



## GUIDELINES

### WHAT IS FISH IN SCHOOLS?

Fish in Schools (FinS) is a provincial fisheries education program, delivered by Bow Habitat Station. The program provides Alberta schools the opportunity to raise rainbow trout in their classrooms. Students and teachers create healthy aquarium habitats to raise 65 rainbow trout. Trout are then released into government approved waterbodies.

### PROGRAM GOALS

FinS aligns with learning objectives identified in Alberta Education's Program of Studies at every grade level (K-12).

The program fosters an awareness and appreciation of Alberta's fish species and demonstrates the importance of healthy aquatic ecosystems. Throughout the program, students and teachers will work together to:

- Maintain a healthy aquarium environment for trout, from egg to fry;
- Release rainbow trout fry into an approved provincial waterbody;
- Study and investigate trout life cycles and stages, habitats, needs and adaptations;
- Learn about Alberta's fish and threats to their survival; and,
- Develop an awareness of human impacts and actions on aquatic ecosystems.

### APPLICATION PROCESS

School must be within Alberta. A limited number of schools can be accommodated in the FinS program. An annual application process allows new participants into the program and allows schools in good standing to reapply, repeatedly, in the program. Schools applying to the program must make financial and resource commitments to be eligible:

- Identify two responsible school coordinators (applicants); at least one of whom is in a permanent role with the school (a teacher, librarian, or administration);
- Invest in aquarium start-up costs (~\$1,500-\$1,700) and maintain aquarium equipment;
- Annual supplies to run the aquarium (~\$100/year); media filters, water conditioners, water quality testing;
- Cover field trip costs to release fish; and,
- Commit to program guidelines.

FinS is an intensive, five-month fisheries education program.

**Your classroom aquarium and trout will require continuous monitoring and care, regardless of school closures and holidays. Be sure to read and fully understand the commitment and responsibilities of participation in this program.**

New and returning program participants must fill out an application form on an annual basis.

### CONTACT INFORMATION

FinS Education Portal:  
<https://talkaep.alberta.ca/fish-in-schools>

Bow Habitat Station Website:  
<http://bowhabitat.alberta.ca/>

FinS Email  
[Fins.program@gov.ab.ca](mailto:Fins.program@gov.ab.ca)



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### STRUCTURE AND ROLES

**Bow Habitat Station** manages the delivery of the FinS program and is responsible for the delivery of healthy rainbow trout eggs, training and resources to schools participating in the program. The FinS Coordinator will assist the schools in coordination and troubleshooting.

**Schools** must designate two School Coordinators (applicants). Both School Coordinators are responsible for meeting the terms of the Fish Research Licence and the program requirements, including:

- Purchasing initial set-up and replacement equipment;
- Setting up and maintaining the aquarium;
- Assist in coordinating egg pick-up/delivery;
- Coordinating return of egg delivery supplies back to Bow Habitat Station;
- Monitoring, and maintaining a healthy aquarium environment;
- Monitoring, and documenting fish development and health;
- Participating in the virtual training for release events in April;
- Coordinating the class/school's participation and transportation for the release of their fish into a provincially-approved water body;
- Maintaining and submitting required program documents; and,
- Disinfecting aquarium equipment at the end of the year.

If a project has an extensive mortality rate (>50%) for two consecutive years, a review will be conducted to determine possible solutions. This review may require documented information that School Coordinators must maintain throughout the project.

**Anyone (person, agency or institution) whose work involves collecting, holding or sampling fish for inventory, research, educational or promotional purposes in Alberta must obtain a Fish Research License (FRL).**

**Bow Habitat Station** is responsible for obtaining FRL's from an Alberta Fisheries Biologist.

**Schools** are responsible for adhering to the requirements of the FRL to participate in FinS.