



# Minister's Special Licence Auction (MSLA) Grant Application Guidelines 2025-26

## Eligible Projects

Projects applying to for Minister's Special Licence Auction (MSLA) grant funding will be considered relative to the Priority Objectives. The MSLA is seeking projects that make an important contribution in Alberta to:

- *Enhancing and sustaining wildlife populations and their habitats.*
- *Addressing identified knowledge gaps concerning wildlife populations and their habitats.*
- *Generating information that has practical applications for wildlife management.*
- *Applying innovative approaches to increase the efficacy of wildlife management.*

When reviewing applications, a project's alignment with the Priority Objectives is 40% of the review criteria. Additionally, applications will be considered based on relevance and presentation as follows:

Forty percent (40%) will be based upon the project's relevance to:

- *Species and issues of greatest concern to the hunting and outfitting communities.*
- *The target species that generated the MSLA revenue (sheep, mule deer, elk, moose, whitetail, pronghorn, cougar, or turkey),*
- *The annual Focus Areas set by the MSLA Stakeholder Advisory Committee:*
  - *Identifying and enhancing habitat that supports target wildlife,*
  - *Developing techniques and capacity to assess population size, wildlife demography, and vulnerability to anthropogenic threats, particularly for target species, and*
  - *Advancing understanding and prevention of wildlife disease, with a particular interest in *M. ovi*.*
- *Wildlife management at a broad scale (i.e. beyond the local site).*
- *Advancing positive relationships between stakeholders and/or the broader public.*

Twenty percent (20%) will be based upon demonstration of:

- *A well-presented proposal that is thoroughly researched, clearly written, and concisely organized.*
- *Clear rationale, goals, methods, and deliverables.*
- *A feasible and practical plan of action.*
- *A detailed budget that suggests a reasonable return on investment.*

The MSLA typically does not provide funding for ongoing operational costs, emergency funds or deficit financing, general fundraising, retroactive work, or land acquisition. The MSLA Grants Adjudication Committee may make consideration for such costs in exceptional circumstances. Where capital costs are included in an application, the Alberta Professional Outfitters Society (APOS) has the first right of refusal for ownership of the purchased items when the project concludes.

Multi-year project funding may be available up to 3 years. However, applicants may reapply in year 3 if the project is longer in duration. Applicants should identify in their application if they are requesting funding for multiple years, and provide the amount required for one year only. Deferred contributions (i.e. outstanding obligations) for multi-year applications will be tracked by APOS. Outstanding reports must be filed before additional funds will be released, whether through a separate grant or multi-year agreement.

Applicants will obtain the appropriate permits required for the project before funds are issued.

*NOTE: Camps, hunter education/training, and community-oriented projects are no longer eligible under the MSLA. Applicants may consider applying for funds from the MSL Draw Funds or the Alberta Conservation Association (ACA)'s Conservation, Community, Education Grants (CCE). Each year, 5% of the annual net proceeds of the MSLA are dedicated to the ACA's CCE to support non-research projects previously supported by the MSLA. Please visit [www.ab-conservation.com](http://www.ab-conservation.com) for more information.*

## **ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS**

Government representatives may only apply in collaboration with other institutions, groups, or organizations. The MSLA will not fund applications where the federal or provincial government is the principal applicant or lead on a project. Federal or provincial government employees may be part of a project but must not be responsible for the majority of the project. Post-secondary applicants should be aware that funding is available for direct project costs only – no indirect costs will be paid.

APOS claims no ownership or rights of any kind over intellectual property developed or data collected as a result of this funding. However, by accepting this funding, recipients agree that the results of the project and the raw data will be made publicly available, within 24 months of the funding end date, unless otherwise agreed to by APOS on behalf of the MSLA. If the recipient does not make the results and/or data publicly available within the agreed to timeframe, then ownership of all raw data will revert to APOS, and it may then be made publicly available.

An applicant may be disqualified for funding if they have failed to complete previous MSLA reporting requirements. Additionally, an applicant made be disqualified for funding if they have made public statements calling for the discontinuance of hunting, trapping, or outfitting, or the MSLA.

Applicants may apply for funds ranging from \$20,000 to \$150,000 per year. Applicants are expected to demonstrate their efforts to obtain leveraged funding, up to 25% of the cost of the project annually (of which, a maximum of 50% may be labeled "in-kind support"). The MSLA Budget Template requires applicants to differentiate between Confirmed Partner Funding, Pending Partner Funding, and In-Kind Support.

The adjudication process aims, whenever possible, to award at least 50% of the funds generated by a particular species' MSLA towards projects that are of clear benefit to the conservation, management, or knowledge of that species. However, this aim does not supersede or override any other adjudication criteria, nor bias any other assessment of quality, rigour or relevance of a proposal, and ultimately, the discretion to award funds is with the Grants Adjudication Committee.

## **APPLICATION PROCESS**

The deadline for applications for 2025-26 MSLA grants funding is Tuesday, December 10, 2024. If the grant window has not yet opened, applicants can submit an informal expression of interest to begin discussions about the project and assess eligibility in advance of submitting a formal application. An expression of interest may be sent to [grants@apos.ab.ca](mailto:grants@apos.ab.ca) at any time.

Committee decisions will be rendered in March and announced in the first week of April. If this timeline presents a challenge for a proposed project application, an applicant may inquire with APOS about timing options. The Grants Adjudication Committee may, at its discretion, accept and review applications outside of the typical application and review windows.