FORESTRY FUTURES TRUST ONTARIO

Enhanced Forest Resource Inventory Knowledge Transfer and Tool Development Program Call for Applications

Program Overview

The Forestry Futures Trust Committee (FFTC) is pleased to announce the Round 5 Call for Applications for eligible projects under the Forest Resource Inventory (FRI) Knowledge Transfer and Tool Development (KTTD) Program. Up to $1,500,000 in funding is available to support eligible projects of up to 24 months in duration, anticipated to take place in 2027-2029. Funding decisions are anticipated in early 2027.

The round uses a single-stage application process. Applicants submit one completed application, accompanied by a project budget, curriculum vitae (CVs), and references. No separate letter of intent or subsequent full proposal is required.

Program Purpose

The KTTD Program supports practical tools, methods and knowledge transfer that advance Ontario's enhanced forest resources inventory, improve integration of inventory information into forest management planning, and build capacity among Ministry and industry partners. Applications are welcome from university and private-sector researchers, government applied researchers, consultants, non-governmental organizations, forest company staff and qualified collaborators.

Projects should demonstrate clear relevance to Ontario's forests and a credible pathway to practical use. Proposals involving proprietary methods or technology may be considered, provided the application clearly describes the public-facing deliverables and benefits to the provincial FRI Program. Preference is given to open, unlicensed and non-proprietary tools, methods and outputs.

Round 5 Priority Themes

Projects must address one or more of the following themes, consistent with the *Ministry of Natural Resources and Forestry (MNRF) 2017-2026 Strategic Focus for the Forest Resources Inventory Program*[1] for Forest Resources Inventory:

- Tools and products to advance FRI production and Continuous Forest Inventory (CFI)
- Tools and products for clients and stakeholders
- LiDAR and single-photon LiDAR applications
- Advanced remote sensing

Illustrative research and development topics are provided in Appendix A. Every project must include a meaningful knowledge and technology transfer component.

Submission Requirements

Submit the following four components together as one complete application package:

[1] Document can be found at www.forestryfutures.ca under the FRI and KTTD link within the Programs menu

- Completed Round 5 application form, including the project description, objectives and anticipated incremental value; project team, roles and partnerships; design and methods; work plan, milestones and deliverables; knowledge transfer and implementation plan; and any links to earlier KTTD-funded work.
- Completed project budget form, with annual costs and any partner cash or in-kind contributions identified.
- CVs for project lead(s) and key team members (maximum two pages per person).
- References: contact information for two professional references familiar with the applicant's work; identify two qualified independent potential peer reviewers within the application, if requested by the form.
- For software or hardware development, describe expected deployment, licensing (if applicable), maintenance and update costs, along with how the tool will be supported beyond the funding period. Identify any proprietary components and specify which resulting products or guidance will be available for broader use.

All submissions must be 10-point font or larger on letter size paper. In the interest of efficiency, the following document length restrictions apply to all submissions:

- *Application* should be 5-7 pages (not including budget forms and Curriculum Vitae)
- *Curriculum Vitae* for each team member should not exceed two pages
- *Literature Cited* should not exceed two pages

Table 1. Submission and Information Dates for KTTD Round 5

Submission and Information & Dates	
Call for Applications	November 10, 2026
KTTD Application Information Session	November 25, 2026, at 1:00 P.M. E.T.
Application Deadline	December 18, 2026, at midnight E.T.
Funding Decisions	January 29, 2027
Submission Email	admin@forestryfutures.com
Forms and Information	www.forestryfutures.ca

Applications must be submitted electronically using the designated forms. Receipt will be acknowledged within two business days. Incomplete or late submissions may be considered ineligible; the FFTC may request clarification or corrections at its discretion.

Review and Funding Decisions

Applications will be screened for completeness and program eligibility and assessed by a review team comprising FFTC members and other experts selected by the Committee. External peer review may be sought as appropriate. Final funding decisions rest with the FFTC; submission does not guarantee funding.

Applications will be assessed using the criteria below, retained from the draft Round 5 scoring matrix:

Table 2. Scoring Matrix for Project Applications

Section	Value
Project Description and Incremental Value	15%
Project Team	20%
Design and Methodology	25%
Schedule	10%
Funding	10%
Knowledge and Technology Transfer	15%
Open-Source Deliverables Content	5%

Eligible Costs and Project Conditions

Eligible costs may include directly related salaries, subcontractors and consultants, reasonable travel at applicable provincial rates, specialized equipment acquired during the first half of the project, supplies, teleconferencing, report production, and overhead/administration up to 10%. Costs of preparing the application, non-specialized fixed capital costs and costs incurred before the approved start date are ineligible. See Appendix B.

Applicants must present achievable schedules, measurable deliverables and a clear transfer plan. Projects spanning fiscal years should provide year-by-year budgets and partner contributions. Funding and reporting requirements, including any advances, holdbacks and payment schedules, will be established through the project authorization process.

Note:
The information collected in this Call for Applications is collected under the authority of the Crown Forest Sustainability Act and is subject to the Freedom of Information and Privacy Protection Act. The results of all projects funded by the Program are deemed to be in the public domain.

Appendix A – Examples of Topics[2]

1. Theme 1: Tools and Products to Advance Forest Resource Inventory (FRI) Production and Continuous Forest Inventory (CFI)

A. Continuous Forest Inventory (CFI)

1. Conduct large-scale CFI proof-of-concept projects within operational Forest Management Units (FMUs) to support operational implementation and policy development.
    - Implement and evaluate the CFI White Paper framework.
    - Build on approaches established through previous ABA KTTD projects.

B. Field Data Collection and Automation

1. Terrestrial LiDAR classification and processing.
    - Automate field data collection workflows.
    - Improve classification accuracy and efficiency.
2. Automate the integration, compilation, and management of field-collected data.

C. Integration of Photo Interpretation and LiDAR-Derived Information

1. Develop object-based image analysis (OBIA) and LiDAR methodologies for species identification and forest characterization.
2. Explore alternative age assignment approaches using LiDAR-derived structural stages as a more robust alternative to traditional layer-based methods.
3. Develop and validate fire fuel load and risk models for Ontario using field samples and T2 LiDAR-derived products to develop model assessment tools.
4. Advance forest data repository and data management solutions through a federated data model.

2. Theme 2: Tools and Products for Clients and Stakeholders

A. Forest Management Planning Support

1. Update and enhance the existing Forest Productivity Layer to support forest management planning.
2. Develop and refine forest characterization products.
    - Fire fuel load and risk assessment tools to support planning activities.

[2] This is a list of topics that are relevant to the four themes and are provided as examples of potential projects.

- Updated productivity layers for the Great Lakes-St. Lawrence (GLSL) region, replacing legacy products derived from 1950s datasets.

3. Automate depletion reporting processes to support annual reporting requirements and approvals.
    - Streamline and automate approval workflows.
4. Develop updated biomass estimates using LiDAR-based inventory and modelling approaches.

3. Theme 3: LiDAR and Single Photon LiDAR Applications

A. Automation and Enhanced Forest Inventory Products

1. Generate additional descriptive attributes to improve stand characterization, including:
    - Basal area and size-class metrics.
    - Enhanced stand silvics classifications beyond traditional layered structure classifications.
2. Support tactical and operational forest management planning through LiDAR-derived information products.
3. Advance fire disturbance monitoring and mapping capabilities.
    - Develop and implement field sampling and validation protocols.

4. Theme 4: Advanced Remote Sensing

A. Disturbance Monitoring and Assessment

1. Develop monitoring approaches for abiotic, biotic, and wildfire-related forest disturbances, including pest impacts across Ontario.

B. Burn Severity Mapping

1. Establish an Ontario-specific burn severity classification framework based on the Composite Burn Index (CBI) that takes Ontario general soil substrates into account.
2. Identify and evaluate new information requirements, including:
    - Field-based measurements and sampling.
    - Emerging sensor technologies and data sources.
3. Integrate burn severity classification into operational monitoring programs through:
    - Comprehensive field assessment and sampling protocols.
    - Utilization of readily available data sources.
    - Automated monitoring workflows.
    - High-resolution, high-frequency data collection and analysis.

This theme will support consistent, scalable, and operationally relevant disturbance monitoring across Ontario's forested landscapes.

Appendix B – Eligible Expenses

- Salaries directly related to project, e.g., graduate and undergraduate students, forest technicians, photo interpreters, etc.
- Consultant/sub-contractor fees directly related to the project
- Reasonable travel costs for work directly related to the project
    - Mileage and per diem meal expenses may not exceed current provincial reimbursement rates
    - Economy accommodation and airfare (if applicable)
- Fixed capital costs including:
    - Related equipment lease/purchase costs (must be specialized equipment directly related to project outcomes and must be purchased/leased/acquired during the first half of the project)
    - Supplies directly related to the project
- Teleconferencing costs
- Report production
- Overhead or administrative costs (up to a maximum of 10 percent)

Please note the following items are ineligible as in-kind expenses or for reimbursement under this Program:

- Preparation of application for funding
- Fixed capital costs that are not specialized equipment, excluding those as defined above
- Costs incurred prior to approved project date