



**MRC** du  
**Golfe-du-Saint-Laurent**

# *Maritime et touristique :*

Transformer notre réalité dans l'avenir grâce à la Signature Innovation

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Volet 3 – Fonds régions et ruralité

## PROGRAM

February 2024

## **DESCRIPTION**

The MRC du Golfe-du-Saint-Laurent, situated at the extreme east of the province has a population of 3 382 (census 2021) spread over 14 villages from Kegaska to Blanc Sablon, 5 municipalities. To that, we add a non-organized territory that represents 87% of the total area. In addition, although they aren't part of the MRC, the Innu communities of Unamen Shipu and Pakuashipi also occupy the territory.

An important particularity of the Lower North Shore is the absence of a road link between the villages of Kegaska and Old Fort. Spread over almost 400 kms of coastline, the inhabitants are dependant on air and maritime transport (only available from April to February annually). During the winter months, the "White Road" is the preferred means of transport. It offers a degree of freedom unheard of during the other months of the year.

Because of our unique reality, the ocean remains one of the greatest implications in our lives. Whether for transportation, recreation, fishing or tourism, our powerful waters are anchored in the lives of our people every day.

As our villages are surrounded by the Gulf of St. Lawrence, it's no surprise that fishing is the main economic activity. What's more, almost one hundred and fifty local people are employed in our fish processing plants. However, in recent years, the fishing industry has experienced many inconsistencies and a decline, forcing us to explore new activities of unique experience and opportunity, with tourism the main prospect for future economic development.

By pursuing the economic development of the region, we aim to promote innovation and revolution in our current industries, and to push them to evolve and succeed. With technological advances, changing markets and tourism trends, the development potential of the Lower North Shore is limitless.

## **OBJECTIVES**

- Strengthen the tourism offer: support the creation of high-quality tourism products to attract people to the region and enhance existing products to increase visibility and visitor experience.
- Develop the maritime industry: support industry players by encouraging them to make innovative choices.
- Create links between the maritime and tourism sectors: encourage promoters to create a stronger link between the two industries and develop tourism products linked to the maritime industry.
- Develop a regional brand and marketing strategy with direct links to the maritime and tourism industries to increase the territory's visibility and identity.

## **ADMISSIBLE ORGANIZATIONS**

To be admissible, a project must fit directly into the adopted management framework of the Signature Innovation project and must take place in one or more localities within the territory of the MRC du Golfe-du-Saint-Laurent.

Projects must be time-limited, one-off (unique and not expected to be repeated, single, standalone that has a specific goal and timeline) and non-recurring in nature and not include the permanent expenses that the organization must assume to remain in business, regardless of the volume of its activities (NO fixed costs – property taxes, salaries, insurances, office supplies, interest expenses, depreciation, utilities).

## **AREAS OF INTERVENTION AND CHALLENGES**

The main focus of the MRC du Golfe-du-Saint-Laurent's Signature is both the Tourism and Maritime industries.

The priorities are:

- Strengthen the tourism offer (all seasons)
- Create high quality products
- Increase tourism-related economic activity
- Increase the attractiveness and awareness of the region as a tourist destination
- Introduce visitors to each village
- support innovation in the maritime industry
- create links between the tourism and maritime sectors
- Develop tourism products linked to the maritime industry.

## **INELIGIBLE PROJECTS**

The following projects are not eligible:

- Projects that would contradict a government policy or measure approved by the Treasury Board or the Government of Quebec or that would cover an activity already funded by budgetary rules approved by the latter.
- Projects associated with setting up or expanding health services (e.g. health cooperatives).
- Projects consisting of studies, initiatives, action plans or strategic planning carried out as part of an organization's regular activities.
- Projects related to municipal administration (e.g. renovation of the town hall, maintenance of the municipal garage).
- Projects related to the place of worship, unless the building is being converted for a purpose other than religious (e.g. converting a church into a community hall for the general population would be eligible).

## **EVALUATION CRITERIA**

- Responds to a priority demonstrated in the MRC's Signature Innovation project, Maritime and Tourism: transforming our reality for the future
- Contributes to the improvement of the Maritime and Tourism capacity, innovation and attractiveness and to the achievements of the objectives of the Signature Innovation project.
- Establishes long term viability
- Does not create undue competition
- The quality of the financing plan: realism of anticipated costs, contributions from partners and applicable government programs
- The quality of the project implementation plan
- The quality of the governance structure: clear relationships between partners, established decision making processes
- Direct, measurable impact on clusters of attached projects
- The promoter's ability to deliver
- The duration of the project (time limit, one-time and non-recurring).

## **ELIGIBLE PROMOTERS**

- Municipal organizations and aboriginal communities (Band councils)
- Private and social economy enterprises, excluding private enterprises in the financial sector
- Cooperatives, with the exception of cooperatives in the financial sector
- Non-profit organizations
- Education network organizations
- Legal entities wishing to start a business.

## **ORGANIZATIONS NOT ADMISSIBLE FOR FUNDING**

Organizations listed in the Register of Companies not eligible for public contracts are not eligible. The Minister may refuse any application from an otherwise eligible organization if it is involved in a dispute with the Government of Quebec or if is in default of fulfilling its obligations to the Minister under a law administered by the Minister, a regulation deriving therefrom or an agreement.

## **INELIGIBLE EXPENSES**

- The operating deficit of an eligible organization, the repayment of loans or the replenishment of its working capital
- Expenses incurred prior to the signing of the agreement
- Expenses already paid by the Quebec government for the same project
- Expenditures related to projects already carried out

- Any expenses not directly related to the project
- Any expense related to the relocation of a business or organization unless the local municipality where the business or organization is located agrees
- Any grant to the government administration, with the exception of organizations in the education community networks
- Any expenditure related to activities governed by budgetary rules approved by the Government of Quebec
- Any expense incurred with companies listed in the Register of companies not eligible for public contracts
- Any form of loan, loan guarantee or equity investment
- The refundable portion of taxes.

## **FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTIONS**

Financial assistance cannot exceed 50% of eligible expenses, up to a maximum of **\$100 000** for a private or social economy enterprise or any legally constituted organization where at least half of the members are directly or indirectly related to private business, where applicable, may not exceed 50% of eligible expenses.

Financial assistance cannot exceed 80% of eligible expenses, up to a maximum of **\$100 000** for all other eligible projects.

Any financial assistance granted to an eligible organization from the agreement envelope to carry out a project in accordance with the Signature Innovation framework is provided for in a financial assistance agreement between the organization and the eligible recipient. The agreement sets out the terms and conditions for the granting and payment of the amounts awarded as well as the control and accountability mechanisms.

In general, the disbursement are made as follows:

- 80% upon signature of the ratified agreement between the MRC and the promoter
- 20% upon receipt of a final activity report.

The MRC reserves the right to modulate the payment of financial assistance according to needs.

## **CUMULATIVE AIDE**

The stacking of assistance, if any, to an eligible organization for a project from federal or provincial government departments or agencies, their crown corporations and municipal entities, namely municipal bodies included in section 5 of the Act respecting access to documents held by public bodies and the protection of personal information, shall not exceed these same rates.

Financial assistance provided to an eligible organization for a project must comply, where applicable, with the stacking rules of any other government program contributing to the financing package.

## **CONSTRUCTION WORK**

When the project is intended to finance the execution of construction work entrusted to a third party, the eligible recipient of financial assistance, with the exception of a private enterprise, must follow the provisions of the Act respecting contracting by public bodies.

For municipal agencies, educational agencies or agencies mandated by the municipal government, publicly tendered contracts must be open to liberalization agreements.

Public tendering is not required, on the advice of the Minister, when, due to an emergency situation, the safety of persons or property is at stake or when only one contractor is possible due to a guarantee, property right or exclusive right.

Where the construction contracting rules of an agency eligible for the program are more restrictive than these rules, the agency shall apply its own rules.

## **PURCHASING**

Buying local encourages our workers, our businesses and our economy. The promoter must make the effort to purchase local first (within a 10% difference and a reasonable time frame). If that is not possible, the promoter should give preference to Quebec products or suppliers located in Quebec. If not, the promoter must justify the reasons for purchasing out of province.

## **CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE WITH REGULATIONS**

Where applicable, in connection with its application for financial assistance and the project submitted, the project promoter shall provide the MRC with a certificate or attestation of compliance with the regulations.

## **CONDITIONS FOR OBTAINING FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE**

- Respond to the call for initiatives within the prescribed timeframe and in the required format
- Demonstrate eligibility as a promoter
- Demonstrate financial capacity to carry out the initiative
- Demonstrate the management capacity to carry out the initiative
- Demonstrate the ability to ensure the sustainability of the initiative.

## PROJECT SUBMISSION AND SELECTION PROCESS

- The application form, program description and management framework will all be made available on the MRC website.
- Discussions with the promoter about the project and verification of eligibility
- Project submission with all required supporting documents within the prescribed deadlines must be submitted by email to [jackie.gallibois@mrcgsl.ca](mailto:jackie.gallibois@mrcgsl.ca)

### PROJECT DEADLINES 2024:

- \* **April 30, 2024**
- \* **September 15, 2024**

- Analysis and selection by management committee
  - \* **Response time after a project deadline is 45 to 60 days.**
- Communication to promoters of selected projects, drafting of financial aid agreements for signature
- First disbursement and project start-up

**NOTE: Project expenses are not eligible until the financial aid agreement is signed by both parties (promoter and MRC).**

**IMPORTANT: PROJECTS MUST BE COMPLETED BY DECEMBER 31, 2025.**