Questions and Answers
Future Forest Ecosystems Scientific Council (FFESC)
Letter of Intent (LOI) Process

LOI eligibility

1. Who is eligible to submit a LOI?

Anyone who participated in an EOI is eligible to submit a LOI. The topic can differ from the original EOI and team members/clients can be included who were not on the original EOI.

2. My EOI was not successful and I was not invited to the Collaborative Planning Workshop; can I still submit a LOI?

Yes, you may submit a LOI. However, you should make every effort to inform yourself about what happened at the Collaborative Planning Workshop and incorporate that information into your LOI (see Question 4 for more information about the workshop proceedings and the web site link). As well, you should make every effort to ensure your research proposal meets the application and evaluation criteria set out in the LOI supplementary information (see Question 3 for more information about LOI application guidance).

Be aware that EOI research proposals that were not successful, and therefore did not receive an invitation to the workshop, are less likely to be successful at the LOI stage, and therefore would need to be substantially modified to meet the LOI application and evaluation criteria.

LOI application guidance

3. What information/guidance should I consider as I prepare my LOI?

At a minimum, you should consider the 'LOI supplementary information' as you prepare your LOI. This document discusses: FFESC purpose and objectives; research scope; purpose of the LOI review; LOI evaluation criteria (relevance, technical/scientific merit, expected benefits, and value for money); LOI application instructions; general policies; and, eligible costs.

To download the LOI application form and supplementary information, please visit the FFESC web site, at http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/HTS/Future_Forests/EOI.htm. If you have any questions about the documents, please contact Suzi Malan at UBC, at FFESC.office@ubc.ca.

In addition to the LOI supplementary information, you should also consider other documents posted to the FFESC web site, such as:

- FFESC Contact List with Key Words (for Proponents)
- 2009 Program Overview: Interdisciplinary Climate Change Adaptation Research
- Summary: Climate Change Adaptation Research Needs
- List of ongoing and completed forest and range climate change research projects
- Detailed list of relevant forest and range climate change adaptation research topics
- Summary: FFESC Collaborative Planning Workshop
- Workshop presentations by Evelyn Hamilton, Sybille Haeussler, and Cindy Prescott
- Integrating the social and natural sciences in environmental research (Strang)
- Working effectively at the interface of forest science and policy (Guldin et al)
- Climate Change, Impacts and Adaptation Scenarios (Spittlehouse)
- IPCC Fourth Assessment Report: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability

For background on the Future Forest Ecosystems Initiative (FFEI), please refer to the 2008/09 – 2009/10 Strategic Plan, which is posted on the FFEI web site: http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/HTS/Future_Forests. In particular, this plan provides helpful context on the purpose, objectives, desired outcomes, and scope of FFEI, the definition and aspects of the forest and range management framework within the scope of FFEI, and the government programs responsible for implementing this initiative. Questions about FFEI may be directed to Kristine Weese, FFESC Secretariat, at Kristine.weese@gov.bc.ca.

4. How can I find out what happened at the Collaborative Planning Workshop?

The Collaborative Planning Workshop took place on April 29, and was attended by 108 people. The workshop had three main objectives:

- to provide an orientation to the FFESC, its climate change adaptation research program, and the application and review process;
- to encourage networking and collaboration among LOI proponents in the development of research proposals; and,
- to promote inter-disciplinary team building and a client-centred approach to developing research proposals.

Please visit the FFESC web site [http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/HTS/Future_Forests/EOI.htm] to learn more about what happened at the workshop. The web site includes a detailed workshop summary, list of attendees with contact information, presentations made at the workshop, and advance workshop materials (including the agenda and other backgrounders).

If you have any questions about the workshop after reviewing this material, please contact Kristine Weese, FFESC Secretariat, at kristine.weese@gov.bc.ca.

5. How can I learn more about relevant climate change adaptation research topics?

First and foremost, the 'LOI Supplementary Information' sets out the evaluation criteria related to 'relevance' of the research topic. Relevant research topics:

- contribute to FFESC objectives and are within the FFESC research scope *(the objectives and scope are set out in the LOI supplementary information*);
- address climate change adaptation from a holistic (systems) interdisciplinary perspective;
- integrate natural and social sciences;
- address priority climate change adaptation issues and knowledge/extension gaps; and,
- involve clients as partners.

For more information and context on the climate change adaptation research scope, please refer to the 'IPCC Fourth Assessment Report: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability'.

For more information on priority climate change adaptation issues and knowledge/extension gaps, please refer to the following documents:

- Summary: Collaborative Planning Workshop (*section 8 and appendix*)
- Summary: Climate Change Adaptation Research Needs
- Detailed list of relevant forest and range climate change adaptation research topics

These documents are posted to the FFESC web site: http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/HTS/Future_Forests/EOI.htm. If you have any questions about relevant climate change adaptation research topics after reviewing these documents, please contact Sybille Haeussler, FFESC Research Coordinator, at haeussl@unbc.ca.

6. How can I learn more about forming an interdisciplinary research team and involving clients in my research proposal?

The FFESC web site [http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/HTS/Future_Forests/EOI.htm] includes two helpful articles on integrating social and natural sciences in environmental research, and engaging clients in the design and delivery of research projects:

- Integrating the social and natural sciences in environmental research (Strang)
- Working effectively at the interface of forest science and policy (Guldin et al)

Furthermore, the 'LOI Supplementary Information' clarifies that clients may include forest and range management policy makers, practitioners, community stakeholders, and First Nations - essentially, anyone who substantially influences, makes or implements decisions about the way BC's forest and range resources are managed. Clients may have local, regional or provincial jurisdiction.

Engaging clients in the early stages of the design of your research proposal will help elucidate the desired outcomes of your research, including the forest or range management legislation, policies, procedures or systems your research intends to influence. This process will help clarify the scope of your research, the affected disciplines, and the socio-economic implications that will need to be considered and addressed in your team and proposal. Thinking through this process to its end result early on will enable you to develop a proposal and team that is both client-centred and interdisciplinary.

If you would like advice about how to form an interdisciplinary research team and/or involve clients in your research proposal, please contact Sybille Haeussler, FFESC Research Coordinator, at haeussl@unbc.ca.

7. What is the FFESC looking for in terms of the size and mix of projects?

The FFESC can award funding up to $4 million in total to research projects. It will consider both small and large projects, based on evaluating them against the evaluation criteria set out in the LOI Supplementary Information (i.e., relevance, technical/scientific merit, expected benefits, and value for money).

Technical advice and opportunities to collaborate

8. How can I find out what other proponents are proposing to avoid duplication and/or to take advantage of opportunities to integrate or link my proposal with theirs?

If you are interested in connecting with other proponents that may have overlapping or related proposals, you should look at the excel spreadsheet posted to the FFESC web site called 'FFESC Contact List with Key Words (for Proponents)'. Sybille Haeussler prepared this spreadsheet with input from EOI proponents that agreed to share their research topics and/or key words from their proposals.

As well, the Collaborative Planning Workshop 'Attendee List' provides a comprehensive list of attendees with their affiliations, contact information, and geographic location, if you wish to get in touch to share information or collaborate.

These documents are posted to the FFESC web site: http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/HTS/Future_Forests/EOI.htm.

If you have any questions after reviewing these documents, or would like help connecting with other LOI proponents, please contact Sybille Haeussler, FFESC Research Coordinator, at haeussl@unbc.ca.

9. I would like advice on whether my draft research proposal is on the right track in meeting the evaluation criteria; who can I talk to?

If you would like advice about specific elements of your draft research proposal, and how those elements address the evaluation criteria, please contact Sybille Haeussler, FFESC Research Coordinator, at haeussl@unbc.ca.

LOI and full proposal process

10. Who will be reviewing my LOI?

The FFESC will review and evaluate the LOIs.

11. How will my LOI be evaluated?

The FFESC will evaluate LOIs against the evaluation criteria set out in the 'LOI Supplementary Information' (i.e., relevance, technical/scientific merit, expected benefits, and value for money), which is posted to the FFESC web site, at http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/HTS/Future_Forests/EOI.htm.

12. When will I hear whether my LOI was successful?

You will hear whether your LOI was successful by Friday, June 19.

13. What are the next steps / timeframe for the full proposal stage?

Please refer to the '2009 Program Overview: Interdisciplinary Climate Change Adaptation Research', which is posted to the FFESC web site [http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/HTS/Future_Forests/EOI.htm] to review the full 'application and review process' (page 4-5).

In brief, following notification of the LOI results on June 19, successful LOI proponents will have up to September 14 to submit full proposals. The FFESC will work with proponents to improve their proposals as necessary to maximize the value of the research for the FFESC program. Final approval of full proposals to be funded will be made by the first week of November, and successful proponents will receive project funding no later than December 2009.

14. **Where should I go and who can I contact for more information?**

Topic	Contact
FFESC web site	http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/HTS/Future_Forests/EOI.htm
FFEI web site	http://www.for.gov.bc.ca/HTS/Future_Forests
LOI application form and supplementary information	Suzi Malan, UBC, FFESC.office@ubc.ca
Collaborative Planning Workshop	Kristine Weese, FFESC Secretariat, kristine.weese@gov.bc.ca
Relevant climate change adaptation research topics	Sybille Haeussler, FFESC Research Coordinator, haeussl@unbc.ca
How to form interdisciplinary research teams & develop client-centred proposals	Sybille Haeussler, FFESC Research Coordinator, haeussl@unbc.ca
Technical advice: proposal development, collaboration opportunities	Sybille Haeussler, FFESC Research Coordinator, haeussl@unbc.ca
FFESC and FFEI	Kristine Weese, FFESC Secretariat, kristine.weese@gov.bc.ca