



CALL FOR PROPOSALS

**Community-led Research Fund
2026-2028**

October 2025



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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.

The Community-led Research (CLR) Fund supports multi-year, community-driven research projects that strengthen resilience and respond to marine environmental challenges. The fund is designed to:

- Prioritize and uphold Indigenous-led and community-led research and community-defined priorities.
- Develop community research capacity, including training, mentorship, and skills development.
- Support research partnerships that bring together scientific, cultural, and/or Indigenous knowledge systems.
- Enable projects that enhance coastal and ocean resilience, community well-being, and sustainable futures.

Funded projects may include:

- Community-led and Indigenous-led research projects, community-based monitoring programs, knowledge hubs, living labs, test sites, and other partnership models.
- Research rooted in natural sciences, social sciences, and Indigenous methodologies that address ocean and coastal issues.
- Projects that weave in or support cultural knowledge, language, and land/water-based activities to support community well-being.

Priority will be given to Indigenous-led projects and community partnerships that strengthen resilience and advance community-driven priorities.

B. Alignment with MEOPAR's 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.

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 proposed projects engage in practices that apply an EDIA lens to all its activities. Project activities 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 teams and to those that effectively demonstrate a commitment to EDIA and Truth and Reconciliation principles.

B. Structure of the Call

MEOPAR expects to fund 6-10 projects up to \$150,000 per year for up to 2.5 years, for a maximum awarded amount of \$300,000. The timeline for the project funding taking place from April 1, 2026 – October 28, 2028.

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, organizations and 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. Applicants must be eligible to hold a grant in their institution/organization. Research-led projects must demonstrate strong and verified community partnerships.

E. Requirements of Funding

Institutions employing each principal investigator (PI) receiving MEOPAR funding will enter into an agreement with MEOPAR (called an Ultimate Recipient Agreement [URA], in which the PI is the Ultimate Recipient). The URA identifies the funding schedule, reporting timeline, project milestones, and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs).

It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all necessary certifications, permits, licenses and other approvals have been obtained before any research is carried out in whole or in part (e.g. research involving human subjects, or research with effects on the environment, Indigenous peoples, and animals). If an environmental or ethics assessment is required for the proposal, MEOPAR will need a copy of the appropriate institutional certification committee approval before full funding is released.

F. Budget

Detailed budgets (i.e., project and partner contribution), with accompanying justification, are required in addition to the work plan. The budget must be submitted in the format of the attached template (**Appendix B**). Eligible expenses may include personnel and honoraria, training and capacity development, community engagement activities, travel and fieldwork, equipment and supplies, dissemination and reporting, and justified overhead costs. See the full application guide for details.

In accordance with the SSF guide, 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 you require administrative support 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 in the attached template (**Appendix C**) whether partner contributions are cash or in-kind, matched or leveraged, and if the contribution is expected or secured. **Matching funds must be equal to or above the ratio of 1:0.8 from non-federal government partners for every dollar of MEOPAR funding requested**, with additional points awarded for increasing matched funding. See the [explanation of matched and leveraged partner contributions](#), the SSF Program Guideline for details on [eligible and ineligible costs](#), and [Appendix C - Guidelines for calculating the value of in-kind contributions](#).

G. Submission Procedure

Submit your proposal via our online portal: <https://meopar.smapply.io/>. The submission deadline is **January 25th, 2026 at 23:59 Eastern time**.

Keep submission sections to the word or page limits indicated. Reviewers will not receive information after the noted limit. For PDF uploads, documents are to be single-spaced (no more than six lines per inch), regular 12-point font, with margins of 0.75". Reviewers will not receive or review information after the noted limit.

H. Inquiries

To help with proposal development, and having a good understanding of matching fund requirements, MEOPAR will host a webinar in English on December 4, 2025 at 11:00 am Pacific time (2:00 pm Eastern time). To register click [here](#). The French webinar will take place on December 11 at 11 am Pacific time (2 pm Eastern time) and you can register [here](#). For questions regarding this Call for Proposals contact Maéva Gauthier, Program Manager – Community-led Research, at maeva.gauthier@meopar.ca.

I. Proposal Evaluation

MEOPAR's Research Management Committee will review and evaluate proposals based on the following criteria:

1. Goals, Benefits, Scope, and Alignment with MEOPAR strategy (20%)
2. Quality of Project: Objectives, Approach, Collaboration (30%)
3. Project Plan, Timeline, Budget, Matching Contributions, Data Management plan (25%)
4. Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Accessibility, and Truth & Reconciliation (25%)

To review the evaluation rubric for this call, refer to the Application Guide and/or the proposal form worksheet (both found [here](#)).

Optional bonus points (5%):

Applications from equity-deserving groups or remote regions (see Appendix A). These applications must demonstrate that they originate from these groups or regions, which can be the applicant, co-applicant or communities directly involved in the proposed community-led research project.