



Northern States Research Cooperative Releases 2024 Indigenous Forest Knowledge Fund Request for Proposals

For release: March 8, 2024

The Northeastern States Research Cooperative (NSRC) recognizes and respects the deep, primary knowledge of Tribal Nations in the Northern Forest and is excited to announce the 2024 request for proposals (RFP) for the NSRC Indigenous Forest Knowledge Fund (IFKF).

Proposals are welcomed for:

- Education, mentorship, and training of Indigenous youth in applied forest research and/or Traditional Ecological Knowledge about forest systems;
- Applied forest research that advances Tribal priorities; and
- Synthesis and translation of forest research and/or Traditional Ecological Knowledge to advance communications, outreach, and economic programs for Tribal Nations and Indigenous communities.

NSRC will award up to \$1.5 million in 2024 to support projects with budgets ranging from \$75,000 to \$500,000 for one- to three-year funding terms. Project leaders and/or project settings shall be directly related to Tribal homelands/territories or ancestral territories of the NSRC region (i.e., the Northern Forest region that includes/overlaps/impacts Maine, New Hampshire, New York, and/or Vermont).

“Working together with our Tribal partners and the U.S. Forest Service to facilitate this opportunity is an honor. It’s great to see the IFKF building momentum, with increased available funding year after year,” observed Anthea Lavalley, Member of the IFKF Planning Committee and NSRC Executive Committee, who consults with an External Advisory Committee representing Indigenous interests, forest industry, natural resource management, conservation, wildlife, and economic development to ensure NSRC is aligned with on-the-ground research needs and emerging priorities. The IFKF Planning Committee consists of members from across the region including Tribal members and US Forest Service scientists.

The 2023 general NSRC RFP encouraged projects of high cultural significance to Indigenous communities and lifeways (e.g., the health of brown ash and Indigenous peoples’ access to lands for hunting, fishing, gathering materials, and other purposes). Notably, the IFKF is a separate opportunity to: 1) acknowledge and address structural inequities in opportunities for Indigenous youth to participate in forest research and 2) invest in the cultural and intellectual sovereignty of Tribal forest traditions alongside other forms of applied forest research.

Previous IFKF award funding is supporting the following projects: moose monitoring on Penobscot Indian Nation lands; development of management guides for ash under the threat of emerald ash borer; understanding regeneration and historical traditions of an Atlantic White Cedar swamp ecosystem utilized by Abenaki Nation citizens; developing a set of Haudenosaunee Forest Principles based on the Haudenosaunee Environmental Protection Process; and Connecting N’dakinna (Land), Bilowagizegad (Climate), and Alnobak (People), providing Indigenous college students with research opportunities that

combine Indigenous knowledge of watersheds with empirically collected data from forested watersheds. The IFKF projects are in addition to NSRC research projects focused on the health of northern forest ecosystems and communities.

Proposals are due for the 2024 IFKF RFP by June 14, 2024. Proposals will be reviewed by a committee composed of Tribal consultants and NSRC administrators. The committee will apply the following evaluation criteria, giving equal weight to each:

- General fit to the program's primary goals and requirements;
- Clarity of the specific project objective and likelihood of success;
- Appropriateness of the approach and methods, including intellectual sovereignty and/or data management; and
- Tribal Leader (e.g., Tribal Council Official/Tribal Chairperson) or Tribal Department Director endorsement as expressed in signed letters of support.

Award decisions are expected to be announced by July 12, 2024, and funding committed by August 16, 2024. Any unallocated funds will be applied toward future NSRC competitions.

Questions about eligibility or how grant funds are distributed to awardees should be sent to:
alavallee@hubbardbrookfoundation.org.

The Northeastern States Research Cooperative (NSRC) is a competitive grant program for Northern Forest research, jointly directed through the USDA Forest Service Northern Research Station, the Hubbard Brook Research Foundation, and a designated institution in each of the four Northern Forest states: the Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources at the University of Vermont, the Department of Natural Resources and the Environment at the University of New Hampshire, the Center for Research on Sustainable Forests at the University of Maine, and the Department of Sustainable Resources Management at the College of Environmental Science and Forestry at the State University of New York. Learn more about the Northeastern States Research Cooperative at nsrcforest.org