projects in multiple areas, identify all locations.
11. **Expected Start Date:** The date the first activity of the proposed project is expected to get underway. Costs incurred before the start of the project or signing of a contribution agreement will not be reimbursed.
12. **Expected End Date:** The date all project activities are expected to be completed.
13. **Location types:** Identify the location types for your proposed projects. You may select more than one if you have multiple location types.
14. **Estimate of number of new trees planted:** Provide the number of trees you estimate planting for the proposed project to the nearest thousand. If you have multiple locations, provide the total number of new trees.
15. **Has access to trees been secured:** Indicate whether you have access to seedlings or trees for your proposed project and provide the name and location of the nursery. If you have access to trees at more than one nursery, please indicate all of the names and locations of the nurseries providing seedlings or trees for your proposed project.
16. **Estimate the land area required to plant the new trees:** Provide an estimate of the land area required to plant the number of trees you have estimated in question 14. Provide the answer in hectares. Free online area conversion calculators can assist if required.
17. **Has access to land been secured:** Indicate whether you have access to land to plant the new trees. This includes agreements in principal with landowners on providing land for tree planting new trees.
18. **Indigenous lands or traditional territory:** Indicate if, to the best of your knowledge, your proposed project will take place within or adjacent to Indigenous lands or traditional territory, including lands governed by a modern treaty. If you do not know, simply check the "Do not know" box, but understand that this information will be required in any subsequent agreement.
19. **Project Overview:** Describe the proposed project in a few paragraphs. Please provide brief answers. Be as concise as possible with your responses; however, do not leave out important information in order to be brief. Answer all sections as best as you can. Incomplete answers will not necessarily result in the rejection of your application.
- a. **Goals and objectives:** Describe the proposed project and indicate how it fits within the objectives of the GCF program. We encourage applicants to familiarize themselves with the Growing Canada's Forests program to ensure their project fits its goals.
  - b. **Proposed approach:** Describe the key activities that will be carried out to implement the proposed tree planting project; securing trees, accessing available land, ensuring that the right trees are planted in the right environment, availability of labour, overseeing

tree planting operations, ensuring monitoring and reporting after the trees are planted. Please describe critical milestones and approximate timelines.

- c. **Readiness:** Describe your organization's experience and readiness for successfully implementing your proposed tree planting project. This must include your plan to implement COVID-19 protocols in accordance with the health safety regulations of your province.
- d. **Monitoring:** Provide details on how the trees will be monitored for health and survival after they have been planted. If monitoring involves landowners or third-party organizations, describe their role.
- e. **Prior Work:** List any work that has been completed in preparation for this proposed project (e.g. engaging landowners, land preparation for planting, acquiring seedlings).
- f. **GHG emission reductions & co-benefits:** Describe how your proposed project will contribute to maximizing greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reductions or increasing carbon sequestration, and how your proposed project will lead to measurable biodiversity and human well-being co-benefits. Examples include, but are not limited to:
  - i. Improvement or creation of a community park
  - ii. Extension of a green belt around a city
  - iii. Forest health restored, or increased forest area, for habitat
  - iv. Increase biodiversity to increase forest resilience to climate change
  - v. Creating green jobs for a local community or youth
  - vi. Engagement and creation of jobs with Indigenous youth
- g. **Partners/Supporters:** Explain how partnerships will be leveraged or developed as a result of the proposed project. If you have confirmed partners (financial) or supporters (non-financial in nature), please identify them in this section. It is expected that project partners/supporters will be identified at the time of a full application.

### Forecasted project costs and cost-share funding sources

20. **Forecasted Total Project Cost:** Please round up to the nearest full dollar amount.

21. **Amount Requested from NRCan:** Do a quick check to make sure it does not exceed allowable limits including:

- maximum cost-sharing ratio (see Section 2.4).
- the maximum payable to a single recipient in the 2021 fiscal year (April 1, 2021, to March 31, 2022):
  - \$90,000,000 per fiscal year for eligible recipients that are provincial governments and their agencies including public sector bodies established by or under provincial statute or by regulation.
  - \$15,000,000 per fiscal year for eligible recipients that are territorial governments and their agencies including public sector bodies established by or under territorial statute or by regulation.
  - \$40,000,000 per fiscal year for all other eligible recipients (including municipalities).

22. **Forecasted Budget and Anticipated Sources of Funds:** The project budget includes costs for work that is incremental and specific to the proposed project.

The project budget is to include all costs directly related to the proposed project. The project budget will be assessed for its reasonableness in comparison to similar projects. Should the project be approved for funding, all project costs must be incurred within the timeframe specified in the Agreement. Examples of a single year forecasted budget are shown below.

For a single (one-year) project, the information entered in the Total Budget and the 2021 Fiscal Year columns will be the same.

One year project sample		
Funding partners	Total budget	2021 Fiscal Year
NRCan	10,000	10,000
Applicant	20,000	20,000
Additional Funders (specify) <i>i.e. Government of XXX</i>	10,000	10,000
Additional Funders (specify)		
Additional Funders (specify)		
Additional Funders (specify)		
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$40,000</b>	<b>\$40,000</b>

In the first column of the table, identify all sources that are expected to contribute financially to the proposed project. It is not necessary that these financial contributions be committed at this time, but will be required before the contribution agreement is signed.

- NRCan: Indicate how much funding you are seeking. For eligible projects, priority may be given to proponents that provide a higher leveraging ratio (i.e.-where proponents are seeking a lower contribution from NRCan toward total project costs).
- Applicant: This represents the dollar value contribution made by you or your organization to the project. In-kind contributions that you will be providing to the project (non-monetary contribution of goods, services, equipment or time) will only be considered if you can demonstrate a cost to your organization that relates directly to the proposed project. For example, salaried employees, where you can demonstrate through time sheets, are dedicated to project activities could be considered in-kind costs.
- Additional Funders: Use the additional funder rows to identify other funders for your project, including government and private sector. At the EOI stage, this may include other "expected" funders, even though confirmation of funding may still be pending.

- Government funding: Indicate the specific program name and amount of any other federal, territorial or municipal funding being requested for the project.
- Other funding: Indicate other non-government funding anticipated or already committed to the project, including non-profit and private sector.

Please ensure that total anticipated funding from all sources equals total project costs.

23. **Have you already incurred costs or made legal commitments to the project?** Costs incurred before the start of the proposed project may not be reimbursed. If applicable, please describe the legal and financial nature of existing commitments to this project.

### Diversity and Inclusion

Building a sustainable, inclusive, and dynamic economy helps all Canadians prosper. Recognizing that systemic barriers remain in achieving the full participation of underrepresented, disadvantaged, or equity-seeking groups (including, but not limited to, women, Indigenous Peoples, persons with disabilities, members of visible minority/racialized groups), the information collected in this section helps the Government of Canada identify the potential impacts of its policies, programs and services on diverse groups of people.

The information you provide in this section is protected under the *Privacy Act*, and will not adversely affect your application.

## 5. Submitting your application

Please follow the following steps to submit your EOI. To ensure the health and safety of our workers during the COVID-19 pandemic, we encourage submissions be sent via email. However, should this not be possible, please contact the email address below for a mailing address.

1. Download our Growing Canada's Forests: Early Starts EOI form and save as a separate file
2. Fill in the form.
  - Please make sure your application is not scanned since data will be extracted from the electronic version for processing by NRCan.
3. Print, sign, scan and save as a separate file the Authorization page.
  - Alternatively, you can digitally sign the form and send as one file.
4. Email your Expression of Interest form as well as your Authorization page [nrcan.2btrees-2garbres.nrcan@canada.ca](mailto:nrcan.2btrees-2garbres.nrcan@canada.ca) by **Thursday, March 25, 2021, 5:00 p.m. EDT**.
5. In the email subject line, use the following format to assist with processing your submission: 2021 EOI – [Province /Territory] – [Organization Name]
  - Replace the information in the square brackets with the appropriate province/territory and organization name for your project (e.g.2021 EOI – MB – ABC Enterprises)

## 6. Confidentiality and Authorization

This last page of the EOI form describes how the use and distribution of information collected through this EOI will comply with both the *Privacy Act* and the *Access to Information Act*. This section is to be completed by a representative duly authorized to make the declarations and submit the response to NRCan.

Pursuant to the *Privacy Act*, the GCF program will keep confidential any personal information it may collect and will not disclose or transmit said information without your written consent.

Pursuant to the *Access to Information Act*, the GCF program will protect from disclosure any information of a financial, commercial, scientific or technical nature it collects from you so long as you treat said information as confidential in your own establishment. If you choose to send the information or other confidential information to the program by e-mail, the program will respond by email. Similarly, if your correspondence is through regular mail, the program's response will be in like manner. However, in all cases, the program will use e-mail correspondence to you for all non-confidential matters.

## 7. For more information

For any questions surrounding this EOI process, please do not hesitate to contact us by email at [nrcan.2btrees-2garbres.nrcan@canada.ca](mailto:nrcan.2btrees-2garbres.nrcan@canada.ca).