



# **CANADIAN AGRICULTURAL RURAL COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE**

**OPERATING GUIDELINES and APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS**

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# **CANADIAN AGRICULTURAL RURAL COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE OPERATING GUIDELINES**

## **Background**

The Canadian Agricultural Rural Communities Initiative (CARCI) was developed through consultations between industry and stakeholders. These consultations identified priorities for a renewed Canadian Adaptation and Rural Development (CARD) program with greater focus on rural agricultural community development.

CARCI-assisted projects will complement other CARD-funded projects which respond to the needs of the agriculture and agri-food sector in such areas as agricultural production, marketing of agricultural products, food safety, research and development of new products and processes, and farm management.

CARCI projects will also complement the Canadian Rural Partnership's pilot projects, and other programs and projects, that are part of the Federal Framework for Action in Rural Canada.

## **OVERVIEW**

### **1. Objective**

CARCI's objective is to enhance the viability of agricultural rural communities, particularly those communities undergoing change as a result of adjustment in the agricultural sector. CARCI's projects will:

- enhance the capacity of regional rural organizations to develop responses to agricultural community issues;
- implement partnership projects which test community-based responses to the socio-economic adaptation issues faced by agricultural communities in transition;
- provide assistance to conferences, workshops and seminars that identify rural needs, programs and services gaps, and ways to overcome the challenges facing agriculture rural communities; and
- undertake research on agricultural rural community issues.

## 2. Eligible Recipients

Canadian individuals and organizations including:

- rural groups, associations and corporations;
- municipal governments or their agencies;
- aboriginal and Métis groups;
- women`s and youth groups;
- farm, agri-food and rural organizations; and
- educational institutions.

*(Federal and provincial governments and their agencies are not eligible for assistance, but their partnership is encouraged).*

## 3. Eligible Activities

Eligible activities fall under the headings of:

- **Rural Coordination Organizations;**
- **Partnership Projects;**
- **Workshops, Conferences and Seminars; and**
- **Research.**

### 3.1 Support for Rural Coordination Organizations for related Agricultural Rural Projects

Support will be provided to further the work of existing and new provincial and territorial rural coordinating organizations which contribute to building a community of non-government organizations, focused on agricultural community development.

This support will help coordinating organizations develop the capacity to advise all levels of government on agricultural and rural development policies in their respective regions.

Support will be provided based on the degree to which the applicant represents the agricultural community sector within the province or region, the capability of the organization to implement the proposed project and the reach of the project. The normal maximum level of support is 50% of the eligible costs, to a maximum of \$80,000.

### 3.2 Partnership Projects

These projects will implement partnerships that test community-based solutions to the adaptation issues faced by agricultural communities in transition. This component assists in the funding of projects in such areas as: empowering agricultural rural communities through networking, business alliances and community coaching; and, the

development of new approaches to doing business such as cooperatives or new models of business practices.

CARCI partnership projects provide an opportunity for applicants to work with other federal departments and agencies, as well as other levels of government and stakeholders. Partnership funding can provide financial assistance to organizations and groups in agricultural rural communities who wish to develop an “action plan” for community development and sustainability.

These projects must be time-limited and results-based. They cannot lead to on-going commitment by the federal government.

Funding or resources leveraged from other sources will ensure that AAFC is only one of the partners and that other sectors and rural stakeholders play a significant role. Normal maximum level of support is 50% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$60,000.

Projects should demonstrate that they are innovative and will result in local impact. Preference will be given to projects which promote networks with more than one partner. Benefits should be in the public domain, i.e., not accrue to individuals or private businesses.

### **3.3 Workshops, Conferences and Seminars**

Support is provided for workshops, conferences and seminars in which participants can share and exchange ideas, experiences and solutions for addressing common agricultural community issues, at the national, regional, provincial and local level. Support is provided to examine policy and community level issues which involve other partners, including other levels of government, the private sector and rural stakeholders.

Funding can be used for seminars and workshops that help agricultural communities in developing solutions/alternatives to their issues. The seminars and workshops can be stand-alone or parts of a larger event, such as a conference. The support should contribute to the longer-term viability of communities.

CARCI will not normally be the major source of funding for workshops, conferences, or seminars. Normal maximum level of support is 50% of eligible costs to a maximum of \$20,000.

### **3.4 Research Related to Agricultural Rural Communities**

CARCI assists in funding socio-economic research on the issues faced by agricultural communities. Research could be on such issues as:

- the identification of new economic activities for agricultural communities resulting in new niche markets for value-added products;
- innovative ways of providing government services to small communities;
- the constraints facing rural people in their ability to access and use new information technology; and
- growth and adaptation to change within rural communities to help determine the significant characteristics of dynamic communities.

This greater understanding of the process of change in communities provides valuable insights for other communities and all levels of government, and can assist the federal government in determining what role it can play in socio-economic community development.

The focus of projects can be local, regional or national. In addition, projects can be “stand-alone”, or components of larger partnership research projects being lead by other federal departments, other levels of government, universities and academic institutions or non-government organizations. Emphasis must be placed on sharing the outcomes of the research. The normal maximum level of support is 50% of eligible costs, to a maximum of \$50,000.

### **3.5 General Criteria**

**Projects must demonstrate the following:**

- S respond to one or more of the rural priorities under the Federal Framework for Action in Rural Canada;
- S recognize and respond to local/regional agricultural rural community priorities;
- S where appropriate, work with multiple partners in implementing projects;
- S propose innovative or original approaches to issues;
- S assist in adaptation of the agricultural sector; and
- S contribute to the socio-economic sustainability of rural communities.

Projects must be consistent with the Canadian Adaptation and Rural Development Program’s Objectives, Principles, and Criteria and relevant Treasury Board Guidelines.

## 4.0 Deadlines

### Rural Coordination Organizations

Deadline: ongoing acceptance of applications

### Partnership Projects

Deadlines: August 31, 2001  
December 31, 2001  
April 30, 2002  
August 31, 2002  
December 31, 2002

### Workshops, Conferences and Seminars

Deadline: ongoing acceptance of applications

### Research Related to Agricultural Rural Communities

Deadlines: June 30, 2001  
September 30, 2001  
December 31, 2001  
March 31, 2002  
June 30, 2002  
September 30, 2002  
December 31, 2002  
March 31, 2003

## **CANADIAN AGRICULTURAL RURAL COMMUNITIES INITIATIVE APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS**

### **Information Required**

All applications for financial assistance shall provide the following information:

- S Name of the applicant, address, legal status, Canada Customs and Revenue Agency GST or Business Number, contacts, experience associated with the proposed project.
- S Description of the proposed activity to be undertaken, including the identification of who will benefit from the project and what the benefits are expected to be.
- S How the proposed activities relate to CARCI's objectives.
- S Description of the linkages with agriculture.
- S Description of how the project assists the community in reacting to changes within the agriculture and agri-food sector.
- S Description of how and to what extent the project addresses issues in the community and what involvement the community has in the project.
- S The time frame to undertake the proposed activity, including timing of interim and final project and financial reports.
- S The budget for the project, including funding arrangements by the various parties associated with the project, and time frames for the use of funds. All funding sources, including federal and provincial departments and agencies, municipal governments and private sector sources should be clearly identified. (Note: CARCI financial support cannot be matched with financial support from other Canadian Adaptation and Rural Development (CARD) programs or projects, or other Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada programs.)
- S Anticipated expenditures, funding limitations and method/schedule of payment.
- S Where applicable, the need for advance payments and/or progress payments, and timing of final payment.
- S Provision for performance reporting, audit and evaluation.

- S Where applicable, ownership of the intellectual property by the Crown.
- S Identification of the involvement of former public servants who are under the Post-Employment Guidelines.

This information should be part of all project proposals from the applicants and will be incorporated into the approved activities, and expected outputs and outcomes in contribution agreements.

### **Applicant Obligations**

- S Recipients are required to carry out project activities according to established federal practices, recommendations, standards and specifications.
- S All project activities must meet federal and/or provincial environmental assessment requirements prior to approval.
- S Recipients receiving contributions must agree to provide access to AAFC personnel and authorized persons, agencies, or groups for inspection, evaluation, demonstration, audit and public information purposes.
- S Recipients must have the capability to conduct the proposed project activities and must demonstrate that they have, or will have, adequate financial resources to discharge their obligations under the contribution agreement.

All of the above information is covered in the contribution agreement which the recipient must sign.

### **Eligible Expenses**

Expenses incurred prior to the signing of contribution agreements are not eligible for reimbursement. Eligible costs incurred in carrying out approved eligible activities include:

- S costs for consultants and/or contracted goods and services;
- S costs for incremental materials and supplies, including the non-refundable portion of the Goods and Services Tax (GST), if any, paid by the proponents;
- S costs for incremental labour or incremental salaried services, and related employment costs;

- S costs for rental or lease of facilities, equipment or machinery (the purchase of specialized items necessary for the execution of projects may be eligible with prior authorization of the Executive Director, Rural Secretariat, AAFC);
- S administrative and other costs such as planning and consultation, performance reporting, accounting, auditing and evaluation, travel (in accordance with the Treasury Board Travel Directive), maintenance expenses; and
- S any other costs having the specific approval of the Executive Director, Rural Secretariat, AAFC.

Non eligible costs include:

- S capital construction and capital items, including the purchase of furniture and furnishings (except for those identified above);
- S on-going, core activities;
- S activities associated with regular on-going events;
- S hospitality costs beyond Treasury Board Guidelines;
- S gifts associated with the hosting of events;
- S legal fees associated with the incorporation of an organization; and
- S the refundable portion of the G.S.T.

### **Level of Financial Support**

Financial support for projects will not normally exceed 50% of eligible project costs.

For project proposals where the funding requests are above the “normal” limits as identified above, the applicant must clearly identify the nature of the exceptional benefits that rural Canadians will derive from the project. Applicants must also clearly identify why partners cannot be found to share the costs of the project.

A lower level of support than that sought may be recommended during the review and assessment process. CARCI projects cannot be matched with funding from other CARD initiatives or other Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada programs. CARCI applications must clearly indicate all other sources of federal funds being sought or obtained.

Projects forwarded for approval will reflect the CARCI's partnership objectives and the recommendations of others involved in the proposal assessment process.

Project management and administration for the Canadian Agricultural Rural Communities Initiative is through the Rural Secretariat, AAFC.

### **Basis of Payment**

Contributions to the recipient shall be in accordance with accountable contribution agreements between the recipient and AAFC. Where possible, expenses will be incurred by the recipient and reimbursed, within approved funding levels, through the agreement. However, when this is not possible, due to the nature of the organization, event, time or cash flow restrictions, an advance payment can be made to the recipient. A minimum hold-back of 10% of the federal contribution shall be applied until all project and financial reports have been received and accepted.

### **Audit Provisions**

Recipient/AAFC agreements shall contain audit clauses reserving the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food's right to audit contribution records and satisfying all AAFC financial/non-financial conditions. Where applicable, agreements must also provide for overpayment recovery and recipients' maintenance of related records for a three-year period beyond the Initiative.

### **Communication**

All applications must describe how the outcomes of the project will be shared with others. All communications materials will prominently acknowledge the role of the Government of Canada and will be in accordance with the Government of Canada's Communications Policy, the Federal Identity Program and the Official Languages Act.

### **Performance Framework**

Where applicable, the recipient must develop and implement a performance management framework and reporting system to measure the performance of the recipient's programs, input project and performance indicator information to the national database and provide an annual performance report summarizing program reach, results achieved and resources expended on a fiscal year basis.

### **Environmental Assessment**

Although it is recognized that many of the activities will not have any effect on the environment, all Canadian Agricultural Rural Communities Initiative activities are subject to environmental assessment.

## **Duration**

Projects under CARCI shall be approved by March 31, 2003. All projects must be completed by December 31, 2003 with all payments made by March 31, 2004.

### **Note:**

**The information that you provide is collected for the purpose of the administration of the Canadian Agricultural Rural Communities Initiative. The information collected will be subject to the Access to Information Act.**

## CHECK LIST

A check list has been provided to assist with a quick self assessment of the completeness of your project proposal. Failure to adequately address all of the required elements will lessen the likelihood of a project being approved.

### **HAVE YOU CLEARLY IDENTIFIED:**

1. How you plan to meet the eligibility requirements?
2. That your project addresses an agricultural rural community priority?
3. The link to the agriculture sector that the project has?
4. What change in the agriculture sector your project addresses?
5. How and to what extent the project addresses issues in the community, as well as the involvement of the community in the project?
6. That the project activities are incremental to your organization's operations?
7. How the proposed approach is innovative?
8. Where appropriate, the involvement of partners?
9. All funding sources, including federal and provincial departments and agencies, municipal governments and private sector sources for your project?
10. That your partnerships are confirmed?
11. That other funding partners' support has been confirmed?
12. That your proposal includes an evaluation framework?
13. All project expenditures in your budget, and how CARCI funds are to be used?
14. How you expect to measure the project's outcomes?

