What kind of projects will be funded?

Projects must be inquiry-based, with students researching and implementing solutions to real environmental issues in Alberta.

What is inquiry? Do we need to use the inquiry model provided or can we use an alternative approach?

Inquiry-based learning fosters a sense of wonder and curiosity in students learning about their world. Studies have demonstrated that inquiry-based learning encourages deeper understanding of subject matter, promotes creative problem solving and develops transferable skills.

ESAC challenges students to identify and find real environmental issues to solve in their community. Through shared group experiences, individual research, question generation and consulting experts, the primary goal is to provide an authentic learning experience and connect students to our province's land, air, water and biodiversity.

There are many inquiry-based learning models. For this funding, you are welcome to use any model that suits the needs of your students. Please see the reporting requirements for further details about how to share the findings of the inquiry projects.

Can we pick the environmental issue to base our project on?

Yes! Projects should be rooted in the principals of inquiry-based learning, with a focus on researching local environmental issues. As students are the driving factors for successful inquiry-based projects, we recommend soliciting your class and selecting topics that are of interest or are relevant to them.

If your students are struggling to identify a topic of inquiry, Alberta Environment and Parks has several recommended issues for exploration, such as:

- **Fighting aliens:** By identifying invasive species in water or on land, students could work on projects to remove weeds, plant local shrubs or educate their community about the risks of introduced species.

- **Making a splash**: By monitoring indicators of water quality or quantity, students could contribute to Alberta databases, compare water quality year to year or create awareness of the importance of watersheds.

- **Clearing the air:** By monitoring or researching air quality, students could design educational tools to teach about the impacts of poor air quality to our health and the environment.

- **Discovering our wild world**: By tracking and documenting wildlife, students could use wildlife camera data to record biodiversity data, compare species richness within ecosystems or foster appreciation for local animals.

How do we apply?

Apply by completing an application form at:
https://www.alberta.ca/environmental-student-action-challenge.aspx

When is the deadline?

The deadline to submit an application is **4:30 p.m. on October 31, 2022**

Who can submit a proposal?

Any team of grade 3 to grade 12 students attending school in Alberta that have an adult supervisor and principal support may apply.

Alberta

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How much funding is available?
Approximately five awards of up to $500 and ten awards of up to $1,000 are available.

Where does the funding come from?
Funding for these grants comes from the Government of Alberta's Ministry of Environment and Parks.

What supports are provided to the recipients?
If your inquiry-based project is selected, we recommend that you reach out to subject matter experts in your local area to help guide your team as needed. Additionally, the ESAC team will reach out to your team throughout the year and may be able to provide suggested resources to ensure your project meets its milestones.

Virtual educational programs are also available to purchase through Bow Habitat Station. The fee for up to four classes is $80 per session. Note that the ESAC funding cannot be used to purchase this program.

What is the difference between applying for a grant of up to $500 and a grant up to $1,000?
The process for applying for the two grants is the same, but more detail is expected in applications for grants of $501–$1,000. Projects for grants of $501-$1,000 are also expected to have a larger environmental impact and further reach than projects for grants of up to $500.

Is this an individual or team challenge?
This is a team challenge for groups of two or more. Individual applications are not eligible.

What can teams spend the funding on?
Teams can spend the funding on project materials and supplies. You cannot spend the money on things items for which you already have funding. Full funding requirements can be found in the Application Handbook.

How many projects can be funded per school?
A maximum of two projects may be funded per school.

If my students develop a project that has the potential to go on past the end date, will we get ongoing funding?
The project may continue beyond the end date of May 31, 2023 though only unique additions to the project may be funded in subsequent years. If the project will be expanded on or added to in subsequent years, a new proposal can be submitted for consideration under the program. Students can also look for additional funding through community grants or corporate sponsorship to fund unique components of the project.

Are there any reporting requirements?
Yes. All grant recipients must provide a short project reflection in June. Full reporting details can be found in the Application Handbook in the "Important Documents" section.

Can we ask people who aren't on our project team to help us with our project?
Yes! Collaboration with other groups and individuals is encouraged.

Where can I find further detailed information about the Environmental Student Action Challenge?
More information on the ESAC is available in the Application Handbook under "Important Documents". The Application Handbook includes further details, including the evaluation rubric. If you have additional questions please email **Student.Action@gov.ab.ca.**