



Opportunity Fund Guidelines

Background

The Islands Trust Fund established the Opportunity Fund in 2004 to support conservation projects in the Islands Trust Area. It is funded by donations from the general public and Islands Trust Fund fundraising initiatives. The Opportunity Fund consists of public donations formerly dedicated to 'general', 'where most needed' and 'undesigned donations'. All proceeds from sales of Islands Trust Fund birthday calendars will be directed to this fund to support our partners. The Islands Trust Fund encourages its donors to give to the Opportunity Fund to support regionally important projects in the Islands Trust Area.

The fund was named the "Opportunity Fund" as the Board wishes to assist partners who are willing to act on conservation opportunities in the Islands Trust Area.

Purpose

The Opportunity Fund's purpose is to provide funding to partner agencies working on regionally important conservation projects. The Fund will generally provide support for 'hard to fundraise' costs associated with land protection or will be used to lever increased donations to land acquisition projects.

Eligible Organizations

As the Islands Trust Fund is a 'qualified donee' of Canada Revenue Agency, Opportunity Fund donations may only be made to registered charities working in the Islands Trust Area to protect natural ecosystems and habitats.

Eligible Requests

Funding requests that support the Trust Fund Board's conservation goals as outlined in the Regional Conservation Plan will be considered a priority.

In general the Board will consider the following types of requests:

1. Acquisition and covenant costs (baseline, survey, appraisal, legal, etc)
2. Acquisition purchase costs where the Board is a partner on the project (used to match designated donations to the Islands Trust Fund for the project on a 1:1 ratio)

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3. Other types of projects may also be considered at the Board's discretion.

The Board may accept or reject requests for funding at their discretion.

Ineligible Requests

The Board will not provide funding towards properties that are involved in a development application.

Request Timelines

The Board will consider funding requests at their bi-monthly board meetings. Meeting dates are available on the Islands Trust Fund website.

Requests should be received in writing two weeks before the meeting date. However, late submissions that are time sensitive may be considered.

Application Requirements

Opportunity Fund request letters to the Trust Fund Board should be addressed to:

Chairperson
Trust Fund Board,
200-1627 Fort St
Victoria BC V8R 1H8

Letters should be no longer than 2-3 pages and should include:

- Information on the organization making the request (budget, staff/volunteers, track record)
- Project history
- Project objectives
- Project partners
- Project timelines
- Project budget and revenues (committed and pending)
- Amount of request
- Whenever possible, applications should explain how their project supports the goals of the Trust Fund Board's regional conservation plan

Opportunity Fund Granting Principles

When evaluating requests the Board will consider:

- Urgency of the request
- Compatibility of the request with the regional conservation plan's goals.
- Stability and track record of the organization making the request.

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Opportunity Fund Management Principles

Distribution Levels

No more than 20% of the balance of the Opportunity Fund (at the date of adoption of these guidelines, and then as of April 1 of each year) will be donated or committed as matching funds in any one fiscal year. Generally, grants will be in the range of \$500-\$5,000.

Restrictions

The Trust Fund Board will not release designated acquisition donations or Opportunity Fund matching funds until it is certain that sufficient funds have been raised to complete the property purchase.

Opportunity Fund monies will not be used for Island Trust Fund property acquisition or management costs or any other regular expenses.

Maintaining the Fund

The Trust Fund Board will solicit donations to the Opportunity Fund on an on-going basis, and especially through its annual donor campaign.

Funding Equity

Regional equity for funds will be considered in the context of the regional conservation plan priorities.

Reviewing and Revising These Guidelines

The Opportunity Fund guidelines will be reviewed, and revised if needed, once a year at the same time as the regional conservation plan.

Partner agencies and the public are welcome to provide feedback to the Trust Fund Board on these guidelines and can direct their comments in writing to the Board Chairperson at the address given above.