



**AquaNet
Directed Call for Proposals – January 9, 2006**

***Knowledge Innovation in the Canadian Aquaculture Sector:
Canadian Aquaculture Innovation Portal***

AquaNet is inviting proposals for development and maintenance of a Canadian aquaculture sector portal, a web-based means to close knowledge gaps within the Canadian aquaculture sector. The portal is envisioned as the one-stop access point to knowledge about sustainable aquaculture in Canada, for general use by all Canadians and for more specific uses by key stakeholder groups including, e.g., the aquaculture industry, government decision makers, and seafood retailers.

The second page of this document describes the rationale, objectives, selection criteria and the required proposal content for this call. AquaNet invites applications from all eligible researchers. A maximum of one year of funding will be available. To be eligible, research proposals must be submitted to info@aquanet.ca electronically, and

- have a minimum total partner contribution of at least 50% of the total funding required; and
- commit to a rapid turn-around of results, i.e., within one year of project initiation.

Deadline for application: February 3, 2006.

Rationale / Justification:

Sustainable aquaculture practices are increasingly knowledge-intensive, and Canada has responded by investing in knowledge-creation and transfer. Over the past six years AquaNet has played a key role in the national innovation system, funding numerous research studies, workshops and science forums. Many of these studies are now published in leading scientific journals, and, as a result, have made significant contributions to the social and natural sciences in aquaculture research. It is, however, increasingly evident that much more needs to be done to improve the efficiency and comprehensiveness of knowledge exchange throughout the aquaculture sector. Existing means of knowledge transfer stem from a variety of initiatives, and do not represent a systematic and comprehensive approach. The challenge is to identify and acknowledge the real knowledge gaps, establish a transparent process to address these gaps, and provide a mechanism to bridge the creation of the knowledge and its availability and usage by the whole aquaculture sector (DeJager Aqualogic, 2005).

AquaNet now invites proposals for development and maintenance of a Canadian aquaculture sector portal, a web-based means to close knowledge gaps within the Canadian aquaculture sector. The portal is envisioned as the one-stop access point to knowledge about sustainable aquaculture in Canada, for general use by all Canadians and for more specific uses by key stakeholder groups including, e.g., the aquaculture industry, government decision makers, and seafood retailers.

Objectives:

The portal will provide:

- A virtual ‘honest broker’ mechanism for knowledge exchange among all members of the aquaculture sector, including both editor-reviewed and un-reviewed knowledge relevant to the Canadian aquaculture sector and its sustainable development, e.g., pre and post publication manuscripts, articles, communication pieces, a forum to capture community perspectives on aquaculture, etc.
- Archiving of exchanged knowledge.
- Improved access to existing and archived knowledge through user-friendly interface design satisfying user-identified needs.
- Inclusion of features as warranted by sector interest, added to a scalable architecture, e.g., an on-line jobs directory.
- A mechanism for user-initiated, sector-wide consultation on sector-relevant issues, e.g., regulatory changes.
- A delivery mechanism for on-line continuing education programmes for the aquaculture sector.
- Options for evolution into a self-supporting, subscription-based knowledge exchange service.
- Opportunities for ongoing research into innovation-accelerating effects of improved knowledge-exchange mechanisms, including development of appropriate metrics.

Selection Criteria:

- Institutional capacity and support: the proposed institutional base for the portal must be within a Canadian university to ensure the institutional neutrality of the portal. Proposals will demonstrate availability of project-appropriate infrastructure at the host university.
- Quality and cost-effectiveness of the plan for portal development: proposals must utilise the information obtained from initiatives described in the introduction (i.e., the needs assessment, recommendations for portal design, and development strategy for a Canadian Aquaculture Innovation Portal) to articulate an effective and efficient work plan *that will meet the objectives of this call for proposals*. Plans for portal development and operations, hosting, archival practices, security, and expansion must be described, preferably in the context of use of open source software. As a national portal, provision must be made for operation in both of Canada's official languages.
- Project team and portal management: preference will be given to teams demonstrating national scope, prior success in collaborative interdisciplinary research, relevant administrative experience, and a record of successful stakeholder collaboration in development of on-line services. Plans for portal management must include governance provisions for both day-to-day operations, and strategic planning involving whole-of-sector representation on a board or similar governance device. .
- Leveraged funds: proposals must demonstrate how AquaNet's investment builds upon current infrastructure and capital equipment investments, and identify amounts and sources of funds available or applied for as resources to match AquaNet's investment.

Proposal content:

In a maximum of ten single-spaced pages (12 point font), not including appendices, the proposal must include:

1. A clearly articulated plan for application of AquaNet's investment to establish a Canadian Aquaculture Innovation Portal.
2. Plans for development and operation of the portal in both official languages, including specification of proposed technologies and integration of the technical capacity of the portal with opportunities for research into the relation between innovation and acceleration of knowledge transfer.
3. Plans for management and governance of the portal including a rationale for the proposal's choice of information technology service provider(s).

4. Funding to be leveraged from other sources and plans for evolution of the portal toward self-sufficiency

Other:

Unnumbered reference pages may be appended and will not be counted in the page total.

Proposed budgets may be appended as a Microsoft Excel file. Proposed budgets may contain *brief* explanatory notes as necessary.