



## Indigenous Forest Knowledge Fund

### Spring 2022 Request for Proposals

#### History and Goals

From 2001 to 2016, the Northeastern States Research Cooperative (NSRC) provided competitive funding for applied forest research across the Northern Forest region, from New York to Maine. With congressional support over this 16- year period, more than \$23.3 million in U.S. Forest Service funds was awarded for 335 collaborative research projects. The program was suspended in 2017, and NSRC leaders took the opportunity to evaluate and reflect on its points of strength and areas for improvement. Direct collaboration and service to stakeholders and non-academic partners emerged as a key area for growth. With renewed support from Congress and \$2 million in Forest Service funding, NSRC 2.0 launched in 2020. To ensure alignment with on-the-ground issues and emerging priorities, Tribal consultants and an External Advisory Committee representing forest industry, natural resource management, conservation, wildlife, and economic development set the research agenda for the general requests for proposals, issued in September 2020 and 2021. The [general RFP](#) encouraged projects of high cultural significance to Indigenous communities (e.g., the health of brown ash and Indigenous peoples’ access to lands for hunting, fishing, gathering materials, and other purposes). NSRC leaders were committed to going further 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. The NSRC recognizes and respects the deep, primary knowledge of Tribal Nations in the Northern Forest region and established an **Indigenous Forest Knowledge Fund** for:

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

With these goals in mind, **\$200,000 in NSRC funding will be awarded in 2022** to support between two and five projects, each in the \$40,000 to \$100,000 range, for one- to three-year funding terms. Project leaders will be required to track and report progress and expenses annually.

#### Requirements

- Projects must clearly address forest research, education, outreach, and/or economic priorities for Tribal Nations or other Indigenous communities.

- Project leaders and/or project settings should be on Tribal homelands/territories of the NSRC region (i.e., the Northern Forest region that includes/overlaps Maine, New Hampshire, New York, and/or Vermont).
- A signed letter of support from a Tribal Leader (e.g., Tribal Council Official/Tribal Chairperson) or Tribal Department Director attesting to the value of the project must accompany each proposal. In the letter, please describe how the project advances Tribal priorities in terms of education, training, research, communications, and/or economic development.
- Projects may be carried out independently or in collaboration with academic researchers from partner institutions. Each academic partner must submit a signed letter describing how the project will 1) benefit federally- and/or state-recognized Tribal Nations or other Indigenous communities and 2) describe how issues of cultural and intellectual sovereignty will be handled.
- NSRC funding may provide complete project support or be combined with additional funding from other public/private sources.
- We require written plans for: 1) protecting Tribal intellectual sovereignty, 2) protecting culturally sensitive sites and materials, and/or 3) data management. Plans should address how data and results will be shared and how sensitive information will be protected (e.g., locations of culturally sensitive sites).
- Projects presented as partnerships between non-Tribal and Tribal organizations should reflect equitable and appropriate distribution of funds in the budget, with Tribal partners in the lead role.

### **Timeline**

- May 3, 2022: RFP issued
- July 1, 2022: Proposals due electronically by 4:30 pm
- July 22, 2022: Notification of project award decisions
- August 19, 2022: Funding committed. Annual reports and a final report will be required.

### **Review Process**

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.

### **Proposal Elements**

- Project title
- Project leader (name, title, affiliation, and email address)
- Project collaborators (name, title, affiliation, and email address), including all persons or entities who will be directly supported by the proposed project
- Project goals (200-word max)
- Relevance to the goals and requirements of the NSRC Indigenous Forest Knowledge Fund (200-word max)
- Project approach and methodology (200-word max)
- Expected products, outputs, and potential outcomes (200-word max)
- Plans for protecting Tribal intellectual sovereignty and culturally sensitive sites and materials and/or data management plan
- Project budget and budget narrative. Contribution of matching funds is optional and will only be used

as a funding decision criterion if projects are otherwise scored equally and funding is limited. See <https://nsrcforest.org/indigenous-forest-knowledge-fund> for the budget and budget narrative template.

- Project timeline
- Letter of support from Tribal leadership (one or more)
- Letters from academic partners (if applicable)
- Abstract for public posting
- How would you like to guide media outreach related to your project?

**If you have any questions about eligibility or how grant funds are distributed to awardees, please don't hesitate to contact: [alavallee@hubbardbrookfoundation.org](mailto:alavallee@hubbardbrookfoundation.org).**

### **Proposal Submission Process**

When your proposal is ready for submission, please access the Google Form

(<https://forms.gle/WNJQu9hqmUbETfXPA>), where you will be asked to enter proposal metadata information.

After submitting the form, please send a pdf of the complete proposal (including the budget and budget justification) via email to: [2022\\_IF.j9hytsleanvqhusx@u.box.com](mailto:2022_IF.j9hytsleanvqhusx@u.box.com). Files should be labeled as Last Name\_First Name\_Short Title\_IFKF 2022. Simply attach the PDF file to a blank email and send. Please email the proposal PDF only once. If you do not get a confirmation email from Box or have questions on the submission process, please contact a program manager (<https://nsrcforest.org/contacts>).