

Manitoba Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Fund – Application Guide

Guidelines for Project Proposals

2025 - 2026

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1 INTRODUCTION

The Manitoba government recognizes the negative impact that aquatic invasive species (AIS) have on Manitoba's aquatic ecosystems and biodiversity, and the importance of increasing AIS prevention across the province. AIS pose a social, economic, and ecological risk to Crown waterbodies and the public, and thus the prevention of outward AIS spread, and containment of AIS, is vitally important to all Manitobans. This fund aims to provide funding to Municipal governments, Indigenous governments, non-government organizations, research organizations, and water-user groups, to aid in the implementation of AIS prevention programs and projects.

1.1 PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

The purpose of the Application Guide is to provide information for prospective applicants who wish to submit applications to the Manitoba Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Fund ("The Fund") administered by Manitoba's department of Environment and Climate Change. This guide includes details on The Fund itself, applicant eligibility, project eligibility, eligible expenditures, project funding, and the application process.

1.2 ABOUT THE MANITOBA AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES PREVENTION FUND

The Fund provides application-based funding to a variety of applicant groups to support a range of AIS related prevention projects. It supports projects through grant funding, based on the type of proposed project, project length, required input, etc. The Fund is a part of the broader provincial AIS Unit's Partnership Program, which provides guidance to partners on how they, and the province, can work together to further provincial priorities and help increase AIS prevention. The Fund focuses on providing funding to partners who are positioned to help prevent the introduction of AIS to local areas, and outward spread of AIS.

The priorities of The Fund are:

- ▶ Contribute to the prevention of AIS introductions into uninvaded waterbodies.
- ▶ Promote AIS education across Manitoba and enable educational experiences in local areas.
- ▶ Contribute to the protection of biodiversity of Manitoba's waterbodies.
- ▶ Mitigate the social and economic impacts of AIS invasions.

The Fund supports discrete time-bound projects and does not provide indeterminate funding to an organization.

2 APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

2.1 ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Eligible applicants include the following:

- ▶ Indigenous communities, organizations, or governments
- ▶ Municipal and local governments
- ▶ Research and academic organizations
- ▶ Non-government organizations
- ▶ Community and resource-user groups

Applicants must be active at the time of application and have established operations within Manitoba for at least one year before applying.

2.2 INELIGIBLE APPLICANTS

Ineligible applicants include the following:

- ▶ Manitoba government departments or agencies
- ▶ Government of Canada departments or agencies
- ▶ Crown corporations
- ▶ Individuals
- ▶ For-profit businesses
- ▶ Organizations and groups without established operations in Manitoba
- ▶ Projects that occur outside of Manitoba

3 PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

3.1 ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

A proposed project must be time bound (have a concrete start and end date). For example, seasonal programs which run during an open water season, programs which involve the installation of permanent or semi-permanent infrastructure, and education and communication programs conducted to target residents during a specific time period, etc.

Eligible recipients may partner together to apply to The Fund. A lead applicant must be identified as the entity who will be responsible for submitting only one application for the proposed project and would complete all reporting requirements on behalf of the entity.

Eligible project/program streams may include, but are not limited to:

Physical Prevention - Contributing to the direct physical prevention of AIS entering uninhabited waterbodies, such as:

- ▶ Inspection and/or decontamination efforts related to Municipal or Indigenous government by-laws, surrounding the use of Municipal or Indigenous government owned property and infrastructure.

Education, Communication, and Outreach - Promoting activities that relate to AIS prevention and education, such as:

- ▶ Development and distribution of education materials within local areas.
- ▶ Erecting signage related to the AIS prevention, regulations, by-laws, or best practices.
- ▶ Outreach and education efforts outside of the broad public outreach conducted by the province.
- ▶ Promoting Clean, Drain, Dry as a standard for AIS prevention and containment.

Monitoring - Contributing to the early detection and monitoring of AIS, such as:

- ▶ Implementation of a passive monitoring program at a localized level.
- ▶ Implementation of an active monitoring program in collaboration with Manitoba.

Response - Contributing to AIS response efforts, such as:

- ▶ Control and eradication of some AIS.

Management - Contributing to the containment of AIS within invaded waterbodies, such as:

- ▶ Manage the outward spread of AIS from an established population.

3.2 INELIGIBLE PROJECTS

Examples of ineligible projects and activities include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ▶ Activities that do not relate to the prevention or management of AIS.
- ▶ Projects directly related to enforcement or compliance with provincial or federal legislation.
- ▶ Activities that require enforcement obligations from Manitoba.
- ▶ Projects or programs that conflict with current provincial mandates.
- ▶ Activities that are not in compliances with provincial or federal legislation.
- ▶ Activities intended to support businesses or for-profit entities.
- ▶ Beach shell cleanup projects.

4 ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURES

Manitoba will evaluate the funding for eligible expenditures that, in the opinion of the department overseeing The Fund, are reasonable and required to achieve overall project objectives and outcomes.

4.1 ELIGIBLE PROJECT EXPENDITURES

Examples of eligible expenditures may include, but are not limited to:

- ▶ Materials, supplies, and equipment related to AIS projects
- ▶ Equipment and vehicle rentals and operational costs
- ▶ Salaries of seasonal staff directly working on an AIS project
- ▶ Staffing and human resource expenditures directly related to the project
- ▶ Administration and overhead costs directly associated with the project (only up to a maximum of 10 per cent of the total project cost)
- ▶ Management and professional service costs (e.g., accounting, communications, design)
- ▶ Other costs that, at the discretion of the department overseeing The Fund, are considered reasonable and required to implement the proposed project successfully

4.2 INELIGIBLE PROJECT EXPENDITURES

Examples of ineligible expenditures include, but are not limited to, the following:

- ▶ Expenditures and costs associated with future fund proposals (funds used outside of the applicable provincial fiscal year)
- ▶ Core organizational funding and general overhead costs
- ▶ Salary costs of non-project related employees
- ▶ Expenses not related to project costs
- ▶ Hospitality and travel expenditures not aligned with Manitoba government guidelines.
- ▶ Expenditures incurred for cancelled projects.
- ▶ Expenditures incurred in previous fiscal years
- ▶ Other costs that at the discretion of the department overseeing The Fund, are considered unreasonable for the proposed project

5 PROJECT FUNDING

The maximum grant per applicant per fiscal year (ending March 31) is dependant on the stream of project (see 5.1 below). Manitoba reserves the right to limit funding per applicant stream, as listed in Section 3.1.

Applications are not required to match project funding with funds from other eligible sources. However, eligible matching funds (cash and/or in-kind) can contribute positively to the application assessment. In cases where other external funding sources are reliant on the province's matching, no more than the maximum funding amount within a given stream will be delivered.

The maximum level, or stacking limit, of total government assistance (federal, provincial, and municipal assistance for the same eligible costs) will not exceed 100 per cent of eligible costs. If total funding exceeds the stacking limit, The Fund will adjust the level of funding so that the stacking limit is not exceeded and there is no duplication of funding.

5.1 FUNDING AMOUNTS

Physical Prevention Stream will grant funds of up to \$75,000

Education, Communication and Outreach Stream will grant funds of up to \$10,000

AIS Monitoring Stream will grant funds of up to \$10,000

Rapid Response Stream will grant funds of up to \$20,000

Management Stream will grant funds of up to \$75,000

An individual applicant can apply for funding from multiple streams by explicitly demonstrating within their application how funding will go towards each funding stream. Streams can be applied together for amounts which exceed the funding limit of an individual stream. For example, if an applicant applies for applicable funding from both the Physical Prevention Stream, and the Education, Communication and Outreach Stream, a total of \$85,000 can be requested during the application process.

5.2 TIMELINES AND NOTIFICATIONS

The following timeline is approximate, and subject to change.

Application Intake Period	Nov 3 – Dec 31, 2025
Application Deadline	Dec 31, 2025
Initial Application Screening	Jan 16, 2026
Program/Project Review Period	Jan 19 – Feb 27, 2026
Grant Recipient Notification	March 2 – April 3, 2026
Grant Payment Release	April 13 – May 1, 2026
Project Delivery Period	April 6 – Dec 31, 2026
Project Completion Deadline	Dec 31, 2026
Final Reporting Deadline	Dec 31, 2026

6 APPLICATION PROCESS

Project application submissions will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, by a review committee. The review committee is made up of government officials from the Manitoba government AIS Unit, in consultation with other professionals from across the Environment and Climate Change department. The interdepartmental team will be involved in reviewing applications and providing feedback. The review committee has the authority to assess each application on its own merits and will exercise discretion in project application approvals. The review committee makes recommendations to the AIS Director and then to the Minister for approval.

The application intake period begins in the fourth quarter of a given fiscal year and is open for approximately two months. Application screening and review occurs in the first and second quarter of the following year, with payments sent for the beginning of the open water season.

6.1 APPLICATION INTAKE PERIOD

Only eligible applications received during the application intake period will be assessed during the screening period. It is the applicant's responsibility to complete the online application on time, and to provide clear and comprehensive information in their application.

Grant applications will be accepted starting on November 3, 2025 with an application deadline of 11:59PM CST on December 31, 2025 – an intake period spanning approximately eight weeks. Applications beyond this deadline may not be accepted.

In addition to the application form the following supporting documents form the grant application package:

- 1) Project map (satellite or aerial) if applicable
- 2) Permits, authorizations, and/or letters of approval
- 3) The provided and completed Application Project Budget Form

Additional information may be requested throughout the application and screening period.

6.2 INITIAL APPLICATION SCREENING

This step acts as a pre-screen for all applications received and will begin as applications arrive. The initial application screening will review applications and compare them to the eligibility criteria outlined in this document, as well as the mandates of the responsible department in charge of The Fund. This process helps to ensure the application is eligible and complete. Applicants may be contacted by the department during the pre-screening period if an application is incomplete.

Submitting a completed application is required to be screened and reviewed for funding but is not a guarantee of funding. If an application is deemed ineligible as it does not fulfill the eligibility requirements of The Fund, the application will not be assessed further.

6.3 PROGRAM/PROJECT REVIEW PERIOD

A review process is applied to all applicable applications, in which the proposed project will be assessed based on evaluation criteria, including the priorities and guidelines of The Fund. Eligible applications are assessed by the review committee who operates under the department in charge of The Fund.

Additional information may be requested from the applicant during this period. Funding is not guaranteed and is contingent on available funding and the number of proposals under consideration.

The following criteria will be used to assess applications:

- ▶ Required Criteria
- ▶ Project Description
- ▶ Organization Capacity and Support
- ▶ Project Budget
- ▶ Authorizations
- ▶ Project Impact

7 PROCESSING AND PAYMENT

Applicants will be notified of the selection decision concerning to their project application. If an application is approved, the partner will be contacted by department staff to discuss next steps. Any remaining outstanding documents, such as insurance certificates, permits, or other authorizations must be submitted at this time.

Selection decisions are final and cannot be appealed. Approved projects are funded subject to the availability of funds allocated within The Fund's fiscal year. The actual amount of funding awarded may be less than the requested amount.

100 per cent of funding will be delivered on successful applications where requested funds are less than \$80,000. For successful applications resulting in over \$80,000 of funds from the Manitoba Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Fund, up to 90 per cent of approved funding is rewarded following signature of a grant funding agreement. The remaining balance of up to 10 per cent will be awarded following the successful commencement of the project, and upon the receipt and approval of the Final Project Report.

A grant funding agreement is a written document between the successful applicant and the Manitoba government which stipulates how the funds are to be spent, and outlines the terms and conditions for the grant applicant. The agreement includes, but is not limited to, project tasks and deliverables; eligible use of funds; maximum project funding limits; project start and end dates; cancellation of the agreement; grant payment processing details, including interim and final payment terms, if any; and reporting requirements. The agreement must be signed by an individual who has legal signing authority and/or is authorized to act on behalf of the organization.

Grant recipients will be responsible for covering any costs that exceed the original estimate; additional funding will not be available to cover cost overruns. Any unused grant amounts must be repaid upon project completion. Government staff may require audits or site visits to the project. These audits and site visits are meant to ensure that project deliverables and timelines are being met.

Grant recipients and/or project descriptions, including hours of operation, project locations, project duration, etc., may be published on the Manitoba government's website, in news releases, or through other forms of communication.

8 REPORTING OF OUTCOMES AND RESULTS

The project, and all associated activities and deliverables (outlined in the grant funding agreement), must be completed by the agreement end date. Upon completion of the project, or before January 31, 2026, grant recipients will be required to provide a Final Project Report. Reporting on results provides accountability for the use of public funds and information on successes and challenges.

An interim update report is required if there is a scope change applied to the project during the project operations.

A Final Project Report is required from the applicant's project team within 90 days of project completion, or by the final deadline identified in the grant funding agreement, whichever is sooner. As part of the Final Project Report, the Project Summary Report and signed Financial Summary Report, including any raw data gathered from project operations (i.e. inspection and decontamination data, by-law or observed provincial regulation compliance data, attendance numbers, etc.), must be completed and submitted in full.

The Final Project Report must include the following:

- ▶ Project Summary Report:
 - A description of the project type, project length, and project area.
 - A summary of the activities completed, and the results achieved.
 - Indicate the status of project (complete/incomplete). If not completed, provide explanation (e.g., exceeded funds, adverse conditions, etc.)
 - Indicate the outcome of project. Describe successes, barriers, and challenges.
 - Any raw data gathered during the project operations (to be delivered in print and electronically).
- ▶ A signed Financial Summary Report.
 - Include total project costs and detailed cost breakdown for the project. All revenues and expenditures relating to project activities are to be reported.
 - Submit copies of all documentation for expenditures incurred for actual project costs (e.g., bills, receipts, invoices, etc.).

Final payment of any remaining balances will not be awarded until both reporting forms have been approved by the Manitoba government. Recipients that do not provide required reports or do not complete project deliverables described in the project plan may be disqualified from future funding opportunities or funds may be withheld until reporting requirements have been met.

9 CONTACT INFORMATION

Send application and supporting documents to the Aquatic Invasive Species Unit at:

AIS@gov.mb.ca and stefano.strapazzon@gov.mb.ca

Aquatic Invasive Species Unit

ATTN: Manitoba Aquatic Invasive Species Prevention Fund

Department of Environment and Climate Change

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