



Natural Resources Canada

**GeoConnections Program Announcement of Opportunities
Fiscal Years 2025-2027 – Project Guidelines**

Announcement Code: GNS25-27IFP



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Table of Contents

GEOCONNECTIONS CONTRIBUTIONS FUNDING SCOPE	3
WHAT IS THE PROCESS?	4
WHAT ARE THE DEADLINES?	4
DETAILED PROCESS FOR THE FULL PROJECT PROPOSAL	5
FINANCIAL INFORMATION	5
ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND CONTRIBUTIONS	7
INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY	8
OFFICIAL LANGUAGES REQUIREMENT	8
CONFLICT OF INTEREST	8
REPORTING AND MONITORING	8
RIGHTS OF GEOCONNECTIONS	10
CONTACT INFORMATION	10
APPENDIX 1: PROJECT PROPOSAL TEMPLATE	11
APPENDIX 2: PROJECT PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA	24

GEOCONNECTIONS CONTRIBUTIONS FUNDING SCOPE

The GeoConnections Program

GeoConnections is an ongoing Program with the mandate and responsibility to lead the modernization of the Canadian Geospatial Data Infrastructure (CGDI). The CGDI is the collection of geospatial data, standards, policies, applications, and governance that facilitate its access, use, integration, and preservation.

The GeoConnections Program helps Canada foster data, digital and systems interoperability through governance, collaboration and funding. The program enables discovery, access, sharing, and operational use of location data and other information to deliver on Canada's key priorities, notably Indigenous reconciliation, inclusivity, innovation, disaster risk management and climate change resilience. Specifically, the Program promotes standards development and implementation, and leverages leading edge technologies such as AI and machine learning to foster an enabling, inclusive and agile environment for governments, Indigenous nations, academia, the private sector and non-profit organizations

GeoConnections co-funds the development of innovative solutions and further development of the CGDI with eligible Proponents through regular invitations for Contribution Projects.

Through this Announcement of Opportunities (AO), the GeoConnections Program is soliciting interest for Contribution Projects that will align with the Program's purpose, theme, priority and preference.

GeoConnections Proposal Theme

The development and implementation of innovative and standards-based solutions* that contribute to the modernization of the Canadian Geospatial Data Infrastructure (e.g., utilizing emerging technologies such as GeoAI, digital twins, etc.**). This can include projects that will enable the future use or integration of emerging technologies in geospatial solutions, including: pilot projects to test feasibility, requirements gathering, promising methodologies, development of digital infrastructure, workflows and processes that are required to operationalize these innovative and standards-based solutions.

*GeoConnections recommends standards be publicly available and from established international Standards Development Organizations (SDOs) such as the International Organization for Standardization, Open Geospatial Consortium, etc. Proponents proposing new standards development are encouraged to seek endorsement by these SDOs.

**Emerging technologies include but are not limited to GeoAI, Digital Twins, Internet of Things, cloud computing, Big Data, machine learning, etc.

Priority and Preference

In addition to selecting projects that will pursue the above theme, preference will be given to proposals:

- aiming to address Indigenous geospatial issues or that have Indigenous collaborators;
- that are scalable across the CGDI.

Proposals will be required to demonstrate that their methods and procedures correspond with existing protocols regarding aspects of privacy, diversity, equality and inclusion in the use of AI or other emerging technologies. Proponents should review and adhere to the principles of Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada's [Voluntary Code of Conduct on the Responsible Development and Management of Advanced Generative AI Systems](#).

WHO CAN SUBMIT A PROJECT PROPOSAL?

Proponents must be from one of the following types of legal entities:

- Academic institutions and Research associations.
- Canadian profit and non-profit organizations;
- Corporations;
- Industry and their associations;
- Provincial, Territorial, Regional, Municipal and Rural government departments, agencies* and some Crown Corporations as set out in Schedule III, Part 2 of the Financial Administration Act, ***This includes Indigenous national, regional, local or remote organizations.**

HOW MUCH CAN BE APPLIED FOR?

GeoConnections is aiming to fund four projects over two fiscal years (2025-2027) and provide a total of **\$250,000** per Project. Each Project will receive **\$125,000** per fiscal year. Proponents will not be funded for more than one Project.

GeoConnections will only fund cost-shared Projects. GeoConnections will fund a maximum of ninety percent (90%) of Total Project Costs. The Proponent and its Collaborators must contribute the remaining ten percent (10%) of Total Project Costs. Total federal government assistance, including the amount requested from GeoConnections, cannot exceed 90 percent of Eligible Expenditures.

Accessing GeoConnections funding under this AO is a competitive process. Refer to Appendix 2 "Proposal Evaluation Criteria" of the Announcement of Opportunity for the common criteria applied to all projects.

****Please note that proposals must pass each of the mandatory criteria in order to be eligible for funding****

WHAT IS THE PROCESS?

To apply, follow the steps below:

1. Review of the requirements and criteria for funding contained in this GeoConnections Contribution Agreement Project Guidelines for Fiscal Years 2025-2027 by Proponent;
2. Preparation and submission of Project Proposal by Proponent;
3. Project proposal evaluation and Project selection by GeoConnections; and
4. **By invitation only** - development of a formal Contribution Agreement for selected Projects. At the end of the process, the resulting agreements will describe the terms of the funding from GeoConnections and set out mutual expectations such as Project duration, outputs, key performance indicators, tasks, milestone dates, human resources requirements (organization, team member names, roles/titles, per diem and days/hours of effort/person), a communications plan, and financial details.

WHAT ARE THE DEADLINES?

STEPS	DATES
Launch of Call for proposals	November 5, 2024
Deadline to submit Project Proposals*	January 14, 2025, 23:59 PST
Project start date	On or after April 1, 2025
Project and Eligible expenditures end date	On or before March 31, 2027

* Based on the number of Projects submitted, GeoConnections reserves the right to modify the closing date for submissions.

NATURAL RESOURCES CANADA SERVICE STANDARDS

SERVICE STANDARDS	GEOCONNECTIONS PROGRAM
Acknowledging receipt of Project Proposal	We will acknowledge receipt of a Project Proposal within five business days of the date received by the Program, 95 percent of the time.
Providing funding decision	We will issue an official written notification of the funding decision within one hundred business days, 90 percent of the time. Timing is highly dependent on a Proponent's responsiveness to requests from the Program for information during the due diligence and risk assessment review.
Issuing payment	We will issue payments within thirty business days of the successful fulfillment of requirements as outlined in the Contribution Agreement. We target to meet this standard, 90 percent of the time.

DETAILED PROCESS FOR THE FULL PROJECT PROPOSAL

1. Proponents will submit a full Project Proposal for evaluation consideration. Project Proposals:
 - a. Will be no more than thirty (Letter size) pages long, excluding financial statements and Project team resumes.
 - b. Will be written by the Proponent using the Project Proposal Template found in Appendix 1.
 - c. May be submitted in either English or French.
 - d. Completed Project Proposal must be submitted to GeoConnections by email: geoconnectionsca-acgeoconnexions@nrca-nrcan.gc.ca
2. The full Project Proposal will be accompanied by a cover letter or email with your organization's letterhead/signature block, dated and signed/sent by an appropriate authority.
3. Please note, based on the number of proposals received, GeoConnections reserves the right to modify the closing date for submission.
4. The Project Proposals will be reviewed against the evaluation criteria found in Appendix 2.
5. For questions regarding the Project Proposal submission process, please contact GeoConnections via the email provided above.

FINANCIAL INFORMATION

Funding

GeoConnections will only fund cost-shared Projects. In cost-shared Projects, the Proponent and its Collaborators agree to contribute financially to the Project either in cash or in-kind contributions or both. The cash amount requested from GeoConnections cannot exceed 90 percent of Total Project Costs.

The maximum funding available from GeoConnections for four Projects is \$1,000,000 CAD for fiscal years 2025-2026 and 2026-2027, with **\$250,000 CAD** per Project. Funding is only available for Projects starting on or after April 1, 2025, and completed on or before March 31, 2027.

The Proponent must provide a list of all federal organizations participating in the proposed Project and shall ensure that the total federal government assistance, including the amount requested from GeoConnections, does not exceed 90 percent of Eligible Expenditures. Funding received from another GeoConnections-funded Project cannot form part of the Total Project Costs or leveraged funds.

If any funding for a Project is dependent upon another funding program, GeoConnections requires written confirmation from that Collaborator regarding that funding. The confirmation must include how much funding is being provided, and whether the funding has been secured or not.

A payment schedule will be established and outlined in the final Contribution Agreement, and will be based on agreed-upon work accomplished, milestones achieved, tasks completed, Eligible Expenditures Incurred, etc.

Eligible and Ineligible Expenditures

The GeoConnections Program will reimburse funds for Eligible Expenditures as described below. Eligible Expenditures for an approved Project under the Program must be directly related to, and necessary to carry out the Project.

Eligible Expenditures include:

- Labour – salaries, professional fees and temporary personnel costs paid to employees on Proponent's payroll, for actual time spent on the Project; plus, any employee benefits up to a maximum of twenty percent (20%) of Project labour costs;
- Subcontracts for services up to forty percent (40%) of total Eligible Expenditures (i.e., professional, scientific, technical);
- Administration costs associated with the Project including translation, printing and binding, promotion of workshops and publication of Project report;
- Communications, audio-visual equipment and facilities rentals;

- Travel to conduct the Project;
- GST, PST or HST related to other Eligible Expenditures, net of any tax rebate to which the Proponent is entitled.
- Data purchases and capture up to twenty five percent (25%) of total Eligible Expenditures.

Note: In respect of auditing Eligible Expenditures related to professional, scientific and contracting services, Canada's auditors may, acting reasonably, request that the Proponent's books, accounts and records be supplemented by information from the books, accounts and records of the subcontractors engaged by the Proponent having contracts in excess of twenty percent (20%) of the Contribution for the purposes of the Project.

Ineligible Expenditures include:

- The purchase of land or payment of property taxes;
- Hospitality (GeoConnections' funds cannot be used to reimburse Proponents for hospitality expenses.)
- Capital costs (including computers);
- Costs associated with the development of the Proposal.

Development of a Contribution Agreement

GeoConnections will invite the Proponents of successful Proposals to discuss Contribution Agreements. At that time, a staff member from GeoConnections will be assigned as the Project Authority. Please note, an invitation to discuss an Agreement is not a guarantee of funding.

The resulting Agreements will describe the terms and conditions of the GeoConnections Program and set out expectations such as Proponent's Project duration, their outputs, their milestones and tasks, dates, Proponent's human resources (organization, team member names, roles/titles, per diem and days of effort/person); their communications plan, and their financial details.

The following Project management tasks will be required from selected Proponents as part of the Contribution Agreement development process.

TASK NAME (TARGET DATE)	TASK DESCRIPTION
Earliest Project Start Date April 1, 2025	Proponents may only commence Projects on or after April 1, 2025, pending contribution agreement final signatures.
Interim Narrative Report and Payment Request September 30 (each fiscal year)	Submit claim for payment; interim financial report; approved time sheets, interim narrative report, copies of Subcontracting invoices; explanatory note listing all the Eligible Expenditures Incurred up to September 30.
Eligible Expenditures End Date March 31, 2027	The Eligible Expenditures Period begins when the agreement has been signed and ends on March 31, 2027. Ensure that all Eligible Expenditures are documented and proper documentation (e.g., invoices, receipts, financial statements etc.) are provided in the final report.
Signed certification of Eligible Expenditures Incurred and Paid April 3, 2027	Authorized signature certifying that the claims for payment of Eligible Expenditures of the Project have been Incurred and Paid by the Proponent.
Final Narrative Report April 30, 2027	A final narrative report to describe how the activities have contributed to the achievement of the objectives, the benefits, and the key performance indicators of the Project as described in the Statement of Work, including the results of the Project in comparison to the original outputs and work plan.

TASK NAME (TARGET DATE)	TASK DESCRIPTION
Final Financial Report April 30, 2027	A financial report that demonstrates how the Contribution funding was used including the receipts for services being funded by Canada.

Basis of Payment

A payment schedule will be established within the Contribution Agreement. The basis on which Contribution final payments and any interim payments are to be made will be based on partial or final achievement of pre-determined performance expectations or milestones, a description of the performance expectations or tasks to be provided, and reimbursement of Eligible Expenditures. Detailed financial statements and invoices are to be submitted as part of the request for payment. At minimum one interim Narrative Project Progress Report and payment request should be submitted by September 30 in each fiscal year, additional are possible. During the Contribution Agreement development process, if a selected Proponent would prefer planning for additional claim requests during the life of the project (e.g., to ensure ongoing cash flow for new hires), GeoConnections may accommodate such additional payments in the schedule.

Non-Repayable Contributions

GeoConnections will be using Non-Repayable Contributions. Contributions will be made towards Projects that contribute to the purpose and objectives of the Program and do not generate profits.

ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND CONTRIBUTIONS

GeoConnections promotes collaboration, particularly those that support Project delivery. This section details the roles and responsibilities of all potential contributors on Projects.

GeoConnections

GeoConnections supports Projects by providing Contribution funding. It is responsible for inviting Proponents to submit Proposals and providing clarifications. It is also responsible for evaluating Proposals, developing Agreements, monitoring progress, evaluating outputs, recommending payments and initiating financial audits.

Proponent

The Proponent assembles the Proposal, leads and coordinates all Project activities, and acts as a single point of contact with GeoConnections on Project issues. The Project Proponent has both a mandate and the resources to coordinate the Project and maintain Project results beyond the Project's completion. Proponents are responsible for coordinating the work of all team members including Project Collaborators and Subcontractors. Proponents are responsible for any sub-contracted activities required for Projects.

Collaborators

The Proponent may include one or more collaborating organizations that are not affiliated with the Proponent, in the Project. To be eligible, Collaborators must not be related to, nor exercise control over, the Proponent, including with respect to shared management or ownership.

Collaborators are persons or organizations that agree to contribute financially by providing cash contributions, in-kind contributions, or both to the Proponent to be used for the Project. An in-kind contribution is a contribution of services or time to which a dollar amount can be attributed, that would otherwise be purchased and paid for by the Proponent to achieve the Project results. Collaborator's contributions should not be invoiced to the Proponent, and, therefore; cannot be submitted to GeoConnections as Eligible Expenditures Incurred by the Proponent. A Collaborator's cash or in-kind contributions must be accounted for towards the Proponent/Collaborator's portion of the Total Project Costs. Together, **the Proponent's and Collaborator's cash and/or in-kind contributions must total at least ten percent (10%) of the Total Project Costs.**

When Collaborator's contribution and commitment to the Project as leverage to meet the ten percent (10%) mandatory criteria, it must be specified in a Letter of Collaboration, written on the organization's letterhead and signed by a senior officer (i.e., the person who has authority and responsibility for the allocation and commitment of the resources for this Proposal), and should be included with the Proposal submission. Collaborators may be from any type of legal entity described earlier. Collaborators should demonstrate an on-going vested interest in the Project and show their support from the senior level of the organization.

Note: Natural Resources Canada and staff cannot provide in-kind contributions, or act as Collaborators in a Project proposed under this Announcement of Opportunities.

Sub-contractors

Sub-contractors are persons or organizations who enter into a contract with the Proponent to provide services or time related to the Project, and who will invoice the Proponent for those services.

If applicable, the Proponent must identify all Subcontractors in their Proposal and must discuss these with GeoConnections before a Contribution Agreement is signed. The Proponent must also clarify with GeoConnections which expenditures, if any, would be considered eligible or non-eligible for reimbursement. GeoConnections recommends, as part of due diligence, that Proponents sign a formal contract with each of their Sub-contractors for any GeoConnections Project.

A sub-contractor may also be a collaborator provided that their duties and responsibilities for each role are clearly delineated in the proposal.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

All Intellectual Property that arises in the course of the Project shall vest in the Proponent or be licensed to the Proponent in the event that a Proponent's Sub-contractor retains title to such Intellectual Property. The Proponent shall supply to the Project Authority the reports and documents described in the Proposal and the Proponent will grant to Canada a non-exclusive, irrevocable, world-wide, free and royalty-free license in perpetuity to use, modify, and, subject to the Access to Information Act, make publicly available such reports and documents for non-commercial governmental purposes.

OFFICIAL LANGUAGES REQUIREMENT

All public information documents related to the Project prepared or paid for in whole or in part by Canada must be made available in both official languages, when Natural Resources Canada judges that this is required under the Official Languages Act. Proponents, if they are to provide/deliver documents or outreach to the public as part of their Project outputs, will be responsible for providing them fully in both languages and; therefore, will incur all costs for translation and personnel. When applicable, these costs must be included in the Proposal budget.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

No public servant or public office holder, either currently or formerly employed by a federal entity, and to whom the *Conflict of Interest Act*, the Conflict of Interest and Post-Employment Code for Public Office Holders or the Values and Ethics Code for the Public Sector applies, can derive any direct or indirect benefit from a Project funded via a Contribution Agreement unless the provision or receipt of such benefits is in compliance with such legislation and codes; and that no member of the Senate or the House of Commons shall be admitted to any share or part of the Project, or to any benefit arising from it, that is not otherwise available to the general public.

Additionally, any individual working for the Proponent who formerly provided consultancy services to Natural Resources Canada that are related to the Contribution Agreement or developing the Project, the Proponent would be considered to be in a real, perceived, or potential conflict of interest situation.

REPORTING AND MONITORING

Proponent Project Manager

The main contact and Project Manager designated by the Proponent.

GeoConnections Project Authority

A GeoConnections Project Authority will be assigned to monitor each Project. This Project Authority will be responsible for recommending the approval of milestone payments. Milestone reports and corresponding tasks or outputs will be submitted to the Project Authority for evaluation.

Orientation Meeting

The Proponent's Project Manager will schedule and conduct an initial orientation meeting involving the GeoConnections Project Authority.

Progress-Review Meetings

Progress-review meetings must be scheduled by the Proponent Project Manager and the Project Authority to demonstrate Project progress and to discuss any relevant Project issues. These meetings may or may not be tied to milestone/request for payment dates.

Project Progress Reports

The Proponent's designated Project Manager shall provide Project Progress Reports to the GeoConnections Project Authority. Reporting templates will be provided by GeoConnections. These reports will be required before any payments are made and shall contain at minimum, but not be limited to:

- Title page;
- Summary of the work accomplished in comparison to the work plan, attachments, including URLs of Project outputs and operational results;
- Explanation of any problems encountered and their solutions;
- Changes to the work plan for the next tasks; and
- Detailed financial statement report for the Project to date.

Final Report

At the end of the Project, the Proponent's Project manager must provide a detailed final report. The final report is required before the final payment can be made. A final reporting template will be provided by GeoConnections. This report should include the following:

- A final Project budget as per the template (including copies of invoices, vouchers, etc.).
- A description of how the Project objectives were met including a comparison of expected versus achieved outputs;
- A self-evaluation against Key Performance Indicators;
- Discuss the experience of using existing geospatial standards or operational policies and any proposed improvements.
- Discuss challenges (institutional, technical and policy) encountered;
- Outline plans for possible follow-on activities and projects; and
- Describe any communication strategies that were undertaken or are planned.

Promotion of Project Results

All Proponents who receive funding from GeoConnections are encouraged to promote Project results with the appropriate audiences of stakeholders or users. This section summarizes these requirements further.

A Proponent that does promote the Project results must publicly acknowledge the GeoConnections contribution by displaying the Natural Resources Canada signature and/or Canada wordmark (as provided by GeoConnections) on media, public, and stakeholder news releases, presentations, websites, brochures and other publications or documentation describing the Project and its results.

Where only text is allowed, the acknowledgement will include the following wording: "Financial support provided by GeoConnections, a national collaborative initiative led by Natural Resources Canada. GeoConnections supports the integration and use of the Canadian Geospatial Data Infrastructure (CGDI), an on-line resource that improves the sharing, access and use of geospatial information."

Where logos of supporting agencies are included in a product, the Natural Resources Canada signature and/or Canada wordmark must be used, as provided by Natural Resources Canada.

Where both text and logos are used, both the text and logo forms of acknowledgement must be used.

Proponents will communicate with GeoConnections when issuing, printing or publishing any publicity material to allow for possible coordinated announcements. Material must be submitted to the Project Authority. GeoConnections will offer a link to Project news releases and articles via its website and may otherwise promote the Project's successes in consultation with the Proponent.

RIGHTS OF GEOCONNECTIONS**GeoConnections reserves the right to:**

- Reject any or all responses to this Announcement of Opportunities;
- Seek clarification and verify any or all information provided;
- Enter into discussions with Project Proponents on any or all aspects of a Proposal;
- Accept any Proposal in whole or in part;
- Clarify/confirm intellectual property rights;
- Promote and communicate the Project and its results;
- Amend, cancel and/or re-issue this Announcement of Opportunities at any time;
- Administer, approve, and allocate funding based on the sole discretion of the GeoConnections Program; and
- Conduct Proponent audit activities such as an independent and objective assessment of a Proponent's compliance with the terms and conditions of a Contribution Agreement.

CONTACT INFORMATION

All enquiries must be directed by email to:

geoconnectionsca-acgeoconnexions@nrca-nrcan.gc.ca

APPENDIX 1: PROJECT PROPOSAL TEMPLATE

PROTECTED once completed.

Regular text identifies section headings and requires text.

Text in italics denotes instructions. Replace with your text.

PROPOSAL COVER PAGE (MAY BE SUBSTITUTED WITH AN EMAIL)

Proponent to use this template to prepare Project Proposal

To include:

- *Project Name*
- *Organization Legal Name*
- *Date*
- *Proponent to insert title page on Proponent's Letterhead*
- *Proponent to sign on Proponent's Letterhead*

PROPONENT INFORMATION

PROPONENT ORGANIZATION NAME:	<i>Insert your organization's name here.</i>
TYPE OF LEGAL ENTITY	<i>Please indicate your organization's legal entity type: Individual; Canadian profit and non-profit organization; Corporations; Industry and their associations; Research associations; Academic institutions; Provincial, Territorial, Regional, Municipal and Rural government departments, agencies and Crown Corporations as set out in Schedule III, Part 2 of the Financial Administration Act</i>
PROPONENT ORGANIZATION DESCRIPTION	<i>Describe Proponent organization including its organization structure, years in operation, mandate and vision, current products and/or services, typical end users of products/services.</i>
PROPONENT PROJECT EXPERIENCE WITH GEOCONNECTIONS	<i>Has the Proponent received GeoConnections contribution funding in the past? If yes, please elaborate and indicate the amount of GeoConnections Program funding received.</i>
FINANCIAL VIABILITY OF PROPONENT	<p><i>Describe your organization's financial viability.</i></p> <p><i>Reference your organization's recent annual financial statements (cash flow, profit/loss, shareholder's equity statements and balance sheet).</i></p> <p><i>Please include the following statements in this section:</i></p> <p>Insert Proponent name attests that the Project's GeoConnections contribution budget, if approved, will be used only for eligible Project expenditures.</p> <p>Insert Proponent name attests that it has sufficient cash flow and other financial capacity to carry out the proposed Project.</p>
PROJECT MANAGER'S CONTACT INFORMATION	<i>Name of contact, job title.</i>
	<i>Full mailing address:</i>
	<i>Telephone number:</i>
	<i>Email address:</i>

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

PROJECT TITLE	<i>Insert your Project title.</i>
PROPOSED PROJECT START DATE	<i>Start date of Project</i>
PROPOSED PROJECT END DATE	<i>End date of Project (may be no later than March 31, 2027)</i>

TOTAL PROJECT COSTS	<i>Provide total project cost (refer to definition sections)</i>
GEOCONNECTIONS CONTRIBUTION FY 2025-2026	\$125,000 CAD
GEOCONNECTIONS CONTRIBUTION FY 2026-2027	\$125,000 CAD
PROJECT OBJECTIVE	<i>Provide a concise description of the Project Objective from the Proponent's point of view.</i>
PROJECT SUMMARY	<i>Provide a clear, brief description of the proposed Project including Project key outputs and impact.</i>
PROJECT OUTPUTS AND INTENDED USERS	<p><i>Briefly describe proposed Project outputs and intended users of technical solutions or intended audience of reports/webinars.</i></p> <p><i>Describe the benefits for Canada/Canadians.</i></p> <p><i>Describe the benefits for stakeholders.</i></p>
RELEVANCE TO GEOCONNECTIONS THEME	<i>Describe how the proposed Project addresses the theme of the GeoConnections Program as stated within this AO.</i>

COLLABORATOR ENGAGEMENT (if applicable or needed for leverage)

Describe the Collaborators that will be involved in this Project and their relationship to your organization, past and present.*

** To be eligible, Collaborators must not be related to, nor exercise control over, the Proponent, including with respect to shared management or ownership.*

Explain how this Project will advance common objectives and goals.

Clearly identify and describe each Collaborator's role in the Project plan.

Letters of Collaboration must be provided by each organization that is contributing to the Project and be written on the organization's letterhead and signed by a senior officer (i.e., the person who has authority and responsibility for the allocation and commitment of the resources for this Proposal). The Letter of Collaboration must include:

- The contact's name and title, full postal address, telephone numbers, email address, and the organization's website address.*
- A description of the organization's role and specific tasks in the Project, common objectives and goals the Project will realize.*
- A description of the commitment they will make to the Project in terms of cash and/or in-kind contributions. For in-kind contributions, describe what is being contributed and the dollar value for the contribution and specify if these amounts are secured or not secured as of the Proposal submission deadline date.*
- A description of any existing business arrangements. Example: Shared Intellectual Property, multiple patents part of an integrated solution.*

Notes:

- *Natural Resources Canada and staff, including GeoConnections employees, cannot provide in-kind contributions, or act as Collaborators in a Project proposed under this Announcement of Opportunities.*
- *Letters of Collaboration submitted after the Proposal deadline may be rejected by GeoConnections.*
- *A sub-contractor may also be a collaborator provided that their duties and responsibilities for each role are clearly delineated.*

INDIGENOUS ENGAGEMENT

Does the Project address an Indigenous geospatial issue and identifies one or more Indigenous collaborators in the proposal?

Please refer to appendix 2: Evaluation Criteria R1 for more information.

SCALABILITY OF PROJECT OUTPUTS

Are the project outputs scalable (technologically, geographically and/or for other domains) across the CGDI? Please include a plan to scale the Project outputs.

Please refer to appendix 2: Evaluation Criteria R2 for more information.

ADOPTION AND IMPLEMENTATION

Describe your plan to adopt and/or implement the Project's outputs. Please include a project outputs communication plan.

Please refer to appendix 2: Evaluation Criteria R3 for more information.

STANDARDS-BASED SOLUTIONS

Identify any and all standards the Project will be using during its duration. Identify any standards that will improve or be developed during the Project.

Please refer to appendix 2: Evaluation Criteria R4 for more information.

TECHNICAL FEASIBILITY

Provide a comprehensive description of technical feasibility with demonstrated use/performance and past experience.

Please refer to appendix 2: Evaluation Criteria R5 for more information.

PROJECT TEAM AND RESOURCES

The Project Proposal must demonstrate that the Project Team has extensive experience and expertise relevant to all aspects of the Project's technical and management scope and is clearly capable of bringing about successful completion of the Project. For each team member, please fill-in the table below and submit a concise resume of selected experiences (maximum of 2 pages each for CV).

NAME	

ORGANIZATION	
ROLE	
RESPONSIBILITIES	
KEY QUALIFICATIONS	

PROJECT MANAGEMENT & OVERSIGHT PLAN

Provide a complete and comprehensive description of the Project's management oversight plan. Will the Project have a Project Steering Committee?

Describes the Proponent's organizational experience in successfully completing projects of similar scope.

Describe Proponent's organizational experience in project management.

SMART* KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

OBJECTIVE	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS	MEASUREMENT CRITERIA
<i>Specify specific Project objective</i>	<i>Specify the key performance indicators against Project objectives.</i>	<i>Indicate performance measures the Proponent will report on and include targets and data sources as applicable.</i>
<i>Specify specific Project objectives. (One entry per Project objective)</i>	<i>Specify the key performance indicators against Project objectives.</i>	<i>Indicate performance measures the Proponent will report on and include targets and data sources as applicable.</i>

***SMART: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant and Time-bound:** *Example: Demonstration Pilot - Number of participants to the webinar as a percentage of distribution list invitees, number of promotional items distributed, and number of sign-ups for e-newsletter before and after the webinar.*

SUMMARY TABLES

For each fiscal year, provide summary tables of task and key outputs with Project scope, schedule and cost management plan, well defined milestones and deliverables, team management and internal and external communications activities, and procurement plan if subcontractors are required.

Complete the two summary tables below.

- Planned milestones and associated tasks. Key outputs as well as requests for payments are to be linked to these milestones and tasks. The payment amounts for each milestone must be specified.*
- The schedule of work is left to the discretion of the Project Proponent*

SUMMARY TABLE OF TASKS AND KEY OUTPUTS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2025-2026

TASK NUMBER	TASK	DESCRIPTION	KEY OUTPUTS
1	<p>Task title</p> <p>Enter task completion/milestone date</p> <p>Enter total costs (include and identify GeoConnections contribution amount for each task)</p>	Describe briefly in point form.	<p>Note only <u>key outputs</u> should be entered that the Project is contingent upon – e.g. Open standards specifications selected, API testing can commence</p> <p>E.g., policy workshops completed and requirements gathered, workshop report writing can commence.</p>

SUMMARY TABLE OF TASKS AND KEY OUTPUTS FOR FISCAL YEAR 2026-2027

TASK NUMBER	TASK	DESCRIPTION	KEY OUTPUTS
1	<p>Task title</p> <p>Enter task completion/milestone date</p> <p>Enter total costs for the task (include and identify GeoConnections contribution amount for each task) E.g. \$1200 (\$600 from GeoConnections)</p>	Describe briefly in point form.	<p>Note only <u>key outputs</u> should be entered that the Project is contingent upon – e.g. Open standards specifications selected, API testing can commence</p> <p>E.g., policy workshops completed and requirements gathered, workshop report writing can commence.</p>

PROJECT RISK MANAGEMENT PLAN

Provide a complete and comprehensive Project risk management plan that identifies potential risks in Project scope, schedule, cost, resources, user engagement and communications; and, identifies a comprehensive and actionable Project risk management strategy.

PROJECT COSTS AND BUDGET

GEOCONNECTIONS CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURES	2025-2026	2026-2027	TOTAL
Labour (i.e., salaries, professional fees, temporary personnel costs) needed to carry out the Project, plus employee benefits – max 20% of Project labour costs)	\$0	\$0	\$0
Subcontract for services up to forty percent (40%) of total Eligible Expenditures	\$0	\$0	\$0
Communications, audio-visual equipment and facilities rentals	\$0	\$0	\$0
Administration of the Project, including translation, printing and binding, promotion of workshops and publication of Project report	\$0	\$0	\$0

Travel to conduct the Project	\$0	\$0	\$0
GST, PST and HST related to other Eligible Expenditures	\$0	\$0	\$0
Data purchases and capture up to twenty five percent (25%) of total eligible expenditures	\$0	\$0	\$0
A. TOTAL GEOCONNECTIONS CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURES	\$125,000	\$125,000	\$250,000

OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURES (CASH & IN-KIND COSTS*)	2025-2026	2026-2027	TOTAL
Proponent in-kind contribution	\$0	\$0	\$0
Proponent cash	\$0	\$0	\$0
Collaborator in-kind contribution	\$0	\$0	\$0
Collaborator cash (excluding other federal funding)	\$0	\$0	\$0
Other government funding (federal, provincial, territorial or municipal)	\$0	\$0	\$0
B. TOTAL OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURES	\$0	\$0	\$0

* These cash and in-kind contributions will not be reimbursed through GeoConnections funding.

PROJECT BUDGET 2025-2026 and 2026-2027	2025-2026	2026-2027	TOTAL
A. TOTAL GEOCONNECTIONS CONTRIBUTION TOWARDS ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURES	\$125,000	\$125,000	\$250,000
B. TOTAL OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARDS ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURES	\$0	\$0	\$0
C. TOTAL PROJECT COSTS (A+B)	\$0	\$0	\$0

LABOUR (SALARIES AND BENEFITS)

TEAM MEMBER	ORGANIZATION	SALARY PER DAY*	HOURS PER DAY	PERCENTAGE OF SALARY THAT IS FOR BENEFITS (%)
<i>Member's name</i>	<i>The Proponent</i>			
<i>Member's name</i>	<i>The Proponent</i>			

* Only the real salary rates are authorized as Eligible Expenditures plus employee benefits – max 20 percent of Project labour costs.

PERCENTAGE OF CASH AND IN-KIND CONTRIBUTIONS TO TOTAL PROJECT COSTS

Note: Figures in the table below are example values

SOURCE OF CONTRIBUTIONS	CASH (\$)	CASH (%)	IN-KIND (\$)	IN-KIND (%)	TOTAL (\$)	TOTAL PERCENTAGE (%)

GeoConnections	\$250,000	50%	N/A	N/A	\$250,000	50%
<i>The Proponent</i>	\$100,000	20%	\$0	0%	\$100,000	20%
<i>Collaborator A</i>	0	0%	\$25,000	5%	\$25,000	5%
<i>Collaborator B</i>	\$125,000	25%	\$0	0%	\$125,000	25%
TOTAL	\$475,000	95%	\$25,000	5%	\$ 500,000	100%

COMPLIANCE STATEMENTS

By signing this Project Proposal, I am attesting that for this Project my organization:

- will comply with the Official Languages Requirement.
- will comply with the Conflict of Interest and Post-employment Code for Public Office Holders; and
- confirms that no member of the House of Commons or Senate will be admitted to any share or part of this proposed activity or to any benefit arising therefrom.

LIST OF PROPOSAL ATTACHMENTS

- Letters of Collaboration A, B, etc. (if applicable)
- Proponent's Organization Financial Report (see definitions)
- M-30 form to be completed for Quebec Projects if relevant.
- Project team short resumes (Protected once completed and 2 pages maximum)

AUTHORIZATIONS*

 <<Name>>

Senior officer of the Proponent's organization

<<Position>>,

<<Organization>>

 Date

 <<Name>>

Proponent's Project Manager

<<Position>>,

<<Organization>>

 Date

****Authorization may be provided in an email provided that it is sent from a senior officer of the Proponent organization (i.e., the person who has authority and responsibility for the allocation and commitment of the resources for this Proposal). The email may also serve as an attestation to the compliance statements.***

Definitions

Agreement - a written agreement or documentation constituting an agreement between the Government of Canada and Proponent setting out the obligations or understanding of both.

Cash Contribution - expenses for the direct costs of activities that are directly related to achieving the objectives for which the Program Contribution would be awarded. It means the form of dollar amount for which cash is exchanged and that is essential to the Project and that would be used by the Project Proponent to fund its Project activities.

Daily Rate - is the individuals' daily rate. This includes employee benefits up to a maximum of 20 percent of labour cost. An explanation on how the daily rate was calculated must be provided by the Proponent. A typical way to calculate labour (labour-rate formula) is reasonable annual salary, plus reasonable benefits, divided by 260 (minus Annual allowable time off benefits) billable days in a year. In the case of provincial or municipal government personnel, official government rate or rates according to classification level must be used.

Days/hours Effort/Person – indicates the level of work effort in days or hours for each team member.

Delivery Date – indicates the date for delivery of the final task of a particular milestone.

Duration (Days) – is the total length of time in working days that the activity will take.

Eligible Expenditures - expenditures Incurred by the Proponent, as set out in Eligible Expenditures Table, within the Eligible Expenditure period.

Eligible Expenditures Period - the period starting when the Agreement is signed to March 31, 2027.

Fiscal Year - the period beginning on April 1st of any year and ending on March 31st in the next year.

Incurred means, in relation to an Eligible Expenditure, that goods have been received by, and/or services have been rendered to, the Proponent.

Incurred and Paid means, in relation to an Eligible Expenditure, which the Proponent has paid for the said Eligible Expenditure.

In-kind Contribution - a cash equivalent contribution in the form of a dollar amount <https://www.nrcan.gc.ca/energy/science/programs-funding/eip/20024> for which no cash is exchanged but that is essential to the Project and that would have to be purchased by the Project Proponent on the open market, or through negotiation with the provider, if it were not provided by the Project Proponent.

Key Outputs – indicates key outputs to be delivered at the milestone/task.

Organization Name – indicates the name of the organization (Proponent, Collaborator, and Sub-contractor) responsible for the task.

Operational Policies – are the guidelines, directives and policies that an organization employs to address the life cycle of geospatial data, information and knowledge continuum (i.e., collection, management, dissemination and use)

Program - a group of related activities that are designed and managed to meet a specific public need and are often treated as a budgetary unit.

Program Contribution - a transfer payment subject to performance conditions specified in a Contribution Agreement. A Contribution is to be accounted for and is subject to audit.

Project - the Project described in the Proposal.

Proposal - a written Proposal completed and signed by the Proponent.

Proponent - an individual or entity that has been authorized to receive a transfer payment.

Proponent audit - an independent assessment to provide assurance on a Proponent's compliance with a funding Agreement. The scope of a Proponent audit may address any or all financial and non-financial aspects of the funding Agreement. Such audit can be commissioned by GeoConnections during project execution after a request for payment or after project completion.

Proponent's Organization Financial Report - refers to, ideally, an independent audit report such as the consolidated financial statements of the Proponent's organization. Such report is required as an attachment to the Project Proposal.

Start Date – indicates the date at which the first activity begins.

Sub-contracting - external services delivered by a sub-contractor to the Proponent organization to be acquired. These services shall be set out in the Proposal. The amount eligible from a Sub-contractor or a consultant shall be the actual contract amount.

Team Members Name – identifies the actual personnel assigned to carry out the described task.

Note: Natural Resources Canada and staff cannot provide in-kind contributions, or act as Collaborators in a Project proposed under this Announcement of Opportunities.

Total Project Costs means the Contribution received from GeoConnections and all other verifiable Cash or In-kind Contributions either received or contributed by the Proponent and Collaborators and directly attributable to the Project.

PROPOSAL ATTACHMENT: FORM TO BE COMPLETED FOR QUEBEC PROJECTS

An Act respecting the Ministère du Conseil exécutif, R.S.Q., c. M-30.

Under sections 3.11 and 3.12 of the Act respecting the Ministère du Conseil exécutif, R.S.Q., c. M-30 (hereinafter referred to as Act) certain entities, as defined by the Act, such as municipal bodies, school bodies or public agencies, must obtain authorization, as indicated by the Act, before signing any Agreement with the Government of Canada, its departments or agencies, or a federal public agency.

Consequently, any entity that is subject to the Act is responsible for obtaining such authorization before signing any Agreement with the Government of Canada. The form must be completed and included with Proposals from Quebec. If you answer "yes" to one of the three questions, you must, on behalf of your organization, take the necessary measures to obtain the proper authorization from the Government of Quebec before obtaining funding from the Government of Canada.

If you answer "no" to all three questions on the form, your organization is not subject to the provisions of Chapter M-30 and the Proposal evaluation process can move forward.

QUEBEC PROJECTS FORM

An Act respecting the Ministère du Conseil exécutif, R.S.Q., c. M-30.

Bill M-30 pertains to any Project Proponents that receive funding from the government of Quebec. This form must be completed by the person representing the organization. It must be used for funding Proposals pertaining to the Government of Canada's programs and initiatives. Please review the relevant provisions of the Act, complete and sign this form, and return it to the Project Authority.

Project Title:

Legal Name of Entity (Organization):

Program:

1. Under section 3.11, is the Proponent (proposed payee) a municipal body or school body within the meaning of 3.6.2 of the Act? Yes ___ No ___
2. Under section 3.12, is the Proponent (proposed payee) a public agency within the meaning of section 3.6.2 of the Act? Yes ___ No ___
3. If an Agreement is signed between Proponent and the Government of Canada, will the Agreement affect a government agency, municipal body, school body or public agency within the meaning of the Act? Yes ___ No ___

If you answered "No" to all three questions, please sign this form and attach it to your Proposal along with any relevant supporting documents.

If you answered "Yes" to any question, you must do the following:

- Contact (as soon as possible) the Project Authority in charge of your Project for advice on how to proceed.
- Obtain and provide a copy of the authorization from the Quebec government or the Minister of Canadian Intergovernmental Affairs (as the case may be) to the GeoConnections Project Authority before signing the Contribution Agreement.

I, Name and Title of representative, certify that I have read and understood all the information above, and that the information I have supplied is accurate.

Signature of representative:

Date:

APPENDIX 2: PROJECT PROPOSAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

Each Proposal will be evaluated according to the evaluation criteria below. There are two (2) sections of evaluation criteria:

Mandatory Criteria – Proponents must pass all of the mandatory criteria in order for their Proposal to be accepted for further evaluation.

Ranked Criteria – Proponents must provide responses for each ranked criteria. Proponents are encouraged to respond as completely as possible to receive the maximum number of points.

Mandatory Criteria (M)

<p>M1: Completeness of Application. Proposals need to satisfy each of the following requirements (Pass/Fail)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the Proposal submission include a cover letter on the Proponent's letterhead or an email, dated and signed/sent by an authorized senior officer of the Proponent's organization? • Is the Proposal complete and does it follow the provided template? • Is the Proponent's organization financial report provided with the Proposal? • Does the Proponent attest that the Project GeoConnections contribution budget, if approved, will be used only for eligible Project expenditures under GeoConnections terms and conditions? • Does the Proponent attest that the Proponent has sufficient cash flow and other financial capacity to carry out the proposed Project?
<p>M2: Relevance to GeoConnections Announcement of Opportunities Theme (Pass/Fail)</p> <p>Does the proposed Project address the following GeoConnections Program theme?</p> <p>The development and implementation of innovative and standards-based solutions* that contribute to the modernization of the Canadian Geospatial Data Infrastructure (e.g., utilizing emerging technologies such as GeoAI, digital twins, etc.**). This can include projects that will enable the future use or integration of emerging technologies in geospatial solutions, including: pilot projects to test feasibility, requirements gathering, promising methodologies, development of digital infrastructure, workflows and processes that are required to operationalize these innovative and standards-based solutions.</p> <p>*GeoConnections recommends standards be publicly available and from established international Standards Development Organizations (SDOs) such as the International Organization for Standardization, Open Geospatial Consortium, etc. Proponents proposing new standards development are encouraged to seek endorsement by these SDOs.</p> <p>**Emerging technologies include but are not limited to GeoAI, Digital Twins, Internet of Things, cloud computing, Big Data, machine learning, etc.</p>
<p>M3: GeoConnections Contribution and Stacking Provisions (Pass/Fail)</p> <p>Is GeoConnections assistance to the proposed Project not more than 90% of total Project costs?</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Does the proposed Project meet the stacking provisions of a maximum federal government assistance of 90% of Eligible Expenditures?</p>
<p>M4: Eligible Expenditure and Costs (Pass/Fail)</p> <p>Do all Eligible Expenditures listed in the Proposal qualify as eligible as per the guidelines?</p>
<p>M5: Maximum Amount Payable (Pass/Fail)</p> <p>Is the amount requested from GeoConnections for this specific Project at \$125,000 per fiscal year?</p>

M6: Project Duration (Pass/Fail)

Does the proposed Project respect the pre-defined Project timelines (commencing no earlier than April 1, 2025, and ending no later than March 31, 2027)?

Ranked Criteria (R)

Proponents must answer all ranked criteria. Answer as fully and completely as possible.

R1: Indigenous Engagement (Max points: 4)

Does the proposed Project address an Indigenous geospatial issue and identifies one or more Indigenous collaborators?

R2: Scalability of Project outputs (Max points: 4)

Are the project outputs scalable (technologically, geographically and/or for other domains) across the CGDI? Does the proposed Project include a comprehensive plan to scale the project outputs?

R3: Adoption and Implementation (Max points: 3)

Does the proposed Project include a comprehensive plan for adoption and/or implementation of Project outputs? Does the proposed Project identify targeted users and specific activities for results adoption including a communications plan, promotion of Project outputs and user centric design beyond the Proponent's organisation?

R4: Standards-based solutions (Max points: 6)

Is the proposed Project standards-based? Will the proposed Project improve or develop standards?

Standards should be publicly available and from established international Standards Development Organizations (SDOs) such as the International Organization for Standardization, Open Geospatial Consortium, etc. Proponents proposing new standards development are encouraged to seek endorsement by these SDOs.

R5: Technical Feasibility (Max points: 3)

Is the proposed Project technically feasible based on demonstrated use/performance (including in other domains) and past experience (pilot projects, demonstrations, etc.)?

R6: Project Team and Resources (Max points: 3)

Do the team qualifications show extensive experience and expertise relevant to all aspects of the Project's technical and management scope, and that the team is clearly capable of successfully completing the Project?

R7: Management and Oversight (Max points: 3)

Does the Project Proposal describe the Proponent management and oversight mechanisms including an assigned Project manager and an established Project committee?

R8: Project Summary (Max points: 3)

Does the Project Proposal include a strong project management summary including a summary table of tasks, milestone dates and key outputs; SMART Key Performance Indicators; and, a method to monitor project progress?

R9: Project Risk Management (Max points: 3)

Does the Project Proposal contain a complete Project risk management plan that identifies potential risks in Project scope, schedule, cost, resources, user engagement and communications; and, identifies a comprehensive and actionable Project risk management strategy?