

**Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta
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REQUEST FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST

REFERENCE: FRIAA-FFP July 2018

FRIAA FIRESMART PROGRAM

Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta

Issue Date:	July 9, 2018
Closing Date/Time:	September 24, 2018 - 16:00 hrs
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1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta (“**FRIAA**”) was established in 1997 to promote and initiate projects that enhance Alberta’s forest resources. In keeping with this primary purpose, FRIAA entered into a Grant Agreement with the Government of Alberta (“**GOA**”) to deliver the FRIAA FireSmart Program (“**FFP**”). The FFP is separate and independent from the Government of Alberta’s FireSmart Community Grant Program.
- 1.2 The purpose of the FFP is to:
- (a) provide for enhanced public safety and improved protection of at-risk-communities, forest resources, and other landscape values through operational and planning activities designed to prevent wildfire occurrence and to reduce the fire hazard and risk throughout Alberta;
 - (b) provide financial assistance to communities, organizations and groups that wish to reduce the threat of wildfire; and
 - (c) support community education and involvement in the continuing dialogue on wildfire prevention, management and suppression issues and the practical application of FireSmart principles throughout Alberta.
- 1.3 FRIAA is inviting Expressions of Interest (“**EOI**”) under the FFP. The following information outlines the intent of this Request for Expressions of Interest (“**RFEOI**”) process and provides instructions to prospective applicants who wish to submit an EOI under this RFEOI.
- 1.4 This RFEOI is open to any municipality, Métis settlement, Alberta First Nation, non-profit society or other organization or group mutually agreed to by GOA and FRIAA.
- 1.5 The maximum amount of funding for a single project will be \$300,000 over the life of the project. Project proponent’s who have not successfully completed at least one FRIAA FireSmart project of a similar discipline (i.e. vegetation management) will be limited to a maximum of \$200,000 for a single project.
- 1.6 The maximum duration of the proposed work should not exceed two years over the life of the project, starting at the project initiation date detailed in the EOI submission but not prior to the date in your approved Project Grant Agreement (approximately January 1, 2019).
- 1.7 Applicants are advised to pay careful attention to the information provided in this RFEOI. Failure to satisfy any term, condition or mandatory requirement of this RFEOI may result in rejection of the submission.

2. EOI REQUIREMENTS

- 2.1 EOIs must be clear and well written and must concisely describe the components of the proposed project including each of the requirements set out in subsections 2.2 and 2.3 below.

2.2 EOI Overview:

- (a) Indicate: “FRIAA-FFP July 2018”.
- (b) Indicate: Title.
- (c) Identify the applicant and the individual(s) familiar with fire-related emergency services and authorized to represent the applicant, submit an EOI and commit the applicant to the execution of a Project Grant Agreement (name, title, relevant professional credentials, contact, phone number and address).
 - (i) Applications from municipalities must be signed by the Chief Administrative Officer or Mayor/Reeve.
 - (ii) Applications from Metis Settlements must be signed by Chief Administrative Officer or Chair.
 - (iii) Applications from First Nations must be accompanied by a properly executed Band Council Resolution.
- (d) Describe the management unit or geographic area covered by the project.
- (e) Identify the FireSmart plan (the “**Current Plan**”) that recommends the Eligible Activities to be undertaken and any work that has already been completed under the Current Plan. Project proponents must be able to demonstrate that the Current Plan was prepared in accordance with the principles and procedures outlined in the *FireSmart Guidebook for Community Protection (2013)* and approved by the organization or group for which the plan was prepared. If the Current Plan was prepared before 2013, the project proponent must demonstrate that it was prepared in accordance with earlier FireSmart guidelines and Eligible Activities proposed therein are still valid.
- (f) Describe the Eligible Activities considered that directly relate to the purpose of the FFP set out above in Section 1 of this RFEOI and the program description (“**Program Description**”) referred to in Section 4 of this RFEOI (indicate all that apply). Note that a separate EOI must be submitted for each different set of activities or different management unit or geographic area.
- (g) Provide relevant background information of the applicant and any Project Partners as defined in Subsection 5.1 of this RFEOI.

2.3 Required Information:

- (a) Overview of the Eligible Activities considered.
- (b) Basic description of methods and project plan.
- (c) Description of how the Eligible Activities link to the Current Plan. If the Applicant does not have a Current Plan, describe the process that identifies the need for the Eligible Activities to be undertaken and provide brief rationale supporting the priority for completing these activities at this time.

- (d) Basic description and estimate of the funding required.
- (e) Basic description of external funding and/or in-kind resources from the Applicant that directly apply to Eligible Activities considered.
- (f) Indication of involvement and support from Fire Emergency Services provider(s) applicable for the project area described.
- (g) Indication of review and support from the Wildfire Management Branch specific to proposed Eligible Activities.
- (h) Basic description of anticipated project results.
- (i) Basic description of resources required to complete a full project proposal and, if needed, a request for funding assistance for a Consultant experienced with FireSmart to prepare a full project proposal. If the request for funding is granted, the amount must be invoiced by the proponent directly to FRIAA under separate cover from the proposed budget, with supporting documents that include a copy of the invoice from the Consultant.
- (g) Verification of participate in a bidder's information session per subsection 6.1 of this RFEOI or face-to-face meeting with a FRIAA FireSmart field representative at least two weeks prior to submission deadline. **Note: FRIAA FireSmart field representatives will attempt to make themselves available on a first come, first served basis; inability to schedule a meeting at a mutually agreeable time does not relieve the Applicant's responsibility for participation in an information session.** FRIAA FireSmart field representatives:
 - (1) Andy Gesner
andy.gesner@friaa.ab.ca
(780.404.6944)
 - (2) Rick Arthur
rick.arthur@friaa.ab.ca
(403.489.2026)

NOTE: EOIs must follow the EOI template provided for this RFEOI.

3. EOI ADJUDICATION CRITERIA

- 3.1 EOIs shall be reviewed and evaluated on the basis of the following criteria by an independent committee ("**Review Committee**") appointed according to the terms of the Program Description:
 - (a) The EOI must support one or more of the Disciplines and contemplate the carrying out of one or more Eligible Activities as defined in the Program Description and more specifically set out in this RFEOI.
 - (b) This RFEOI is focussed with priority on EOIs that support Eligible Activities from any Discipline recommended in a Current Plan and/or Eligible Activities in previously treated areas that warrant retreatment.

- (i) Projects directed at implementation of eligible activities recommended in older Current Plans with no implementation of eligible activities to date will be favoured.
 - (ii) Projects directed at necessary maintenance of treatment units with previous vegetation management will be favoured.
 - (iii) Multi-partner projects that consider landscape level planning or activities in the 10-km community zone outside of direct jurisdiction of applicant with values at risk will be favoured.
- (c) Consideration will also be given to EOIs that support the development and completion of a FireSmart plan for at-risk communities that do not have such a plan.
- (d) Projects that leverage FRIAA funding with other sources of funding will be favoured.
- (e) The EOI must not be located on private land or lands under federal jurisdiction other than a Reserve.
- (f) The EOI must not include any prospective work or project or any work or project in progress or completed under the FireSmart Community Grant Program initiative sponsored by the GOA.
- (g) The applicant must be able to complete the project economically and efficiently, and in considering this criteria, the Review Committee may take into account the following:
- (i) The applicant's proximity to the location of the proposed project;
 - (ii) The applicant's experience in performing such projects;
 - (iii) Whether the applicant has, in the past, successfully completed projects funded by FRIAA;
 - (iv) The amount of leverage by way of in-kind contributions of labour, equipment or other resources by the applicant that are directly applicable to the proposed project. **Note: The proposed budget cannot include FRIAA funds used for existing staff or resources of the applicant; and**
 - (v) The amount of leverage in direct funding secured by the applicant for the project.
- (h) Applicants who have one or more unfinished projects from previous FRIAA funding commitments will receive less favourable consideration.
- (i) Applicants must be able to demonstrate participation in an Information Session as defined in Subsections 2.3 (g) and 5.1 of this RFEOI.

- (j) The EOI must not involve work that will have a significant adverse impact on other forest resources or the environment as a whole and the applicant must agree to carry out the proposed project in an environmentally responsible manner.
- (k) The EOI must not be contrary to the provisions of relevant regulations or legislation or the objects of FRIAA, or FRIAA's bylaws, including but not limited to the following:
 - (i) The EOI must not include any work that is, in the opinion of FRIAA, a responsibility of a timber disposition holder or constitutes a subsidy to the forest industry;
 - (ii) The EOI must not include facility construction, improvement or operations, product research and development, capital road construction, or, the purchase of any capital assets.

4. FRIAA FIRESMART PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

- 4.1 The [full text](#) of the Program Description for FFP is available on FRIAA's website (www.friaa.ab.ca).

5. LEGAL NOTICE

- 5.1 By submitting an EOI, you confirm that you have read, understand and accept the information contained in this RFEOI and, that each of you, the applicant and all individuals and entities that collaborate or are otherwise involved in the preparation of the EOI or the delivery of the proposed project ("**Project Partners**") agree as follows:
 - (a) FRIAA may at any time withdraw, suspend, cancel, terminate, amend or alter all or any portion of this RFEOI, including but not limited to the EOI requirements, the EOI selection and review process and the EOI adjudication criteria.
 - (b) FRIAA reserves the unqualified right to accept or reject any or all EOIs for any reason. FRIAA is not required to accept the highest ranked EOI nor is it required to accept any EOI for advancement to the full project proposal stage.
 - (c) The final decision with respect to EOIs to be included in a short-list rests solely with the Review Committee. The Review Committee's evaluation of the submission may be based on, but is not in any way limited to, the criteria set out in this RFEOI. The Review Committee may consider any criteria determined by FRIAA to be relevant to FRIAA's mandate, regardless of whether such additional criteria have been disclosed to the applicant.
 - (d) No conduct, act or omission of FRIAA, or its directors, officers, consultants, program advisors, committee members, agents, servants and their respective successors and assigns (collectively the "**FRIAA Parties**") other than a written notice to the applicant in writing signed by an authorized person for FRIAA, will constitute an acceptance of an EOI.

- (e) EOIs that do not comply with the requirements described in this RFEOI may be rejected in whole or in part or not considered by the Review Committee. FRIAA reserves the unqualified right to accept or reject a non-compliant EOI.
- (f) This RFEOI is an invitation for EOIs only. It is not an offer and the submission of an EOI does not create a contract or agreement of any kind between FRIAA and the applicant.
- (g) Acceptance of an EOI does not create a binding contract between FRIAA and the applicant or an obligation to fund the activities proposed in the EOI. FRIAA shall not be obligated in any manner whatsoever to any applicant until a written agreement between FRIAA and the applicant (“**Project Grant Agreement**”) has been duly executed relating to an approved full project proposal.
- (h) As between the parties, the submission and all documents and materials you submit to FRIAA in connection with the EOI and this RFEOI and all intellectual property in and to the foregoing are the exclusive property of FRIAA immediately upon delivery to FRIAA. For clarity, this refers to the materials themselves, not to any technology or innovations disclosed or discussed in them. Intellectual property developed during the course of the project will be addressed through the Project Grant Agreement and will normally be owned by the applicant.
- (i) You, the applicant and any Project Partners will keep this RFEOI confidential and will not use, reproduce or distribute it, any portion of it, or any data, information, drawings, or specifications included in or provided with it except as necessary to prepare a full project proposal as requested by FRIAA or to apply for additional third party funding for the project.
- (j) You, the applicant and any Project Partners will not make a claim against FRIAA or the FRIAA Parties for any reason whatsoever relating to this RFEOI. You are undertaking the expenditures required to prepare and submit an EOI entirely at your own risk, and you waive any right and release FRIAA and the FRIAA Parties from any demands, liability, claim or recovery for costs, expenses, or damages incurred whatsoever and howsoever arising out of or relating to this RFEOI or any EOI prepared in response to it, whether such right or claim arises in contract, negligence or otherwise.
- (k) FRIAA takes no responsibility for the accuracy of the information supplied during this RFEOI process by FRIAA or the FRIAA Parties.
- (l) Neither FRIAA nor any of the FRIAA Parties will have any liability whatsoever to you, the applicant, or any Project Partners, or any of them, in connection with this RFEOI or any submission prepared in response to it.

6. INFORMATION SESSIONS

- 6.1 FRIAA will hold two Information Sessions by teleconference to address questions that may arise with respect to this RFEOI one on August 2, 2018 and one on August 30, 2018. Details on the time, agenda and how to participate will be posted on FRIAA’s website at least two weeks prior to the scheduled Information Session.

7. EOI SUBMISSION

7.1 EOIs must be identified as follows: **Expression of Interest for the FRIAA FireSmart Program: FRIAA-FFP July 2018**

7.2 EOIs may be sent by email. Email submissions must be emailed to: admin@friaa.ab.ca and must include **Expression of Interest for the FRIAA FireSmart Program: FRIAA-FFP July 2018** in the subject header of the email. Only EOIs formatted in PDF or Microsoft Word will be accepted.

7.3 Submissions may also be sent by regular mail or courier to:

Forest Resource Improvement Association of Alberta
c/o MNP LLP
Suite 1600, 10235 – 101 Street NW
Edmonton, AB T5J 3G1
Attention: Diane Walton

7.4 EOIs submitted by mail or courier must be submitted in duplicate and must be accompanied by an electronic copy of the EOI on flash drive or CD disk.

7.5 **Deadline for EOIs:** Only those EOIs received before the close of business at 4:00 p.m., local Edmonton time, on **Monday September 24, 2018** will be accepted for evaluation. EOIs received any time thereafter will not be accepted for evaluation.

7.6 FRIAA is not responsible for EOIs that are not received as the result of any courier or postal delivery service issues including disruptions, loss of postal service, the loss of an EOI by the postal service or a delivery failure of any kind by any delivery service whatsoever.

8. NEXT STEPS

8.1 Applicants whose EOIs are rated highly, determined to be of sufficient quality, and are well aligned with FRIAA's mandate will be invited to submit a full project proposal to FRIAA. Further information regarding full project proposal submissions, including evaluation criteria and timelines, will be made available at the time full project proposal invitations are made (Tentative dates: late October – notification of shortlisted EOIs, mid-November – submission of full proposals, mid-December – notification of successful proposals, early January 2019 – project start up).

8.2 Applicants whose EOIs are not short-listed for full project proposal invitation will be notified when the RFEOI review process is completed. Applicants who wish to receive feedback regarding their EOI can set up a short debrief phone call with FRIAA. Information about arranging this discussion will be provided in the notification letter.