



## CALL FOR PROPOSALS Community of Practice Fund JULY 2025

### A. Program Overview

[MEOPAR \(Marine Environmental Observation, Prediction and Response Network\)](#) is a Canadian not-for-profit organization that supports research, training, and communication related to the ocean through funding programs. MEOPAR supports Canadian-based [Communities of Practice \(CoP\)](#) across multiple disciplines that mobilize knowledge, enrich research, and encourage collaboration between academics, community groups, early career researchers and professionals, Indigenous groups, NGOs, practitioners, and policymakers.

For the purposes of [this call for proposals](#) a CoP is a group of people who share a common concern, set of problems, and/or passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise by interacting regularly to create, share, and use knowledge in that domain. Members are practitioners actively engaged in collective learning and the development of shared resources, practices, and solutions. Visit [this link](#) for examples of MEOPAR CoPs.

MEOPAR is encouraging new CoPs to form, in addition to offering continued support to already-established CoPs that can demonstrate a plan towards long-term sustainability beyond MEOPAR funding. The participation of diverse individuals, inclusive of Indigenous Peoples and members of equity-deserving groups (e.g., members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ communities, persons with a disability, racialized individuals, and women) is essential to creating and mobilizing Canada's best research, technological development, and entrepreneurial expertise to create excellent, innovative, and impactful results.

MEOPAR is committed to actively moving forward on the path of Truth and Reconciliation and advancing Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDIA) initiatives in all its activities. Thus, MEOPAR requires that the CoPs it supports create and action an EDIA policy or framework and engage in practices that apply an EDIA lens to all its activities. CoPs should involve a diversity of members that includes Indigenous Peoples and those from equity-deserving groups in its leadership and overall organizational composition. Priority in awarding funding will be given to successful applications from diverse CoPs and to those that effectively demonstrate a commitment to EDIA and Truth and Reconciliation principles.

### B. Alignment with MEOPAR Objectives and Science Strategy

MEOPAR has identified the following objectives for which targeted funding will be provided:

1. Strengthen the evidence base for decision making and adaptation through development of improved tools, techniques, and strategies for ocean and coastal observation, prediction, and information sharing.
2. Increase economic opportunity, coastal community resilience, and marine ecosystem protection in the face of climate and technological change through end-user-driven science and novel collaborative structures.
3. Improve access to and use of ocean research infrastructures.
4. Diversify, develop, and broaden deployment of Canada's ocean-related research and innovation talent.

Applicants are also encouraged to consult the [MEOPAR Science Strategy 2025–2030](#) for further context and to ensure alignment with MEOPAR's long-term vision and core priorities.

### C. Structure of the Call

New and previously established CoPs are invited to apply for up to three consecutive years of funding (1 Oct 2025 to 30 Sep 2026, 2027, or 2028). New CoPs can request up to \$50,000 per year and previously established CoPs can request up to \$30,000 per year. Please note, MEOPAR requires applicants to [secure matching funds](#) from non-federal government sources that equal or exceed the amount requested from MEOPAR. **Applications are due 17 August 2025 11:59PM ET.**

### D. Funding Eligibility

Eligible recipients of MEOPAR funds include post-secondary institutions, not-for-profit organizations, Indigenous organizations and governments, municipalities, research networks, public engagement networks, companies that deliver public engagement activities, or start-up companies (including those housed in Canadian post-secondary-linked incubators). Eligible recipients do not include federal departments, agencies, or Crown Corporations of the Government of Canada.

### E. Requirements of Funding

Each CoP Lead and Co-Lead receiving MEOPAR funding will enter into an agreement with MEOPAR (called an Ultimate Recipient Agreement [URA], in which the CoP is the Ultimate Recipient). The URA identifies the funding schedule, reporting timeline, project milestones and key performance indicators.

### F. Budget

Detailed budgets (i.e., project and partner contribution), with accompanying justification, are required.

MEOPAR can provide support for overhead (indirect costs) at a rate appropriate for the context of the project up to a maximum of 15%. The rate must be established considering the scale of the project (i.e., not simply using a general flat-rate percentage charge [such as 15%] that does not consider project context). Justification is required for use of this category in the form of a narrative description that explains how the funds will be used under this category, how each expense is calculated, and why it is required. If these costs are not being requested, this should also be justified and clear, so MEOPAR understands your CoP's administrative capacity. If you require administration but do not charge it to the project, it may also be described as an in-kind contribution to assist with the matched funding requirement.

For non-MEOPAR contributions indicate whether partner contributions are cash or in-kind and if the contribution is expected or secured. Each CoP is expected to demonstrate a decreasing reliance on MEOPAR funding to sustain its activities over the longer term. A minimum 1:1 match from non-federal sources is required for every dollar of MEOPAR funding requested.

### G. Submission Procedure

Submit your proposal via our online portal: <https://meopar.smapply.io/>. Keep submission sections to the word limits indicated. Reviewers will not receive or review information after the noted limit.

### H. Inquiries

MEOPAR will host an online info session on July 17, 2025, at 10am PT / 1pm ET. Prospective applicants are encouraged to attend or view the recording (to be posted on MEOPAR's website). [Click here to register.](#)

For questions regarding this Call for Proposals contact [kristi.carter@meopar.ca](mailto:kristi.carter@meopar.ca).

### I. Proposal Evaluation

MEOPAR will review and evaluate proposals using the following rubric:

Criteria		Outstanding	Very Strong	Strong	Moderate	Insufficient
CoP goals, benefits, scope and alignment with MEOPAR Objectives and Science Strategy  25%	12.5%	Goals/objectives, benefits, and problems/issues are exceptionally well-defined with comprehensive details, demonstrating relevance and impact across regions or at a national level. For existing CoPs, new goals/objectives or problems/issues are clearly identified and thoroughly addressed, with attention to broader geographic or systemic implications.	Goals/objectives, benefits, and problems/issues are very well-defined with sufficient details, with strong indications of relevance beyond a regional context. For existing CoPs, new directions or challenges are thoughtfully addressed with consideration of regional or national scope.	Goals/objectives, benefits, and problems/issues are adequately described and show potential for broader application. For existing CoPs, some new goals or issues are identified, though connections to wider regional or national relevance may be limited or implied.	Goals/objectives, benefits, and problems/issues are present but lack clarity or depth. Relevance appears primarily regional, with limited articulation of broader impact. For existing CoPs, new goals or issues may be vague or only partially addressed.	Goals/objectives, benefits, and problems/issues are unclear, incomplete, or missing. There is little to no indication of relevance beyond a regional context. For existing CoPs, no new goals or issues are identified or addressed.
	12.5%	CoP goals, objectives, activities and expected outcomes are explicitly and comprehensively aligned with MEOPAR's Objectives and Science Strategy.	CoP goals, objectives, activities and expected outcomes are clearly aligned with MEOPAR's Objectives and Science Strategy.	CoP goals, objectives, activities and expected outcomes show general alignment with MEOPAR's Objectives and Science Strategy.	CoP goals, objectives, activities and expected outcomes are only partially aligned with MEOPAR's Objectives and Science Strategy.	CoP goals, objectives activities and expected outcomes do not align with MEOPAR's Objectives and Science Strategy, or no effort is made to demonstrate alignment.
Quality of CoP activities  25%	12.5%	Strategies for knowledge exchange and community engagement are highly effective and innovative.	Strategies for knowledge exchange and community engagement are very effective.	Strategies for knowledge exchange and community engagement are effective.	Strategies for knowledge exchange and community engagement are moderately effective.	Strategies for knowledge exchange and community engagement are ineffective.
	12.5%	Activities are highly responsive to the diversity of members' needs and priorities, demonstrating clear benefits.	Activities are very responsive to the diversity of members' needs and priorities, demonstrating clear benefits.	Activities are responsive to the diversity of members' needs and priorities, demonstrating benefits.	Activities are somewhat responsive to the diversity of members' needs and priorities, demonstrating some benefits.	Activities are minimally responsive to the diversity of members' needs and priorities, demonstrating minimal benefits.
CoP plan, budget, and timeline justification; matching contributions  25%	5.0%	The plan, budget, and timeline are clear, highly detailed, demonstrate strategic foresight and are contextually appropriate.	The plan, budget, and timeline are well-structured and contextually appropriate.	The plan, budget, and timeline are sound but may lack some detail or clarity.	The plan, budget, and timeline are vague or incomplete.	The plan, budget, and timeline are missing or unclear.
	5.0%	Milestones are well-defined, achievable, and demonstrate a deep understanding of implementation needs, with clear alignment to expected outcomes.	Milestones are clear with logical sequencing and directly linked to expected outcomes.	Milestones are present but could be more specific or better linked to outcomes.	Some milestones may be unclear or poorly aligned with expected outcomes.	There is little to no alignment with expected outcomes.
	15.0%	Strong matching contributions are evident, and there is a well-articulated plan to reduce reliance on MEOPAR funding over time. For every dollar MEOPAR contributes, the applicant will secure at least 1.75 dollars from non-federal sources (cash or in-kind) as well. 1.75:1, or higher.	Matching contributions are present and reasonable and reduced reliance on MEOPAR funding is demonstrated. For every dollar MEOPAR contributes, the applicant will secure 1.5 - 1.74 dollars from non-federal sources (cash or in-kind), as well. 1.5-1.74:1.	Matching contributions are modest or not fully explained and there is some reliance on MEOPAR funding. For every dollar MEOPAR contributes, the applicant will secure 1.25-1.49 dollars from non-federal sources (cash or in-kind), as well. 1.25-1.49:1.	The application meets the minimum matching requirement, with non-federal contributions (cash or in-kind) provided at a ratio of 1-1.24:1 for every dollar requested from MEOPAR. However, there remains a strong reliance on MEOPAR funding.	There are minimal or no matching contributions and high reliance on MEOPAR funding. For every dollar MEOPAR contributes, the applicant will secure less than 1 dollar from non-federal sources (cash or in-kind), as well. <1:1. If this box is triggered the application should not pass the pre-screening.
EDIA & Truth and Reconciliation Considerations*  25%	6.25%	The CoP's approach to EDIA is shaped in collaboration with equity-deserving communities and is woven into everyday work. These principles guide how decisions are made, how people engage, and how the CoP evolves. Accountability is embedded through ongoing reflection, shared responsibility, and transparent practices.	The CoP demonstrates a clear commitment to EDIA, with meaningful engagement of equity-deserving groups in shaping practices. EDIA principles are integrated into core activities, and there are mechanisms in place for accountability and continuous improvement.	The CoP incorporates EDIA principles in its structure and activities, with some engagement of equity-deserving groups. There is a stated commitment to accountability, though mechanisms may be emerging or inconsistently applied.	The CoP acknowledges the importance of EDIA and shows some initial steps toward inclusion. Engagement with equity-deserving groups is limited, and accountability measures are minimal or not clearly defined.	The CoP lacks evidence of EDIA integration. There is no meaningful engagement with equity-deserving groups, and no mechanisms for accountability are in place.
	6.25%	Leadership and participation demonstrate equitable representation. The proposal demonstrates specific actions to ensure accessibility, cultural safety, and inclusive engagement.	Leadership and participation include diverse perspectives, with some representation from equity-deserving groups. Diversity is evident and valued, though the depth of engagement or influence may be less fully articulated.	Some diversity is present in leadership or participation, but engagement with equity-deserving groups is limited. There is evidence of inclusion efforts, though plans may lack depth or integration.	Leadership and participation show minimal diversity, with little evidence of engagement from equity-deserving groups. Inclusion may be intended, but actions are underdeveloped or unclear.	Leadership and participation lack diversity, with no indication of inclusion of equity-deserving groups.
	6.25%	The CoP meaningfully integrates the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, especially those related to education, knowledge sharing, and relationship-building.	The CoP demonstrates strong engagement with Truth and Reconciliation principles.	The CoP acknowledges the importance of Truth and Reconciliation	There is some awareness of Truth and Reconciliation, but limited action or engagement.	Truth and Reconciliation is not addressed in the CoP's work.
	6.25%	Indigenous voices are centered in leadership and decision-making, and cultural safety is prioritized.	Indigenous perspectives are actively included, and there is evidence of respectful collaboration and learning.	The CoP has taken steps to include Indigenous perspectives, though efforts may still be developing or limited in scope.	Indigenous inclusion may be symbolic rather than substantive.	There is no evidence of Indigenous engagement or awareness of related responsibilities.
* We recognize that Indigenous-led CoPs may express EDIA and Truth and Reconciliation commitments through community-based practices, oral traditions, and relational accountability. This matrix is intended to support reflection and recognition of diverse approaches to equity and reconciliation.						