



# AgriScience Program Clusters Component

Applicant Guide

AgriScience Program - Clusters Component, Applicant Guide

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Catalogue No. : A22-600/2017E-PDF

ISBN : 978-0-660-23993-4

AAFC No. : AAFC 12726E

Paru également en français sous le titre  
Programme Agri-science - Volet grappes  
Guide du demandeur

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## Purpose of this guide

The purpose of this applicant guide is to provide you with the eligibility criteria of the AgriScience Program (Clusters component) and the step-by-step guidance and instruction to help you complete your application for Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) funding. It is highly recommended that you read the guide before you complete the form.

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## **1.0 Canadian Agricultural Partnership**

The Canadian Agricultural Partnership (the next agricultural policy framework) is a five-year, \$3 billion investment by federal, provincial and territorial governments to strengthen the agriculture, agri-food and agri-based products sector. In addition, producers will continue to have access to a robust suite of Business Risk Management (BRM) programs.

The partnership will be in place by April 1, 2018.

The Canadian Agricultural Partnership will focus on six priority areas:

- Science, research, and innovation – to help industry use science and innovation to improve resiliency and increase productivity
- Markets and trade – to open new markets and help farmers and food processors improve their competitiveness through skills development, improved export capacity, underpinned by a strong and efficient regulatory system
- Environmental sustainability and climate change – to help the sector reduce its greenhouse gas emissions, protect the environment and adapt to climate change by enhancing sustainable growth while increasing production
- Value-added agriculture and agri-food processing – to support the continued growth of the value-added agriculture and agri-food processing sector
- Public trust – to build a firm foundation for public trust through solid regulations, improving assurance systems and traceability
- Risk Management – to enable proactive and effective risk management, mitigation and adaptation to create a resilient sector

The AgriScience Program is a program under the Canadian Agricultural Partnership.

### **1.1 About the AgriScience Program**

#### **Program Objective**

The AgriScience Program aims to accelerate the pace of innovation by providing funding and support for pre-commercial science activities and cutting-edge research that benefits the agriculture and agri-food sector and Canadians.

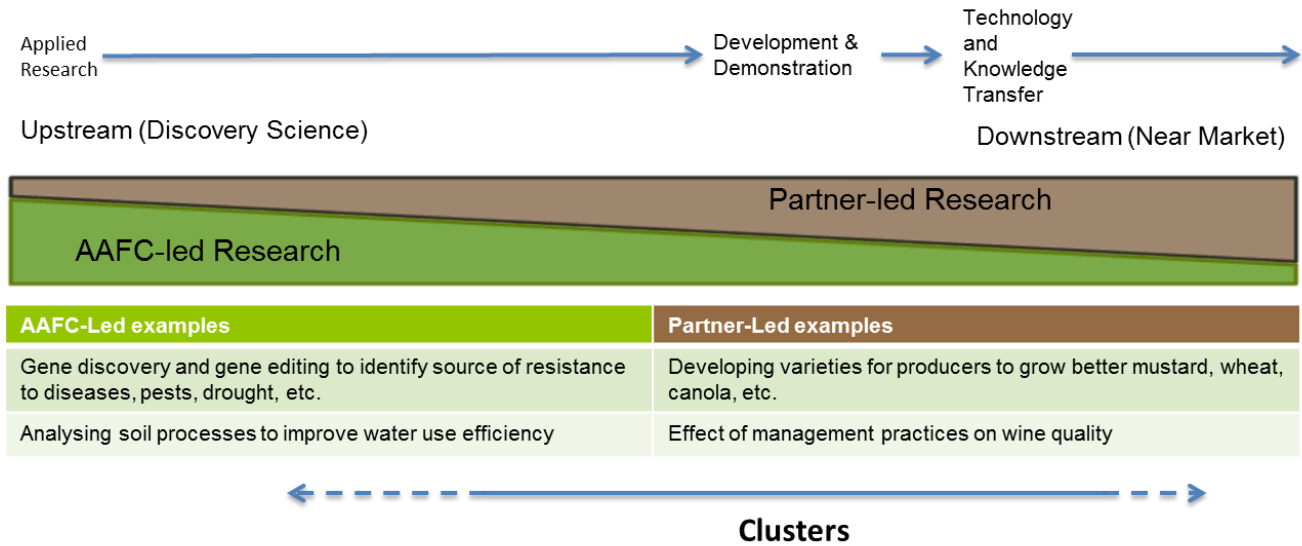
#### **Program Components**

The program provides support through two components, AgriScience Clusters (Clusters) and AgriScience Projects (Projects). This guide is designed for applicants submitting Cluster proposals. Information on Projects will be available in a separate guide when the component is announced by AAFC.

The Clusters component is built on the success of preceding cluster initiatives under the Growing Forward (GF) and Growing Forward 2 (GF2) frameworks. This success has resulted in a progression from collecting sector-related proposals and creating better collaborations that

leverage industry, academic and AAFC science capacity, through to the use of transparent calls for proposals and the creation of medium and long term research strategies.

Cluster proposals are intended to mobilize industry, government and academia through partnerships, and address priority themes and horizontal issues that are national in scope. On the innovation continuum, Cluster activities range from applied research and development to technology and knowledge transfer.



## 1.2 Eligible applicants

Eligible applicants under Clusters are:

Not-for-profit organizations (such as organizations that operate solely for social welfare, civic or collective improvement, pleasure or recreation, or any other purpose except profit), which may include:

- associations
- corporations
- cooperatives
- Indigenous organizations

**Note:** Eligible applicants must be legal entities capable of entering into legally binding agreements.

On a case-by-case basis, academic institutions will be eligible as co-applicants only. In these cases, the application will need to be submitted jointly with a co-applicant organization from industry. This is to ensure that proposals are aligned with industry priorities. Successful co-applicants will be required to co-sign a Contribution Agreement (CA) and/or Collaborative Research and Development Agreement (CRDA) and will be subject to their terms, including Recipient audits.

## 1.3 Funding and cost-sharing

### Funding

Applicants may apply for:

1. Non-repayable contribution funding (referred to as Vote 10 at AAFC) for Cluster activities conducted by industry;
2. Collaborative research and development support (referred to as Vote 1 at AAFC) from AAFC scientists; or,
3. Both (Vote 10 and Vote 1).

In all cases, successful applicants are required to enter into a legal agreement(s) with AAFC as indicated below:

#### Contribution funding (Vote 10)

AAFC will reimburse a portion of the costs for your Cluster. Note that contribution funding is not a grant. Successful applicants enter into a CA with AAFC that lists a number of reporting requirements, including reporting on costs that are eligible.

#### Collaborative research assistance (Vote 1)

AAFC Science and Technology Branch scientists can conduct research on your Cluster. Successful applicants are required to enter into a CRDA with AAFC. The CRDA outlines the deliverables, licensing options and payment schedule for the industry share of funding supporting the Cluster activities. The approved Vote 1 financial allocation is not paid to the applicant but provided within AAFC.

#### Both types of funding/assistance (Vote 10 and Vote 1)

Clusters may contain activities/sub-projects that are completed by industry, or completed by AAFC personnel, or where they are closely linked, such as when AAFC personnel and entities outside AAFC (for example, the applicant or a university) work together. In this case, the successful applicant would enter into a CA and a CRDA.

### **Maximum and minimum AAFC funding amounts**

*(Combined Contribution funding and Collaborative research assistance)*

The maximum AAFC funding amount for a Cluster will not exceed \$20 million over five-years and will be no less than \$5 million of AAFC funding over five-years.

If you have multiple approved Clusters/Projects within this program, total AAFC funding cannot exceed \$10 million per year.

## **Cost sharing**

Eligible project costs will be shared between AAFC with the industry applicant providing a minimum of 30%.

As demand for the program is expected to be high, you are encouraged to seek out other sources of funding above the minimum applicant cost-share ratio.

Your cost share portion can be comprised of your resources and other industry, partner and/or other government sources of funding including:

- industry associations and networks
- businesses
- academia
- other federal government departments
- provincial/territorial/municipal governments

In-kind may be considered as part of the applicant's cost-share (up to 10%) and, in exceptional cases, total government sources of funding should generally not exceed 85%. For more information, refer to Annex A: How to Apply.

Note that the cost share ratio applies to both Contribution funding and Collaborative research assistance; each agreement should be cost-shared at the same ratio where possible.

## **Eligible costs**

All costs claimed under the program or contributed by industry and other sources for the Cluster and its activities, must fall within the program cost categories and respect all limitations. For more information and details on cost categories, eligible/ineligible costs and other limitations, refer to Annex B: Cost Categories.

### **1.4 Application deadlines**

Applications for Clusters will be accepted until **February 1, 2018**, or until funding has been fully committed or until otherwise announced by the program. The program ends March 31, 2023.

For information on how to complete a Cluster application, refer to Annex A: How to Apply.

### **1.5 Program priorities and eligible activities**

Five (5) areas were identified to address key industry and government priorities through Cluster activities. Clusters are expected to address at least one priority area in addition to the knowledge transfer priority. Program priorities and examples of eligible activities are:

- Invest in discovery and applied science for major commodity sectors. Examples of eligible activities include:
  - science that maintains economic growth in Canada’s major commodity sectors such as canola, wheat, dairy, beef and pork, etc., and continue to perform scientific research to maintain momentum of economic growth already benefitting the sector
  - research aligned with one or more of the science objectives (increasing agricultural productivity, improving traits for food and non-food uses, addressing threats to the agriculture and agri-food value chain, and improving environmental performance)
  - activities that align with crop variety development and finishing; or, resistance to pest and disease
  - activities that address agreed upon priorities of the sector (such as those identified by the Value Chain Round Tables)
  
- Improve support for minor commodities, emerging, and transformative areas. Examples of eligible activities include:
  - conducting scientific research that responds to the needs of crops and livestock with a small production base and emerging market potential
  - value added transformation, such as bioproducts from agricultural fibre and agricultural residue from plants
  - ideas that can positively transform agricultural production such as the application of emerging technologies (for example, robotics, sensors, artificial intelligence, big data analytics)
  
- Enhance efforts in clean growth, environment, and climate change, such as:
  - addressing environmental challenges and adaptation to changing climate, agricultural impacts on air, water and soil
  - reducing Green House Gas (GHG) emissions
  - transforming agricultural products into biofuels
  - water management and soil management
  
- Accelerate growth of Canada’s food and beverage processing or value-added sector, for example:
  - ensuring the safety and quality of foods
  - research addressing market access issues leading to increased exports
  
- Strengthen knowledge transfer and adoption, for example:
  - ensuring that research programs include consideration of end users and practical application of research results
  - making information readily available in formats easily accessible, such as social media, brochures, videos

For clarity, the following activities are excluded from the above list and are ineligible:

- any activities, including research, occurring at the commercialization phase of development for products, practices, processes, systems, or technologies



**Note:** AAFC is working to improve horizontal collaboration across government funding programs. As part of your application, in addition to the normal consents required, AAFC is requesting your voluntary consent to share a summary of your Cluster proposal with other federal, provincial and territorial governments.

## **2.0 Expected results**

Building on program priorities, Cluster activities are normally anticipated to produce one or more of the following results in addition to knowledge transfer outcomes.

Expected results, along with examples of potential outcomes, are:

- Targeted applied science, research and/or development activities that lead to new and/or improved products, practices, processes, systems, or technologies, which may lead to such outcomes as:
  - highly qualified personnel (HQP) working on funded activities
  - new technologies (new products, practices, processes and systems) that are developed
- Evaluated or tested new and/or improved products, practices, processes, systems, or technologies under research conditions which may lead to such outcomes as:
  - new technologies (new products, practices, processes and systems) that are assessed under research conditions
- Further developed existing and/or new pre-commercial agricultural products, practices, processes, systems, or technologies which may lead to such outcomes as:
  - new technologies (new products, practices, processes and systems) are utilized
- Knowledge transfer of Cluster results to the sector which may lead to such outcomes as:
  - new knowledge transfer products developed
  - training/knowledge transfer events organized
  - increased participants at training/knowledge transfer events
  - new technologies (new products, practices, processes and systems) are demonstrated on-farm or in-plant
  - papers published in peer reviewed journals
- Participants actively planned, developed, and collaborated (which may include consultations) to expand opportunities for synergies with other Clusters, other industry stakeholders, value chains, and/or other funders.
- Other activities that support the objective and priorities of the program which may lead to such outcomes as:
  - new technologies (new products, practices, processes and systems) attain Intellectual Property (IP) protection

### 3.0 Cluster assessment criteria

Based on experience from previous AAFC science funding programs, demand for the program is anticipated to be high. As a result, assessment criteria, principles and processes have been developed to help identify strong Clusters and activities from among a range of proposals with distinct needs. The application assessment will have two main components

First, all proposals be reviewed to ensure proposals and activities are good science. This assessment will examine:

- relevance, feasibility and impact of the research on the sector
- research methodology and experimental design
- peer reviews and whether the proposed activities have been adjusted to reflect feedback
- timelines are realistic to achieve planned results
- science capacity, that the proposed science team possess or has access to the necessary qualifications, mix of disciplines, and track record to successfully complete the proposed activities
- proven capacity/capability of intellectual property management where applicable

In addition, where proposed activities are a continuation of work supported under previous science Clusters, applications should demonstrate how the current proposal advances the science relative to the previous work. Evidence of progress toward the objective of the previously-funded research should be included in the proposal.

Once the proposals have undergone a science review, AAFC will conduct a principles-based review. This review will examine the Cluster proposals based on five principles:

- A. Clusters should present a clear strategic vision for research in their sector and build science collaborations amongst key partners, for example:
  - research objectives should be clear and aligned with broader industry research strategies with evidence of industry support
  - build national collaborations and engage appropriate partners/stakeholders, taking advantage of expertise in more than one region or institution, including other federal departments such the National Research Council, Natural Resources Canada, etc.
  - show synergies with other Clusters to avoid duplication
- B. Clusters should align with multiple program priorities, for example:
  - pre-commercialization research, development, and knowledge transfer activities are conducted
  - multiple program priorities are addressed
  - an overall required knowledge transfer activity is included
  - activities are designed to increase collaboration between private sector organizations, post-secondary institutions, governments and other stakeholders
  - activities contribute to enhancing economic growth, productivity, competitiveness, adaptability and sustainability of the Canadian agriculture, agri-food and agri-based

sectors/industries

- C. Clusters should leverage increased funding from applicant, industry and other government sources (that is, an increased level of applicant cost-shared funding from previous frameworks). As industry contributions towards Clusters have increased on average over the past two frameworks (GF and GF2), further increases are sought under CAP.
- D. Clusters should identify how the expected research results will generate economic and societal benefits, such as:
- increased production, diminished environmental impacts, diminished threats, response to market demands
  - results that will benefit Canadian agricultural producers
  - results that will benefit other stakeholders such as food and beverage processors
  - results that will benefit Canadians such as employment, clean growth, environment, climate change
  - the long-term economic impacts on the sector if funding is provided
  - the potential negative effects on the sector if funding is not provided
- E. Clusters should address broader emerging issues that have increasing potential impacts on the agricultural sector, such as:
- anti-microbial use/resistance, data management, artificial intelligence, automation, etc.

Finally, each proposal will be assessed on the technical, financial and managerial capacity of the applicant managing the Cluster research.

Priority for funding and support will be directed towards Cluster proposals and/or activities that meet or exceed the expectations outlined in these program principles and assessment criteria. The impact of not meeting or exceeding the program priorities, principles and criteria include:

- AAFC direction to seek support from other funders where appropriate
- the need for a Cluster to reprioritize activities if funding support per Cluster is capped
- the requirement to remove certain proposed activities within Cluster proposals due to duplication, weak research methodology, etc.
- AAFC direction to bring proposed Cluster activities back as projects, when that component is announced, due to a lack of a coherent plan, etc.
- the requirement to increase the industry contribution

#### **4.0 Reporting on your Cluster**

Should you be approved, you will be required to report on Cluster finances, performance and results. To determine the overall risk of the Cluster; which may affect the frequency of reporting requirements, the level of access to advances or our recommendations to the recipient audit departmental strategy, AAFC will conduct a Cluster risk assessment at least annually.

## **4.1 Financial reporting**

You will be required to have an external auditor conduct an annual financial audit of your Cluster costs, for each fiscal year, to ensure they are eligible project costs as defined by the program. The completed audits must be submitted annually to AAFC, as they will form the basis for which you will be reimbursed.

Other requests, such as requests for advances, are required to be submitted directly to AAFC.

Should your Cluster be approved, additional parameters for financial reporting and the annual financial audits will be provided at the time of CA signing. Note that while AAFC intends to use this audit process for financial reporting, additional due diligence may be required depending on risk.

## **4.2 Performance reporting**

You will be required to complete a Performance Measures Table (PMT) when you develop work plans under the CA and the CRDA and when you complete your annual and final performance reports. The following guidance is provided as information only at this time, although it is recommended that, in your application, you reflect how the intended results of your Cluster will be in alignment with the performance measures in the PMT included in Annex C: Performance Measures.

### **PMT Requirements**

Clusters require one PMT for each activity. In the event where a Cluster activity has work being done under both a CA and a CRDA, two PMTs are required: one is for the work plan in the CA and another is for the work plan in the CRDA.

Please refer to Annex C: Performance Measurement for further instructions on performance measures and requirements after your Cluster has been approved.

## **5.0 Contact us**

For more information on AgriScience Program (Clusters component), please contact us by:

E-mail: [aip-pai@agr.gc.ca](mailto:aip-pai@agr.gc.ca)

Telephone: 613-759-1977

TDD/TTY: 613-773-2600

Mail:

Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada

AgriScience Program

960 Carling Ave., CEF Building 97

Ottawa, ON K1A 0C6

## 6.0 Lexicon of frequently used terms

The following terms are used in this Applicant Guide and accompanying Annexes:

**Cash contribution** – means an expense requiring a cash outlay, by either the Recipient organization or another Cluster participant/contributor (such as a partner or other government), during the term of the CA. Specifically, a cash contribution is an expenditure for an eligible project cost incurred and paid for by the Recipient organization, or another project participant. AAFC will only reimburse cash contributions for eligible project costs that are incurred and paid for by the Recipient organization. A cash contribution made by another project participant should be reported as part of the Recipient's Contribution, and must be an eligible project cost.

Note: However, when universities and colleges provide services/goods for a Cluster (such as employee/researcher time) under a service contract/research agreement, for which the institution is not reimbursed by the Recipient organization or another Cluster participant/contributor, these services/goods may only be included in the project expenditures as an in-kind contribution.

**Contribution** – is a transfer payment subject to performance conditions specified in a funding agreement (CA). A contribution is to be accounted for and is subject to audit.

**Fair value** – means the amount for services that would be agreed upon in an arm's length transaction between knowledgeable, willing parties who are under no compulsion to act.

**Fair market value** – means the highest dollar value amount you can get for your goods in an open and unrestricted market, between a willing buyer and a willing seller who are acting independently of each other.

**Flat rate** – is a rate that is the same in all cases and that does not vary in proportion with something.

**In-Kind contribution** – means the fair market value attributed for goods; and, the fair value attributed for services, that are contributed to a Cluster and require no outlay of cash during the term of the CA by a Recipient or a Cluster contributor. These contributions must be eligible costs. They will not be reimbursed by AAFC.

**Per diem** – an allowance or payment made for each day.

**Recipient** - is an entity that either has been authorized to receive a transfer payment or that has received that transfer payment.

**Transfer payment** - is a monetary payment, or a transfer of goods, services or assets made, on the basis of an appropriation, to a third party, including a Crown corporation, that does not result in the acquisition by the Government of Canada of any goods, services or assets. Transfer payments are categorized as grants, contributions and other transfer payments. Transfer payments do not include investments, loans or loan guarantees.

**Travel status** - occurs when a person, conducting Cluster activities, is more than 50 km away (one way) from their assigned workplace using the most direct, safe and practical route, usually for more than one day.

# Annex A: How to Apply

## 1.1 General Information

1. AAFC will provide you with a Cluster application form (PDF format) by email along with a work plan, budget and peer review summary template.
2. Use the step-by-step instructions below to help you complete your application form, including the Cluster work plan, budget and peer review summary.
3. Review the list of additional documents required to ensure you have all the documentation needed to complete and submit your application package.

The information and instructions in this Annex are presented in a manner that corresponds to the application form.

If you experience any trouble submitting your application, or if you prefer to apply by mail, please contact us by telephone at 613-759-1977.

### 1.1.1 Applicant Information

AAFC will use the information you provide in this section to establish your organization's identity.

#### Organization type

See section 1.2 of the Applicant Guide to determine if you are eligible to apply under this program.

#### Legal name

Your organization's legal name, as it appears in legal documents such as articles of incorporation.

#### Operating as (if used)

Enter the name under which your organization operates, if that name is different from its Legal Name.

#### Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) business number

A CRA business number is a nine-digit number that gives each registered business its own unique identifier. For more information on obtaining a CRA business number, visit the [CRA business number web page](https://www.canada.ca/en/services/taxes/business-number.html). (<https://www.canada.ca/en/services/taxes/business-number.html>).

If you do not have a CRA Business Number, or do not wish to share it at this time, enter nine zeros (for example, 000000000).

### **Primary contact**

Enter the contact information of the person in your organization who is responsible for responding to inquiries regarding this application.

### **Project contact**

If your project is approved for funding, this is the person who will be liaising with AAFC during the project. This person can be the same as the Primary Contact.

### **Mailing address**

Provide the complete address of your organization's headquarters.

### **Primary project location**

The primary location a Cluster will take place other than your organization's headquarters, if applicable.

For Clusters, as the project locations may be different for each activity; each activity location should be identified in the work plan.

## **1.1.2 Organizational capacity**

AAFC will use the information you provide in this section to understand more about your organization and assess your ability to carry out this Cluster.

### **How many employees work for your organization?**

Include the number of all full-time and part-time employees on your organization's payroll. Do not include contractors.

### **Describe your organization**

Provide your organization's mandate and priorities. Include a brief history of the organization including any significant changes in the past two years (such as, a significant increase/decrease of staff, changes to executive leadership, including the Board of Directors, a change in mandate, etc.).



## **Does the mandate of your organization focus on any of the following groups?**

This question is for statistical purposes and may be used for assessment.

### **Indigenous**

Individuals who are:

- registered on a band list
- registered as an Indian under the Indian Act living both on or off reserves

or, Indigenous communities and governments such as:

- band and tribal councils
- governments of self-governing First Nations
- local governments of Inuit communities
- Métis organizations

### **Persons with disabilities**

The Employment Equity Act defines persons with disabilities as persons who have a long-term or recurring physical, mental, sensory, psychiatric or learning impairment and who:

(a) consider themselves to be disadvantaged in employment by reason of that impairment

(b) believe that an employer or potential employer is likely to consider them to be disadvantaged in employment by reason of that impairment

Includes persons whose functional limitations owing to their impairment have been accommodated in their current job or workplace.

### **Visible minorities**

The Employment Equity Act defines visible minorities as persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour.

### **Women**

Individuals who are born female or who identify as female.

### **Youth**

Individuals aged 30 and under.

### **Not Applicable**

Use this section if the mandate of your organization doesn't focus on any of the above-listed groups.

### **Decline to identify**

Use this section if the mandate of your organization might focus on one of the above groups, but you don't want to disclose that information at the time of your application.

## **Previous funding**

Please identify if you or your organization has previously received funding from AAFC since April 1, 2013. If yes, list the program(s) from which you've received funding.

## **Capacity to deliver this project**

This long-form response should answer the following questions:

- Has your organization managed other Clusters/projects on a similar scale to this proposed Cluster application? If so, briefly describe the past Clusters/projects.
- What resources do you have to ensure this proposed Cluster will be successful (e.g. human resources, financial management practices etc.)? Expand on the following:
  - Who will provide overall Project management for this Cluster? Include the name and some background about the Project Lead.
  - Who will be providing overall research coordination?
  - Who will conduct financial management, including the AAFC financial reporting requirements process under the CA?
  - Who will monitor and report on Cluster performance?
  - Who will lead communication, knowledge and technology transfer?
  - What other technological and operational staff will be involved?

### **1.1.3 Project information**

AAFC will use the information in this section, in association with your Cluster work plan and budget to do a full assessment of your project.

#### **Project title**

Provide a brief project title that accurately reflects the activities and results of the Cluster.

#### **Project objective**

This short-form answer should be a concise summary of your Cluster (in other words, how would you briefly describe your project at a high-level to a non-technical friend or colleague, or on social media)

Please note that if your Cluster is chosen for funding, this summary may be published on Government of Canada websites.

## **Project purpose**

Your answer to this long-form question should:

- explain how the Cluster will address an industry need and/or priority
- describe how this project aligns with the Program and its objectives and priorities listed in the main section of the Applicant Guide
- describe how your project meets the priorities of AAFC or broader government priorities stated in the Applicant Guide
- describe the expected results of the project and the benefits to agricultural stakeholders (in other words, producers and processors) and other Canadian stakeholders

## **Environmental considerations**

1) Is your Cluster/project on Federal Land?

All projects must comply with the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act 2012* (CEAA 2012), the applicability of which will depend on the type of activities being undertaken as part of the project and the project location. To help us determine this, you are asked to indicate whether the project is on federal land. Under CEAA 2012, federal land means:

- a) lands that belong to Her Majesty in right of Canada, or that Her Majesty in right of Canada has the power to dispose of, and all waters on and airspace above those lands, other than lands under the administration and control of the Commissioner of Yukon, the Northwest Territories or Nunavut;
- b) the following lands and areas:
  - i. the internal waters of Canada, in any area of the sea not within a province,
  - ii. the territorial sea of Canada, in any area of the sea not within a province,
  - iii. the exclusive economic zone of Canada, and
  - iv. the continental shelf of Canada; and
- c) Reserves, surrendered lands and any other lands that are set apart for the use and benefit of a band and that are subject to the *Indian Act*, and all waters on and airspace above those reserves or lands.

2) Have you received, initiated, or do you anticipate requiring any local, provincial, territorial, federal environmental authorizations related to this project (this does not include electrical, hydro or gas permits)?

If a project is on federal land, additional legislative requirements such as permits or authorizations may be needed before a project can begin. AAFC staff will follow-up with you for further details and/or to clarify, as required.

You are also asked to indicate in the application form whether you have or will obtain federal, provincial, territorial or municipal environmental authorizations or permits, for example a municipal wastewater discharge authorization. Copies of these authorizations or permits might

be required by AAFC during the application assessment.

If you have applied for any of the above mentioned permits, provide details on whether the project has any environmental effects and risks. Positive or negative environmental effects and risks can include those related to air emissions, soil erosion, noise, effluent, waste water, solid waste, odour, construction, rare species and habitat, nearby bodies of water, and any other public concerns. AAFC reserves the right to request additional information.

3) Does the Cluster/project pose any risks or result in any environmental effects, including any positive or negative effects on the surrounding environment?

Environmental effects could include those related to air emissions, noise, effluent, waste water, solid waste, odour, soil erosion during construction, rare species, species habitat, nearby water bodies, and any public concern.

#### **1.1.4 Project data collection**

We will be using the following questions for assessment and reporting purposes. The purpose of collecting this information is to align the program funding to areas where there may be gaps and to avoid duplication of Cluster activities across the program's Clusters/projects. Note however that each Cluster is assessed based on its own merit and the impact and relevance of the results for Canadian agriculture and citizens.

#### **North American Industry Classification System (NAICS)**

NAICS is an industry classification system developed by the statistical agencies of Canada, Mexico and the United States.

For more information, visit the Statistics Canada website at:

<http://www23.statcan.gc.ca/imdb/p3VD.pl?Function=getVD&TVD=307532>

The NAICS identifiers that best suit this program have been selected for assessment and reporting purposes. The list has been narrowed down by classifying them into one of the following NAICS identifier types:

- Agricultural Production
- Food and Beverage Manufacturing
- Other Manufacturing
- Other

We recognize that not all Clusters/projects will fit perfectly into one identifier; if this is the case for your Cluster/project, select the identifier that best defines the overall intent of your Cluster, or the identifier that best defines the activity with the highest dollar value.

**Select any of the following groups who will directly benefit from the intent of this Cluster's activities**

- Indigenous
- Persons with disabilities
- Visible minorities
- Women
- Youth
- Not applicable
- Decline to identify

### **Official languages**

AAFC is committed to enhancing the vitality of the official language minority communities (OLMCs), supporting and assisting their development, and promoting the full recognition and use of both English and French in Canadian society.

When it is determined that Clusters under this program involve activities related to the development and transfer of knowledge and may have an impact on OLMCs or are susceptible of promoting the use of English and French, AAFC will include appropriate linguistic commitments in agreements with your organization and ensure that additional expenses incurred as a result of these commitments are considered eligible for contribution funding.

**OLMCs consist of Francophones outside Quebec and Anglophones in Quebec. These communities are often represented by national and regional organizations.**

Impacts on OLMCs may include: Diversifying or strengthening the economic base of OLMCs, or increasing investments in businesses located in OLMCs.

Promoting the use of both official languages may include: translating tools and best practices to share them with OLMCs, or facilitating networking and collaboration between both linguistic communities to achieve tangible economic results in OLMCs.

The recipient must publicly acknowledge AAFC's support for the Cluster. The department may request that such acknowledgments include text in both official languages.

### **1.1.5 Work plan instructions**

Applicants must complete and submit a summarized work plan for each activity. This work plan template is provided by AAFC and contains headings for guidance.

Please follow the instructions below when completing the work plan section of your application:

## Overall direction

- **Activity numbering**
  - Science Co-ordination must be Activity 1
  - the numbering of all activities should be consecutive and not per theme (Theme 1, activity 2-6, Theme 2, activity 7-10, etc.)
  - your overall Knowledge transfer activity must be your last activity
  - note where an activity is being done in partnership by both AAFC and industry, separate the work to be performed by AAFC under its own separate activity number (for example, activity 2A for Vote 1 and 2B for Vote 10)
  
- **Science Co-ordination**
  - Science Co-ordination involves the co-ordination of Cluster science and research activities such as coordinating and liaising with Principle Investigators, aligning research with Cluster research strategies, reviewing research results, Science Advisory Body costs, etc. It may include salary, travel, contracted services and other direct project costs. The financial audits may be charged under this activity. Where an employee/contractor conducts project management/administration and science co-ordination, their time must be split between Administrative costs and science co-ordination. No additional administrative costs may be charged under science co-ordination.
  
- **Knowledge and technology transfer (KTT) Activity required as your last activity**
  - To ensure that knowledge and technology resulting from investments in science better reach the end user and are readily available, Science Clusters must address KTT in their application.

While KTT related to scientific dissemination (for example, academic publications, conference papers, scientific lectures) directly related to an activity may be addressed within each respective activity, the last activity of a Science Cluster must outline the steps that will be taken to efficiently transfer the knowledge, technology and results to the whole sector beyond the scientific community, leading to adoption by producers and/or processors.

Examples of eligible KTT activities include:

- dissemination of results to producers (such as field days, demonstrations, case studies, videos and other formats to help sector leverage results of funded initiatives)
- technology transfer collaborations that seek to further research, development, and commercialization
- publications, media outputs and other initiatives meant to reach a broad audience and improve the potential for adoption

- **Themes**
  - A theme groups a set of coherent and integrated activities together. Themes should identify which program priorities are addressed and explain how they are addressed.

### Step-by-step work plan guidance

- **Summary of Themes**
  - Name of theme**
    - list the name of the theme as the title
  - Description of theme**
    - describe the theme in a few short paragraphs
    - list the program priority to which it relates
    - list all of the activities associated under each theme
- **For Activity 1, Science Co-ordination**
  - fill in the start and end date; the dates should span the full timeline of the Cluster
  - explain your science co-ordination activities and who will fill this role
- **For research activities, starting at Activity 2**
  - fill out the activity name, number, start date and end date (March 31, 2023 or earlier)
  - select whether the work will be undertaken by AAFC or industry/other
  - provide the name of the Principle Investigator and the organization they represent
  - select the primary location of the activity and fill in the city and province
- **Activity Objective**
  - explain what the activity aims to achieve
- **Description of Activity**
  - provide a brief overview of the work to be undertaken (in order to meet the objective) and the expected results
- **Deliverables**
  - provide a breakdown of the activity deliverables (and, if available, indicate by fiscal year (April 1-March 31))
- **Detailed Information**
  - clearly explain and provide detail that addresses program priorities, program principles, program assessment criteria, etc.
  - you do not have to repeat items in your full proposals, such as your research methodology
  - refer to the Applicant Guide for more information
- **Budget Explanation**
  - briefly explain budget items, including other sources from which funding was requested (for example: Salaries include base salary of \$65,000 per year for a term scientist plus 15% benefits, as well as \$10,000 for student assistants. Travel includes

field trips to collect samples in Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba, as well as scientific conferences. Materials and supplies include sequencing costs and consumables.)

- **Risks**
  - include any relevant activity risks and appropriate mitigation measures
- **Other**
  - add any other pertinent information

### **1.1.6 Funding details and budget**

Cluster applicants are provided with a budget template (an Excel Worksheet) to complete a high-level budget (Vote 10 and Vote 1).

You are also required to submit your full final activity proposals that include detailed budgets by activity.

#### **Cost-sharing under your CA (Vote 10)**

Your portion of the cost-share can be comprised of both cash contributions and in-kind contributions. In-kind contributions can only account for a maximum of 10% of total Cluster costs under the CA.

#### **Cost-sharing under your CRDA (Vote 1)**

Your portion of the cost-share is made as a direct payment to AAFC. On a case-by-case basis, AAFC may consider your resources as part of your cost-share up to 10% of the total industry investment in the CRDA.

#### **Science Service charge under your CRDA**

AAFC has streamlined the rates it charges for CRDA projects to a single 10% science service charge. This charge will be applied consistently to all vote 1 allocations and collaborator contributions that support the CRDA activity. These charges will be collected by Science and Technology Branch at the centre where the science activity is taking place.

For more information on funding details, eligible costs, eligible cost dates, and definitions of cash and in-kind contributions, refer to the Applicant Guide and Annex B: Cost categories.

### **1.1.7 Peer Review**

All individual Cluster research activities included in a Cluster application must be assessed by independent peer reviewers, through a process led by the applicant and consistent with the AAFC Guidelines for the Peer Review Process of Science Cluster Proposals. Refer to the additional documents section below and Annex D: Peer Reviews for more information.



### 1.1.8 Additional documents

In addition to the application form, including the work plan and budget, the following documents are required as part of a complete application package:

Document name	Description
Signature of applicant authorized representative form (or a signed Application Form)	Applicants must have their authorized representative(s) sign and attach this form or a signed Application Form.
Executive summary	A brief summary that links proposed activities to the Project objectives and priorities.
Full Cluster activity proposals (that you received from industry during your call for proposals and adjusted following peer reviews)	Full, final Cluster activity proposals in the format in which you received them from industry during your call for proposals. They must include full work plan details with a detailed budget, including research methodology, collaborators, capacity, etc.
A copy of the applicant organization's Certificate of Incorporation or Articles of Incorporation  (only required if you are applying to the Program for the first time or if there have been changes to your incorporation since first provided)	Certificates and Articles of Incorporation are issued and filed, respectively, by or with provincial, territorial or federal government that document the applicant's status as a legal entity.
Financial statements	Statements for the last two years (Audited or Review Engagement)
Letters of Financial Support	Letters outlining <u>confirmed financial support</u> (cash or in-kind) from all financial contributors to the project, other than the Applicant organization (that is, other industry groups or other government*) must be provided. *On a case-by-case basis, letters outlining pending support may be accepted from other governments.
Letters of Acknowledgement From all research organizations identified in the Application, Work Plan or Budget (includes AAFC and organizations external to AAFC)  (not required if your activity proposals are already signed by authorized representatives)	For AAFC: Letters from AAFC Directors responsible for work to be conducted by AAFC personnel are required. These will solely confirm that the scientific and technical capacity is available to conduct the work, should the project be approved, and would not infer an acceptance/approval of the proposal.

<p>such as AAFC Directors or senior organization executives)</p>	<p>External to AAFC: The letters must make specific reference to the proposed activities in the Work Plan, and confirm their availability to do the work.</p> <p>Letters must come from a senior executive authorized to sign the letter on behalf of the organization.</p>
<p>Project Endorsement Letters/ Letters of Support (if available, not a requirement)</p>	<p>Letters of support from organizations indicating they believe there is a need for the proposed project and expressing hope that the proposed project will be accepted.</p>
<p>Capital Asset Pre-approval</p>	<p>For Capital Costs to be purchased for the Cluster that are over \$100,000.</p>
<p>Science Advisory Body (SAB) - Peer Review Summary</p>	<p>The form must be signed by the SAB Chair, attesting that an independent peer review has been conducted, and documenting changes made to the Cluster application (or individual research projects that are part of the proposal) as a result of peer reviews and SAB deliberations.</p> <p>Also attach the following to the summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A list of independent peer reviewers including, at a minimum, each reviewer’s name, title, organization and area(s) of expertise;</li> <li>• A list of SAB members including, at a minimum, each member’s name, title, organization and area(s) of expertise; and,</li> <li>• SAB meeting agenda and minutes.</li> </ul>
<p>Consent to share a summary of the Cluster Proposal - Consent for Use, Disclosure and Copyright (note, consent is voluntary and does not affect assessment)</p>	<p>Written consent to share a summary of the Cluster Proposal and other documentation with other federal, provincial and territorial governments, for purposes such as improving collaboration amongst governments, identifying other funding sources, etc.</p>

## **1.2 What you must declare**

### **Unpaid debts to the Government of Canada**

The recipient of AAFC funds must declare any amounts owing to the Government of Canada. Any amounts due to the recipient under AAFC programs may be set off against any such amounts owing to the Government of Canada under any agreement or any legislation with the Government of Canada.

### **Lobbying activities**

The applicant must ensure that a person lobbying on behalf of the applicant is registered and in compliance with the Lobbying Act.

More information on the obligations in the Lobbying Act can be found on the website of the Commissioner of Lobbying of Canada.

### **Conflict of Interest**

Current or former public servants or public office holders are required to avoid conflict of interest situations while employed by the federal government, and for a period of time following their service. The Applicant acknowledges that any individuals who are subject to the provisions of the Conflict of Interest Act, the Values and Ethics Code for the Public Sector, the Conflict of Interest Code for Members of the House of Commons, any applicable federal values and ethics code or any applicable federal policy on conflict of interest and post-employment shall not derive any direct benefit resulting from this application unless the provision or receipt of such benefit is permitted in such legislation, policy or codes.

### **Consent for Use, Disclosure and Copyright**

Personal information will be treated and disclosed in accordance with the *Privacy Act*. You have the right to access your personal information held by Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada and to request changes to correct personal information by contacting the AAFC Access to Information and Privacy Director at ATIP-AIPRP@agr.gc.ca

For more information about AAFC's privacy practices, you may refer to the following Personal Information Banks: Public Communications PSU 914 and Outreach Activities PSU 938.

Business information will be disclosed in accordance with the provisions of the *Access to Information Act*.

Information on the *Privacy Act* and the *Access to Information Act* is available at the following website: <http://laws.justice.gc.ca>. For further information about these Acts please contact the Access to Information and Privacy Director at ATIP-AIPRP@agr.gc.ca

## **Copyright permission**

AAFC may disclose, reproduce and distribute any part of or the whole of the documentation provided in or with the Application Form, within AAFC and to its authorized third parties, including other Government Departments, for purposes consistent with the receipt, assessment and subsequent treatment of the Application.

## **1.3 Other considerations**

### **M-30 law (Quebec only)**

The M-30 legislation applies for Québec based applicants only. It is the *Act Respecting the Ministère du Conseil exécutif* (R.S.Q., c. M-30).

Organizations located in Québec and receiving more than half of their financing from the Government of Québec may be subject to the Act.

More information on the Act is available online or by contacting the Ministère de l'Agriculture, des Pêcheries et de l'Alimentation (MAPAQ) at [dpci@mapaq.gouv.qc.ca](mailto:dpci@mapaq.gouv.qc.ca).

All Québec based organizations will have to address this matter and demonstrate their compliance with the Act during the project assessment process, and prior to entering into a contribution agreement.

### **Intellectual property**

Should the Cluster funding proposal be approved, specific intellectual property requirements relevant to the Cluster project(s)/activities will be included in the CA and/or CRDA.

## **1.4 Submit**

Once you have completed your application form and have completed all the additional documents, please submit your project application with all required documents attached.

Submit by email at:  
[aip-pai@agr.gc.ca](mailto:aip-pai@agr.gc.ca)

For more information on AgriScience Program (Clusters component), please contact us by:  
Telephone: 613-759-1977  
TDD/TTY: 613-773-2600

Mail:  
Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada  
AgriScience Program  
960 Carling Ave., CEF Building 97  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0C6

## 1.5 Assessment timelines

Once an application has been submitted, an acknowledgment notice will be forwarded to the applicant. Applicants should not consider their application as submitted to the program until they receive this acknowledgement notice; if it is not received within 2 business days, please contact us.

In order to begin the assessment, an application must be deemed complete by AAFC. After an application has been received, AAFC verifies that all required forms and declarations have been completed and there is sufficient detail in the application for a full assessment. When the application has been deemed complete and ready for assessment, notice will be provided to the applicant.

Subsequently, a full review and assessment of the application will be carried out by AAFC and, if an Applicant is successful, AAFC will provide a written decision letter which will outline the level of assistance awarded and any other conditions if applicable (for example, reduced funding or activities). Unsuccessful Applicants will be contacted by AAFC and will receive a rejection notification letter.

Our goal is to:

- respond to general inquiries made to our phone number or email address before the end of the next business day
- acknowledge receipt of your application within 1 business day
- assess your application and send you an approval or a rejection notification letter within 100 business days of receiving a complete application package

As program demand fluctuates, these standards may be updated to provide more accurate timelines. Updates will be posted on the program website.

Please note that the submission of an application creates no obligation on the part of AAFC to provide funding for the proposed Cluster.

# Annex B: Cost Categories

The following Cost Categories provide details on costs and requirements that will be necessary at the application stage and the financial reporting stage, should your application be approved and a Contribution Agreement (CA) signed.

## Timing limitations for costs:

Any costs incurred before April 1, 2018 or after March 31, 2023 are ineligible for reimbursement under a CA and will not be accepted under a CRDA.

If your Cluster is approved, AAFC may consider eligible costs incurred during the review period, on or after April 1, 2018, to be eligible. However, only eligible costs incurred after an application package has been deemed complete by AAFC will be considered. It is very important that you understand that in these cases, eligible costs cannot be reimbursed under a CA until a signed CA is in place, therefore these costs are incurred solely at your risk.

## 1.1 Administrative Costs

Administrative costs will be calculated automatically at a flat rate of 10% based on the total Vote 10 (CA) activity costs\* in the budget. This flat rate will cover costs of project management and administrative staff salaries (managing and reporting), use of office accommodations, use of office equipment and use of office materials.

These administrative costs will be subject to the cost-sharing ratio of the Cluster. Should your Cluster be approved, the 10% flat rate will be applied to your actual eligible costs\* when you submit your financial reporting against your CA expenses.

\*Capital asset costs for items with a value of \$100,000 or more are excluded from the 10% flat rate calculation.

The following list identifies costs that would be covered in the flat rate. These costs cannot be charged under salaries and benefits or other direct project costs.

The costs include, but are not limited to the following:

### Administrative cost items

#### Project management and administration salaries and benefits:

- salaries, including contracted services, for project management and administration staff who perform tasks such as pay the Cluster related invoices, negotiate service contracts, manage the Cluster budget, and/or prepare any financial and/or performance/progress reports for the Cluster
- benefits for project management and administration staff such as Mandatory Employment Related Costs (MERCs), Employment Insurance (EI), Canada Pension

Plan (CPP), Quebec Pension Plan (QPP), vacation pay

**Administrative costs related to:**

- audit fees related to the organization’s financial statements
- bank fees
- insurance (fire, theft, liability)
- membership fees
- legal fees

**Administrative office supplies and expenses:**

- basic telephone fees (including fax lines) and cell phones
- hydro
- materials and office supplies (such as pens, pencils, paper, envelopes, cleaning supplies, subscriptions)
- monthly internet fees
- postage and courier fees
- office equipment (like computers, printers, photocopiers)
- office administrative space (that is, rent for administrative space) and related utilities, maintenance and property taxes
- administrative information technology (IT) products and services, including maintenance
- other overhead type expenditures relating to the organization’s office

*Note: Administrative costs are not applicable to CRDA (Vote 1) activities.*

## 1.2 Cost Categories

Other costs beyond Administrative costs must fall under one of these categories:

- salaries and benefits
- contracted services
- travel
- capital expenditures
- other direct project costs

<b>Salaries and benefits</b>	
<b>Eligible cost items</b>	<b>Limitations/ineligible costs</b>
Salaries and benefits of recipient directly related to completing the activities of the work plan (other than those covered under Administrative costs), including science co-ordination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Timesheets:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <u>will not</u> be required for an</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• benefits will be considered up to 25% only and would include the employer’s portion of CPP, QPP; EI; group insurance, vacation pay and pension benefits</li> <li>• losses to investments or pensions due to stock fluctuations or other unforeseen</li> </ul>

<p>employee who is 100% devoted to the Cluster</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ <u>will not</u> be required for people under contract including research agreements</li> <li>○ <u>are</u> required for an employee of the recipient organization who shares their time between Cluster specific work and organizational work</li> </ul>	<p>events will not be eligible</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● performance pay (such as a bonus), severance pay and retiree settlements are not eligible</li> <li>● discretionary employee benefits (for example, parking at employer's location, gym membership fees, etc.) are not eligible</li> <li>● relocation costs for employees hired for the Cluster are not eligible</li> <li>● for Provincial, Territorial and Municipal government employees, only incremental salaries/benefits are eligible (that is, full-time employee salaries/benefits are not eligible); other restrictions may apply</li> </ul>
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<b>Contracted services</b>	
<b>Eligible cost items</b>	<b>Limitations/ineligible costs</b>
<p>Professional or specialized services for which a contract is entered into, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● research agreements</li> <li>● consultant/expert services</li> <li>● science co-ordination services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● all services, including research work should be established under a contract or a research agreement</li> <li>● Recipients must use a fair and competitive or otherwise justifiable and generally accepted sound business process that results in competent and qualified contractors working on the Cluster and Cluster activities</li> <li>● all such contracts or research agreements should include payment terms, including detailed budgets</li> <li>● overhead costs cannot exceed 15% of total eligible costs invoiced</li> <li>● contracts for project management and administration services for overall Cluster management may be used, however these costs will be considered Administrative costs (in other words, they are included in the 10% flat rate and are not eligible for additional reimbursement)</li> </ul> <p><b>Refer to the Contracted Services section below for more information</b></p>



<b>Travel (based on a AAFC directive – subject to periodic change)</b>	
<b>Eligible cost items</b>	<b>Limitations/ineligible costs</b>
<p>Travel costs directly related to the Cluster, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• meals, incidentals and accommodations on a per-diem basis</li> <li>• transportation (air or ground)</li> </ul> <p>Who can claim travel costs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cluster staff travelling for Cluster related activities</li> <li>• visitors to Canada for the purpose of Cluster related activities</li> <li>• workers travelling to Cluster sites or meetings (ground and air transportation)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• only economy airfare for travel is eligible; bookings should be made as far in advance as possible; seat selection and baggage costs are eligible (upgrades are not eligible)</li> <li>• if a higher class is purchased, proof of the flight's economy rate must be obtained for reimbursement purposes</li> <li>• for ground transportation by car, other than when on travel status (like field site visits or meetings when not on travel status), a rate of up to \$0.55 per km will be accepted</li> <li>• hospitality is not eligible under this program</li> <li>• travel insurance (such as medical, accident, cancellation) is not eligible</li> <li>• non-essential options for rental vehicles (such as GPS and roadside assistance) are not eligible</li> <li>• travel and accommodation expenditures for federal government employees are not eligible</li> </ul> <p><b>Refer to the Travel section below for more information</b></p>

<b>Capital expenditures (based on a AAFC directive – subject to periodic change)</b>	
<b>Eligible cost items</b>	<b>Limitations/ineligible costs</b>
<p>Capital Assets are tangible assets that are purchased, constructed, developed or otherwise acquired and:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are required for the execution of the Cluster</li> <li>• have a useful life extending beyond one year and are intended to be used on a continuous basis</li> <li>• are not intended for resale during the life of the Cluster</li> <li>• the cost of which is considered to include the purchase price plus other acquisition costs, such as installation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the purchase of land or buildings are not eligible</li> <li>• the purchase or lease of private/personal vehicles are not eligible</li> <li>• assets and capital items not specifically required for the execution of the Cluster are not eligible</li> <li>• each capital cost estimated over \$100,000 to be included in the Cluster budget must be accompanied by a pre-approval form at the time of application</li> <li>• each capital cost item estimated between \$10,000 and \$100,000 also requires pre-</li> </ul>

<p>costs, freight charges, transportation insurance costs, duties, and the non-refundable portion of provincial sales taxes, GST\HST or other value-added taxes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• require AAFC pre-approval for costs over \$10,000</li> </ul> <p>Examples specific to this program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• research equipment</li> <li>• computers and specialized software</li> <li>• prototypes</li> </ul>	<p>approval by AAFC, but can be submitted after approval of the Cluster, before a contribution agreement is signed</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• pre-approval by AAFC applies regardless of how it is cost-shared between AAFC, and other sources</li> </ul> <p><b>Refer to the Capital Assets section below for more information</b></p>
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<b>Other direct project costs</b>	
<b>Eligible cost items</b>	<b>Limitations/ineligible costs</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• shipping</li> <li>• translation</li> <li>• conference or registration fees</li> <li>• knowledge transfer associated costs</li> <li>• financial audits required for Cluster specific expenses when requested by AAFC</li> <li>• costs associated with the review of graduate and Ph.D. thesis</li> <li>• stipends</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• legal fees that are not required for the Cluster are not eligible</li> <li>• any government related fees such as visas, patents, etc. are not eligible</li> </ul>

Other ineligible project costs include, but are not limited to:

- normal costs of establishing a commercial operation
- costs for activities that are deemed to be part of normal business practice for any Recipient
- costs for activities intended to directly influence/lobby governments
- costs related to marketing activities and business promotion
- hospitality costs are not eligible under this program
- costs to prepare the CA or related schedules
- other costs not specifically required for the Cluster

### 1.3 Contracted Services

#### Requirements

1. Overhead costs under contract
  - overhead cannot exceed 15% of the total eligible costs invoiced by the University or service provider

- overhead is calculated as an additional 15% cost on goods/services (that is, as an example: \$10,000 cost of services x 0.15 = \$1,500; for a total invoice, including overhead, of \$11,500)
- overhead costs are indirect expenditures incurred by a University or service provider, which are required for the research activities, but are not specifically identified as Cluster activity costs; these costs relate to the use of the organization's resources, which may include, but are not limited to:
  - information technology support
  - internet, telephone, excluding long-distance charges
  - use of photocopiers, fax machines, and other office equipment
  - use of existing workstations, including furnishings and equipment (for example, computers or scanners)
  - normal office software (not including software specifically required to conduct cluster activities)
  - memberships and subscriptions
  - staff recruitment and training
  - routine laboratory and field equipment maintenance (such as oil changes)
  - building occupancy and operating costs (that is, the use of the workspace)
  - facilities maintenance
  - administrative support (such as accounting, payroll administration, meetings)

2. Down payments or advance payments in contracts

- down payments or advance payments due to contractual obligations are allowed to be claimed
- where used, payment schedules should be aligned with incurred costs and the timing of milestones or deliverables

3. Contracts, including research funding agreements

- should be rigorous enough to ensure that payments will be subject to costing details and timing of incurred costs
- to assist with the verification of expenditures, Recipients may be required to share with AAFC, a copy of service contracts for work conducted under the cluster

**Guidance\***

For many approved Science Clusters, a significant portion of the work will be completed under contract by Universities or other organizations on behalf of the Recipient. To better ensure that the work is aligned with the requirements of the CA, it is recommended that the following points be considered before putting in place a contract/agreement with a service provider:

- the Recipient is not an agent of Her Majesty the Queen or the Government of Canada
- the Recipient is fully responsible for funds disbursed under the CA, including costs incurred by service providers (such as Universities)

- it is the responsibility of the Recipient to ensure that all costs from service providers are eligible project costs (in other words, to ensure that both you and AAFC are only paying for cluster activity-related costs under contract)
- work required to complete your cluster is considered to be work under contract if it is not work performed by your organization
- as the CA is an agreement between you and AAFC and not with any other organization (such as service providers), there should be no reference to “the Minister, AAFC or the Crown” anywhere in your contract/agreement between you and any other party who performs work for the cluster
- while the CA lists requirements, terms and conditions that you must follow, it should not be used as a template for your contracts/agreements with other parties
- there is a difference between an agreement to fund a Recipient and an agreement to allow a Recipient to further distribute funds to other ultimate Recipients; to be clear, the CA you sign with AAFC is an agreement with you and not your contractors (in other words, accountability for the cluster and its activities rests with you)
- if you pay a service provider for costs that are ineligible, they will not be eligible for reimbursement by AAFC and also cannot be counted as an industry contribution towards the cluster; likewise, if service provider costs are reimbursed to you by AAFC under a CA and subsequently deemed ineligible (for example, during a Recipient audit), you are solely responsible for repaying those costs to AAFC
- AAFC may only undertake a Recipient audit with the Recipient, as per the agreement, not with the service provider; again, the service provider is your responsibility
- it is recommended that you keep written procedures of your contracting or procurement practices and of the process regarding validation of expenses (such as sampling) of other service providers or contractors; these documents may be helpful in satisfying an auditor that the practices of your organization are clear, understood and followed by your employees
- sampling done by you to verify details of a service provider’s invoice should be done on a risk-based approach (as an example, a 10% sampling of costs on an invoice)

### **What to include in a contract or agreement\***

The terms of written contracts between the Recipient and service providers who conduct research on behalf of the Recipient should address the following:

- specific details of the work being done, who is doing the work and what will be delivered
- clear milestones and timelines for the completion of the work
- detailed breakdown of the budgeted costs (such as hourly/daily rates for salaries and number of positions, list of required supplies and related costs)
- invoicing details, including when invoices are to be submitted and the level of detail they should contain to ensure that the costs invoiced can be verified by the Recipient for eligibility and reasonableness
- the sampling process to be used to confirm costs; it is recommended that the Recipient establish a sampling process based on risk
- reporting requirements (such as financial, progress and performance reporting)

- the right to access all cluster activity related documentation
- other responsibilities agreed upon between parties, including financial roles and contact information
- the provisions, as deemed appropriate, for oversight such as reviews and audits to be conducted by the Recipient and the right of the Recipient to provide copies of any review, evaluation or audit reports to third-parties
- the ability to claw-back or reduce further payments if costs sampled were deemed ineligible

\*Note, in all cases, we advise you seek the advice of your legal counsel to ensure that your contract/agreement is appropriate.

## 1.4 Travel Costs

The following requirements are based on an internal AAFC directive that is subject to change periodically.

### Requirements

1. Per diems will contribute to covering the costs for daily accommodation, meals, local or in-city transportation (buses, taxis, vehicle rentals, etc.), ground transportation (including parking, to and from the public carrier terminal), entry documents (including passports and visas), insurance (all types), vaccinations and incidentals (personal phone calls, laundry, gratuities, currency exchange fees, etc.) for individual travel.
2. Recipients may:
  - a. claim the established per diem; or
  - b. claim an amount less than the established per diem (based on actual costs).

Whether using option (a) or option (b), individual invoices and proof of payment for these incurred travel costs will not be required for claims, however, proof of travel is required (for example, boarding pass, hotel invoice, trip report) and recipients are obliged to keep all invoices and proof of payment, as per the terms of their CA.

If using option (a) per diems are payable for every day on travel status as follows:

- i. day trip within Canada with no overnight stay: \$70 CAD/day
- ii. day trip outside Canada with no overnight stay: \$100 CAD/day
- iii. travel within Canada with an overnight stay: \$300 CAD/day
- iv. travel outside Canada with an overnight stay: \$425 CAD/day

Whether using option (a) or option (b), individual proof of payment for all expenses incurred will not be required for a claim. However, recipients are obliged to keep all invoices and payment receipts, as per the terms of their CA.

3. The recipient may claim cost for air, rail and ground transportation (to an out-of-city destination) for individual travel as follows:

- a. air: economy rate (not Business or First Class) fare
- b. private vehicle: kilometric rates (at a rate of up to \$0.55 per km) as well as costs for parking at the destination
- c. rental vehicle: the cost for a mid-size vehicle (or the cost of a larger vehicle, based upon factors such as, but not limited to, safety, the needs of the traveler, and the bulk or weight of goods transported), gas, and parking at the destination

Recipients are obliged to keep all invoices and proofs of payment, as per the terms of their CA.

## **1.5 Capital Assets**

The following requirements are based on an internal AAFC directive that is subject to change periodically.

### **Requirements**

1. All capital assets required for a cluster must be eligible under program criteria.

### **Acquisition of Capital Assets over \$10,000**

2. All capital asset purchases over \$10,000 must be pre-approved by the Program using an AAFC form intended for that purpose.
3. The pre-approval process for acquisitions over \$10,000 will consider:
  - alignment with program and cluster objectives
  - the necessity and the cost of the asset as well as timing of the purchase (i.e. beginning vs. the end of the contribution agreement)
  - the residual value of the asset at the end of the contribution agreement
  - the possibility of resale (i.e. presence of a market for specified equipment)
  - the future need of the asset for the sector or recipient
  - the benefits of transferring the asset to another organization
  - the retention/disposition mechanism for the asset
4. Capital asset pre-approvals must include a rationale for the purchase and proposed retention or disposal.
5. This pre-approval requirement applies to any capital asset in a cluster's budget, including cases where the asset acquisition is paid by the Recipient or a partner/service provider (like a university) working on the cluster (Recipient contributions).
6. Pre-approval is required for any capital asset acquisition made by an applicant or recipient intended to enhance capacity in another agriculture, agri-food and agri-based sector (for example, by modifying or retrofitting a piece of equipment that would benefit another industry). Pre-approval for such acquisitions will consider the purchase cost, the residual value, retrofitting costs and the usefulness of the asset at the end of the

agreement.

7. Where several similar or related assets are acquired within a cluster, the cumulative cost of these assets should be considered as one and require pre-approval if over \$10,000.
8. Purchased materials with the intention of building a capital asset (such as a prototype) must be pre-approved if the total value of materials exceeds \$10,000.
9. A lease or rental fee for the use of a capital asset acquired by a Recipient outside its current contribution agreement may be considered in cases where the asset is needed by the recipient to achieve cluster outcomes and the asset was not previously paid with federal government funding. Any proposed usage fee must be pre-approved by the Program.
10. AAFC reserves the right to address capital asset requests on a case by case basis when required.

#### **Acquisition of Capital Assets over \$100,000**

11. Capital asset acquisitions over \$100,000 will normally be considered when the applicant includes the proposed acquisitions in the application budget. Applicants are required to submit in their application a rationale for the proposed acquisitions and outline future plans for retention or disposal. These acquisitions, including proposed retention or disposal, will be reviewed by the Program during assessment and will require AAFC approval.
12. Capital asset acquisitions over \$100,000 and required to achieve cluster outcomes will normally be leased where possible and appropriate. Proposed leasing costs to be claimed from contribution funds must be pre-approved by the Program before they can be deemed eligible towards project costs.
13. Capital asset acquisitions over \$100,000 and not approved at the time of cluster approval may be considered at a later date in exceptional cases, and will require approval by AAFC.

#### **Retention or Disposal of Capital Assets**

14. Capital asset acquisitions with a residual value of under \$25,000 at the end of the contribution agreement will normally be retained by the Recipient or partner/service provider but will still require pre-approval by AAFC.
15. Where disposal of the asset is required, the residual value of the asset will be returned to AAFC or will be offset on the final claim or holdback, taking into account the cost-sharing ratio for the cluster and the asset being disposed.

16. The Recipient will be required to provide an estimate of fair value for the proposed assets (at the end of the contribution agreement) using a method agreeable to both Recipient and AAFC. The Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) provides an acceptable depreciation model to determine the decrease in the value of an asset through age, use, and deterioration over time. Information on classes of depreciable property and rates are available on the CRA website (<http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/tx/bsnss/tpcs/slprtnr/rprtng/cptl/dprcbl-eng.html>).
17. AAFC reserves the right to require disposal of an asset if the cluster or cluster activity is ended prematurely, or is terminated by default, regardless of the disposal or retention plan approved at the time of pre-approval.



## CAPITAL ASSET PRE-APPROVAL FOR GRANTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS PROGRAMS

**Purpose:** This form is to be used by the Applicant organization to obtain AAFC authorization for each capital asset acquisition over \$10,000 and approval for planned retention or disposal of a capital asset with an estimated value over \$25,000 at the end of the agreement.

**Instructions:** The Applicant will use one form per capital asset (unless there are several similar or related assets that should be considered as one). Please refer to the program's Applicant Guide for additional information including definitions and program-specific instructions.

### SECTION 1 - APPLICANT INFORMATION

Applicant Name:	
Program Name:	
Project Title:	

### SECTION 2 - DETAILED REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION

<b>Proposed Acquisition of Capital Asset</b>
<b>Name and describe the capital asset to be acquired</b> <i>Be specific by providing exact product names and model numbers, where possible</i>
<b>What is the cost of the capital asset?</b> <i>Provide detailed costs from a recent quote obtained by a supplier. This may include installation, freight, transportation insurance, duties and non-refundable portion of taxes. Convert all costs to Canadian dollars if applicable</i>
<b>Describe why the capital asset is needed for the project, identify the project activities that will utilize the asset, and explain why leasing is not an option.</b>
<b>Proposed date of acquisition:</b> <span style="border: 1px solid black; display: inline-block; width: 80px; height: 15px; vertical-align: middle;"></span>
<b>Proposed location of asset</b> <i>Provide name of facility or institution, city and province</i>
A capital asset with an estimated value of under \$25,000 at the end of the contribution agreement will normally be retained by the applicant or partner. Note that AAFC will have no property ownership or security interests in any asset(s) acquired with contribution funds.
<b>Will the asset have a residual value of under \$25,000 at the end of the contribution agreement?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

**SECTION 3 - PROPOSED RETENTION OR DISPOSAL**

Do you intend to retain the capital asset(s)? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
What is the estimated residual value of the capital asset at the end of the contribution agreement?  
How did you arrive at the residual value estimate? <i>For example, "blue book" or other sources, use of depreciation model</i>  

**SECTION 4 - DECLARATION BY THE APPLICANT**

Signature	
Name and Title:  	
Signature:  	Date:  
<i>I declare that the information provided in this form is, to the best of my knowledge, true, complete and accurate. I further declare that I am duly authorized to sign this Form on the Applicant's behalf.</i>	

**SECTION 5 - AAFC PROGRAM OFFICER: ADDITIONAL INFORMATION / NOTES**

Name and Title:  	Date:  

**SECTION 6 - AAFC DECISION**

Decision:  	
Rationale for Decision:  	
Name and Title:  	Date:  

# **Annex C: Performance Measures**

## **1.1 Requirements for Performance Reporting**

You will be required to complete an Annual Performance Report (APR) during the course of the cluster to provide performance and progress updates. A Final Performance Report (FPR) will be required for the last year of the cluster and will cover the entire cluster.

- The Performance Measures Table (PMT) is part of the performance and progress update information required when completing the APR and FPR, along with sections such as scientific results, issue identification and success stories. In the PMT, information including results achieved, description for each result and explanation of variance will be required for the APR and FPR.
- You will be provided standard templates with guides for completing the APR and FPR.

## **1.2 Completing a Performance Measures Table**

- Successful applicants of cluster activities will need to develop PMT(s) as part of the work plan(s) for their Contribution Agreement (CA) and/or Collaborative Research and Development Agreement (CRDA).
- The list of performance measures is standard across all cluster activities. You will be able to select “Not Applicable” if a particular measure does not apply to your cluster activity. However, if a result is achieved during the life of your cluster activity or and had not been included in the work plan, it can still be reported in the APR/FPR.
- For each applicable measure, you will be asked to provide an estimated target. The targets identified are for the life of the cluster activity. A brief description for each target is also required and should explain what is expected to be achieved during the life of the cluster activity. This provides AAFC with context for the targets identified and helps avoid duplication.

Note: These requirements are for your information only at this time. The attached PMT is provided only as an example and does not need to be completed at the time of application.

## Performance Measures Table

Performance measures		Information that will be required for the CA and CRDA work plans		Information that will be required for the annual and final performance reports (APRs & FPRS)		
		Targets	Description for each target	Results achieved	Description for each result reported	Explain variance between targets and results (required for final performance reports only)
1	<p>Number of highly qualified personnel (HQP) working on funded activities</p> <p>Definition: This includes individuals who are registered in Master or PhD programs and are working on funded activities. This also includes HQP working on clusters that receive funding through the Canadian Agricultural Partnership. They are only counted in their first year working on clusters.</p>	<p>Example: 5</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable</p>	<p>Example: 2 for Master students; 3 for PhD students</p>	<p>Guide will be provided along with the APR and FPR templates.</p>	<p>Guide will be provided along with the APR and FPR templates.</p>	<p>Guide will be provided along with the FPR template.</p>
2	<p>Number of training/knowledge transfer events organized</p> <p>Definition: This includes events completed in the reporting year that were organized under the cluster to share results of the activities with audiences who may use the knowledge in the future. Examples could include training events, scientific meetings, symposia, conferences, workshops, industry meetings, field days or webinars.</p>	<p>Example: 2</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable</p>	<p>Example: 1 for wheat breeding workshop; 1 for webinar training on crop production</p>			
3	<p>Number of participants at training/knowledge transfer events</p> <p>Definition: This includes individuals who attend the events listed and who may use that knowledge in the future.</p>	<p>Example: 200</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable</p>	<p>50 of participants for Wheat breeding workshop; 150 of participants who register for webinar training on crop production</p>			
4	<p>Number of new knowledge transfer products developed</p> <p>Definition: New knowledge could include, but is not limited to: 1) newly acquired knowledge that differs</p>	<p>Example: 1</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable</p>	<p>1 brochure about benefit of no-till practice</p>			

	<p>significantly from previously acquired knowledge;</p> <p>2) existing knowledge that is enhanced to meet different requirements;</p> <p>3) existing knowledge that is applied in different situations.</p> <p>These are knowledge transfer materials created under the cluster that have been disseminated to transfer information to audiences who may use that knowledge in the future. Examples could include brochures, factsheets, flyers, guides, articles in trade magazines, technical bulletins and social media items. Only the number of products developed should be reported, not the number of copies that were printed and disseminated.</p>					
5	<p>Number of papers published in peer reviewed journals</p> <p>Definition: This includes scientific papers that are published in peer reviewed journals. Papers that are not yet published (ex. manuscripts in preparation, under review or accepted) should not be reported.</p>	<p>Example: 2</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable</p>	<p>1 for Soil and Tillage Research; 1 for Journal of Plant Sciences</p>			
6	<p>Number of new technologies (new products, practices, processes and systems) that are developed</p> <p>Definition: A new technology could include, but is not limited to:</p> <p>1) a newly created technology that differs significantly from existing technologies;</p> <p>2) an existing technology that is modified to meet different requirements;</p> <p>3) an existing technology that is tested in different situations.</p> <p>New products are goods and services that differ significantly in their characteristics or intended uses from products previously produced and used. Examples could include equipment, software, novel foods or consumer goods.</p> <p>New practices are new agronomic techniques or methods that can be applied directly by producers.</p> <p>New processes are the set of operations performed by equipment in which variables are monitored or controlled to produce an output in labs or processing facilities.</p> <p>New systems are the set of detailed methods, procedures and routines created to carry out a specific activity, perform a duty, or solve a problem. Are developed: when new products are</p>	<p>Example : 2</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable</p>	<p>Example: 1 for new practice: new technique in seed spacing which increases yield; 1 for a new product: a bio-herbicide that demonstrates efficacy in killing Canada thistle. 1 for a new process: a spray drying process where bioactive food compounds can be encapsulated and delivered in food ingredients.</p>			

	produced, new practices are generated and new processes or systems demonstrate utility.					
7	<p>Number of new technologies (new products, practices, processes and systems) that are assessed under research conditions</p> <p>Definition: Are assessed: when new technologies are evaluated or tested under research conditions.</p>	<p>Example: 2</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable</p>	<p>1 for a new practice: a new no-till practice that will be tested in research and development centers; 1 for a new product: a new energy bar that will be evaluated for consumer acceptance.</p>			
8	<p>Number of new technologies (new products, practices, processes and systems) that are demonstrated on-farm or in-plant</p> <p>Definition: Are demonstrated: when new technologies are presented to the sector by experiments, prototypes, examples or pilot on-farm or in-plant.</p>	<p>Example: 1</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable</p>	<p>1 for a new no-till practice that will be demonstrated on-farm.</p>			
9	<p>Number of new technologies (new products, practices, processes and systems) that attain Intellectual Property (IP) protection.</p> <p>Definition: Examples for IP protection could include, but are not limited to: plant breeder rights, patents filed, registered trademarks and copyrights, and registered or released varieties.</p>	<p>Example: 1</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable</p>	<p>1 for a new wheat variety that is expected to be registered</p>			
10	<p>Number of new technologies (new products, practices, processes and systems) that are utilized</p> <p>Definition: Are utilized: when new technologies are adopted or implemented for use within the sector. Examples may include, but are not limited to: a signed license agreement, a signed letter of intent, a new product that is available on the market, and a new practice which is adopted by farmers.</p>	<p>Example: 1</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable</p>	<p>1 for a new no-till practice that may be adopted by farmers in Guelph.</p>			

# Annex D: Peer Reviews

## 1. Objectives

Establish guidelines for the peer review of Science Cluster proposals that:

- Recognize existing peer review processes and best practices developed by Cluster recipients and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) over the past two generations of the Science Clusters program;
- Eliminate duplication of efforts; and
- Promote high standards in the peer review and assessment of research, including independent peer reviews for all Cluster research.

## 2. Guidelines

### 2.1. Obtain independent peer reviews for all research activities included in the Cluster proposal

All individual research projects included in a Cluster proposal submitted to AAFC\* must be assessed by independent peer reviewers, through a process led by the applicant and consistent with the following guidelines:

- **Three (3) peer reviews will normally be obtained for each research project within the proposed Cluster:** A documented, critical review must be performed by peers, defined as scientists having technical expertise in the subject matter to be reviewed to a degree at least equivalent to that needed for the original work. These peer reviews can be completed by scientists from industry, academia and/or government, in Canada or abroad.
- **From independent reviewers:** The peer's independence from the work being reviewed means that the peer, a) was not involved as a participant, supervisor, technical reviewer, or advisor in the work being reviewed, and b) has not collaborated with the principal investigator(s) within the last three years. Peer reviewers must sign a conflict of interest agreement (see next page).
- **Scope of peer review:** Reviewers are expected to assess the scientific and technical quality of the proposed activities, budget and research team. Peer review forms should contain, at a minimum, the following sections to be completed:
  - Overall value of the proposal objectives and deliverables to Canadian agriculture research
  - Clarity and feasibility of the objectives and anticipated outcomes
  - Quality of the methods/approach
  - Appropriateness of the budget
  - Summary comments on the strengths and weaknesses, as well as recommendations and advice regarding the proposal

Peer reviewers are not expected to assess non-research related activities or program eligibility criteria.

- **Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality:** Peer reviewers must sign an agreement to ensure effective conflict of interest management and, during the review process, the confidentiality of personal information and commercial information submitted to, and shared amongst, the applicant/recipient organization, peer reviewers and AAFC. Applicants are encouraged to refer to the [Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Policy of the Federal Research Funding Organizations](#) and the Federation Research Funding Organizations' [Conflict of Interest and Confidentiality Agreement](#) or to use the optional template provided by AAFC (See Schedule A).

A copy of the signed peer reviews will be available for review by AAFC, but is not required at the time of Cluster proposal submission.

\* Note: An independent peer review of letters of intent is not expected of applicants.

## 2.2. Establish a Science Advisory Body

It is the applicant's responsibility to form a Scientific Advisory Body (SAB). This advisory body will play an advisory role on scientific and technical issues for the Cluster project as a whole, as well as the individual research activities that are part of the Cluster.

- The composition of the SAB must meet the following guidelines:
  - At least three (3) regular members**, representing any of the following:
    - Industry stakeholders (other than the applicant)
    - Universities and/or other research institutions
    - Government (other than AAFC)
  - At least two (2) ex-officio, non-voting members** representing:
    - The applicant
    - AAFC
- Members will normally be research scientists or managers with expertise relevant to the Cluster project subject matter.
- The SAB will name a chair who will normally be a research scientist with demonstrated leadership skills and extensive knowledge of the Cluster's sector.
- A list of SAB members, along with short biographical notes (such as title, organization and areas of expertise) must be included in the Cluster proposal submitted to AAFC.
- Furthermore, it is recommended that SAB members be appointed for mandates of one (1) year or longer, whenever this is feasible.



### **2.3. Mandate of the Science Advisory Body**

It is the applicant's responsibility to form a Science Advisory Body to provide independent advice on the scientific and technical merit of proposed research over the duration of the Cluster.

The SAB's mandate is to:

- Validate the integrity of the peer review process to ensure a fair, transparent and thorough evaluation of individual research activities/projects by independent peer reviewers; and
- Provide the applicant organization with expert advice on the Cluster's science programming.

The SAB will fulfill its mandate by:

- Ensuring that research, development and technology transfer activities have been assessed for scientific/technical merit by independent peer reviewers with appropriate expertise in the field of the proposed activities;
  - Expressing opinions on the feasibility of the proposed workplan, the soundness of the proposed budget, and the appropriateness of the assembled team in charge of carrying out the Cluster's research activities;
  - Providing strategic advice with respect to the Cluster's overall five-year science programming, in general, and the anticipated emerging themes and priorities which may lead to new activities and/or changes to existing ones; and
  - Assessing the scientific/technical merit of new activities and/or changes to existing ones for the duration of the Cluster.
- It is not expected that the SAB will assess non-research related activities.

The applicant must submit a "Science Advisory Body (SAB) – Summary of Peer Review" form, signed by the SAB Chair, attesting that an independent peer review has been conducted, and documenting changes made to the Cluster research proposal (or individual research projects that are part of the proposal) as a result of peer reviews and SAB deliberations. This form will be made available on the program website and in the application package. The applicant/recipient may also request the form from program officials.

### **2.4. Information Management, Retention of Documents and Access**

The applicant must include the following peer review and assessment documents in the Cluster proposal submitted to AAFC:

- List of independent peer reviewers including, at a minimum, each reviewer's name, title, organization and area(s) of expertise;
- List of SAB members including, at a minimum, each member's name, title, organization and area(s) of expertise;
- SAB meeting agenda and minutes; and the

- Science Advisory Body (SAB) – Summary of Peer Review form signed by the SAB Chair.

The following peer review and assessment documents must be retained by the applicant, but are not required to be included in the Cluster proposal submitted to AAFC:

- All completed peer review forms;
- Signed conflict of interest and confidentiality agreements for all reviewers; and
- Terms of reference and/or administrative policies of the SAB.

AAFC may ask to review these documents at a later date.

Documents can be retained in paper and/or electronic format. Scanned images of paper documents that are maintained in electronic format are acceptable.

Contribution agreements with AAFC contain Information Management, Retention and Access provisions which require that recipients retain records for six (6) years after the date of expiration or early termination of the funding agreement with AAFC, whichever comes later.

## SCHEDULE A

***[INSERT CLUSTER APPLICANT LETTERHEAD AND ADDRESS]***

### CONFLICT OF INTEREST, CONFIDENTIALITY AND NON-DISCLOSURE DECLARATION - EXTERNAL PEER REVIEWERS -

External peer reviewers must meet very high standards of ethical behaviour in their task. External peer reviewers are invited as individuals; they are not the advocates or representatives of their disciplines nor are they the delegates of any organization. Their duty is to make the best possible objective assessment of research proposals.

**Regarding peer reviews of research proposals from the *[Insert Cluster Applicant Name]* for the next science cluster:**

**I, the undersigned,** \_\_\_\_\_ *[Insert Your Printed Name]*

- Recognize that I may be informed, through my involvement in the assessment and/or expert evaluation of the submitted research activities, of confidential information consisting of scientific, technical, industrial or commercial information related to the projects (except that which would be part of public domain), which will be communicated to me in an oral or written way or on any other media given to me for the task.

**Consequently, I am committing to:**

#### ***CONFIDENTIALITY:***

- Treat the documentation provided as strictly confidential;
- Use the confidential information provided only for the purpose for which it was originally intended (i.e., assess *[Insert Cluster Applicant Name]* research proposals to evaluate the scientific merit and to confirm the resources requested to undertake the research. It must not be used for any other purpose or discussed with or disclosed to others);
- Take all necessary measures to prevent the disclosure of the confidential information to a third party (e.g., neither reproduce all and/or part of the confidential information nor disclose it in any form therefore, store it in a secure manner to prevent unauthorized access, and when no longer required, destroy it).

**CONFLICT OF INTEREST:**

- Point out to the **[Insert Cluster Applicant Name]** Science Advisory Body any situation of conflict of interest that would affect me as a result of my involvement in the selection process relating to the projects submitted;
- Evaluate projects with equity and objectivity, according to the criteria of the evaluation form therefore carrying on my mission from a completely impartial and independent standpoint;
- Not belong or have belonged, in the last three years, to the same research unit as the scientist(s);
- Not have been a research supervisor or graduate student of the applicant(s) within the past three years;
- Not have collaborated with the applicant(s) within the past three years or have plans to collaborate in the immediate future;
- Not be an employee of a non-academic organization with which the applicant has had collaboration within the past three years;
- Not be in any other potential conflict of interest (e.g. personal, financial);
- Not take any advantage from my position for myself, my relatives, my colleagues, my laboratory or my organization;
- Not get in contact with the applicant(s) for my work achievement during the evaluation;
- Draw the attention of the **[Insert Cluster Applicant Name]** Science Advisory Board regarding any pressure attempt coming from the applicant.

NOTE: The notion of conflict of interest is defined as follows: It refers to the situation in which somebody has to evaluate and/or to take part in a decision which could directly/indirectly give him an advantage in the framework of his scientific activities or as a scientific manager. It covers in particular the following cases:

\* The evaluation/decision about a project in which he is involved himself, or his close colleagues, or a team of his research unit-especially when he is at the head of this research unit-or his organization,

\* The evaluation/decision about a project directly in competition with a project in which he is involved himself, or his close colleagues, or a team from his research unit-especially when he is at the head of this research unit-or his organization.

*I have read the above instructions on the need for confidentiality with respect to **[Insert Cluster Applicant Name]** information provided and the requirement for secure management of all information entrusted to me by the **[Insert Cluster Applicant Name]**. I understand that breaches of confidentiality are subject to investigation, to the imposition of sanctions by the **[Insert Cluster Applicant Name]**, and that the person to whom the information relates may seek civil remedy against me for breach of confidentiality. I agree to take personal responsibility for complying with these requirements.*

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please send the signed form by e-mail to **[Insert Cluster Applicant Contact Email]** or by fax to **[Insert Cluster Applicant Fax #]**.