



Networks of Centres of Excellence (NCE) Full Application Development Call for Preparatory Project Proposals

Application Instructions and Background

Application Form Release:	March 23, 2018
Application Deadline:	May 7, 2018
Internal CMN Review Process:	May/June, 2018
Announcement of NCE Funding Decision:	October, 2018
Project Approval by CMN Board of Directors:	January/February 2019
Funding Period Starting:	April 1, 2019

Overview

The Canadian Mountain Network (CMN) is preparing a Full Application for the 2019 NCE Competition, with a submission deadline on 19 July 2018.

As part of the CMN process for developing the Full Application for the NCE Competition we are releasing this call for Preparatory Project Proposals. At this stage, we are seeking your assistance to ensure that we **(1)** identify the strongest possible projects to include in the NCE Full Application and **(2)** establish a fair, transparent and rigorous project review process. Please note that this funding will only be available if the CMN NCE Full Application is successful. If the CMN Full Application is not successful, there will be no funding available to support proposals submitted as part of this preparatory process.

Before completing the application package, please read these guidelines, the [CMN NCE Letter of Intent](#), and [additional application information on the CMN website](#). A glossary with more details about specific technical terms is provided at the end of this document.

Projects may request funding for either one, two or three years duration (beginning April 1, 2019). Project duration and objectives will need to be defined by each research team, with a maximum request of \$150,000 per year per project from NCE funds. Exemplary projects of a larger scope (and budget) will be considered at this time only with prior approval from the co-Research Directors. Additional cash and in-kind support for proposed projects are desirable, but not absolutely essential. All applications will be evaluated by a multidisciplinary Adjudication Committee (AC), and progress will be reviewed annually.

The CMN expects to approve funding for up to twelve Research Projects through this preparatory competition. The CMN will prioritize projects that are strongly aligned with and support development of the NCE Full Application, and represent all three Modes of Research that were identified during the Letter of Intent process. Mode 1 refers to a model of research that is initiated and led by CMN researchers based at academic institutions. Mode 2 projects are “partnership-driven”, and are co-designed by project partners from academic institutions and external organizations. Mode 3 projects are developed, designed and produced/managed by Indigenous communities and organizations - other partners may be invited to join. More details can be found at <http://canadianmountainnetwork.ca/mountain-nce/modes-of-research/>.

Please note that for this Preparatory Call, the CMN is particularly interested in Mode 1 projects that address an information need identified by Indigenous communities, Mode 2 projects involving Indigenous partners, and Indigenous-led Mode 3 projects.

Special note: CMN recognizes that this rapid timeframe for preparatory proposals may disadvantage projects led by Indigenous communities and those that are developed and/or implemented in partnership with Indigenous communities and/or adhere to Indigenous research methodologies. Established protocols for these projects require careful consultation, engagement and collaborative planning at the community level before a research project is initiated, which may not be possible within this time frame. The following accommodations are being made:

1. For the Preparatory Call: CMN welcomes submissions for Mode 3 projects using a modified application process where applicants are requested to complete the 2-page Application Form. CMN Co-Research Director Norma Kassi will convene a meeting of all projects in May to discuss interests that have been brought forward and to foster new partnerships (as needed) in order to support the advancement of this work in the early stages of CMN.
2. Following approval of the CMN: If the NCE is approved, special emphasis will be placed in the first year on supporting and facilitating the development of Mode 3 (and select Mode 2) projects. CMN will facilitate conversations about best practices in Mode 3 research, and will offer additional proposal development supports to assist these proposal teams, if they are interested.

In addition, a second call for new project proposals will be announced in early 2019 if the NCE is approved.

Eligibility Criteria for this Call

Preparatory research proposals should be aligned with CMN priorities described in the NCE Letter of Intent. The CMN is particularly encouraging project proposals that are led by and fully involve community and Indigenous research partners and knowledge users. Projects are encouraged to identify collaborators from outside of Canada, so long as they are relevant to the project. While collaborators outside of Canada will not be eligible to receive Network research funds, some networking funding may be requested to support their participation in project team meetings.

Research being conducted in northern Canada may overlap with another NCE Full Application in development, led by ArcticNet (<http://www.arcticnet.ulaval.ca>). Please contact the CMN office at proposal@cmn-rcm.ca if you have questions about which program to submit your application to.

Application and Review Process

All applications submitted by the deadline will be reviewed during May 2018. Reviews will be undertaken by an Adjudication Committee (AC) appointed by the CMN Steering Group. Membership of the AC will include the co-Theme Leads, co-Research Directors, one representative from each of the CMN Initiating Groups, and three other experts nominated by the CMN Steering Group. The AC will make their recommendations to the CMN Steering Group for approval, however final decisions about funding will need to be confirmed after the NCE results are announced in October 2018. As noted above, additional resources will be available at this time to assist with the further development of Mode 2 and 3 proposals. All material submitted as part of this preparatory application process will be used to inform the development of the CMN Full NCE Application.

If you have questions about the application process and requirements, please contact proposal@cmn-rcm.ca. **As early as possible (and prior to 7 May), please also provide a tentative title of your project and brief one-paragraph description.** This information will be used to help us secure appropriate disciplinary expertise on the Adjudication Committee.

Please deliver completed proposals by e-mail to proposal@cmn-rcm.ca **by 11:00 PM on May 7, 2018 (your local time zone).**

Evaluation Criteria

In addition to alignment with the overall goals of the CMN, each project will also be assessed against specific evaluation criteria. The weighting, priority and evaluation for each criterion will depend on the Research Mode identified in each proposal.

Evaluation Criteria:

1. **Research:** The project is creative/innovative and seeks results, knowledge and output of major significance, and is feasible to complete the proposed work within the 1, 2 or 3 year funding period requested. Proposals demonstrate the transfer of relevant knowledge to those that will benefit from it.
2. **Partnerships:** The project relies for its success on respectful collaboration among project members. The project team includes relevant expertise, experience, collaborators and knowledge holders. Partnerships with Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities, and/or international researchers is strongly encouraged.
3. **Knowledge and Technology Exchange and Mobilization:** The project has a clear and feasible plan to apply and implement research outcomes. This request for proposals places an emphasis on partnering and encourages teams to include specific plans to engage mountain communities, Indigenous organizations, private sector, researchers from other disciplines, policy makers and/or the public, as part of their research approach.
4. **Project Management:** The project has a plan to address a specific research problem, in an integrated fashion, with clear deliverables and milestones. A detailed data management plan is not required at this stage, but awareness of these requirements is desirable.
5. **Training:** The project offers opportunities for a diverse group of trainees to develop their skills. The CMN has adopted a more expansive definition of trainees and highly qualified personnel (HQP) that includes community members and youth involved in CMN activities.

Opportunities for interdisciplinary learning, bridging Indigenous and western methodologies, and/or advances understanding of Indigenous methodologies are encouraged.

6. **Indigenous engagement and leadership:** Mode 1 projects that address an information need identified by Indigenous communities, Mode 2 projects with Indigenous partners, and Indigenous-led Mode 3 projects will be given greater weight during the evaluation of proposals received from this preparatory call.
7. **Equity, diversity and inclusion:** The CMN is aware that equity, diversity and inclusion strengthens research communities and the quality, social relevance and impact of research. Challenges remain in achieving the full participation of equity-seeking groups (including women, visible minorities, Indigenous peoples, people with diverse gender identities and people with disabilities). We are committed to advancing equity, diversity and inclusion in the design of research projects funded through the network.
8. **Budget:** Only broad categories of anticipated CMN resources are required at this time. If other sources of cash and/or in-kind support are known, please indicate how they will help to support the overall request for funds.
9. **Bios:** Include sufficient detail to demonstrate that the team members have the expertise to successfully conduct the project.

Application Guidelines for Mode 1 and Mode 2 projects

Complete preparatory proposals consist of **nine sections**, as outlined below. Applicants should also refer to the [CMN NCE Letter of Intent](#) and [CMN website](#) for additional information.

Application Guidelines for Mode 3 projects

Application Guidelines for Mode 3 projects For projects in Mode 3, applicants must complete the 2-page Application Form prior to 7 May). We will respond with any questions of clarification so that these projects can be evaluated.

SECTION 1: Project Overview

Project Title (max. 15 words)

Capture the essence of what is going to be done.

Project Leader(s)

Identify who will be responsible for managing the project and for progress reporting to the Network. Projects may include more than one leader, ideally with expertise from at least two of the following areas: natural sciences and engineering, social sciences and humanities, or Indigenous methodologies.

Geographic Scope

Indicate in which region(s) and/or communities the project will predominantly take place. You may check more than one region and list more than one community, as appropriate.

Project Summary (max. half page)

Provide an Executive Summary of the proposal **using non-technical language**, highlighting the following:

- key team members including partners;
- who will benefit from the research results and how;
- the research methodology and Mode, and the key project objectives; and
- the potential short and long-term impact of your proposed research, and alignment with CMN Vision and goals. (Note: This summary will be evaluated as part of the review process, and for successful proposals, may be included as part of the Full NCE Application in July 2018).

Project Deliverables (max. 6 key deliverables)

Using bullet format, provide a list of the primary deliverables for the proposed project including expected time of completion within the term of the grant (1, 2 or 3 years).

SECTION 2: Project Team & Roles

In the Tables provided, list all participating Network Investigators and any Collaborators, plus their organizational affiliations, telephone numbers, email addresses and role in the project. Please distinguish between primary Network Investigators who will be receiving funds from CMN from those who will not be directly receiving CMN funding.

SECTION 3: Research Proposal

Description of Research Mode(s) (max. half page)

The CMN aims to support the sustainability of mountain spaces and communities by advancing research that is inclusive, co-designed, and multidisciplinary; recognizes the interconnectedness of mountain environments and their social and economic systems; and meets the needs of diverse mountain communities, particularly Indigenous communities.

The CMN recognizes three modes of research: Mode 1 (Researcher-led), Mode 2 (Partnership-based), and Mode 3 (Indigenous community-led), as described above. For additional detail see <http://canadianmountainnetwork.ca/mountain-nce/modes-of-research/>.

In this section, indicate the primary Mode of research relevant to your application and explain how project management will align with that Mode.

Proposed Research (max. 2.5 pages)

Outline the proposed research questions, methods and approach, clearly demonstrating the integration of project members' expertise towards achieving the goals of the project.

Literature Cited (max. 2 pages)

This is an optional section but will provide very helpful information for the NCE Full Application. If appropriate, please provide **up to 20** selected references, reports, articles, websites or other suitable resources that are directly relevant to your project. These references may also provide reviewers with the background and context for your proposal.

SECTION 4: Partnerships (no page limit)

List each partner that will participate in the project, their specific role, and any known or anticipated cash and in-kind contributions. If possible, please provide a letter of support on the letterhead of each partner addressing the extent of their collaboration and/or their cash and in-kind contribution towards the project. The letter should specifically include reference to the Canadian Mountain Network, the proposed project, and any conditions placed on funding provided by the partner. These partner letters are optional, and may be forwarded to the CMN office following submission of your application if additional time is required to secure them.

For projects that involve Indigenous partners, in place of a letter (which may not be possible to attain given the time constraints) we request that you provide a brief summary of efforts made to develop these relationships in support of your project. Formal commitments from Indigenous partners will not be required at this time; however, please be aware we may be in touch with those who have been identified to validate their involvement.

SECTION 5: Knowledge and Technology Exchange and Mobilization (max. one page)

Describe the specific KTEM strategies that will be employed to translate the project's research outcomes into long-term outcomes that will benefit Canadians. Please refer to the [CMN Letter of Intent](#) for proposed network-wide KTEM initiatives. You may find the following criteria useful when addressing this section:

- Prospect for social innovation and the implementation of effective public policy through collaboration with the public and/or private sector.
- Effective collaboration with the private and public sectors in technology and public policy development.
- The impact or potential impact on the partners' capabilities and practices.
- Describe the involvement of the knowledge end-user (i.e., decision-maker, policy-maker, industry, citizen, etc.) as part of the research approach.
- Outline and provide the strategy for addressing key contextual challenges (i.e., social, ethical, cultural, technological) for uptake of knowledge.
- Demonstrate feasibility of knowledge transfer plans with respect to critical pathways, timelines and resources available.

SECTION 6: Training (max. one page)

Describe the training component of the project and development of trainees. Include an estimate of the number of anticipated trainees associated with your project, and ways in which the proposed training activities will consider equity, diversity and inclusion of, for example, women and Indigenous groups.

Eligible trainees may include students enrolled in college or university programs, postdocs, community members, Indigenous youth, and/or others involved in the delivery of CMN supported programs. Please see Glossary below for CMN's expanded definition of HQP – Highly Qualified Personnel.

The CMN Administrative Centre will be developing core training programs for all HQP involved in the Network that provide an orientation to CMN's commitment to advancing reconciliation with Canada's Indigenous Peoples through the way research is done through the Network. As outlined in the LOI, the main components of this core program will include: reconciliation and research courses, orientation programs, internships, mobile labs, grants, and student association. Individual projects will be expected to access these core training programs as they become available. Project plans are required to provide a description of how they will access these elements.

Project proposals that include plans to integrate non-traditional HQP in the research project and/or include unique mentorship and/or training opportunities will be given greater weight during the evaluation of the preparatory proposals. Metrics about the number and type of HQP (including non-traditional HQP) are also required so we can measure breadth of impact of CMN-funded projects.

SECTION 7: Project Management (max. one page)

Describe how the project will be managed to ensure success and maximize collaboration. This is particularly important for large, multi-site, multidisciplinary projects and projects involving external partners. If the need for a dedicated project manager/administrator is identified, specify whether it is a full-time or a part-time position. Also, include information about how observing and research data will be managed, shared, preserved and protected, as appropriate.

SECTION 8: Budget

Budget: Complete the Excel template provided (Part 2 of the application package). Please note that NCE cash portion of the requested budget for the project should **not exceed \$150,000 per year** (however, exemplary projects with higher budgetary requirements may be considered – please contact the CMN Co-Research Directors to discuss). All CMN research grants must adhere to Tri-Council financial administration, ethics, and responsible conduct of research guidelines http://www.nce-rce.gc.ca/ReportsPublications-RapportsPublications/FundingAgreements-EntentesFinancement_eng.asp

Budget Justifications & Comments: Provide justification/comments for your budget. Identify budget items by referring to the Excel spreadsheet row number relevant to the item. There is no page limit for this section, but please be concise. It is not necessary to include a breakdown by each project participant, but where applicable, please specify how matching cash or in-kind will be allocated.

Note: In order to receive funds, applicants (project leaders and co-applicants) will eventually need to enter into a formal arrangement with the CMN Host Institution (University of Alberta) confirming details for how funds will be managed. Further information about these requirements can be requested by sending a note to proposal@cmn-rcm.ca. All successful applicants must execute a Standard NCE Network Agreement, through which they will become a Member of the Canadian Mountain Network, and take on all of the associated rights and obligations, including providing the CMN Administrative Centre with annual reports.

SECTION 9: Bios

For each project team member, please provide a short bio (max 250 words per person). Include information relevant to their participation in the proposed research project.

Submission Instructions

Instruction and application forms are available in French and in English, but for this Preparatory Call all application documents will need to be submitted in English.

Part 1:

A single PDF file which includes the following: (1) The completed application form (Sections 1 to 8), **in single spaced, Times New Roman or Arial (minimum size 11) font, 1 inch margins**. Please enter the Project Leader's name in the headings of the document. You should delete the specific section instructions but do not delete or modify section headings; and, (2) scanned or PDF letters of support from project partners (see Section 4 for details).

The file name should include the Project Leader's name (i.e. Smith.pdf).

Part 2:

A single Excel file provided separately, detailing the budget requested for the project (please use the CMN budget template file). Funding may be requested for projects of either one, two or three years duration. Budget justifications are to be included in Section 8 of the application form. The file name should include the Project Leader's name (i.e., Smith.xls).

Part 3:

A single PDF file which includes a short (max. 250 words per person) bio for each project team member. The file name should include the Project Leader's name (i.e. Smith.pdf).

Please direct questions about the application process to proposal@cmn-rcm.ca

The application package must be delivered by e-mail to proposal@cmn-rcm.ca, and must be received **by 11:00 PM local time on Monday May 7, 2018**.

Glossary

Collaborator: researchers who do not receive funding but who are involved in the research project. They can be from an academic institution, Indigenous Group, government agency, industry partner, etc.

End-user: Non-academic stakeholders (e.g. government departments, policy makers, the public, private industry, not-for-profits, etc.) who apply research results or knowledge, resulting in research impact.

Trainees - Highly Qualified Personnel (HQP): trainees and research staff such as undergraduate and graduate students, post doctoral fellows, research associates, research assistants, technicians, summer students, and other eligible trainees, including community members and youth, involved in CMN projects.

Knowledge and Technology Exchange and Exploitation (KTEE): The process by which research or knowledge is co-produced and shared with end-users or partners. KTEE aims to get information to influential people or organizations, at the right time, in the appropriate format, in order to facilitate evidence-based decision making.

Project Leaders: Individuals on a research project who have overall responsibility for the research grant as well as the CMN Performance and Reporting Agreement for the project. Lead investigators may be academic or non-academic professionals and experts (e.g. elders and traditional knowledge holders) qualified to lead a research program.

Network Investigator: A member of a research team actively involved in a CMN project and receiving funding from the CMN NCE for any of the research activities that are sponsored and supported by the CMN. Network investigators may be academic or non-academic professionals and experts (e.g. elders and traditional knowledge holders) that contribute to a research program.

Partner: an organization providing cash and/or in-kind contributions in support of the activities of a project.

Research deliverable(s): Refers to the research results or knowledge resulting from a project that can be mobilized for use by partners or end-users. Examples include, but not limited to: applied scientific results, reports, guidelines/standards, training activities/learning modules, software/modelling tools, products, prototypes, services/tools, multimedia, and data.