Ontario Agri-Food Research Initiative – Commercialization Stream

Call for Full Proposals (2025/26)

September 2025

Bioenterprise Canada Corporation

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Bioenterprise webpage

Ontario Agri-Food Research Initiative webpage

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Section 1. Initiative Overview

1. 1. Objectives

The Sustainable Canadian Agricultural Partnership (Sustainable CAP) is a five-year (2023-2028) investment by federal-provincial and territorial governments to strengthen competitiveness, innovation, and resiliency of the agriculture, agri-food and agri-based products sector. This includes $1 billion in federal programs and activities and a $2.5 billion commitment that is cost-shared 60 per cent federally and 40 per cent provincially/territorially for programs that are designed and delivered by the provinces and territories.

The Partnership supports projects in the following key priority areas, with research and innovation continuing to be a focus across all programming:

- Productivity and growth in the agri-food and agri-based product sectors.
- Environmental stewardship to enhance water quality and soil health.
- Protection and risk resilience to reinforce the foundation for public trust in the sector through improved assurance systems in food safety and plant and animal health.
- Crosscutting whereas businesses adopt innovations and best practice tools, practices, and technologies.

The Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Agribusiness (OMAFA), through the Ontario Agri-Food Research Initiative (OAFRI) under Sustainable CAP, offers funding for commercialization and innovation that helps foster economic development of the sector, ensure protection and assurance in the sector, and provide stewardship of Ontario's capacity to produce food. The objective of this Initiative is to conduct activities that enable and support the agriculture, agri-food, and agri-based products sector through market validation and product development. This Initiative supports the Grow Ontario Strategy which aims to increase the creation and adoption of innovative technologies to enhance competitiveness, grow market opportunities and strengthen the sector against future disruptions.

OMAFA is committed to the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion. To meet this commitment, the ministry has developed actions that ensure research and innovation programs are more open, accessible, equitable, and respectful of a variety of needs and expectations for all Ontarians. All research teams applying for OAFRI funding should be equipped to consider impact(s) on equity and representation of deserving groups if appropriate to the context of the proposed project.

OMAFA is committed to supporting the success of Indigenous food systems and businesses. Participation by First Nations, Métis, and Inuit applicants is strongly encouraged. All applicants are encouraged to look at how Indigenization can influence the project. To create opportunity within the Initiative, a broad Research Focus Area (Indigenous Agriculture and Food System) under each of the OMAFA Research Priority Areas has been included (see Appendix A) that

acknowledges Indigenous peoples, communities, and businesses who are best positioned to speak to their own applied research needs. To better support the participation of Indigenous peoples, culturally sensitive research methods will be required as a central component of the proposed applied research project. If you are interested in applying for the Initiative but have more questions, please contact submissions@bioenterprise.ca to discuss further.

This Initiative will engage Ontario-based organizations with promising discoveries to support the advancement of their research into the marketplace through two project types:

- **Project Type A: Market Validation Grants** to conduct market research to determine the size and quality of the market opportunity for a new and promising technology, product, or service with the goal of determining if there is any market potential before more research funds are spent on the technology.
- **Project Type B: Product Development Grants** to create prototypes, perform field trials, remove any barriers to a market launch or private sector adoption and optimize a minimum viable product that best meets the needs of customers.

Final recipient projects are required to align with one of the 10 approved OMAFA key research priority areas:

1. **Food Safety**:
    - Enhance public confidence in the sector to deliver on food safety and emergency management expectations and demands.
    - Anticipate, detect, mitigate and/or reduce food safety hazards along the supply chain.
2. **Animal Health & Welfare:**
    - Enhance public confidence in the sector to deliver on animal health and animal welfare expectations and demands.
    - Anticipate, detect, mitigate and/or reduce animal health hazards and antimicrobial use along the supply chain.
3. **Plant Health & Protection:**
    - Enhance public confidence in the sector to deliver on plant health expectations and demands.
    - Help strengthen the agri-food sector's sustainability and social license through increased utilization of integrated pest management (IPM) and other pest mitigation strategies.
    - Anticipate, detect, mitigate and/or reduce plant hazards along the supply chain, and improve plant resilience and resistance.
4. **Soil Health:**
    - Protect and enhance soil health and water quality, supporting improved public confidence in the sector to deliver on sustainability expectations.
    - Improve soil health and conservation to support agricultural productivity.

5. **Water Quality and Quantity:**
    - Protect and enhance soil health and water quality, supporting improved public confidence in the sector to deliver on sustainability expectations.
    - Strengthen the agri-food sector's sustainability and social licence through improved water use and water quality.
6. **Sustainable Production Systems:**
    - Strengthen the sustainability of the agri-food sector through (1) Soil health and conservation, (2) Improved water quality (e.g., reduced phosphorus runoff and pesticides), (3) Increased water/waste/energy efficiency and reduced greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and (4) Increased utilization of 4Rs of Nutrient Stewardship (right source, right rate, right time, and right place).
7. **Productive Land Capacity:**
    - Implement land use policies that support a healthy and resilient agriculture and food industry.
8. **Competitive Production Systems:**
    - Improve production efficiency, productivity, competitiveness and public trust efforts through technology adoption and innovation and technology development such a labour-saving technology or practices, automation, waste reduction, recycling, and increased water/waste/energy efficiency and reduced GHG emissions.
9. **Innovative Products & Product Improvements:**
    - Enhance competitiveness, profitability, and growth of the agri-food sector through new or improved products.
10. **Trade Market & Targeted Sector Growth Opportunities:**
    - Growth of the overall agri-food sector through expansion of existing and access to new domestic and international markets.
    - Improve economic performance of identified priority sub-sectors and increased production of niche and/or value-add products.
    - Priority areas include dairy goats, hazelnuts, greenhouse, maple syrup, processed vegetables, processed meats, baked goods, and cannabis/hemp.

Bioenterprise is delivering and administrating this Initiative. Bioenterprise brings more than 20 years of industry experience and a national and international network of research institutions, academia, mentors and experts, government, and industry to help small and medium-sized businesses in the sector nationwide connect, innovate, and grow. Through its experienced service partner network, Bioenterprise offers a wide range of expertise and support to its clients, and partnerships with other industries help open doors to new technologies and platforms to help food and agri-tech businesses innovate and grow.

The OAFRI Call for Commercialization Proposals invites Ontario-based eligible applicants to apply to receive funding support to lead projects that will enable commercialization of innovative agriculture, agri-food, and agri-based products and technologies. These efforts aim to enhance competitiveness and the leadership position of Ontario in the agriculture and agri-food sectors.

1. 2. Overview

Project Duration: up to 18 months

Project Start: A project cannot start prior to the approved start date. Eligible costs can only be incurred, invoiced, and paid for on or after the start date. Anticipated start dates will be on or after **March 2, 2026.**

Project End: Projects must be completed no later than **August 31, 2027** and all final reports due by September 30, 2027.

Funding Available:

The total funding available through the Initiative is $3.4 million over the period from October 1, 2023 through to March 31, 2028. Applicants can request up to **100 per cent of the total eligible project costs of the eligible project***, to a maximum of the following amounts per project:

- **Project Type A** – Market Validation: Maximum of $30,000 in eligible costs per project.
- **Project Type B** – Product Development: Minimum of $50,000 and to a maximum of $150,000 in eligible costs per project.

***Note:** Applicants may request a maximum of **75 per cent funding for each eligible equipment and capital expenditure purchase**. **Applicants can request 100 per cent funding for each eligible equipment and capital expenditure rental or lease.** Please refer to Section 1.5. c) for more further details on eligible equipment and capital expenditures.

The applicant's organization must demonstrate that it has the financial capacity and sufficient resources to complete the project. Funding under this Initiative is provided on a reimbursement basis meaning the applicant's organization must pay for project costs up front. If a project exceeds the approved budget, the applicant's organization must raise the additional funding required to complete the project; additional funds will not be provided from this Initiative. If successful, funding through this Initiative is conditional on proof of supporting funds.

There will be a 10 per cent holdback of reimbursement until a Final Report for the project is received and approved by Bioenterprise. The Final Report submitted for the project must include a confirmation that the project has been completed within the project timelines stated in the Project Contribution Agreement, and the project must fulfill all other requirements stated in the Agreement.

In addition to project funding, approved applicants will receive a one-year complimentary Access membership to Bioenterprise's Canada's Food & Agri-Tech Engine upon successful project completion.

OAFRI Commercialization Stream – Timeline

2023	OAFRI Commercialization Stream Launch	November 2, 2023
2024	Round 1 Recipient Announcement	Fall 2024
2025	Round 2 Recipient Announcement	Spring 2025
	Round 3 Proposal Intake Opens	September 4, 2025
	Round 3 Proposal Deadline	October 30, 2025
2026	**Round 3 Recipient Announcement**	Spring 2026
	Round 4 Proposal Intake Opens	TBD Fall 2026

**Dates listed above are subject to change. Please refer to the Bioenterprise website for updates.*

1. 3. Eligible Applicants

We invite organizations that meet the following eligibility criteria to submit a full proposal.

Applicant organizations may include but are not limited to: Research bodies, industry organizations, Indigenous persons, municipal government, processors, service providers or retailers/wholesalers. This could include for-profit entities, not-for-profit entities, non-government organizations, universities and colleges based in Ontario.

Eligible Applicants:

- Must be located in Ontario.
- Must have project activities that take place in Ontario with project partners located in Ontario.
    - Eligible project costs should be incurred in Ontario. For project costs incurred outside of Ontario, strong justification is required to be considered eligible.
- Must have projects that address the OMAFA key research priority areas and the Initiative objectives as referenced in Section 1.1.
- Must be operating in the agriculture, agri-food, and agri-based products sectors, including technology or equipment suppliers to the sector.
- Must have a product/technology/service that is unique to Ontario.

Applicants may submit more than one proposal if multiple unique technologies exist.

Note: Organizations operating in the aquaculture sector are not eligible to receive funding through this Initiative.

Note: Applicants who have received prior funding from OMAFA but have outstanding required reports or have ongoing OAFRI Commercialization projects are not eligible for funding under this Initiative until OMAFA and Bioenterprise have received and approved the outstanding reports and previously approved projects are completed. Previous recipients under OAFRI are eligible to apply for a different project than what was previously funded.

Project partners and service providers may include but are not limited to: for-profit entities, not-for-profit entities, government and non-government organizations, universities and colleges, and research institutions based in Ontario.

1. 4. Eligible Projects & Activities

Eligible projects are those requiring either market validation assistance to determine the market opportunity of their innovation (Project Type A), or support product development activities for their innovative technologies, services, and products (Project Type B).

Eligible activities can include but are not limited to:

Project Type A – Market Validation

- Conducting market research to determine the size and quality of the market opportunity.
- Comprehensive market analysis and competitive landscape assessment.
- Customer discovery research to determine industry needs and to identify optimal industry partners.
- Beta-testing early-stage technologies before transferring to industry (Technology Readiness Level 5+).
- Demonstrating proof of relevancy using a prototype made within the cost constraints determined by the market.
- Generating data (proof of concept) from a novel technology to support filing a patent application.
- Determining the technical merit, feasibility, and commercial potential of a technology, which could involve demonstrating proof of relevancy.
- **Note:** The Commercialization Stream does not support activities involving analytical studies and/or laboratory studies. If your project does involve these activities, please refer to the Applied Research Stream – Call for Full Proposals document.

Project Type B – Product Development (Technology Readiness Level 6+)

- Prototype creation.
- Field testing and/or pilot testing prototypes/devices that have never been used outside the lab (does not cover human medical testing).

- Removing any barriers to a market launch or private sector adoption.
- Evaluating a significant advancement to an existing product, process, or service.
- Testing or optimizing a minimum viable product that best meets the needs of customers.
- Evaluation and testing of late-stage technologies to support a regulatory approval submission.
- Exploring and advancing the certification of a product or process by a reputable association.
- Developing a new product for animals or agriculture based on existing technology for humans or non-agricultural purposes.
- Creating and utilizing an academic-industry research centre at an industry partner's site to co-develop and implement process improvements directly applicable to industry.

Note: Market research should be complete before applying to a Project Type B – Product Development project. Market research activities are not eligible under Project Type B – Product Development projects.

1. 5. Financial Guidelines

The Initiative will provide up to:

- $30,000 for Project Type A or
- $50,000 to $150,000 for Project Type B

The total project budget can include eligible and ineligible project costs. However, the approved eligible project costs will be considered as the total eligible project budget when approval is received. **Applicants can request up to 100 per cent of the total eligible project budget and applicants can request a maximum of 75 per cent funding for each eligible equipment and capital expenditure purchase. Applicants can request 100 per cent funding for each eligible equipment and capital expenditure rental or lease.**

Note: Funding for eligible equipment purchases, rentals, and leases is limited to 30 per cent of the total eligible project budget to a maximum of $30,000.

Funding under this Initiative can only be used for Eligible Project Costs that are:

- Directly related to the intent of the project.
- Reasonable and required to carry out the project.
- Incremental to the cost of doing business.
- Directly connected to the Project Milestone Plan.
- Subject to approval by Bioenterprise.
- Auditable by Bioenterprise (complete documentation is necessary).

Eligible Project Costs

The eligible and ineligible costs listed below are not exhaustive but provide a guideline for developing project budgets under OAFRI. **Bioenterprise reserves the right to determine the eligibility of all expenses, including salaries, on a case-by-case basis**.

Project costs may include:

a. Internal Employee Labour

- Eligible Costs:
  - Actual salary costs for employing experts to contribute directly to the project, such as:
    - Trainee salaries, e.g., graduate and summer students, and Post-Doctoral Fellows.
    - Contract technicians and other staff contributing directly to the project outcomes.
    - Employee's direct hourly labour rate plus normal benefits including organization portion of CPP, EI, WSIB, and health/dental benefits (benefits cost in total not to exceed 15 per cent of the hourly rate).
  - Internal employee labour costs for existing staff are not to exceed 15 per cent of the total eligible project budget. There is no limit on salary expenses for incremental new hires.
- Ineligible Costs:
  - Salaries of permanent staff whose time is not directly spent on executing the approved project.
  - Individuals with permanent academic appointments.
  - Individuals with provincial, federal, or municipal government employment.
  - Salaries for executives, administrative staff, or Board members.
  - Discretionary severance and separation packages.

b. Consulting and Professional Service Providers

- Eligible Costs:
  - Costs of consultants, professionals, and legal fees, including Intellectual Property costs, must be directly related to the project activities.
  - Note: Funding for eligible legal fees, including Intellectual Property costs, are limited to 10 per cent of the total eligible project budget to a maximum of $10,000.
- Ineligible Costs:
  - Costs for consultants, professional service providers, and legal fees not directly attributable to the project activities.
  - Patent or filing fees.

c. Equipment and Capital Expenditures

- Eligible Costs:
  - Equipment leases and rentals to conduct the project.
  - Equipment is defined as any item (or interrelated collection of items comprising a system) which is used wholly or in part for the proposed project having a useful life of more than one year and costing more than $2,000.
  - Costs related to commissioning of new equipment or modification/relocation of existing equipment (infrastructure and commissioning) related to the project may be eligible.
  - Note: Applicants can request a maximum of 75 per cent funding for each eligible equipment and capital expenditure **purchase**. Applicants can request 100 per cent funding for each eligible equipment and capital expenditure **rental or lease**.
  - Note: Funding for eligible equipment purchases, rentals, and leases is limited to 30 per cent of the total eligible project budget to a maximum of $30,000.
- Ineligible Costs:
  - Purchase of common use items not directly related to the approved project (e.g. computers, office equipment).

d. Consumables

- Eligible Costs:
  - Material and supplies directly related to project activities.
- Ineligible Costs:
  - Common use items not specific to the project.
  - Food or entertainment costs.

e. Travel

- Eligible Costs**:**
  - Travel, meal, and accommodation costs, as outlined in the *Travel, Meal and Hospitality Expenses Directive*, necessary to carry out the project (e.g., travel to research stations, partner facilities, and field plots).
    - Rental vehicle (compact model or equivalent) and gasoline (no costs for fees/penalties incurred, including for failure to refuel rental vehicle before returning it); or
    - Personal/fleet vehicle with the distances calculated in kilometers and tracked and submitted for project-related use according to the following maximum rates per kilometer:

Number of Kilometres	Southern Ontario ($/km)	Northern Ontario ($/km)
0-4,000 km	$0.40	$0.41
4,001-10,700 km	$0.35	$0.36
10,701-24,000 km	$0.29	$0.30

More than 24,000 km	$0.24	$0.25

  - Air and rail travel directly attributable to the project activities (economy or coach class equivalent).
  - Single accommodation in a standard room is eligible where directly attributable to the project activities.
- Ineligible Costs**:**
  - Travel costs (flights, mileage, accommodation, meal allowances etc.) for participants in workshops and meetings who are not part of the core project team.
  - Car allowance.
  - Parking, and tolls for bridges, ferries, and highways (no cost for traffic or parking violations).

Other travel costs that are, in Bioenterprise's sole and absolute discretion, direct, incremental, and necessary for the successful completion of the project may be eligible, provided those costs have been approved by Bioenterprise in writing prior to being incurred.

Note: In order to be eligible, travel costs must be identified and approved as such in the proposal for an approved project.

f. Indirect Costs

- Eligible Costs:
  - Other indirect eligible costs include meeting rooms, space, or facilities, as long as the applicant can provide an estimate of the fair market value for use of the space.
- Ineligible Costs:
  - Allocation of the organization's facility costs.
  - Leasehold improvements as a category.

g. Other Ineligible Project Costs

- Costs incurred before the approval of the project by OMAFA or after the project completion date identified in the Agreement.
- Costs incurred in preparing a proposal.
- Any cost not specifically required for implementation of the project.
- Normal costs of establishing, expanding, or operating a business or organization.
- Goods or services provided by federal or provincial government departments or agencies.
- Deposits (prepayments) for which goods or services are not yet fully received.
- Costs of membership in a professional body.
- Purchase of land, building, or facilities.
- Purchase of vehicles, transportation equipment, mobile material handling equipment (powered or unpowered), and construction and agriculture machinery.

- Financing charges, loan and lease interest payments, bank fees and charges, fines, or penalties, as well as debt restructuring or fundraising.
- Interest on invested capital, bonds, debentures, or mortgages.
- Bond discount.
- Costs related to litigation.
- Opportunity costs.
- Costs of conference or tradeshow admission if not exhibiting or presenting.
- Gifts and incentives.
- Permits and approvals.
- Costs related to activities that promote Ontario products explicitly over those of another province or territory.
- Costs related to activities that directly influence or lobby any level of government.
- Costs of intangible assets such as goodwill, whether capitalized or expensed.
- Extraordinary or abnormal fees for professional advice unless approval is obtained from Bioenterprise before incurring the cost.
- Taxes, including Harmonized Sales Tax.
- Any refund or rebate the applicant receives or is eligible to receive.
- Costs to obtain goods, services, or both, where those goods, services or both were not obtained from an entity operating at Arm's Length from the recipient.
- Costs for which the recipient is eligible to receive a credit, rebate or refund.
- Costs related to the recipient's ordinary business operations (such as day-to-day business operating expenses related directly to producing the goods or services sold by a business, to selling goods and services, costs of running a business).
- Any costs related to submitting reports to Bioenterprise.

1. 6. Timelines

Round 3 Submission Deadline: 11:59pm EDT on Thursday, October 30, 2025.

Project Start (for the purpose of developing project milestones): March 2, 2026. Actual start and end dates may vary, but projects must be completed by August 31, 2027.

Final Report Deadline: 30 days following project completion and no later than September 30, 2027.

1. 7. Proposal Review

Initial Relevance Screen

Applicants are encouraged to complete a short initial relevance screen to determine eligibility and fit for the OAFRI Commercialization Stream. This survey can be found on the Bioenterprise

website. Eligible applicants will be encouraged to complete a full proposal. For full proposal templates, see Section 2.1.

Full Proposal Relevance Pre-Screening Review

A pre-screening of full proposals will be undertaken to determine the following:

- Eligibility of the applicant, their project partners, and project eligibility.
- Completeness of the proposal.
- Fit within stated OMAFA research priority areas.

Panel Review

Full proposals that pass this review will be submitted to a Review Panel for evaluation. The proposal title and abstract may be shared by Bioenterprise with third parties for the purpose of finding expert reviewers who are not in a conflict of interest with the proposal. All reviewers are required to declare any conflict of interest and to sign a confidentiality agreement prior to accessing and reviewing any submission. Once reviewers are selected, they have access to the entire proposal for evaluation purposes.

Review Panels will evaluate the proposals according to the following criteria:

1. The project's fit within the OMAFA priority areas, the objectives of Bioenterprise, and key priorities under Sustainable CAP.
2. How well is the barrier or gap defined and understood?
3. How clear is the plan to develop the product, technology, or service?
4. How valuable is the potential innovation to society once the barrier is removed? What is the economic impact of the project?
5. What realistic benefits will the project deliver once completed as planned? Who will benefit in Ontario and beyond?
6. What is the level of uniqueness of the product, technology, or service to Ontario? Technologies, products, and services that already exist in Ontario are not eligible through this Initiative.
7. Quality and clarity of methodology and overall project work plan. The review committee must understand the step by step process the project will use to achieve stated milestones.
8. The experience and expertise of the applicant and project partners to produce the anticipated outcomes to benefit Ontario.
9. The completeness and appropriateness of the proposed budget, evidence of stakeholder support, and level of available funds from eligible sources (requested and confirmed) where applicable.

Applicants whose full proposals are selected for funding will be notified via email. Funding is contingent on the applicant signing and complying with the terms and conditions outlined in the Project Contribution Agreement with Bioenterprise.

1. 8. Intellectual Property

The Recipient is required to include, in the full proposal, their Intellectual Property (IP) Strategy related to achieving project objectives through IP-related activities. IP activities should facilitate increased technical collaboration and provide an opportunity for Recipients to advance their technologies.

Bioenterprise and OMAFA make no claim to ownership of IP resulting from activities supported through this Initiative.

Section 2. How to Submit a Proposal

2. 1. Submitting a Proposal

Organizations applying for funding under the OAFRI Commercialization Stream will complete an initial relevance screen to be reviewed by Bioenterprise which will pre-screen for basic eligibility. For a full list of eligibility criteria, refer to Section 1.3.

The proposal process is a one-phased full proposal consisting of:

- OAFRI Intake Form.
- Proposal Workbook (found under "Tools & Templates").
- Budget Workbook (found under "Tools & Templates").

Proposals must be submitted online through the Bioenterprise website (Wufoo link). **Email, mail, in-person, and facsimile (fax) submissions will not be accepted.** Proposals must be received by the submission deadline to be considered for funding.

Upon submitting a proposal, a confirmation email will be provided. Applicants are encouraged to retain a copy of their completed submission for ease of reference until funding decisions are made.

All proposals received on time will be reviewed and assessed. Funding awards under the OAFRI Commercialization Stream will be announced upon completion of the proposal review process. Successful applicants will enter into a Project Contribution Agreement with Bioenterprise.

Applicants with additional questions can contact: submissions@bioenterprise.ca.

2. 2. Proposal Requirements

Proposal Contents

Complete proposals must include the following elements, completed in full:

- OAFRI Intake Form (required):
  - Applicant Information.
- Proposal Workbook that contains the following sections (required):
  - Organization & Technology Overview.
  - Project Overview & Projected Outcomes.
  - Milestone Plan.
- Budget Workbook (required).
- Supporting Documentation (optional).

Templates

Templates include:

- An electronic version of the OAFRI Intake Form (Wufoo link).
- A Proposal Workbook provided in a Microsoft Word template.
- A Budget Workbook provided in a Microsoft Excel template.

All templates are accessible in the Tools & Templates section located on the Bioenterprise website.

Formatting

- Document type: All proposals must be typed.
- Font: Must be easy to read (11-point minimum). Smaller font may be used in figures and tables but must be clearly legible.
- Figures, graphs, images, and pictures: Must be of a size that is easily readable or viewable and may be landscape orientation.
- Line spacing: Single.
- Margins: One (1) inch top, bottom, left and right.
- Page limit for written proposal: 20 pages excluding the appendices.
- Paper size: Letter (8 ½ inches by 11 inches).
- Proposal language: Official language (English or French) of choice. Proposals will not be accepted in any other languages.

2. 3. Proposal Workbook & Budget

The Proposal Workbook must be completed by providing information that corresponds to each of the sections listed below. The Proposal Workbook template containing the required information must be submitted as an attachment to the OAFRI Intake Form.

Section A) Organization & Technology Overview

The Organization & Technology Overview provides a description of the applicant's organization and its technology innovation (including Technology Readiness Level), as well as short and long-term growth plans. It should also include details on the applicant's proposed vision, including an overview of key aspects of the organization, including technologies to be validated or developed.

Section B) Project Overview & Projected Outcomes

The Project Overview & Projected Outcomes provides a description of the proposed project's requirements, deliverables, and outcomes. It should outline objectives, activities to be done, when and by whom, milestones and expected outcomes.

This plan will outline and describe in detail:

- An overview of the project.
- A clear explanation of the scope and required resources in order to achieve desired outcomes.
- A description of the core product/technology to be advanced through project implementation.
- A description of how the project addresses one or more of the key OMAFA priority areas and the Initiative's objectives.
- Geographic location where the project activities will take place.

An overview of the project benefits for the business and project partners, as well as its overall economic impact for Ontario must be included. An assessment of the projected economic growth, industrial benefits, and business outcomes of the proposed project must be provided. This section should highlight opportunities for job creation and retention, revenue generation, commercialization, and new investment opportunities.

Project team and partners must be identified including the nature of their involvement, highlighting the capabilities, technology expertise and sector strengths. Applicants must explain how their involvement/participation strengthens the proposal and impacts expected outcomes.

Section C) Project Milestone Plan

Applicants must provide a detailed implementation plan, including:

- Activities and timelines.
- Milestone activity description and projected outcomes.

Section D) Budget Workbook

Applicants must provide a detailed project budget, including all eligible and ineligible project costs, corresponding to the activities listed in the Project Milestone Plan.

2. 4. Supporting Documentation

Supporting documentation is not required to submit a proposal but is encouraged to provide further context to the organization and project. Supporting documentation should be in PDF format and may include:

- Organization Business Plan and/or:
    - Pitch deck.
    - Product specification sheets.
    - Technology overview.
- Letter(s) of support from project partners.
- Proposal Details Supporting Documentation:

    - Relevant articles demonstrating industry needs.
- Other Supporting Documentation:
    - Letter(s) of support from stakeholders as evidence of need and/or potential commercial adoption of technology.
    - Statement of Work (SOW) for external project partners.

2. 5. Important Considerations

When naming attachments for the OAFRI Proposal Form, refrain from using the following characters: " # % & * : < > ? / \ |. Otherwise, the form will not submit to Bioenterprise for review.

The OAFRI Proposal Form will only submit successfully once the questions are completed and the required attachments have been inserted.

Applicants should clearly mark as "proprietary" any information contained in their proposals that they believe is a trade secret or proprietary business information. Proprietary information also includes applicant and project details provided. This information is to be maintained confidential and will not be shared with other applicants nor on public sites.

Proprietary information contained in proposals will be used or disclosed only for the purposes of project evaluation and assessment. Funded projects under the OAFRI Commercialization Stream are subject to the federal Access to Information Act and the Privacy Act.

Section 3. Project Administration

3. 1. Project Contribution Agreement

A Project Contribution Agreement will be executed with successful applicants outlining, at a minimum:

- Eligible Project details including the Project Milestone Plan.
- Approved budget and spending timelines.
- Payment schedules and reconciliations.
- Reporting requirements.
- Retention of data requirements.

The project is considered approved upon execution of the Project Contribution Agreement. Funding payments will be managed by Bioenterprise and support eligible project costs as described in the Project Contribution Agreement.

3. 2. Claims & Payment Reconciliation

Payments are reconciled on a periodic basis through the submission of claims by the recipient. Claims will be submitted based on milestones as outlined in the Project Contribution Agreement and are reconciled with cash flow requirements and actual expenditures. All claims must be accompanied by a report of the work accomplished and details of costs being claimed for the period covered by the claim. Expenditures must be substantiated by appropriate documentation such as invoices, timesheets, contracts, and other approved documents. Claims must be certified by an authorized financial officer of the recipient. Bioenterprise may require that any claim for payment be certified by an external auditor.

Recipients will be requested to provide evidence to support that all Eligible Costs claimed have been paid by the recipient. The recipient must keep records and documents for a minimum of seven (7) years following the conclusion of the project and Project Contribution Agreement.

3. 3. Reporting Requirements

The Project Contribution Agreement outlines the reporting requirements for:

- Claims and project expenditures.
- Project activities.
- Results and outcomes of the project.

Required Reports

- Claims and interim progress reports:
  - Recipients will submit claims on a periodic basis, as outlined in the Project Contribution Agreement, on prescribed forms as provided. Interim progress reports must be submitted with each claim using the template provided.
  - These reports will provide information to assess progress and to track recipients' success against the terms and conditions of the Project Contribution Agreement.
- Final report:
  - Recipients must submit a final report within 30 days of the completion of the project on overall goals, achieved outcomes, results and economic benefits of the project.
  - All final reports are due the earlier of 30 days following the completion of the project or September 30, 2027.
- Annual Client Surveys post project completion:
  - Recipients are required to complete Annual Client Surveys for up to six (6) years after the completion of the project. Client surveys are designed to report on Initiative objectives, to measure achievements and to provide feedback on engagement with Bioenterprise.

Retention of Reports

Recipients are required to keep official records, including all interim, annual, and final reports, and supporting claims documentation for a minimum of seven (7) years following the conclusion of the Project Contribution Agreement.

END OF DOCUMENT