

**Quiet Vessel Initiative (QVI)**

**Industry/Academic stream**

**Applicant’s Guide**

## Program Objective

The objective of the Program is to provide funding in the form of a contribution to assist projects and activities that will help to reduce the impacts of vessel navigation on marine mammals and the marine environment. Specifically, the objective of the program will be to help:

* Identify, test and develop quiet vessel technologies and designs.

## Available Funding

The Program will provide funding over a period of up to three fiscal years. All activities must be completed **by March 31, 2024**.

The Program will reimburse Recipients up to 75% of eligible expenditures incurred towards the project. The maximum contribution per project is $150,000.

## Eligibility Assessment Criteria

### 3.1 Eligible Recipient

Eligible recipients include the following entities:

* Canadian Port authorities;
* Public sector organizations[[1]](#footnote-1);
* Not-for-profit and for-profit private sector organizations;
* Foreign entities and international organizations;
* Academia; and
* Individuals (e.g. technical experts with highly specialized knowledge).

NB: Contributions to for-profit private sector organizations and foreign entities will be considered only when they advance the Canadian public good.

### 3.2 Eligible Activities

Contributions will be provided to fund the following eligible activities, as long as they contribute to the Program’s objective:

* Development, acquisition, training, installation/deployment and demonstrations of technology
* Studies and research, including predictive modelling and tool development
* Dissemination of results and best practices, for example, through development, design and publication of a vessel design and retrofit compendium[[2]](#footnote-2)
* Capacity building activities to share and develop knowledge, expertise and engagement through a variety of approaches (e.g., symposia, workshops conferences, etc.).

**Examples of eligible activities include the following (non-exhaustive list):**

* Developing and maintaining an online resource about effective and proven technologies to reduce underwater vessel noise for naval architects, vessel owners/operators, and other stakeholders – based on best available evidence.
* Developing, or increasing the technology readiness level of a novel approach or technology for the reduction of underwater vessel noise; for example, underwater noise reduction of outboard propulsion systems.[[3]](#footnote-3)
* Tests, trials or other field research to quantify the effectiveness of new vessel designs, retrofits or operational practices aimed at reducing underwater vessel noise.3
* Development of onboard, real-time underwater vessel noise monitoring, or propeller cavitation monitoring systems for vessels.
* Development of vessel design and engineering tools to facilitate the consideration of underwater radiated noise (URN) mitigation as a design criteria for vessels (e.g. software prediction tool for propeller-related underwater radiated noise).
* Studies to support the development of adaptive noise management plans for ferries that operate in endangered marine mammal habitat (i.e. Southern Resident killer whale, North Atlantic right whale, St. Lawrence Estuary Beluga).
* Studies to support the development of adaptive noise management plans for whale watching vessels that operate in endangered marine mammal habitat (i.e. Southern Resident killer whale, North Atlantic right whale, St. Lawrence Estuary Beluga).
* Studies to support the development of a whale-watching vessel design, to reduce their underwater noise impacts on endangered marine mammals.
* Developing a post-secondary training initiative for marine engineers and other functional specialists (e.g. policy officers) to increase the understanding of underwater vessel noise and its impacts on the marine environment.

### Proof of funding

Applicants are required to demonstrate they have secured sufficient funding for the project by identifying any and all sources of funds in their application.

## Eligible Expenditures

Eligible expenditures include the following, as necessary to execute eligible activities as defined in **Section 3**:

* Staff salaries and benefits;
* Professional fees (for contracted services);
* Purchase or lease of technologies, equipment, software, licenses, data and systems, as well as their deployment or installation;
* Public outreach, dissemination of information, communication materials and other associated costs;
* Travel expenditures (including the cost of accommodations, vehicle rental and kilometric rates, bus, train, airplane or taxi fares, allowances for meals and incidentals), (**see Note 1**);
* Rental of meeting rooms and audio/video equipment;
* Fees related to the participation in, and organization of, conferences and symposia, including fees for speakers and interpretation services;
* Training costs related to new technologies, equipment, software and systems;
* Capacity building activities for Indigenous communities to facilitate project management and to further development of knowledge and expertise on emerging quiet vessel innovations and approaches;
* Expenditures related to telecommunication, data analysis, and data validation services (e.g., collection, processing and analysis of hydrophone data);
* Incremental insurance costs related to project requirements for the testing and/or installation of technologies, software, hardware, sensors and any other equipment deemed necessary for vessel retrofits or new designs/builds;
* Administrative expenditures (including expenditures for general administration, rent, insurance, and office equipment rental) limited to 15% of total eligible expenditures; and
* Other expenditures not included in the categories above, as identified in the application for funding, and approved by the Minister or his/her delegated representative, to achieve the objectives and results of the Program.

The above expenditures may include in-kind expenditures associated with in-kind contributions. In-kind expenditures may take the form of:

* Goods, services or assets consumed by the recipient for which costs are incurred and no cash is exchanged; and
* Donations of goods, services or assets to the recipient, for which no costs are incurred and no cash is exchanged.

Donations are not eligible for reimbursement but may form part of the recipient’s share of the total eligible expenditures for the project/activities.

***Note 1:*** *Applicants must base their amounts on the rates and allowances of the* [*Travel Directive of the National Joint Council*](http://www.njc-cnm.gc.ca/directive/d10/en)*.*

## Eligible Project Duration and Approvals

* Projects may begin to incur costs on the date of approval of the project by the Minister and must be completed by **March 31, 2024.**
* Projects may begin to incur costs upon approval, however, no reimbursements will be provided until a funding agreement is signed.
* The applicant must demonstrate that they have sufficient funding available to ensure successful completion of the project in advance of reimbursement.

## Merit Selection Criteria

Applicants must provide the following information to support this assessment (Refer to **Section 10**).

**Relevance of the Project**

How closely the proposed project outcomes correspond to the Program objective (See **Section 1**).

**Applicant's Relevant Experience and Capacity**

How well the applicant is able, in terms of resources, personnel and expertise, to complete the proposed project. More specifically, Transport Canada will consider the applicant's:

* Experience and/or expertise; and
* Institutional, management/organizational structures, financial controls and other support required to successfully deliver the proposed project.

**Quality of the Proposal**

The degree to which the planned activities, schedule, budget, results, roles and responsibilities are clear, realistic and consistent with the proposed project’s objectives. The proposed project will be assessed against the following criteria:

* Clearly stated goals, objectives and outcomes;
* A realizable project plan, concrete deliverables, budget and timelines;
* A detailed risk analysis and a mitigation strategy; and
* An experienced and qualified project manager with roles and responsibilities clearly established.

**Value for Money**

How well the proposal sets out the efficient use of resources and plans for producing outputs in an affordable manner.

**Additional Criteria**

In addition to the mandatory selection criteria, projects will also be selected based on the degree to which the proposal addresses the following item:

* The public benefits of sharing research outcomes with industry, Indigenous groups, and other marine stakeholders.

## Notification

After the project proposal has been assessed, the applicant will be informed if they have been selected for funding or not. Transport Canada reserves the right to accept or reject any project proposal.

## Service Standards

In an effort to continually improve service and conduct a transparent process, the following service standards have been established:

* Our goal is to provide applicants with written acknowledgement of receipt of their application and/or project proposal within 10 business days of the application deadline date.
* Our goal is to issue payments within 20 business days following the notification to the recipient that the requirements outlined in the funding agreement have been fulfilled.

**Note**: If the Program cannot meet the above standards, we will advise recipients in a timely manner.

## Funding Agreements

A funding agreement signed by both the recipient and Transport Canada is required to receive QVI funding. The following sections highlight some of the key areas of this legal document.

**9.1 Risk-based Funding Agreement**

A risk assessment of the project will be conducted prior to signing a funding agreement. This ensures that funding agreement requirements correspond to the project’s risk levels, and the recipient's capacity to deliver results. The project risk assessment will determine:

* How often the recipient must report project progress;
* Financial documentation the recipient must submit with payment claims;
* How often site visits will be made with and/or contact the recipient; and
* Audit requirements (all funding agreements indicate our right to audit).

The risk assessment will be based on, but not limited to, the information provided in the applicant’s project proposal.

**9.2 Project Scope and Agreement**

The applicant's project proposal will form the foundation of the project scope, mandatory legal documentation, clauses, terms and conditions, and payment structure that are included in the funding agreement. Once the funding agreement is signed, no change to the scope of the project (including budget, structure, timelines, etc.) is possible without prior written agreement between the recipient and Transport Canada.

**9.3 Reporting Requirements**

Reporting requirements will be established in the funding agreement and may include providing financial claims, list of invoices, progress reports, annual reports and a final report, among other elements.

**9.4 Progress Reports**

Recipients must submit written progress reports on a quarterly basis, or other frequency, as identified in the funding agreement. Progress reports will identify the progress achieved during the reporting period and accompany financial claims. Periodic meetings may be organized with Transport Canada throughout the duration of the agreement period, but these will be confirmed at the agreement negotiation stages.

**9.5 Annual Reports**

In the case of multi-year projects, the recipient will be required to produce an annual report. This report will include but may not be limited to the following:

* A detailed description of the project's progress and major achievements during the year, and an update on how the project is moving forward and how it relates to initial objectives and final results;
* Updated data and reporting on performance indicators indicated in funding agreement compared to the start of the project;
  + The recipient will ensure that appropriate data collection processes are in place to enable the capture and reporting of performance indicators used to measure the achievement of the project's outcomes;
* Annual reporting on the recipient’s eligible expenditures incurred and based on the breakdown of the eligible expenditures claimed, in accordance with the funding agreement budget;
* Summary of project communications activities during the reporting period, if applicable; and
* Issues, areas of concern or risk factors that may affect completion, the schedule or the budget of the project as per original plans, and also proposed mitigation strategies to correct any issues.

**9.6 Final Report**

When the project is complete, recipients will be required to submit a final report. The final report should be the overall roll-up of the information required in the annual reports and verification of all project activities, costs and outcomes. Under the funding agreement, we must receive the final report before we will pay the final expense claim.

Along with the information required in the final report, recipients may also be asked to include an overall assessment and analysis of the objectives met, outcomes achieved and lessons learned.

**9.7 Financial Claims**

Recipients can only submit claims for reimbursement of expenditures incurred **that are identified in the funding agreement**. Recipients will be provided templates that reflect the eligible expenses as indicated in the funding agreement. Recipients will also be required to submit a list of invoices with each claim.

**9.8 Official Languages**

All recipients must respect the [*Official Languages Act*](http://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/O-3.01/) when delivering a project funded under QVI. Linguistic requirements may apply to projects depending on their scope (national, regional or local), or on the specificity of the regions and targeted audiences of projects. Transport Canada will work with successful recipients to determine how this applies to their projects.

## How to Apply

The following sections detail the documents required to submit a proposal.

The application package must include the following:

1. Title of project and executive summary
2. Applicant’s information
   1. legal name of the applicant organization
   2. name and position of the primary contact(s) for applicant organization
   3. contact information such as mailing address, office phone numbers, email/Internet address, etc.
3. Organizational profile
   1. type of organization
   2. organizational structure and governance
   3. mandate of the organization
   4. organizational activities
4. Project management personnel
   1. designated project manager
   2. project manager’s qualifications and experience
   3. declarations
   4. conflict of interest questionnaire
   5. declaration by applicant organization attesting to the accuracy of the project proposal and the commitment of the organization to carry out the project signed by an authorized agent
5. Project description
   1. project objectives and goals
   2. location of project delivery
   3. proposed start and completion dates
   4. major activities for the project
   5. project work plan
   6. partners and contributions
   7. risk assessment and mitigation measures
6. Communication plan
7. Letters of financial support
8. Budget
   1. detailed project costs, by fiscal year, including all cash and in-kind contributions from the public or private sector, clearly broken down by organization.

**Important Note**: The project proposal template and budget and cash flow template are attached to the invitational email. Please use these templates for your project proposal.

## Submitting an Application

### Application Deadline

Applications must be received by **June 30, 2021**.

Note: All applications and project proposals must be signed, complete and accurate using the templates provided. All applicants must provide legal documentation confirming their organization is a legal entity (for example, using letters of patents, certificates of incorporation or other such legal documents). Missing or incomplete information will slow the processing of the application and may result in its rejection.

An application package must be submitted by email.

An electronic application package must be in MS Word, MS Excel or PDF format. Applications and inquiries concerning the application process must be sent to: [QuietVesselInitiative-InitiativeDeNaviresSilencieux@tc.gc.ca](mailto:QuietVesselInitiative-InitiativeDeNaviresSilencieux@tc.gc.ca).

Transport Canada will confirm receipt of application packages.

1. A body that is established by or under provincial/territorial statute or by regulation or is wholly-owned by a province, territory or municipality (e.g. transit agencies, commissions, boards, certain port authorities, provincial crown corporations). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. An online data and information resource capturing the results of various noise reduction technology, design and retrofit approaches for various vessels classes. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Technology readiness level (TRLs), as defined by: <https://www.ic.gc.ca/eic/site/080.nsf/eng/00002.html>. The Program will only consider technologies at TRL maturity levels of six (6) or above.

   [↑](#footnote-ref-3)