



Applicant Guide: **A NEW ATLANTIC CLIMATE SERVICE ORGANIZATION**

Canadian Centre for Climate Services
November 2020



Unless otherwise specified, you may not reproduce materials in this publication, in whole or in part, for the purposes of commercial redistribution without prior written permission from Environment and Climate Change Canada's copyright administrator. To obtain permission to reproduce Government of Canada materials for commercial purposes, apply for Crown Copyright Clearance by contacting:

Environment and Climate Change Canada
Public Inquiries Centre
12th Floor, Fontaine Building
200 Sacré-Coeur Boulevard
Gatineau QC K1A 0H3
Telephone: 819-938-3860
Toll Free: 1-800-668-6767 (in Canada only)
Email: ec.enviroinfo.ec@canada.ca

Photo: © Gettyimages

© Her Majesty the Queen in Right of Canada, represented by the Minister of Environment and Climate Change, 2020

Aussi disponible en français

Table of Contents

1.0 Purpose	4
1.1 Objective of the Call for Proposals.....	4
1.2 Purpose of the Applicant Guide	4
2.0 About Canada’s Climate Services Program	5
3.0 About the Atlantic Hub	6
3.1 Guiding Principles	6
3.2 Expected Operating Environment.....	7
3.3 Atlantic Hub Structure and Governance	8
Board of Directors.....	8
Secretariat.....	8
Advisory Committee	10
Working Groups or Teams	10
3.4 Priority Start-up Activities for Atlantic Hub (Start-up to Operational)	10
3.5 Call for Proposal Funding Parameters	12
3.5.1 Funding Level and Duration: First Three Years (2021-2024)	12
3.5.2 Funding Level and Duration: Subsequent Years (2024-2028).....	12
3.5.2 Eligible Expenditure Period	13
3.6 Partner Organizations	13
4.0 Applicant Eligibility.....	14
4.1 Geographic Location	14
4.2 Official Language Requirements	15
5.0 Application Requirements and Selection Process	15
5.1 How to Apply.....	15
5.2 The Application	16
5.2.1 Applicant Profile.....	16
5.2.2 Context for the New Atlantic Hub.....	16
5.2.3 Understanding of the Call for Proposals	17
5.2.4. Secretariat Team	17
5.2.5 Work Plan and Associated Costs.....	19
5.2.6 Financial Sustainability Plan.....	21
5.2.8 Governance Plan	21
5.2.9 Partner Organizations	22

5.2.10 Communications Plan	22
5.2.11 Risk Management Plan	22
5.2.12 Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion	23
5.2.13 Overarching Themes	23
5.3 Mandatory Supporting Documents	24
5.3.1 Letters of Commitment.....	24
5.3.2 Letters of Support	24
5.3.3 CVs of Secretariat Team.....	25
5.4 The Evaluation	25
5.4.1 Step 1: Mandatory Criteria	25
5.4.2 Step 2: Point Rated Criteria.....	25
5.4.3 Step 3: Presentation to Evaluation Committee	26
5.5 Recipient Selection.....	27
5.6 Communicating Decision	27
6.0 Intellectual Property	28

1.0 Purpose

1.1 Objective of the Call for Proposals

This Call for Proposals (CFP) process will select a team or an organization to act as the Secretariat and to fulfill the position of Executive Director to lead a new Atlantic climate service organization, hereafter referred to as the “Atlantic Hub”, which will provide regionally-tailored climate services for Atlantic Canadians. These services will include relevant and tailored climate data, information, tools, training, and expert support to help users understand and apply climate information in their decision-making. The new Atlantic Hub will become part of a network of other similar regional climate consortia located across the country, and will work closely with the Canadian Centre for Climate Services to co-deliver climate services in Atlantic Canada.

Please refer to *Section 3.3: Atlantic Hub Structure and Governance* for further information on the expected structure of the Atlantic Hub and the role of the Secretariat within that new organization.

1.2 Purpose of the Applicant Guide

This document provides applicants with the information required to develop a funding proposal to apply to be the organization to serve as the new Atlantic Hub. The guidelines include general program information such as eligibility requirements, as well as information on how to complete and submit the full application package.

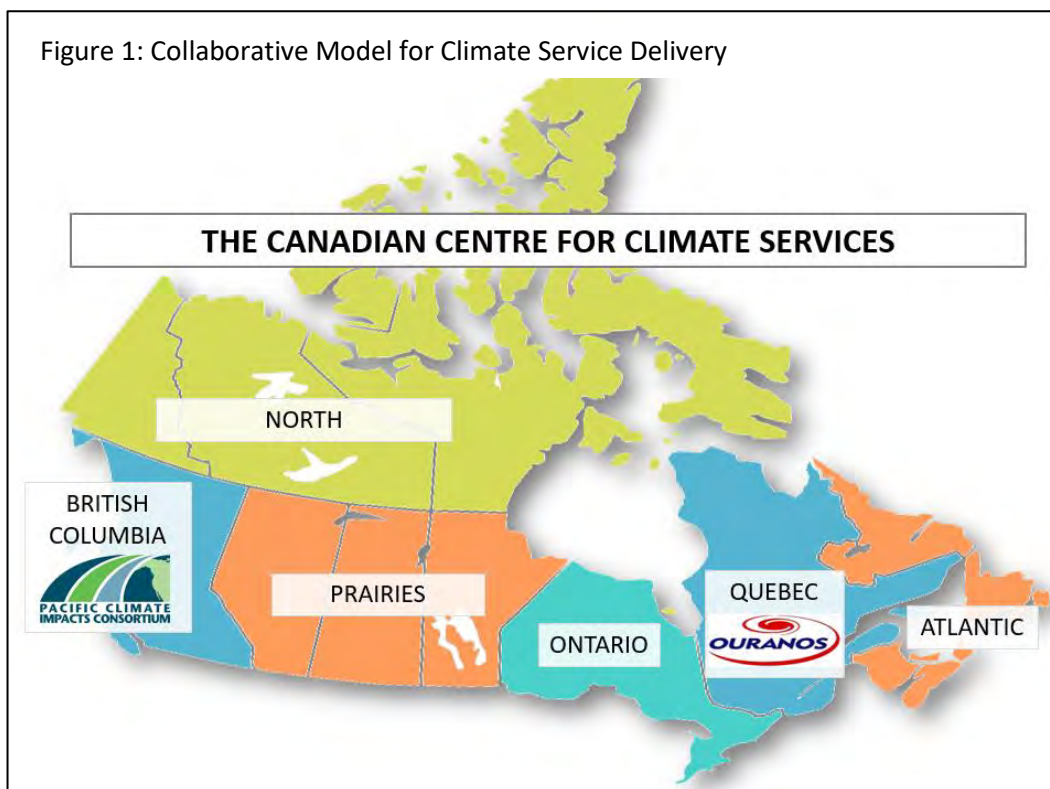
Please read this guide carefully before submitting an electronic application.

Enquiries related to the Call for Proposals should be directed to ec.ccsadmin.ec@canada.ca.

2.0 About Canada's Climate Services Program

In 2018, the Government of Canada, through Environment and Climate Change Canada, established the [Canadian Centre for Climate Services](#) (CCCS) to help Canadians understand the climate-related risks they face so they are equipped to pursue adaptation action. The CCCS works to make climate data and information more accessible and provides guidance and resources to help Canadians use this knowledge to make climate-smart decisions when planning for the future. Together with its partners, the CCCS is supporting a continuum of climate portals, including [ClimateData.ca](#), to provide Canadians with easy access to climate related data and to help increase their resilience to climate change.

The CCCS is leading the development of a national system of climate services by fostering and coordinating a network of regional climate expert organizations across the country to ensure all Canadians have access to locally-relevant expertise, advice, and information needed for decision-making. This network of climate service providers work together to help translate climate science and information into meaningful insights that can help organizations and individuals plan for the future (see Figure 1).



Climate services in Canada are provided through a collaborative model, whereby:

- The CCCS provides national leadership and coordination, and focuses on services that provide foundational climate information, data, and tools available at a national scale;
- Regional climate consortia (and their partners) provide local context, tailored or specialized interpretation and support services; such that,

- Together, the CCCS and regional climate consortia *jointly deliver* climate services to Canadians.

CCCS is providing support to existing regional climate organizations in British Columbia and Québec. Where regional climate organizations do not already exist, CCCS officials have been supporting provinces and territories to establish regional climate organizations for their regions to work with the CCCS in responding to local needs. To that end, the CCCS has been working closely with the four Atlantic provinces to develop a concept for an Atlantic climate service organization.

3.0 About the Atlantic Hub

In an effort to foster regional capacity for climate change adaptation, the Atlantic provinces and the CCCS are working together towards the creation of an Atlantic climate service organization, or Atlantic Hub, which would become part of the national network of regional climate expert organizations. Beginning in April 2021, federal and provincial financial contributions will be available to support the Atlantic Hub's first three years, from the start-up to operations, with declining contributions thereafter (please see *Section 3.5.1: Funding Level and Duration* for further information).

The role of the new Atlantic Hub would be to provide locally-tailored climate data, information, training and other client supports to help Atlantic Canadians consider the impacts of climate change in their decisions.

Based on needs identified by the Atlantic provinces and CCCS, the Atlantic Hub will initially focus on providing users in Atlantic Canada with:

- Enhanced accessibility of regionally and locally relevant historical and future climate data, information, and tools;
- Regionally-tailored training on the interpretation and use of climate information for adaptation to climate change; and
- Expert advice and support on how to access and use climate information.

The Atlantic Hub's scope of services and activities may grow and evolve over time in response to user needs for climate services for adaptation.

3.1 Guiding Principles

The Atlantic Hub will be guided by the following six guiding principles:

- Maintain a **regional focus** on issues and priorities of common interest where possible, whilst also ensuring sufficient attention is given to **unique jurisdictional needs** and considerations, such as the range of climate zones in the region (from sub-arctic to maritime) and provincial Official Languages legislation.

- Employ a **multi-disciplinary approach** to assess and respond to climate change impacts and adaptive measures that are multi-faceted with economic, social, and environmental considerations.
- Provide services with a strong **user-focused approach**. This would include **ongoing and regular engagement and interaction with users** to understand their needs for regionally relevant, tailored and user friendly products and services that support them in understanding and using climate information.
- Demonstrate a commitment to **scientific quality** and **continuous and ongoing improvement** to products and services.
- **Collaborate and partner**, including with Indigenous groups, local organizations, and other regional hubs as needed, to deliver measurable results.
- **Adapt**, so that the Atlantic Hub is capable of operating effectively in a dynamic environment, including responding effectively to change, different client/user needs, and altering operational realities.

3.2 Expected Operating Environment

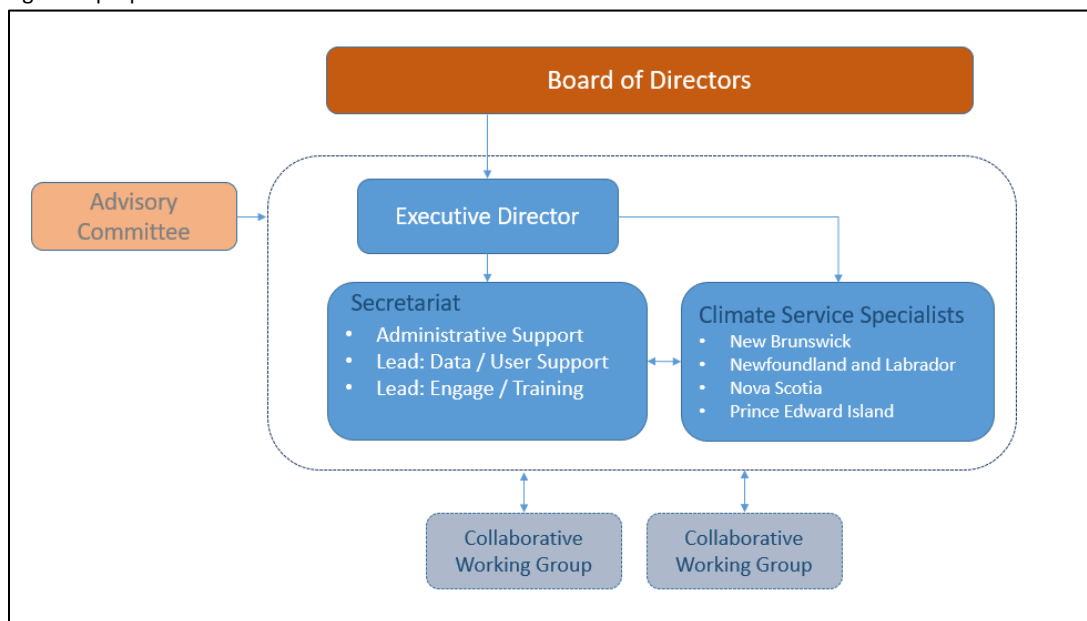
The Atlantic Hub will be entering a very dynamic operating environment and will need to be highly collaborative within the region and with peer organizations elsewhere in Canada. Elements of its operating environment will likely include:

- As a regionally networked organization, the Executive Director and Secretariat will be providing regional leadership for the Atlantic Hub's expertise, programming, and brand, in addition to coordinating activities of the distributed group of climate service specialists located in each province.
- Operating across multiple jurisdictions that have differing climate policy approaches and differing economic strength, with predominantly rural (and some remote) populations across a large land base with some urban centres.
- Working closely with the CCCS, other expert hubs and climate consortia established (or being established) in other parts of the country, to share information, transfer knowledge, build collective capacity, and provide mutual support.
- Interacting with other experts and fostering collaborative partnerships with provincial and federal ministries, local governments, academic institutions, private sector interests, Indigenous communities, and other experts and knowledge holders.
- Providing services to meet the needs of diverse users from within Atlantic Canada's provincial or municipal government, Indigenous government and organizations, professional associations, and climate-sensitive economic sectors.

3.3 Atlantic Hub Structure and Governance

The Atlantic Hub is envisioned to be a not-for-profit organization, governed by a **Board of Directors** (BoD). The Secretariat of the Hub will be led by an **Executive Director** who will provide operational leadership to the **Secretariat** staff and to the **distributed team of climate service specialists** located in each province that provide climate services directly to clients. The Secretariat is to be comprised of staff capable of providing technical leadership in areas of user outreach and engagement, user training, and regionally tailored climate information and products. It is envisioned that the Atlantic Hub will receive input and advice from an **Advisory Committee** and have the option to establish **working teams** to undertake collaborative projects in priority thematic areas (see Figure 2 below).

Figure 2: proposed Atlantic Hub Governance & Structure



Board of Directors

The Atlantic Hub's Board of Directors (BoD) will provide the organization with fiduciary oversight and governance, (e.g. approving the strategic direction and annual work plans as proposed by the Executive Director). The initial composition of the BoD will include (at a minimum) representation from the Government of Canada (CCCS), in an advisory capacity, and equal representation from the four Atlantic provincial governments (or their designates). The BoD will develop their own Terms of Reference. In the interim to establishing the BoD, the CCCS and provincial representatives will provide stewardship and guidance to the establishment of governance structures and operational activities of the Atlantic Hub.

Secretariat

The Atlantic Hub **Secretariat** will be responsible for program development, managing the Atlantic Hub's engagement with a broad range of clients, peer organizations, regional stakeholders and collaborators,

increasing access to regional climate information and data products, developing regional best practices for service delivery, and coordinating activities of Climate Service Specialists. The Secretariat will be responsible for leading the start-up of the Atlantic Hub, coordinating operational service delivery activities (see *Section 3.4: Priority Start-up Activities for Atlantic Hub (Start-up to Operational)*), and tracking and reporting on Hub performance.

The Secretariat will include at least four key positions such as the **Executive Director**, two **technical lead positions** leading on a) Data and User Support and b) Engagement and Training, as well as administrative support required to oversee the administration of the Secretariat. At minimum, the Executive Director and one technical lead must be identified at the time of submitting the application. The Secretariat will be expected to provide client services in both official languages, in accordance with the federal [Official Languages Act \(1985\)](#), and any applicable legislation of the province where the Secretariat is (or to be) located.

Executive Director

The **Executive Director** will provide operational leadership, direction, supervision and management of the Secretariat (comprised of technical leads and administrative support) and the distributed team of climate service specialists (located in each province). The Executive Director will be responsible for ensuring the Atlantic Hub fulfils its mandate by developing and implementing the Hub's strategic plan and annual work plans that achieve targeted outcomes. The Executive Director will be responsible for developing new initiatives that align with the strategic plan and engaging in partnerships and fundraising to ensure long-term financial sustainability of the Hub.

Technical Lead Positions

Two technical Lead positions will be housed within the Atlantic Hub Secretariat: **Lead, Data & User Support**, and **Lead, Training & Engagement**. The Secretariat will also be responsible for coordinating with four additional climate service specialists located in each of the Atlantic Provinces.

Climate Service Specialists

Provincial **climate service specialists** will deliver locally-tailored services to provincial climate information users, which could include (but not be limited to): user engagement to understand user needs, tailoring climate products or analysis, and delivering user training. Climate service specialists will be identified at the discretion of each province; some of these positions may be hosted within a provincial government department or hosted by a non-government organization or academic institution. While the climate service specialists will be funded by each of the Atlantic provinces (and separately from this Call for Proposals), their activities will be coordinated by the Atlantic Hub's two technical leads, and receive direction from the Atlantic Hub's Executive Director.

Administrative Support

The Secretariat will require administrative support to ensure efficient operation of the Atlantic Hub and oversee responsibilities related to office management. Duties could include (but not be limited to): book keeping, payroll, materials purchasing, assistance with records keeping and reporting, document management, logistics, and providing administrative support to the Executive Director.

Advisory Committee

Within its first year of operation, the Atlantic Hub will establish an **Advisory Committee** to provide the Atlantic Hub, including the Executive Director, with advice and perspectives that help inform and align the Atlantic Hub's plans and activities with regional user needs. The Advisory Committee could be comprised of key stakeholders, knowledge holders from regional Indigenous governments and organizations, academia and communities, as well as key client/user groups. Members could come from across the region and beyond (as appropriate), with an effort to include underrepresented groups, diverse participation, and strive for gender balance. The majority of meetings being conducted via teleconference or web-based platforms, where possible. It is anticipated that there would be one in-person meeting of the Advisory Committee per year, with member travel costs overseen and compensated by the Atlantic Hub.

Working Groups or Teams

It is further envisioned that the Executive Director may choose to create specific **Working Groups or Teams** to help advance a particular theme or area of the Atlantic Hub's activities. Such Working Groups or Teams would be led by the Atlantic Hub staff (or co-led with a collaborator) and comprised of relevant experts or knowledge holders with interest in specific areas of Atlantic Hub's activities. Working Groups or Teams would enable both collaborative approaches that leverage expert capacity within the region and assist in the identification of gaps and opportunities for value-added projects or initiatives. Working Groups or Teams would use teleconference and web platforms for collaboration as much as possible. If travel is required, expenses would be managed by the Atlantic Hub's operational budget.

3.4 Priority Start-up Activities for Atlantic Hub (Start-up to Operational)

The Atlantic Hub will be expected to prioritize activities to support its quick start-up, and to launch operational climate service delivery. Such activities would include, but not be limited to the following (in some instances, timelines are provided*):

Organizational Set-up/Start-up for longevity:

- A Contribution Agreement between Environment and Climate Change Canada and the Recipient must be negotiated and signed within 60 business days of the notification of approval.
- Establish the Atlantic Hub's full staff complement (within 4-6 months).
- Establish a functional Board of Directors (BoD), Advisory Committee, and the necessary policies and practices supporting effective governance of the organization and its resources (within 1 year).
- Undertake incorporation of the Atlantic Hub organization (within 12-14 months).
- Responsibly manage the financial resources allocated to the Atlantic Hub, including contracting for activities or required services (ongoing).
- For approval by the BoD, develop the Atlantic Hub's Strategic Plan and annual work plans, and initial plans for financial sustainability (2024-2028, and beyond) (within 1 year).

* Timelines are anticipated, based on standard operating conditions. There is flexibility to accommodate unforeseen circumstances, to the extent possible.

- Monitor and report to Environment and Climate Change Canada on the Atlantic Hub's activities and results achieved as per the Contribution Agreement (to be negotiated).

Public Outreach and Communication:

- Initiate selection of name and branding for organization, and coordinate a public launch of the Atlantic Hub, with input from the Atlantic provinces and the CCCS (within 6 months).
- Develop and lead implementation of a public communications plan (e.g. using various forms of media and a web presence) to clearly communicate and promote the Atlantic Hub, its activities, products, services, and supports available.

Climate Service Coordination:

- Coordinate service delivery activities (e.g. user training, knowledge mobilization, and product tailoring) with the network of regional climate service specialists located in each Atlantic province.
- Build relationships and a collaborative approach to leverage climate expertise, capacity, and strengths of organizations in Atlantic Canada (e.g. different orders of government, university researchers, and professional associations).
- Participate in and represent the Atlantic Hub on the Regional Coordinating Committee, a national forum for collaborative and coordinated action for the provision of climate services across Canada, including alignment of approaches and priorities, exchange of knowledge, expertise, and lessons learned (within 2 months).

Regional Climate Service Leadership:

- Receive and respond to regional user inquiries for climate information, guidance and other supports, and coordinating with CCCS Support Desk (within 8 months).
- Lead the development and adoption of climate service delivery best practices for Atlantic Canada (e.g. guide users towards appropriate sources of climate information and guidance in the use of that information, based on expressed needs).
- Lead Atlantic Hub activities to enhance user access to high-quality, locally-relevant, and tailored climate data (e.g. develop Atlantic module on ClimateData.ca), information, and tools that aid users' in decision-making and advance adaptation action.
- Lead the Atlantic Hub's user engagement (including key economic sectors and Indigenous governments and organizations), user needs assessment, and client relationship building.
- Develop regional user training and engagement programs across the Atlantic Provinces.

It should be noted that the following activities are ineligible for reimbursement and are outside the scope of services to be provided by the Atlantic Hub:

- Activities relating to environmental monitoring, including the purchase, installation and or repair of monitoring equipment.
- Research activities, whether science or social science related.
- Lobbying activities (or activities that can be perceived as such).

3.5 Call for Proposal Funding Parameters

3.5.1 Funding Level and Duration: First Three Years (2021-2024)

Funding for the Atlantic Hub will be provided both by ECCC through the CCCS, as well as by Atlantic Provinces.

The successful Applicant to this Call for Proposals will participate in the negotiation of a three (3) year Contribution Agreement with the CCCS. The maximum amount of contribution funding available from the CCCS is \$549,500 per year for each of the three years (totalling up to \$1.648 million).

In addition to the contribution agreement with the CCCS, the Atlantic Hub will be eligible to receive (through separate funding arrangements) annual funding from each of the Atlantic provinces from 2021-2022 until 2023-2024 (subject to each province's annual budget appropriations) which will be used to support operating costs.

Please see Table 1 below for a summary of resources available for the first three years (April 2021-March 2024) of the Atlantic Hub Secretariat operations:

Table 1: Confirmed Maximum Funding Available to the Atlantic Hub

Source	2021/2022	2022/23	2023/24
CCCS contribution funding to Secretariat	\$549,500	\$549,500	\$549,500
NB funding for Secretariat operations	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
NS funding for Secretariat operations	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
PEI funding for Secretariat operations	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
NL funding for Secretariat operations	\$25,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
TOTAL anticipated operating budget	\$649,500	\$649,500	\$649,500

In addition to this funding for the Atlantic Hub Secretariat, each Atlantic province has agreed to fund the creation of a climate service specialist in its jurisdiction that will form part of the Atlantic Hub. The location of this specialist (whether in the provincial government, or an external organization) will be determined by each province and will be funded directly by the province.

For greater clarity, the Atlantic Hub is not responsible for the salary or operating costs of the four provincial climate service specialists, as these positions will be funded by the respective province. However, a formal arrangement will be negotiated between each province and the Atlantic Hub to clarify each of the specialists' reporting relationship with the Hub.

3.5.2 Funding Level and Duration: Subsequent Years (2024-2028)

After the first three years, and pending successful performance of the Recipient, the contribution agreement with the CCCS will be up for renegotiation in April 2024, valued at \$400,000 in 2024-2025, and \$250,000 each year thereafter until the end of March 2028. The CCCS provides no assurances,

express or implied, that the successful Applicant under this process will receive funding in 2024-2025 onwards. The CCCS funding in 2024-2025 onwards is subject to availability of funds, the potential recipient demonstrating their eligibility for CCCS funding, and departmental approval of the recipient that will continue the Atlantic Hub activities.

It must be clearly understood by Applicants that the vision is for the Atlantic Hub to become operational and to sustain service delivery over the long-term. Thus, the first three years of confirmed funding will need to be used strategically and be leveraged by the Atlantic Hub to attract additional collaborators, and contributions from other funders. The Executive Director of the Atlantic Hub will be responsible to develop, with advice and guidance from the Board of Directors, a financial sustainability plan for the Atlantic Hub.

As outlined below in *Section 5.2.6: Financial Sustainability Plan*, Applicants are asked to outline, at a high level, their proposed approach to achieving financial sustainability for the Atlantic Hub over the longer term. A clear and feasible approach to the financial sustainability plan will perform better in the proposal evaluation.

3.5.2 Eligible Expenditure Period

Incurred costs may be considered eligible for reimbursement as of the date the Recipient is notified of approval in writing by Environment and Climate Change Canada or as of April 1, 2021, whichever is later.

Payments can only be reimbursed by Environment and Climate Change Canada after the Contribution Agreement between Environment and Climate Change Canada and the Recipient is signed. Only those expenditures described in the Agreement will be considered for reimbursement by Environment and Climate Change Canada.

Payment details will be included in the Contribution Agreement between Environment and Climate Change Canada and the successful Recipient.

3.6 Partner Organizations

Applicants are encouraged to develop partnerships or other arrangements that enable them to leverage existing expertise and to build on areas of strength already in place within Atlantic Canada and beyond the region. Partnerships are not meant to replace the development of new capacity within the Atlantic Hub. Partnerships will offer an opportunity for organizations other than the Recipient to be involved in this initiative, perhaps by co-developing events, projects, funding, and/or providing other forms of support for the Atlantic Hub.

Unlike the Applicant, partner organizations do not have to be not-for-profit organizations. Partners can include academic institutions, professional associations, private enterprises, and governments (e.g., provincial, territorial, municipal, and Indigenous).

Applicants that demonstrate capacity for and commitment to building relationships, fostering collaboration and partnership will perform better in the proposal evaluation.

4.0 Applicant Eligibility

The following types of Canadian organizations are eligible to apply to this Call for Proposals:

- Academic institutions
- Existing climate consortia
- Indigenous governments or organizations
- Not-for-profit organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs)

As noted in *Section 3.4: Priority Start-up Activities for Atlantic Hub (Start-up to Operational)* above, the Contribution Agreement between Environment and Climate Change Canada and the Recipient must be negotiated and signed within 60 business days of the notification of approval.

If the Applicant is an association of individuals from existing organizations, one of the associated organizations would be required to agree to receive and manage the funding from ECCC on *behalf of the collective* until the Atlantic Hub itself is incorporated and able to be the legal recipient of the contribution funding.

Over time, the recipients must be incorporated as the Atlantic Hub (formal legal name to be determined) either federally (under the [Canada Business Corporations Act](#) or the [Canada Not-for-Profit Corporations Act](#)) or incorporated provincially in one of the provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island or Newfoundland and Labrador.

The following are considered ineligible to apply for the opportunity:

- Representatives of municipal, provincial, or federal government
- Individuals
- Non-Canadian organizations

Please feel free to reach out to ec.cccsadmin.ec@canada.ca if you have any questions around your eligibility to apply for the Call for Proposals.

4.1 Geographic Location

Applicants located outside of Atlantic Canada may apply to this Call for Proposals; however, the Applicant must establish a presence in one of the Atlantic provinces (New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador, or Prince Edward Island) prior to signing the contribution agreement, or clearly demonstrate the commitment to do so (i.e. provide copy of signed lease, etc.) and have experience working in Atlantic Canada. Applications must include the organization's mailing address, as

outlined in *Section 5.2.1: Applicant Profile* of the Applicant Guide. Failure to provide an address will result in the application being deemed incomplete and will not be evaluated in the technical review.

4.2 Official Language Requirements

The Government of Canada is committed to taking positive measures to enhance the vitality of official language minority communities and promote the use of English and French in Canadian society. The Recipient must agree to comply with the official language requirements set out in the funding agreement, per the federal *Official Languages Act*.

As appropriate, the Recipient will be required to:

- Ensure that any communications, announcements, or documents for the general public concerning activities, projects, services, and programs are provided in both official languages.
- When delivering services, programs, projects, or activities to the general public, to be capable of doing so in both official languages and provide services to official language minority communities, when appropriate, in such a manner that they may participate in these services on a basis comparable to the majority language community.
- Ensure that engagement with stakeholders regarding Atlantic Hub activities, projects, and programs encourage participation in both official languages as well as representation from official language minority communities, where appropriate.
- Implement any other measures that the department may identify including, without limitation, the inclusion of official languages provisions in the recipient's agreements for further distribution of funding.

In addition, the Recipient should strive to communicate with individuals in the official language of their preference.

Bilingual capacity of candidates for key positions will be evaluated through the CVs provided for the Project Team. The submitted CV's should include information pertaining to team member(s)' bilingual credentials or relevant certifications.

5.0 Application Requirements and Selection Process

5.1 How to Apply

Applicants may submit proposals electronically from November 24, 2020 until January 11, 2021 at 11:59PM (AST) to ec.ccsadmin.ec@canada.ca. Late submissions will not be accepted.

Mailed or facsimile (fax) submissions will not be accepted.

Applicants should review the eligibility criteria in *Section 5.4.1 Mandatory Requirements* prior to submitting an application. Applicants must clearly demonstrate that they meet the eligibility criteria in *Section 4.0: Applicant Eligibility*.

5.2 The Application

The following sections outline the required elements to be included in the application. Please ensure responses are provided for all of the required elements (*Section 5.2: The Application* and *Section 5.3: Mandatory Supporting Documents*). Incomplete applications will not be considered.

Where possible, guidance is provided within each section on how the application will be evaluated.

Page limits are provided for each requirement. Submissions will not be evaluated beyond the specified maximum page limit.

5.2.1 Applicant Profile

Please tell us about the Applicant organization. New organizations forming in response to the opportunity must provide applicant information, to the extent possible.

The Applicant Profile must include the following elements:

- Applicant organization name, or proposed name
- Applicant organization address, or proposed address (including street address, city, province, and postal code)
- Lead contact information:
 - Lead contact name
 - Lead contact email address (this is the email that we will use to contact you)
- If an existing organization, include the organization's mandate
- Status of incorporation

The Applicant Profile will not be rated, but must be included for the application to be considered complete.

Maximum 1 page.

5.2.2 Context for the New Atlantic Hub

Applicants must describe their organization's understanding of the operating context for the new Atlantic Hub and network of climate service specialists, demonstrating an understanding of the climate services landscape in Atlantic Canada, including but not limited to: the variety of climatic conditions found in Atlantic Canada, the projected climate conditions, priority regional climate impacts and risks, your knowledge of existing climate expert communities within the region, key user communities, what

climate data is often used for, some of the existing challenges users experience accessing and using climate information, and climate service user needs and gaps.

Maximum 2 pages.

5.2.3 Understanding of the Call for Proposals

In light of the Atlantic context, Applicants are asked to briefly summarize their organization's understanding of what the Call for Proposal is seeking of the Atlantic Hub, paying particular attention to its role in achieving the broader purpose of the Atlantic Hub.

Maximum 1 page.

5.2.4. Secretariat Team

Applicants must identify and provide details on who, within the Applicant team, will fulfill key Atlantic Hub positions, including the Executive Director, Lead for Data and User Support, and Lead for Engagement and Training and administrative support. Applicants must have the Executive Director position and at least one of the Lead positions confirmed at the time of submitting the application, and must detail in *Section 5.2.5: Work Plan*, how and when the hiring for the remaining positions will take place. Candidates for the Secretariat Team hired following the submission of the application must meet the mandatory qualifications and experience, outlined below.

A strong application will include information on team members in terms of their education, qualifications, and relevant experience to perform the duties and responsibilities of the position they will fulfill within the Secretariat. This section of the application should demonstrate the team's capacity to successfully execute on the areas of activity outlined in *Section 3.4 Priority Start-up Activities for Atlantic Hub (Start-up to Operational)* and, more specifically, the work plan which forms part of the application (*Section 5.2.5: Work Plan*).

The Applicant's Secretariat team will be evaluated on the extent and depth of relevant experience and expertise. Thus, the application package should include a curriculum vitae for each of the Secretariat Team members that are identified at the time of submitting the application.

5.2.4.1 Experience and Qualifications: Team

The Applicant's Secretariat Team must possess the following mandatory qualifications:

- Experience working in Atlantic Canada;
- One or more members possessing advanced university degrees or equivalents in relevant fields of the social or natural sciences (e.g., climatology, geography, environmental science, or environmental sociology);

- One or more members possessing advanced university degrees or equivalents in business administration;
- At least fifteen years of combined experience in an area relevant to the mandate of the climate services network;
- All members capable of working effectively in English (written and spoken);
- At least one member possessing superior French language skills, making them capable of working effectively in French (written and spoken). The expectation is that this team member will lead on Hub communication with the public as needed, and with Francophone clients; and
- All members must be currently eligible to work in Canada.

This section should demonstrate the group's experience and/or capacity to execute the following required activities:

- Strategic planning and implementation of strategic plans;
- Fundraising and strong financial management;
- Use of climate information;
- Ability to communicate climate science effectively to a wide variety of audiences;
- Provide training and/or information sessions tailored to the audience learning objectives; and
- Working with Indigenous communities, governments, and/or organizations.

The following experiences would be considered an asset:

- Development of climate adaptation products and services to support adaptation planning;
- Delivery of climate services, such as using climate information to support climate change impact, risk or vulnerability assessments and/or adaptation planning;
- Provision of expertise and advice on climate change, including in areas such as (but not limited) coastal hazards, inland flooding, melting of permafrost, ice conditions, human health, ecosystem impacts, or impacts on or opportunities for economic sectors like agriculture, fisheries, tourism, and forestry;
- Work on issues relating to climate change adaptation in Atlantic Canada; and
- Work with Indigenous communities, governments, and/or organizations, including to co-develop or deliver climate information or services.

5.2.4.2 Experience and Qualifications: Executive Director

The Executive Director must demonstrate the following key experiences and competencies:

- Strong executive management capacities and demonstrated experience successfully leading and developing an organization;
- Experience with strategic planning and service delivery;
- Team leadership experience, including recruitment, management and assessment of staff and sub-contractors;

- Financial administration experience; and
- Fundraising experience, including building and maintaining donor relationships, demonstration of entrepreneurship.

Knowledge of environmental issues considered an asset, particularly knowledge of climate change and/or climate adaptation in Canada and the Atlantic provinces.

The Applicant is encouraged to identify any relevant and additional credentials and certifications held by team members that would contribute to the successful development and operation of the Atlantic Hub.

Where examples of previous projects are provided, the Applicant is encouraged to present this information in the form of a Project List, and include: Project Name, Client Organization, Project Start Date, Project End Date, the Applicant and team member's roles and responsibilities, the tasks undertaken and demonstrate that the project is similar in subject matter, complexity, size and scope to this project. If the project resulted in a publication, paper, presentation and/or online resource, Applicants are encouraged to provide an external link for more information.

Maximum 3 pages (not including CVs and Project List)

5.2.5 Work Plan and Associated Costs

Present a three-year work plan that your organization will follow to launch the Atlantic Hub and deliver on the areas of activity outlined in *Section 3.4: Priority Start-up Activities for Atlantic Hub (Start-up to Operational)*, above. It is expected that the work plan will have more detail for year 1 than for years 2 and 3. For year 1, please include in your work plan all of the key activities that will be undertaken, the milestones that will be achieved, and the estimated costs associated with those activities and milestones. For years 2 and 3, please identify the high level milestones expected to be achieved, and the estimated costs associated with reaching those milestones.

- Key activities are a series of tasks performed that result in outputs and ultimately contribute to the program objective.
- Milestones are specific points achieved or reached in your timeline as a result of completing activities. At least one milestone must be achieved in each year, with up to four key milestones per fiscal year. Over the course of the Contribution Agreement, the Recipient will be required to demonstrate that the milestones have been achieved.
- Associated costs are the estimated costs, based on your activities and the available budget, which are required to achieve the milestones identified. Costs should reflect and align with the listed activities required to achieve each milestone.
- Responsible personnel are those individuals and/or organizations responsible for the activities required to achieve the identified milestone(s). Identify all responsible personnel and their titles and/or partner organizations.

To assess and include associated costs with work plan items, the Applicant must keep in mind what types expenditures are eligible (and ineligible) for reimbursement under the contribution agreement that will result from this Call for Proposals.

Eligible expenditures include the following:

- Salaries and benefits;
- Contractors and professional services (e.g. bookkeeping or accounting services, and legal services);
- Venue and conference expenses;
- Communications and translation, including printing;
- Materials and supplies;
- Travel and hospitality:
 - hospitality expenses cannot be more than the rates determined in Appendix B of the [Directive on Travel, Hospitality, Conference and Event Expenditures- Canada.ca](#);
 - travel and per diem expenses cannot be more than the rates and allowances determined in the [Travel Directive of the National Joint Council](#);
- Administrative costs;
- Overhead costs (to a maximum of 20% of total annual project costs); and
- Other, if applicable.

Ineligible expenditures include:

- Costs for ineligible activities (e.g., activities relating to climate monitoring like installing climate monitoring stations or undertaking climate impact research);
- Costs incurred outside the eligible expenditure period, including those for preparing the application;
- Capital construction (e.g. office renovation or expansion);
- Land costs (e.g., acquisition, leasing, or property taxes);
- Lobbyist fees;
- Financing charges and interest payment on loans;
- Expenditures for provincial sales tax, goods and services tax, and harmonized sales tax for which the Recipient is eligible for rebate and any other costs eligible for rebates;
- Any goods and services costs which are received through donations or in-kind;
- Fines and penalties;
- Depreciation of assets paid for by the Atlantic Hub;
- Gifts, donations, entertainment expenses, and alcoholic beverages;
- Dues to other memberships other than regular trade and professional associations;
- Extraordinary or abnormal fees for professional advice unless approval is obtained from Environment and Climate Change Canada before incurring the cost;
- Discretionary severance and separation packages;
- Costs related to routine administration and operation of partner organizations, except the reimbursement of salary costs related to the Atlantic Hub's objectives and activities; and
- Salary of members of the Board of Directors for that role.

The Applicant's proposed work plan and proposed associated costs should be feasible and responsive to the key activities and timelines outlined in *Section 3.4: Priority Start-up Activities for Atlantic Hub (Start-up to Operational)*.

Please provide the work plan in a table format, responding to each of the required elements listed above.

Maximum 3 pages.

5.2.6 Financial Sustainability Plan

Applicants must demonstrate their understanding that the Atlantic Hub will require a Financial Sustainability Plan that ensures its continued operation beyond the initial three years of federal and provincial funding. Applicants should describe, at a high-level, their early ideas for an approach to ensuring the long-term financial sustainability of the organization, that could include but not be limited to different options to diversify sources of revenue, prospective partnerships, fundraising (e.g. from governments, granting agencies, private business), and fee-for-service strategies.

The financial sustainability plan should identify a reasonable approach to ensuring long-term financial sustainability. The plan can reference the intent to seek additional federal or provincial resources, but should not be dependant on those sources.

Maximum 2 pages.

5.2.8 Governance Plan

Applicants must demonstrate an informed and knowledgeable understanding of the Atlantic Hub structure and governance, including the role of the Board of Directors, Executive Director and distributed team of Climate Service Specialists, as outlined in *Section 3.3: Atlantic Hub Structure and Governance*. In the application:

- If the Applicant includes an existing incorporated organization or organizations, explain how the Applicant's existing governance structure(s) will be modified or adapted to meet the Atlantic Hub's governance structure requirements;
- Describe how the Atlantic Hub will demonstrate regional leadership on climate services, including through its interaction with the Atlantic Hub's Board of Directors, the Advisory Committee (to be created), and the broader stakeholder community;
- Explain the process by which the Atlantic Hub will build a team approach with the climate service specialists; and
- Indicate the process the Secretariat will follow to take decisions and to act in the best interest of the Atlantic Hub (e.g. set priorities, key activities, and deliver projects).

Maximum 2 pages.

5.2.9 Partner Organizations

Applicants should present a reasonable plan to collaborate and engage with other organizations to achieve complex and geographically diverse initiative that enhance the provision of climate services in Atlantic Canada and sufficiently respond to all of the elements outlined in the Call for Proposals.

Applicants must provide a summary of:

- organizations your team, in the role of the Secretariat, currently work with and intend to collaborate with to deliver Atlantic Hub work plan activities and note whether these collaborators are other not-for-profit organizations, academic institutions, professional associations, private enterprises, governments (including Indigenous governments and/or communities), and representation organizations; and
- a description of their intended involvement in Atlantic Hub work plan activities (e.g., respective roles, and cash and in-kind contributions if applicable); and
- expected outcomes from their participation.

Please respond in table format.

Maximum 2 pages.

5.2.10 Communications Plan

Provide a preliminary communications plan. The Atlantic Hub's key services and activities (e.g. access to data and technical support), results and accomplishments should be conveyed to external audiences, including potential participants from all sectors, public policy makers, the media, the public, and potential funders. Communications are subject to official language requirements (see *Section 4.2: Official Language Requirements*).

The communications plan should identify a variety of public communications opportunities, including but not limited to: a distinct web presence, public events (in-person and virtual), press releases, social media, and newsletters.

Maximum 2 pages.

5.2.11 Risk Management Plan

This section focuses on the primary risks to the Atlantic Hub.

Describe the three most significant risks that could have an impact on the Atlantic Hub’s ability to carry out its activities to achieve its desired objectives, as well as approaches that will be used by your organization to mitigate each of these risks. If the Atlantic Hub will be accepting funding from other sources and there is a risk associated with these funding sources, including real or perceived conflicts of interest or issues of credibility, this risk should be addressed in this section.

Maximum 1 page.

5.2.12 Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

Describe how the planned activities will ensure equity, diversity, and inclusion in the Atlantic Hub’s operations and collaborations. This could include how the Advisory Committee could be composed to include underrepresented groups, diverse participation, and gender balance in delivering climate services in Atlantic Canada.

Maximum 1 page.

5.2.13 Overarching Themes

5.2.13.1 Understanding and Proposed Implementation of Guiding Principles

Throughout the proposal, including but not limited to explaining the proposed approach/vision for the organization, delivering work plan activities, and engaging in partnerships, Applicants should demonstrate an informed and knowledgeable understanding of the Atlantic Hub’s intended Guiding Principles (please refer to *Section 3.1: Guiding Principles*).

Applicants will be evaluated on how they intend to operationalize the Guiding Principles throughout the delivery of climate services in Atlantic Canada.

5.2.13.2 Proposal Quality

The proposal content must be clear and well written, have professional presentation, facilitate straightforward evaluation, and incorporate all of the required elements, as outlined in *Section 5.2: The Application*.

The quality of the proposal will be evaluated throughout the submission.

5.3 Mandatory Supporting Documents

All information and supporting documentation must be submitted with the application. No additional information received after the application deadline will be taken into consideration.

The following supporting documents must be included with the application:

1. Letters of Commitment for confirmed key positions
2. Letters of Support from regional organizations
3. Secretariat Team CVs

Proposals that do not provide all of the above required supporting documents **will not** be considered eligible.

5.3.1 Letters of Commitment

The Letters of Commitment are required to demonstrate medium-term availability and support for the Secretariat, to ensure longer-term sustainability of the initiative.

Applicants must submit at minimum two (2) Letters of Commitment for individuals who intend to take part in the formation of the Secretariat: one from the Executive Director, and the second from either the Lead, Data and User Support, or Lead, Engagement and Training.

The Letters must affirm individuals' intention to be available on a full-time basis for at minimum two (2) years and provide details on their intended role within the Secretariat.

Maximum 1 page, each.

5.3.2 Letters of Support

The Letters of Support are intended for Applicants to demonstrate support for the Applicant's provision of climate services at a regional level in Atlantic Canada.

Applicants must provide at minimum two (2) Letters of Support from organizations operating in Atlantic Canada with clear and significant interests in climate change adaptation (e.g. not-for-profit organizations, post-secondary institutions, private sector enterprises, municipal governments, and Indigenous governments, communities and/or organizations). Letters of Support must explain their role with the organization, involvement in its activities, and, if applicable, any financial or in-kind contributions.

Up to four (4) Letters of Support will be accepted, with the preference for one letter to be submitted from proponents in each Atlantic Province.

Letters of Support will not be accepted where there is real or perceived conflict of interest. As such, Letters of Support will not be accepted from any Provincial governments or Federal departments.

Maximum 1 page, each.

5.3.3 CVs of Secretariat Team

Applicants must:

- Provide a CV for each proposed member of the Secretariat team, including a summary of relevant experience on the first page.
- Include a description of the roles and responsibilities that will be assumed by each of the proposed members of the team.

5.4 The Evaluation

5.4.1 Step 1: Mandatory Criteria

The application must meet the mandatory technical criteria specified below. Applicants must provide the necessary documentation to support compliance with this requirement.

Bids which fail to meet the mandatory technical criteria will be declared ineligible. Each mandatory technical criterion should be addressed separately.

1. Applicants must be eligible to apply, as defined in *Section 4.0: Applicant Eligibility*.
2. Applicants must submit a complete application, including responses to all required components, including all required supporting documents.
3. The Secretariat must be based in either New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Newfoundland and Labrador, or Prince Edward Island.

5.4.2 Step 2: Point Rated Criteria

Applications which meet all the mandatory requirements (*Section 5.4.1: Mandatory Requirements*) will be evaluated and scored as specified in the table below.

A minimum score of 70% is required for the overall evaluation (70/100 points). The following point rated criteria must each receive a minimum score of 70% for the application to be considered successful: PR3 Secretariat Team; PR4 Work Plan and Associated Costs; PR5 Financial Sustainability Plan, and; PR12 Proposal Quality.

Applications which fail to obtain the required minimum number of points specified will be declared ineligible.

Item	Summary of Point Rated (PR) Technical Criteria	Min Points Required	Max Points
PR1	Context for the new Atlantic Hub		5
PR2	Understanding of the Call for Proposals		2
PR3	The Secretariat Team	14	20
PR4	Work Plan and Associated Costs	21	30
PR5	Financial Sustainability Plan	7	10
PR6	Governance Plan		5
PR7	Partner Organizations		5
PR8	Communications Plan		2
PR9	Risk Management Plan		2
PR10	Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion		2
PR11	Understanding and Proposed Implementation of Guiding Principles		3
PR12	Proposal Quality	7	10
PR13	Letters of Support		4
	TOTAL	70*	100

*The minimum total of 70 points must be met for the proposal to receive further consideration. This result is in addition to the proposal meeting the minimum scores for certain criteria, as indicated in the table above.

5.4.3 Step 3: Presentation to Evaluation Committee

Applicants who are successful in meeting the mandatory criteria and achieving the minimum score for the technical evaluation, will be asked to provide a virtual presentation of their proposal to the evaluation committee. Applicants will be contacted by email, at the address provided in *Section 5.2.1: Applicant Profile*.

5.5 Recipient Selection

Environment and Climate Change Canada will administer the assessment process, with support of relevant federal organizations and the Atlantic Provincial governments. Applications will be screened for eligibility prior to assessment. Only applications that meet all eligibility requirements (see *Section 4.0: Applicant Eligibility*) will be assessed.

All applications received will undergo an initial screening to determine whether they are eligible and complete. Any applications deemed ineligible (including incomplete applications) will be screened out of the application process.

The onus is on Applicants to provide clear, comprehensive, and accurate information.

A technical evaluation committee, composed of equal representation from the Atlantic Provinces and external subject-matter experts will confirm technical feasibility of applications and evaluate based on the technical evaluation criteria.

Proposals will be assessed and ranked based on a combination of factors, please refer to *Section 5.4.2 Step 2: Point Rated Criteria*, above.

Select Applicants will be invited to present their proposals to the technical evaluation committee. Details concerning the evaluation of the presentations will be communicated to Applicants at the time of confirming their success through the previous elements in the evaluation process.

Environment and Climate Change Canada will review results of the technical evaluations and make a final decision on the successful Applicant.

5.6 Communicating Decision

Environment and Climate Change Canada will assess all submitted proposals and intends to select the successful Recipient by March 31, 2021. All Applicants will be notified of the final decision at the email address provided in *Section 5.2.1: Applicant Profile*. Results will not be shared before the application processed has closed and decisions have been finalized.

Information on next steps will be provided to the successful Recipient.

Please note that decisions regarding eligibility are final.

6.0 Intellectual Property

The Government of Canada will make no claim to ownership of intellectual property resulting from activities that it funds.

Applicants are encouraged to adopt an open source approach to intellectual property.