

FAQ

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

Emerging Concepts &
Technologies Research
Program - Nova Scotia

Last updated: October 30, 2025

The following is a list of common and frequently asked questions (FAQs) received over the previous calls. Additional questions can be sent to info@netzeroatlantic.ca. Any requests for information are required to follow this FAQ process; we will not be meeting with applicants prior to the call closing.

Question period has closed.

Proposals are due November 3, 2025, at 2 p.m. A.T.

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Abbreviations and Terms

- Net Zero Atlantic (NZA)
- Nova Scotia Department of Environment and Climate Change (DECC)
- Nova Scotia Department of Natural Resources and Renewables (NRR)
- The terms proponent, Lead Applicant, Lead Researcher, and Principal Investigator are used interchangeably.

New Questions from the Past Week

(Note: Questions received within the past week are answered and posted in this section.)

No additional questions were received in the past week.

General Information

1. Is it required for an applicant—as a university professor—to have an industrial partner to be eligible to apply??

No, it is not required that you have an industrial partner to be eligible to apply. If you will be partnering with an industrial organization, it is advised that you include this information in your application, but it is not a requirement.

2. Should the application be submitted directly by the academic professor, or must it be submitted through the university's research office?

The application is usually submitted by the project lead – the professor in your case. However, the research office might be interested in looking over the application and providing some guidance ahead of submission. That is up to your institution, pls contact them to find out the possibility of this

3. Are there any specific institutional requirements or approvals needed from the university as part of the application process?

We do request a certificate of insurance from the lead institution, during the contracting phase should the proposal be selected for award.

4. What is the Net Zero Emerging Concepts and Technologies (ECT) Research Program?

The ECT Research Program is:

- i. a three-year grant program
- ii. for early-stage research and development projects
- iii. that will support local solutions and help the province adopt new technologies and approaches
- iv. to reduce Nova Scotia GHGs emissions post 2030
- v. and generate economic benefits for the province.

The ECT Research Program is intended to support early-stage projects that may find it difficult to access funding from other sources. The Program will fund two types of research and development:

- **Stream 1 (Technology and Methods Development in Nova Scotia):** Targets early-stage conceptual projects that create made-in-Nova Scotia GHG reduction technology/IP and approaches. Stream 1 funding is intended to support research and development in Nova Scotia.
- **Stream 2 (Technology and Methods Adoption from Elsewhere):** Targets emerging GHG reduction technologies and approaches under development outside of Nova Scotia. Stream 2 will fund technoeconomic and/or feasibility studies that evaluate how emerging technologies, methods, and/or practices demonstrated elsewhere can be imported and deployed, with or without modification, in the Nova Scotia context. Project outcomes will include recommendations for additional funding to support field work or pilot plants that demonstrate strong potential to cost-effectively reduce GHGs within Nova Scotia.

5. What is the purpose of this Program?

- It is critical to identify knowledge and technology gaps so that hard to abate emissions in the 2030-2050 period can be addressed. The ECT Research Program targets the creation of new concepts and technologies now so Nova Scotia will be ready to mitigate the final remaining GHGs that must be eliminated to achieve net-zero emissions, post-2030.
- The ECT Research Program will help bring more solutions from the lab to the marketplace and support the goal of making Nova Scotia a global leader in clean, renewable energy. This in turn is expected to result in economic development opportunities for Nova Scotian companies and technology developers.

- The provincial government funding provided for the Net Zero ECT Program advances Actions 13 and 63 of [Nova Scotia's Climate Change Plan for Clean Growth](#): research on new processes that can improve natural carbon sinks – such as soil and forests, which absorb carbon dioxide – and new technologies and practices to meet our net zero by 2050 target.

6. What outcomes are you anticipating the ECT Research Program will achieve?

Anticipated ECT Research Program outcomes include:

1. A suite of promising emerging clean technologies approaches and practices that warrant continued funding from Nova Scotia's incubation ecosystem – government sources, the private sector, or a combination of both.
2. NZA recommendations to government for funding to support advanced studies, field work or pilot plants for promising technologies or methods that should be introduced to Nova Scotia from other jurisdictions.
3. An assessment of the program's success with respect to its strategic objectives, with recommendations on how Nova Scotia should continue investment in technologies and methods needed to reach net zero in the Post 2030 period.

7. What is Net Zero Atlantic?

Net Zero Atlantic (NZA) is a not-for-profit energy research organization that works to advance Atlantic Canada's transition to a carbon neutral society by coordinating independent energy sector research for a variety of end users. NZA's purpose is to advance a sustainable and inclusive transition to a carbon-neutral Atlantic Canada by providing credible and objective research and support services. NZA identifies critical knowledge and data gaps, assembles research and delivery teams, and leads applied research projects to close these gaps.

8. Who can I contact with questions?

Please send any inquiries about the ECT Research Program to info@netzeroatlantic.ca. If warranted, questions and responses will be posted on an updated FAQ – so please refer back to this link before completing your proposal.

9. How many applications can an applicant submit?

There is no limit to the number of applications a Lead Applicant can submit. We may limit the number of applications per Applicant in future calls.

10. Are the ECT webinars posted to YouTube?

NZA does not have a YouTube presence. The recorded webinars have been posted to our website [here](#) while the direct vimeo link is <https://vimeo.com/manage/videos/832343333/analytics>

11. When will the projects from this call begin?

The start date for the projects is projected for March 2026. We hope to award the projects in December 2025 and proceed right into contracting. The project duration begins from the date the contract is signed.

12. We have seen the advertising for the new call. Can we schedule a meeting to discuss our application?

NZA will not be offering independent consultations for proponents while the call is open. We ask that all applicants send their questions to info@netzeroatlantic.ca to be answered through the formal FAQ process.

13. When is the submission deadline and also could you send me the link where I can submit the application?

The Applications for Fall 2025 ECT call are due Nov 3rd, 2025. Pls refer to this link <https://netzeroatlantic.ca/ect-apply> for instructions and resources pertaining to the open call. Submission upload link can be found in the “How to Apply” section of the applicant guide.

14. Can the project timeline be extended beyond the set duration?

Projects that request an extension after work has begun, will have to go through a formal contract amendment process with NZA. All projects for the Fall 2025 funding round must be completed by February 28th, 2027.

15. For submissions to the ECT program, is there a submit button in the portal, or is it considered submitted when it shows as “uploaded”?

Your proposal is considered submitted once it is uploaded

Requirements/Objectives

16. Is the development of technology and/or intellectual property (IP) a required outcome of proposed projects?

No, technology and IP development are not required outcomes by the end of the project duration. However, they are long-term goals for the program. Proposals should explain how their projects aim to reduce Nova Scotia’s hard-to-abate GHG emissions and what economic benefits to the province

may be derived from their proposed R&D project. Technology and IP development are two desired outcomes from both objectives.

17. What are the reporting requirements with a successful proposal? Will there be milestones established to correlate with the projected funding?

Yes, payments will be disbursed on a milestone basis over the course of the project (typically 3-4 payments depending on project size and duration). An initial payment will be made following the contract signing. Subsequent payments would be made at key milestones and tied to the provision of milestone deliverables to NZA. For this reason, applicants are advised to describe work packages clearly describing the work done per package in the proposals. Key milestones will be scheduled during the contracting phase for the successful applicants.

18. Do the objectives have to include a direct reduction of emissions? Or can it be an indirect reduction? For example, diverting food waste from landfills, sustainable agriculture practices.

Indirect reduction of emissions could be appropriate should the proponent clearly align their project to one of the Priority Research Themes identified in the Applicant Guide.

19. Do the project objectives have to be measured by how many emissions were reduced? Or can the objectives be measured using other metrics?

NZA does not have prescribed metrics for measuring emission reductions to which ultimate recipients must use.

20. Is this program only targeting nascent technology?

The target is early-stage concepts and technologies. We intend to be inclusive rather than exclusive in the definition, but we will favour earlier-stage projects if we receive multiple strong submissions and must differentiate on that basis alone. Please see the next response.

21. Must the project maturity at the time of application be only in the research stage, or can it be little more mature, such as beyond the proof of concept and now attempting to address needs identified post POC and closer to a pre-pilot stage with further research required to address these needs?

Yes, it can be a little more mature as you have outlined.

22. If we outsource is there any (political) weighting applied depending on the country we outsource to?

No.

23. Is greater weight given to a research partner in academia vs. a working professional, i.e., NSCC/Dalhousie vs. a person in the related field?

No.

24. Could you please expand on the Nova Scotia content requirements?

There are no Nova Scotia content requirements as such. The Lead Applicant must be based in Nova Scotia and there is an expectation that a certain amount of the project work will be undertaken in the province, but there are no set criteria for local content. Keep in mind, the program aims to support made-in-Nova Scotia solutions for GHG emissions reduction in the province, which can be economically developed for market to other jurisdictions as well.

25. Does this fund support projects that are already happening either in NS or elsewhere?

The funds are to support pre-commercial ideas that create made-in Nova Scotia solutions (stream 1) or adopt already existing technologies/methods outside of Nova Scotia, for new deployment to address GHG emissions reductions, in the province (stream 2).

26. Is it acceptable to re-submit an adjusted application in future rounds?

Yes, definitely.

27. If I propose a project for stream 2, it is possible to get a comment that you can support it in stream 1?

Proposals will be evaluated within the stream that is stated in the application alone. It is the proponent's responsibility to determine the appropriate stream, stating clearly the alignment of the project within that stream.

28. Do you have an estimate of number of projects you may be able to fund in each call?

NZA does not have a quota on projects awarded per call, stream or priority research themes. The number of awarded projects will be dependant on the quality of the applications. It is estimated that NZA may fund up to 10-12 projects per call.

29. What kind of environmental benefits are being sought, beyond GHG reduction, for example, arresting biodiversity loss?

The primary objectives of the program are identifying and addressing knowledge gaps in hard-to-abate GHG emissions reduction solutions and creating intellectual property/economic development opportunities for Nova Scotia. Other benefits realized from the projects are a plus and are encouraged.

30. Are there target word counts or other length limits for sections other than section 1 (that has a 300-word limit)? Is there an overall proposal page count limit?

Where there is no specified word limit, feel free to be as comprehensive as you wish. We ask proponents to use effective and efficient explanations but acknowledge that the words required to do so will be dependant on the project specifics. There is no proposal page count limit.

Eligibility

31. Are companies that do not have an office in Nova Scotia eligible to receive funding?

The Lead Applicant must be registered, incorporated or based in Nova Scotia. This means that non-Nova Scotian companies, academic institutions, not-for-profits, etc. must serve as project partners and cannot be the Lead Applicant. Please see the Applicant Guide for more information.

32. What stage of advancement of a made-in-Nova Scotia project would cause an application to be disqualified because it is not early-stage enough? Can you add more clarification on the definition of ‘early-stage’?

The ECT research program defines early-stage projects as pre-commercial i.e., not on the market already. Therefore, the target projects are those earlier on the path to commercialization. NZA does not intend to be restrictive, hence all proposals under stream 1 will be considered provided there is a clear argument for the project being at an early enough stage.

33. Can a for-profit organization that is Extra-provincial Corporation Provincial be eligible to be the lead applicant for Net Zero funding? If yes, is this factored at all in the proposal evaluation under section 13?

To be eligible to receive funding through the ECT Research Program, the Lead Proponent must be incorporated, registered or based in Nova Scotia. Proposals will be accepted from institutions who fall under either one of these categories. Organizations outside of the province may partner with lead institutions for the project execution.

With regards to evaluation, proposals that strongly align with the program’s objectives relative to the province will be scored higher. In particular, the ability to demonstrate how the research will address hard to abate emissions, and the potential economic benefits to the province of Nova Scotia.

34. Am I eligible to apply for the new call for the Net Zero Emerging Concepts and Technologies Research Program, as I currently have an active project from the previous call?

You are eligible to apply again in this call, if your new project is not dependent on the outcomes of the currently active one as this would pose a problem should the current one experience any setbacks. Feel free to submit as many applications as you have the capacity for.

Partnerships/Lead Applicant

35. With the Net-Zero ECT funding, can a company include an extra-provincial university as a collaboration partner?

Yes.

36. If we outsource to another country for some hardware design and manufacturing -- is this considered a partner as per the application?

It could be, depending on how you describe your relationship with the company. Otherwise, it's simply a subcontractor, which is also eligible to receive funding through you as the lead applicant.

37. Can an independent member (outside an organisation) submit a proposal?

Yes, the Program is open to sole proprietors on the understanding that NZA Program Managers may require specific assurances and documentation to prove that funds are appropriately managed and HST/GST taxes remitted if applicable.

38. Are you accepting applications from one single organization or are we required to have a partner involved in the project we are proposing?

Yes, we are happy to accept applications from single organizations. Partnerships are not a requirement.

39. Can we be a participant for more than one stream?

Yes, applicants will not be penalized if they are contributors to multiple projects if the project scope is not the same.

40. Are multiple proposal applications allowed in multiple streams or different provinces i.e., both Nova Scotia and New Brunswick?

Multiple submissions are allowed across the different streams and in both provinces. However, take note that the requirements for the specific provinces/streams must be met.

Funding/MITACS/Budget

41. For Mitacs funding, are NSCC students or high school students eligible or just students enrolled into an undergraduate program?

Post-secondary students are eligible for Mitacs funding.

42. Can the Mitacs funds be used to support post-doctoral fellows (PDFs)?

Yes, Mitacs supports PDFs. They can have up to 3-year (9 units) projects. To be eligible, they must be within 5 years of PhD graduation at the start of the project.

43. Can ECT support the "company portion" of Mitacs project costs?

Yes, NZA is considered a private partner by Mitacs, thus ECT funding would be matched by Mitacs.

44. Is a separate application required for accessing matching funds from MITACS?

Yes. For proposals which have indicated the necessity of Mitacs funds, NZA will arrange for completion of a Mitacs application by the proponent during the contracting phase.

45. For the Mitacs funding, do we need to have a student by the application deadline, or can we find a student later?

In the proposal it is not required that a student be named, but it needs to provide a commitment to having the student in place at the time of contracting. The lack of a student identified will be considered a project risk that will need to be defined, and mitigation addressed in the proposal.

46. Is taking advantage of the MITACS program explicitly factored into the evaluation criteria? i.e., will this be considered as leverage?

Yes, using the Mitacs opportunity is considered leverage and is explicitly factored into the evaluation criteria, but in a comparatively minor way. Please see the Evaluation Criteria section in the Applicant Guide to review the weighting criteria.

47. Is Mitacs billed separately or within the project budget?

In the contracting period we will distinguish the funds that you would like to be diverted to Mitacs. NZA will send funds directly to Mitacs, but these funds are to be factored into your 50k (stream 1) or 130k (stream 2) project budget.

48. Are there total percentages limiting how many funds are allocated to salaries/wages, capital equipment, and travel expenses?

No, there is no cap on salary/wages. Please review section 7.3 of the applicant guide for more details.

49. Is overhead supposed to be around 15%?

Overhead can be a maximum of 15%.

50. If I request the maximum allowable funding for expenses, is there a possibility of receiving a reduced amount, or will the full requested amount be granted?

The full amount of the award will be granted to awardees.

51. Is there a policy indicating the percentage of funding that must be spent within Nova Scotia? One of our researchers is from another province and collaborating with a lead investigator in Nova Scotia.

There is no financial limitation on what needs to be spent in Nova Scotia. However, the lead applicant should be based or registered in Nova Scotia and the application should make a connection on how the research is working to close a knowledge gap needed in Nova Scotia and the potential economic development should the project advance.

52. How will funds be released?

Funds will be released on a milestone basis over the course of the project (typically 3-4 payments depending on project stream and duration). An initial payment will be made following the contract signing (Milestone 1). Subsequent payments would be made at key milestones and tied to the provision of milestone deliverables to NZA. There is no “claims process” as such, just simple lump sum invoices that are typically tied to project milestones. For context, contracts signed by awarded recipients will include milestone payments spread out over the project duration, at the discretion of the recipient. The indicated sum for each milestone will be paid after the deliverable specific to that milestone has been provided to NZA. The budget form does not require separation into project milestones, this will be done at the contracting phase. Payments do not need to be equally distributed either, it can be broken down based on foreseeable expenses incurred per time.

53. What level of detail is required for the budget? For example, do you want expenses itemized and supported by quotes?

The budget form may be filled to the level of details requested in the form using the budget categories. Quotes do not need to be submitted.

Priority Research Themes (PRT)

54. Does the project have to be strictly inside in one of the 7 Priority Research Themes?

The set Priority Research Themes are not intended to be restrictive to these issues alone. Projects proposed by the Applicant will be considered as long as they broadly fall within a Priority Research Theme in the Applicant guide. For projects that touch on more than one Theme, Applicants are asked to pick the one Theme that is most representative of their project. Feel free to suggest new themes by contacting us at info@netzeroatlantic.ca and we will consider adding it to future intakes.

55. Can you expand what you are looking for in the Theme: “Electricity System Challenges Post 2030”?

The Theme is broadly written to be as inclusive as possible. Many project types may be eligible; we at Net Zero Atlantic are hoping the proponents will propose projects that we may not have considered, provided they can be shown to relate to one of the Priority Research Themes including “Electricity System Challenges post 2030”, and meet Program objectives.

56. Will the Priority Research Themes change in future intakes?

The Themes may be updated to add on or expand the listed Themes in the future, depending on submissions received and funder priorities. Suggestions for new themes can be submitted to info@netzeroatlantic.ca.

57. What is the definition of "nature-based solutions" being used by NZA? Are these existing solutions (tree planting, etc.) or are novel solutions (alkalinity enhancement, rock weathering etc.) eligible as well?

Pls see the Appendix 1 – Priority Research Themes, in the Applicant guide for more information on this Priority research theme. NZA prefers not to limit project ideas within a given theme. Proposed projects may have a variety of scope falling within stream 1 or 2 that relates to this theme, which identifies and address knowledge gaps in the reduction of hard-to-abate GHGs in Nova Scotia and demonstrate economic benefits to the province.

58. Do projects applicants have to identify a single research theme? Or can projects cover multiple themes?

Projects can align with multiple streams but please note that individual projects will only be granted funding up to the amounts listed in the Applicant Guide. That is, a Stream 1 project touching on two Themes would only be eligible for \$50K, not 2X \$50K. For projects that touch on more than one Theme, applicants are advised to show how their project/solution clearly addresses knowledge

gaps in the theme that is most related to their projects while also meeting the program objectives, to strengthen their application.

Evaluation/Feedback

59. How will successful proposals be selected? Will NZA Program administrators provide debriefs to unsuccessful applicants?

Evaluation criteria are listed in the Applicant Guide. Proposals will be assessed by the Net Zero ECT Program's Proposal Review Committee, a Research Management Committee, and Subject Matter Experts of respective themes. The debrief process for unsuccessful applicants will be dependant on the number of applications received.

60. Could you share who will be involved in the evaluation of the proposals?

Proposals will be evaluated by staff at Net Zero Atlantic, the Province of Nova Scotia (DECC and NRR) and external subject matter experts (SMEs) recruited for the evaluation committee.

61. How long is the application review?

The anticipated award date will be in late December.

62. How technical should the proposal be written?

The proposals will be reviewed by committee members comprised of subject matter experts as well as non-technical persons. We suggest striking a balance between clear understanding of what the project is about and the work plan to meet the program objectives, as well as demonstrating technical feasibility of the project.