

FONDS
ÉCOLEADER

SOUTIEN
AUX ENTREPRISES
EN ESSOR
ÉCORESPONSABLE

FONDS ÉCOLEADER
AGENT NETWORK

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

SEPTEMBER 2018

Partners:

Québec 



FONDS D'ACTION
QUÉBÉCOIS POUR LE
DÉVELOPPEMENT DURABLE



centre
québécois de
développement
durable

écotech
Québec

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i. Introduction

This document aims to give Quebec business support organizations the opportunity to submit proposals to be part of the new Fonds Écoleader Agent Network. Expression of interest and submission forms are available for interested organizations.

1. FONDS ÉCOLEADER

Fonds Écoleader was launched under the MEI (Ministère de l'Économie et de l'Innovation) 2018–2023 Action Plan on Clean Growth and Technologies. It is an integrated and comprehensive strategy that will encourage Quebec companies to adopt green business practices and clean technologies.

Fonds Écoleader is committed to promoting green business practices and clean technologies. Its mandate is to help make Quebec businesses more competitive, and its objectives are to:

- › Reduce natural resources consumption;
- › Reduce energy consumption;
- › Reduce pollution emissions, including GHGs;
- › Increase the recyclability of products;
- › Extend products lifespan;
- › Foster environmentally responsible procurement;
- › Encourage ecodesign;
- › Support measures that improve companies' environmental performance and generate social and economic co-benefits.

1.1. OBJECTIVES OF FONDS ÉCOLEADER

- › Recruit, guide, train, support, and fund companies striving to improve their environmental performance.
- › Reach 50,000 companies—about 20% of companies in Quebec—so they adopt green business practices and clean technologies by March 2023.
- › Ensure that 35% of funded projects prepare companies to adopt and purchase clean technologies



1.2. FONDS ÉCOLEADER AGENT NETWORK

The Network will consist of individuals (agents) at business support organizations. Their role will be to encourage businesses to develop and implement projects that foster green business practices and clean technologies¹. The Network will operate in each of Quebec's 17 administrative regions. Agents will direct companies to the resources, expertise, and funding programs available in their region.

Member organizations will have the opportunity to:

- › Gain expertise, increase their visibility, improve their work practices and tools, expand their networks, and take part in an unprecedented initiative to green businesses across Quebec
- › Collaborate extensively with other local business support organizations by working closely with MEI's regional offices, experts in local fields of specialty, industrial clusters, municipal economic development officials, sustainable development organizations, Plan Nord commercialization officers, regional innovation clusters, the federal government, and others.

¹ The selected organizations will be eligible to submit funding applications for project. A process will be put in place to avoid conflict of interests.

1.3. FONDS ÉCOLEADER PARTNERS

The agent network can count on the support and collaboration of four partners:

1.3.1. Ministère de l'Économie et de l'Innovation (MEI)

As the project initiator, MEI funds and mandates Fonds Écoleader partners, set up an advisory committee composed of stakeholders, establish ties between relevant ministries and government agencies, and approve the organizations that host the agents.



1.3.2. Fonds d'action québécois pour le développement durable (FAQDD)

FAQDD coordinates Fonds Écoleader and manages agreements with the host organizations. Its responsibilities will include heading up and coordinating the selection process for organizations, approving them, monitoring their activities, holding them accountable, and establishing annual priorities and directions for the network.



1.3.3. Centre québécois de développement durable (CQDD)

CQDD will act as the Network's facilitator. It will be responsible for coordinating activities, maintaining a collaborative environment, and supporting the Network's member organizations and agents in fulfilling their mandates.



More specifically, it will train, advise, and equip the Network with available resources (companies, NPOs, guides, tools, funding programs) to help Quebec businesses adopt green practices and clean technologies.

1.3.4. Écotech Québec

Écotech Québec will act as an advisor on clean technologies and support and train the Agent Network in carrying out its activities and fostering clean technologies. It will identify resources, expertise, tools, and funding programs that will help companies prepare to adopt and purchase clean technologies.



It will also direct Fonds Écoleader project applicants to funding programs, experts, and clean technology resources that may benefit their projects.

FAQDD is responsible for developing and carrying out the selection process for host organizations in partnership with MEI and Écotech Québec. Because Centre québécois de développement durable provides support to businesses, it will be excluded from development and implementation of the selection process in order to ensure the process remains fair and at arm's length.

2. MANDATE OF THE FONDS ÉCOLEADER AGENT NETWORK

2.1 AGENTS MANDATE

Agents will be employed full time to carry out the following tasks² in their administrative region:

Awareness and promotional activities:

- › Identify and enlist a network of regional partners (associations, business leaders, etc.).
- › Join existing local and/or regional business and sustainable development networks.
- › Conduct or organize workshops, presentations, lunch-and-learn sessions, training sessions, and/or webinars and circulate newsletters and media articles.
- › Present the services available from Fonds Écoleader (funding, tools, coaching, etc.), compelling case studies, and other resources that businesses and support organizations may find useful.
- › Encourage business groups to develop projects that provide an incentive for their members to adopt green practices and clean technologies.
- › Share information about local and regional funding opportunities and technical aid of Fonds Écoleader and other government programs.
- › Vaunt Fonds Écoleader success stories.

Preparation to action:

- › Offer a quick needs assessment that directs businesses and business associations to helpful resources.
- › Facilitate the process for companies that wish to obtain support or submit funding applications for specific projects.

Additional administrative duties:

- › Ensure proper coordination with MEI's regional offices to ensure synergy and consistency between MEI and Fonds Écoleader.
- › Ensure adequate ties are established with regional socioeconomic stakeholders working to improve environmental sustainability among businesses.
- › Attend training sessions organized by the Network's facilitator.
- › Contribute to strategic development of the Network by helping design tools, sharing informing on local needs, and meeting Fonds Écoleader's objectives.

Activities supported under another component of Fonds Écoleader:

- › Carry out projects (e.g., creating regional tables, organizing large-scale events, implementing action plans, etc.).
- › Provide specialized consulting support directly to companies as part of projects, diagnoses, actions implementation, etc.
- › Develop specialized support tools for companies.

Fonds Écoleader has earmarked \$18.5 million to help companies and business associations take action to adopt green business practices and clean technologies. Support may be provided for concrete measures such as diagnosis, skills development, support measures, implementation of green practices, and preparatory work for the adoption of clean technologies. *This component is not covered in this document and will be the subject of a future announcement.*

² A list of tasks will be set out in an agreement with FAQDD at the beginning of each fiscal year.

Agent neutrality

Agents are expected to remain neutral and point companies to all relevant support resources, programs, and organizations without attempting to influence their choice of service providers. Obligations and control measures will be introduced to ensure compliance with neutrality rules.

2.2 MANDATE OF NETWORK MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

Network member organizations will be responsible for, but not limited to, the following actions:

- > Hire or appoint an agent³.
- > Ensure agent position is permanently covered and replace the one who leaves, if need be.
- > Act as agent's employer (onboarding, administrative supervision, etc.)
- > Ensure agent carry out their mandate according to the guidelines provided by FAQDD, using CQDD tools.
- > Provide agent with suitable workplace and appropriate work tools.
- > Support and supervise agent in the performance of their duties.
- > Ensure agent have the means to travel to meet with businesses and partners in its administrative region.
- > Contribute to the Network's mandate by collaborating with its partners.
- > Coordinate with MEI's regional offices by sharing references and information.
- > Submit an annual activity plan to FAQDD for approval.
- > Submit an annual activity report to FAQDD.
- > Report back to FAQDD.
- > Collaborate with CQDD.

2.3 DURATION OF MANDATE

The mandate, including eligible expenses, begins with the signature of an agreement between FAQDD and the organization and ends in March 2023. The agreement is renewable annually following approval of the annual activity report by FAQDD.

2.4 FUNDING

A maximum of \$90,000 in annual funding is available to carry out the mandate. This funding must cover salary, benefits, operating expenses (excluding co-development activities), and agent supervision.⁴ The proposal form contains a budget section for organizations to list the expenses they expect to incur with the funding they receive. The list will be included in the agreement with the organization and will be reviewed annually.

2.5 REGIONAL PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES

A maximum of \$15,000 per year is available for additional regional promotional activities. Project proposals for the first year must be included on the form, along with corresponding expenses. Projects may target strategic clients or regional priorities. Involvement by local partners is considered an asset.

³ If an organization wishes to divide the tasks between two agents, it must demonstrate clearly why doing so is justified (i.e., to cover a large region).

⁴ FAQDD will finance agents' co-development activities in order to encourage their attendance at Fonds Écoleaders training and activities (travel, accommodation, training fees, etc.).

3. HOW TO SUBMIT A PROPOSAL

Fonds Écoleader is seeking regional organizations working to facilitate economic development and environmental performance in the business community.

3.1 ELIGIBLE ORGANIZATIONS

Interested organizations must be:

Authorized to offer services throughout the administrative region (this criterion can be met through collaboration or partnerships, which should be submitted first to FAQDD for approval).

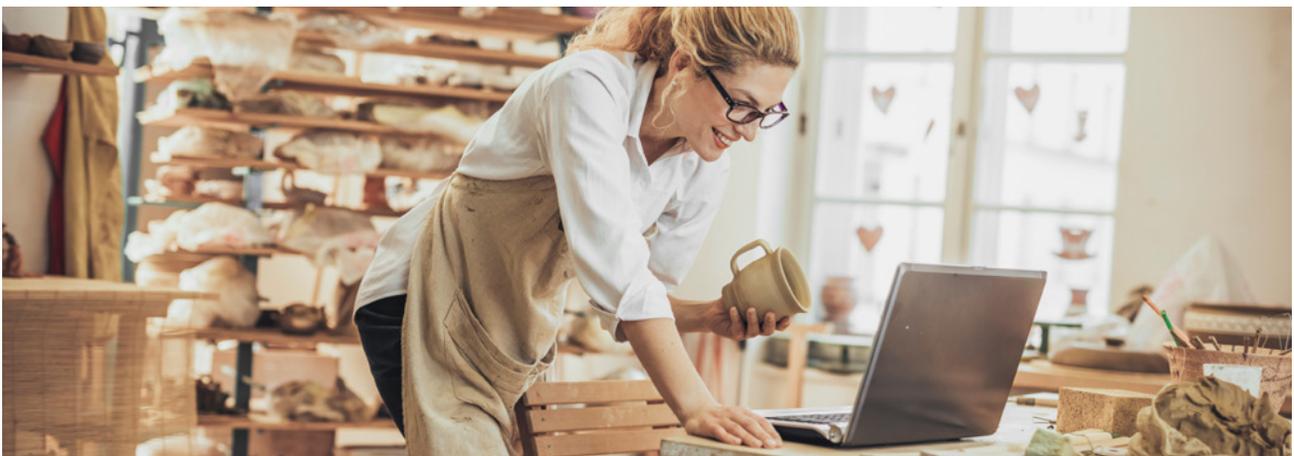
- > A non-profit organization or a cooperative that is legally incorporated and governed by Quebec or Canadian law or a local authority (e.g., a municipality, city, or regional county municipality [RCM] incorporated under the *Cities and Towns Act*), provided it is authorized to carry out the Network's mandate throughout the administrative region.
- > Headquartered in Québec.
- > Financially viable.
- > Compliant with the laws and regulations that govern it and possessing the powers necessary to carry out its activities.

Any organization wishing to apply for a region other than the one in which its head office is located must demonstrate its presence in that region's business community. Priority will be given to proposals from local organizations. Organizations wishing to provide services in two different regions must complete two separate applications.

3.2 INELIGIBLE ORGANIZATIONS

The following organizations are not eligible:

- > Sole proprietorships.
- > Corporations (joint stock, general partnership, limited partnership, joint venture).
- > Condominium corporations.
- > Trusts that operate commercial businesses.
- > Government corporations and corporations controlled directly or indirectly by a government (provincial or federal) or a company that is majority owned by a government corporation.
- > Community Futures Development Corporations (CFDC).
- > Companies listed on the register of enterprises ineligible for public contracts (RENA)
- > Any applicant that, for the two years preceding the funding application, failed to comply with its obligations after receiving due notification from MEI in connection with previously awarded funding.
- > Any applicant that, for the two years preceding the funding application, failed to comply with its legal obligations to the Government of Quebec.



3.3 SELECTION CRITERIA

After eligibility has been determined, proposals under this call for proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- > Business support expertise.
- > Experience or demonstrated interest in green business practices or clean technology.
- > Coverage of the entire administrative region (alone or in partnership⁵).
- > Regional consultation capability (letters of support must be included in the proposal).
- > Team expertise:
 - Good knowledge of the regional business landscape.
 - Good knowledge of the business environment at SMEs.
 - Expertise in green economy, environmental performance, or clean technology.

Priority will be given to existing organizations that are currently authorized to provide services covering their entire administrative region.



3.4 MANDATORY ASSISTANCE FOR SUBMISSIONS

Interested organizations are invited to contact FAQDD at 418-692-5888 or infos@fondsecoleader.ca for any questions regarding this call for proposals. FAQDD will assist organizations by confirming their eligibility and providing guidance on items that can contribute to a successful proposal.

Organizations that wish to submit proposals must indicate their interest to FAQDD by phone or email by November 23, 2018. The expression of interest form, which contains basic information, must be sent to infos@fondsecoleader.ca.

3.5 SUBMITTING A PROPOSAL

- > November 23, 2018:
Submission deadline for expression of interest forms
- > December 7th, 2018:
Submission deadline for proposals

All documents must be sent to FAQDD via infos@fondsecoleader.ca.

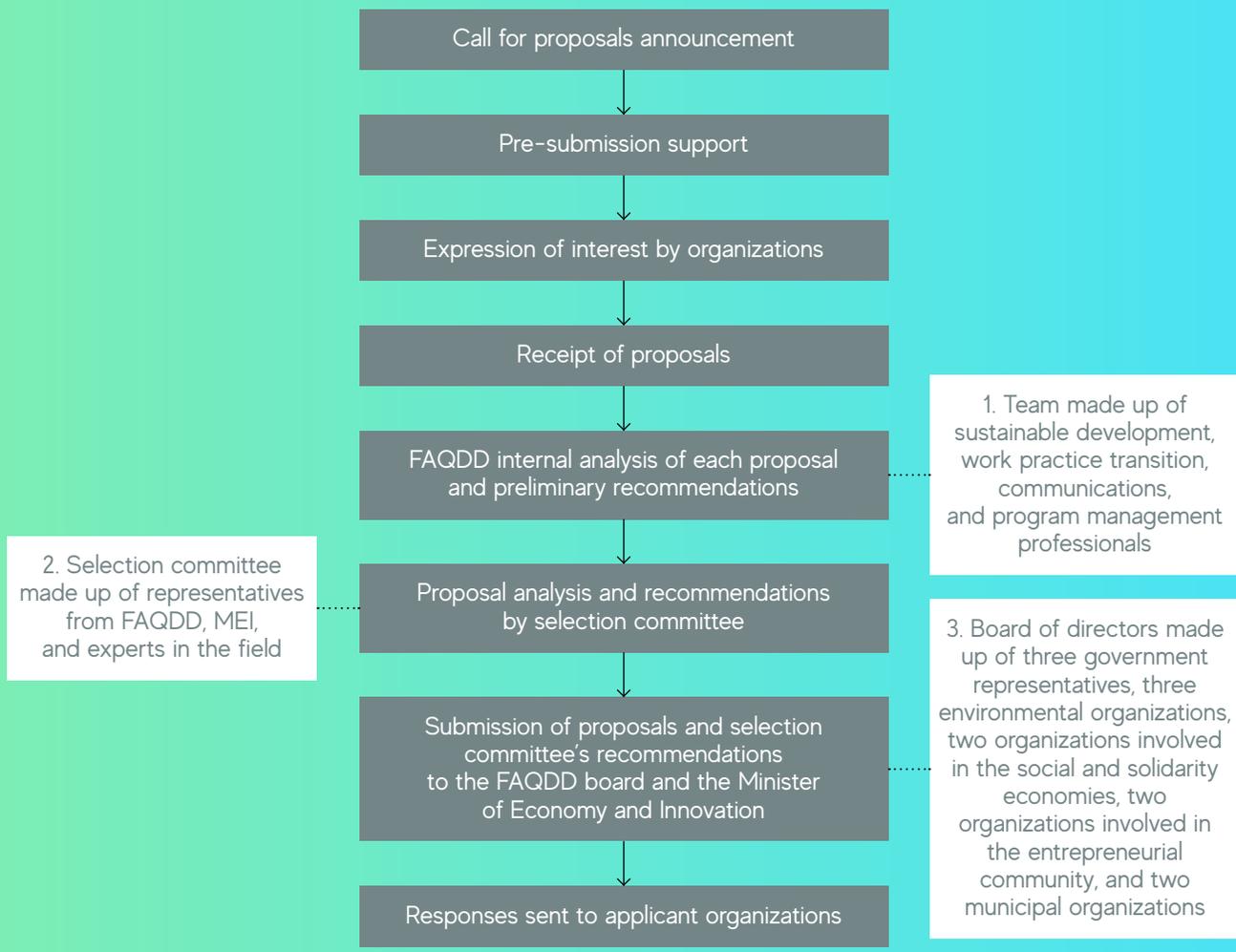
3.6 REQUIRED DOCUMENTS

Submit the following documents to make sure your proposal is eligible:

- > **November 23, 2018:**
 - Expression of interest form
- > **December 7th, 2018:**
 - Complete proposal form.
 - Letters of support for the organization.
 - Letters patent of the organization.
 - The organization's most recent audited financial statements.
 - For organizations in the process of formation, please submit letters of commitment from funding partners.
 - Any other relevant documents.

⁵ Partnerships must be limited to a maximum of two organizations.

APPENDIX I: PROPOSAL SELECTION PROCESS



1. Evaluation team

The FAQDD evaluation team brings expertise in sustainable development for businesses and work practices transformation and its knowledge of local stakeholders to the selection process. Its role is to assess the degree to which proposals align with the specific objectives of Fonds Écoleader. It also liaises between applicant organizations, the selection committee, and the FAQDD board of directors.

2. Selection committee

The selection committee is made up of the team in charge of analyzing the proposals, together with representatives from FAQDD and MEI (including MEI's regional offices). The committee makes recommendations to the FAQDD board and the Minister of the Economy and Innovation.

3. The FAQDD board of directors and the Minister of the Economy, Science and Innovation (MEI)

The FAQDD board and the Minister approve the selected proposals for funding from Fonds Écoleader after receiving the selection committee's recommendations.