

# OCEAN SUPERCLUSTER RESILIENCE (OSCR) CALL FOR PROPOSALS GUIDELINES

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Short-Term Ocean Projects to Help Continue to Build Resiliency in Ocean Sectors



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# INTRODUCTION

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**Canada's Ocean Supercluster is an industry-led transformative cluster focused on tackling the shared challenges of multiple ocean sectors through a collaborative program designed to accelerate the development of globally relevant solutions and build Canada's ocean innovation ecosystem.**

This includes leaders in fisheries, aquaculture, offshore resources, bioresources, transportation, marine renewables, defense, and ocean technologies who are committed to leveraging their collective strengths, working together, and growing Canada's ocean economy in a digital, sustainable, and inclusive way.

In 2020, OSC membership grew to over 350 organizations with partnerships forming from coast to coast to coast, and more than 45 projects have been approved to date. We are excited to continue to scale and facilitate connection-making across our national cluster through this Ocean Supercluster Resilience (OSCR) Call for Proposals, which will trigger investment in new projects and generate different conversations about collaborative opportunities between our members in both the private and public sectors. This is a deadline-driven, competitive opportunity for projects that have durations of up to 30 months.

The OSCR Call is investing up to \$15 million into projects that demonstrate strong collaborations and focus on supporting the growth of multiple Canadian innovation-focused companies. We are seeking project ideas that promote ocean digital transformation, strengthen private-public sector connections, and build diverse partnerships between OSC members. OSCR is a one-time only call to encourage members to

tackle significant challenges in Canada's ocean industries and the ocean community at large, unlocking new development opportunities, and increasing Canada's global competitiveness in ocean. OSCR will help industry access and leverage the incredible capacity and knowledge that exists in Canada's public sector institutions, and drive the creation of commercially relevant initiatives that strengthen Canada's ocean innovation ecosystem. This call invites members to apply their collective capability, diversity of insight, and resilience towards projects that make a direct positive impact on OSC members and the broader Canadian ocean economy.

The OSC will offer an OSCR Call for Proposals information session on January 25th, 2021 at 1:00pm Atlantic time (English) and at 2:30 pm Atlantic time (French) to walk through the details of this one-time program. This session is open to the public. If you would like to register for this information session, you can do so here:

**<https://www.eventbrite.ca/o/canadas-ocean-supercluster-17506726217>**.

In addition, the OSC will support project idea development by hosting ideation events during the EOI phase. During these events, we will invite OSC members to pitch and solicit ideas, and also explore new partnership opportunities. These sessions will be open to OSC members only. Further information on ideation events will be shared at the January 25th information session and made available through OSC member communications and in the member portal: **<https://oceansupercluster.force.com/GranteePortal/login>**. If you'd like to participate in an ideation event but are not yet an OSC member, please see more information about how to become a member on page 7.

# APPLICATION PROCESS

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The OSCR Call for Proposals process consists of several steps:

## EXPRESSION OF INTEREST (EOI)

- The project Lead Applicant must be an OSC member before the EOI submission deadline to be eligible to submit an EOI.
- Applicants must complete and submit an EOI using the OSC prescribed EOI template by the stated deadline.
- No additional documents, letters, appendices, or attachments other than the EOI template will be processed.
- The OSC will not review draft EOIs or provide detailed project-specific feedback to individual organizations as they prepare EOIs. This will ensure all EOI applicants have access to the same information.
- EOIs will be evaluated by an OSCR Call Evaluation Committee (CEC). All applicants will be informed of the outcome by the middle of March 2021. Only applicants successful in their EOI submission will be eligible to submit a proposal. Applicants that are not successful in their EOI submission will not be able to receive detailed feedback.

## FULL PROPOSAL

- By the middle of March, successful EOI applicants will receive an invite to submit a full proposal. The details of the proposal development process will only be communicated to successful EOI applicants.
- Applicants will have five (5) weeks from the date of notification to develop and submit full proposals.
- Applicants must prepare and submit proposals in the prescribed format.

## PROPOSAL SELECTION AND AWARD

- Proposals will be evaluated by the OSCR CEC, and selection recommendations will be ratified by the OSC Board of Directors. All individuals involved in the evaluation process will be under an OSC non-disclosure agreement and in compliance with OSC's Conflict of Interest Policy.
- Applicants will be notified of the selection outcome and any conditions for funding.
- Applicants may be requested by the CEC to revise one or more aspects of their proposal before their project's selection outcome is finalized.
- Selected applicants are required to enter into an OSC Project Agreement, which sets out the terms and conditions related to funding.
- Applicants that are not successful in their full proposal submissions will be invited to discuss proposal evaluation feedback.

# PROJECT SELECTION CRITERIA

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**OSCR's selection criteria are aimed to solicit a diverse set of project ideas that:**

- Address challenges impeding the ability of multiple Canadian companies to launch or proliferate ocean-focused offerings into new markets;
- Leverage digital innovation and business reform to deliver transformational changes in customer value, global competitiveness, and connectivity across and between ocean sectors; and
- Contribute to the advancement of the ocean innovation ecosystem by creating and strengthening relationships between Canada's private and public/NGO sectors.

**Successful OSCR projects will:**

- Identify a compelling industry-relevant challenge;
- Solicit required industry contribution(s);
- Identify appropriate private and public/NGO sector partners;
- Deliver direct commercial benefits to the project consortium; and
- Make a positive impact on Canada's ocean innovation ecosystem.

**The OSC represents a variety of ocean industries that will bring different perspectives to OSCR project ideas, but areas where consortiums are likely to find common ground in the context of this Call include, but are not limited to:**

- Digital ocean supply chain development initiatives.
- Ocean health and environmental stewardship.
- Ocean technology standards development and interoperability.
- Development of remote, autonomous or AI-based sectoral/cross-sectoral networks.
- Ocean-based technology validation of products from multiple firms and organizations.
- Sustainability-focused initiatives for ocean-based resources.
- Circular economy concepts that create or add value to made-in-Canada supply chains.
- Communication infrastructure, IP & data sharing, and information exchange.



**Projects will need to demonstrate strength across key selection criteria which have been summarized below:**

### **Industrial relevancy and contribution to industrial growth (25%)**

- Focuses on a clearly defined, distinctive, and significant ocean-related industry challenge that requires innovative thinking, advanced capabilities and world-class technological solutions to resolve.
- Demonstrated pull by and meaningful involvement from ocean industry for the solution being proposed.
- Magnitude of the positive impact the project will make on Canada's ocean economy is direct, substantial, and substantiated.
- Creates and/or preserves Canadian private sector jobs.

### **Capability and technology advancement (25%)**

- Enables or accelerates the delivery of new or enhanced ocean-related technologies and commercial offerings.
- Requires specialized, advanced human capabilities and expertise to succeed.
- Demonstrates why proposed advancements are not possible, would not have occurred, or would not have achieved a similar level of positive impact in absence of OSCR.
- Capability and technologies applied to the challenge deliver transformational changes in customer value, global competitiveness, and connectivity across and between ocean industries.

### **Quality of collaboration and reach of impact (25%)**

- Meaningful, distinctive private-public/NGO sector consortium created to execute the project.
- Deliver a direct quantifiable benefit to Canada's ocean innovation ecosystem. Ways by which projects can demonstrate their contribution include, but are not limited to:
  - Impact definitively extends to under-represented groups.
  - New, meaningful organizational relationships across multiple provinces are fostered.
  - Facilitates new investment into small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs).
  - Improves industry stakeholders' access to research and development labs and/or testing sites in Canada.
- Manner by which innovation ecosystem benefits will be realized is clear and tangible.

### **Project plan (25%)**

- Role of each collaborator is clear.
- Consortium's capability to deliver is superior compared to existing or status quo alternatives.
- Consortium has appropriate experience and expertise.
- Plan is well-articulated, with clear tasks, milestones and deliverables.
- Budget is clear and in line with project plan.
- Timeframe is feasible.

For OSC members who are familiar with OSC's long-standing Core Technology Leadership (TL) and Innovation Ecosystem (IE) programming, OSCR can be considered as a hybrid of both programs. The industry contributions and cost eligibility requirements are the same as a Core TL project, but the consortium characteristics and selection criteria are aimed

to solicit project ideas that solve broader industry-relevant problems and contribute to the advancement of Canada's world-class ocean innovation ecosystem. Projects focused on product commercialization should be directed towards the OSC's Core TL program, OSC's continuous intake program that caters specifically to these types of projects.



# INFORMATION & REQUIREMENTS

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**EOI DEADLINE:  
FEBRUARY 19TH, 2021  
AT 4:00PM  
ATLANTIC TIME**

**Program Information:** All information relevant to the OSCR program, including the EOI template, is available on OSC's OSCR webpage: <https://oceansupercluster.ca/projects/ocean-supercluster-resilience/>

**EOI submission:** EOIs must be submitted by the Lead Applicant before the stated deadline to: [OSCR@oceansupercluster.ca](mailto:OSCR@oceansupercluster.ca)

**Lead applicant:** The project Lead Applicant must have operations in Canada and be an Industry or Associate Member of the OSC.

## **To become a member:**

- Read the OSC Unanimous Members Agreement and By-Laws, then sign and submit a Joinder Agreement to the OSC. To receive these documents, fill out this form: <https://oceansupercluster.ca/become-a-member/>
- Return the signed Joinder Agreement to [membership@oceansupercluster.ca](mailto:membership@oceansupercluster.ca). You will receive a confirmation of your membership and login credentials for the OSC member portal within one business day of returning your signed Joinder.

If an applicant's Proposal is selected and approved, then organizations seeking reimbursement from the OSC will need to become Industry Members.

To be eligible for Industry Membership and reimbursement, an organization must be one of the following:

- (a) for-profit organization;
- (b) not-for-profit organization that facilitate and fund research and development and whose funding is received primarily from private-sector organizations;
- (c) non-federal Crown corporations whose funding is derived from commercial activities.

Additional information on membership can also be found here: <https://oceansupercluster.ca/members/info/>.

**Consortium requirements:** The project consortium must consist of at least three (3) collaborators that are directly involved in and meaningfully benefitting from the project. The project consortium must include at least one (1) small medium sized enterprise (less than 499 employees) AND at least one (1) non-private sector organization.

**Project duration:** The maximum permitted project duration is 30 months.

**EOI submission limit:** Each OSC member organization may be a Lead Applicant on up to three (3) EOIs. Subsequent EOIs received will not be processed. Any organization can be a collaborator on any number of EOIs that are led by another OSC member organization.

**Reimbursement rate:** The OSC supports projects by reimbursing a portion of the cash and in-kind contributions made by private sector firms (industry contributions) who are participating in the project as Industry Members. The OSC will reimburse up to 50% of a project's industry contributions. There is flexibility to adjust reimbursement rates within certain cost categories as long as the overall reimbursement rate is maintained at or below 50%.

**Industry contributions:** A minimum of one private sector firm must make a financial contribution to the project. Applications must include sufficient industry contributions to match their OSC ask. Contributing firms must be clearly identified. Other additional sources of funding that add to the total project value are not required but are supportive to the application.

**Cost eligibility:** Up to 25% of total project industry contributions can be in-kind. Salaries of new and existing industry personnel are considered cash and should be included as cash contributions. The OSC's Cost Eligibility Guidelines can be found on the OSCR webpage, and provide additional details on eligible and ineligible project costs as well as reimbursement rates on in-kind contributions.

**Minimum budget:** The minimum OSC funding contribution cannot be less than \$250,000.

**Minimum budget example:** An OSC funding contribution request for \$250,000 requires an industry contribution of \$250,000 to be put forward by private sector firms. This means the Industry Member must spend \$500,000 in order to receive a reimbursement of \$250,000

from the OSC. Up to \$62,500 (25%) of the industry contribution can be in-kind. The industry contribution salary component should be included as a cash (not in-kind) contribution. Under this example, the project would have a total value of \$500,000.

**Maximum budget:** The maximum OSC funding contribution cannot exceed \$5 million per project.

**Maximum budget example:** An OSC funding contribution request for \$5 million requires an industry contribution of \$5 million to be put forward by private sector firms. This means the Industry Member must spend \$10 million in order to receive a reimbursement of \$5 million from the OSC. Up to \$1.25 million (25%) of the industry contribution can be in-kind. The industry contribution salary component should be included as a cash (not in-kind) contribution. Under this example, the project would have a total value of \$10 million.

**Incrementality:** All projects must be incremental to the regular business undertakings of applicants. Successful EOI applicants will be required to assert that their proposal is not a project in progress at the applicant(s) organization(s), and that the proposed project is new or that OSC funding will be used to expand the scope or scale of a proposed project.

The OSC offers a Core Technology Leadership program that is separate from this Call for Proposals and focuses on product commercialization. If you wish to learn more about this program, please contact:

[contact@oceansupercluster.ca](mailto:contact@oceansupercluster.ca)



[contact@oceansupercluster.ca](mailto:contact@oceansupercluster.ca)  
[oceansupercluster.ca](http://oceansupercluster.ca)

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