ONTARIO ABORIGINAL
LANDS ASSOCIATION

CALL FOR EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST (EOI) ADDITIONS TO RESERVE (ATR) 2025-2026 DIRECT SUPPORT PROGRAM

The Ontario Aboriginal Lands Association (OALA) is accepting applications for the Additions to Reserve (ATR) Direct Support Program. This is an opportunity for the project manager and/or staff from two to three First Nation participants to receive assistance from the OALA's ATR Unit navigating your First Nation's ATR project. This one-year program is supported through partnerships with Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) and Urban Systems Ltd.

The ATR Direct Support Program will assist First Nations with the process of adding land to reserve. The Program will provide up to 10 months of limited project financial supports and one-year of technical support with the aim to provide the necessary tools, resources, and technical support for First Nation project managers and/or lands staff to navigate the complexities of adding land to reserve.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the ATR Direct Support Program include:

- ✓ Provide user friendly resources to support the navigation of the ATR process
- ✓ In person and virtual support:
    - Build understanding of the ATR process, including the technical and legal requirements
    - Pre-planning: Relationship building and early consultation
    - Work planning and budgeting
    - How to complete and then make the ATR proposal to ISC
- ✓ Information and networking with subject matter experts (legal, surveyors, appraisers, etc.)
- ✓ Develop capacity building and engagement tools to engage with First Nations and Municipalities
    - o Community Updates
    - o Engaging Chief and Council
    - o External Stakeholders (i.e. Municipalities, 3rd Party Interests, etc.)
- ✓ Support and training on NATS (National Additions to Reserve Tracking System)
- ✓ Consistent and ongoing resource support through the OALA ATR Unit

WHO SHOULD APPLY?

✓ OALA member First Nations who have demonstrated the need for assistance in navigating any part of the ATR process and are seeking to make a new proposal to ISC or have an existing proposal that would benefit from additional support and guidance.

✓ Applicants will be selected via an application process and selected by a panel with experience in First Nation land use planning, management, and ATR.

See **Appendix C (Applicant Eligibility Requirements)** of this EOI document for more information.

IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS FOR APPLICANTS

✓ Participants will have regular access to subject matter experts, and support to assist with navigating the ATR process.

✓ Participants will be required to submit monthly updates to monitor progress on the various stages of the ATR Direct Support Program

✓ Participants will be required to participate in and complete all stages of the program to be eligible for potential funding opportunities

✓ Applicants may be required to share with or provide certain elements of legal agreements to OALA (e.g. land claim settlement agreement) that relate to the transfer of land and reserve creation if accepted into the ATR Phase II Pilot Project
  o *OALA is willing to enter into non-disclosure agreement with First Nation participants ahead of sharing any sensitive information (e.g. land claim settlement agreement) related to the undertaking of the ATR Phase II Pilot Project.*

Note: This Program is not intended to provide legal advice in any capacity or replace the services of legal professionals that may be required in an ATR proposal.

APPLICATION REVIEW AND SELECTION PROCESS

| **Applications submitted by April 30, 2025 to OALA ATR Support Coordiantor.** | **Intitial review and vetting by OALA Review Team to select list of preferred applicants.** (May 7, 2025) | **Preferred applicant interviews (as required) with OALA Review Team.** (May 7-14, 2025) | **Recommendations for applicant entry made to OALA Selection Committee and selections confirmed.** (May 15, 2025) | **Successful Applicants notified of entry into program.** (May 15-22, 2025) |

ONE-YEAR PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Successful Applicants will participate in a one-year program and will receive Project support services from the OALA ATR Unit in the areas of capacity development and ATR knowledge, work planning and budgeting, relationship and partnership development, and reviewing technical reports, in addition to accessing potential funding to support project work on a case-by-case basis. The program encourages collaboration between First Nations, government bodies and other stakeholders to assist in developing a personalized plan for your First Nation's specific ATR needs.

Program Topic	Learning Objectives
Kick off meeting with successful Applicants	The OALA ATR Unit will meet virtually with the successful Applicants to review the program objectives and discuss program expectations
Understanding the ATR Process	Review of the ATR Process and the key requirements and steps necessary to navigate an ATR.
Program Overview	Review of ATR Direct Support Program including: • Project timelines and schedules • Resource overview • Roles and responsibilities
Understanding your individual ATR	An overview of your current ATR proposal. If applicable, the history of the ATR already ongoing.
Project Management	Successful Applicants will be given hands on project management training specific to ATR proposals and related processes.
Tools, Resource Documents/Templates	Successful Applicants will be given hands on training and assistance with the tools developed to assist in the ATR process such as workplans, budgets, communication pieces, etc.
NATS National Additions to Reserve Tracking System (NATS).	Participants will be trained on NATS and will receive assistance with building their ATR proposal using NATS.
Land Use Planning (LUP) initiatives/activities	How to incorporate ATR into new or existing LUP initiatives and activities and review how your ATR may accomplish existing LUP objectives.
Mentorship and Engagement	Successful Applicants will have opportunities throughout the program to meet, engage, and share best practices with other successful Applicants.

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1-YEAR SCHEDULE

2025-2026

Program Deliverable	Date
1. Kick off Meeting with Successful Applicants (Virtual)	June 2025
2. Applicant Signing of Program Terms of Reference (ToR)	June 2025
3. Identification and Collection of Existing Documents • Collection of information by OALA project team • Identification of missing documents required for ATR submission	June 2025
4. ATR Project Management Training and Planning • Potential in-person sessions (location TBD) • Development of ATR Project Management Plan for each applicant	June 2025 - July 2025
5. Individual Support to Successful Applicants (Virtual and In-Person) • Implementation of Project Management Plans • Complete Phase 1 of the ATR process (ATR proposal submission) • Further assistance to advance ATR proposal within given program timeframe as opportunities exist on an applicant-by-applicant basis	July 2025 - March 2026
6. Pilot Program Completion and Reporting	March 2026

DISCLAIMER:

Entry into the ATR Direct Support Program does not guarantee the completion of the ATR process and reserve creation within the program's timeframe. ATR completion is dependent on the conditions and context of the individual brought forward. The ATR Direct Support Program intends to help participants gain the tools and knowledge necessary to complete ATR process requirements.

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APPLICATION FORM

Application Deadline: Wednesday, April 30, 2025, at 4:30 p.m. EST
(due to project timelines late applications will not be accepted)

Applicant **(First Nation or Organization)**	
OALA Member	☐ Yes ☐ No

Which Land Regime does your First Nation operate under:

☐ **Indian Act, (if applicable, select below)**
   o Reserve Land and Environment Management Program (RLEMP)
   o 53/60 Delegated Authority

☐ **Developmental under the Framework Agreement on First Nation Land Management (FNLM)**
   o What stage of the process are you in?

   _____

☐ **Operational under the Framework Agreement on First Nation Land Management (FNLM)**
   o When did you become operational?

   _____

Does your community have an established Lands Department?
☐ Yes
☐ No

Has your community submitted an ATR Application?
☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ Currently developing in NATS
☐ Unsure

Does your community have a current ATR?
☐ Yes, (if known, provide NATS # and ISC Officer: _____)
☐ No

If yes, please provide a brief description of the ATR proposal currently underway:

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If yes, what Phase (see Directive 10-2 of the ATR Policy) of the ATR process is this ATR proposal in:

☐ Phase 1- Initiation

☐ Phase 2 – Assessment and Review

☐ Phase 3 - Proposal Completion

☐ Unsure

If yes, please answer the following to the best of your ability:

Location and size (acres/hectares) of the ATR Lands:

Description of the Land (legal description, address, PIN number):

Is your ATR proposal a result of:

☐ Legal Obligations and Agreements

    o If yes, name/date of Agreement:

    _____

    o If yes, is Canada a party to the Agreement? _____

☐ Tribunal Decision

    o If yes, date of Tribunal Decision:

☐ No

☐ Unknown

Who owns the lands being proposed for ATR:

☐ Lands held in Fee Simple by [insert name] _____

☐ Lands are provincial Crown lands [name of ministry] _____

☐ Lands are federal Crown lands [name of federal department] _____

☐ Lands are held by a municipality [name of municipality] _____

Are the lands proposed for ATR related to any of the following (select all that apply):

☐ Community Development

☐ Economic and Business Development

☐ Urban Reserve Development

☐ Cultural Development and preservation

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☐ Treaty Rights protection

☐ Conservation or Environmental Protection

Does your First Nation have an ATR Working Group, such as a committee or a dedicated team of staff, established as a result of a legal Agreement or a similar group or committee dedicated to advancing ATR for your First Nation?

☐ Yes

☐ No

☐ Unsure

What area of your ATR are you experiencing difficulties with?

☐ Developing the Initial Proposal

☐ Undertaking Technical requirements for an existing proposal

☐ Addressing technical issues with an existing proposal

Please indicate any training/workshops/conferences you've attended with regards to ATR.

☐ NALMA ATR Toolkit

☐ OALA ATR Toolkit

☐ Virtual Events

☐ NATS Training

☐ ISC

☐ LABRC

☐ OTHER _____

Please rate your level of experience in the following areas:	No experience	Some Experience	Moderate Experience	Extensive Experience
ATR's	☐	☐	☐	☐
Applying for Funding	☐	☐	☐	☐
Community Engagement	☐	☐	☐	☐
Surveys	☐	☐	☐	☐
Appraisals	☐	☐	☐	☐
Environmental Site Assessments	☐	☐	☐	☐
Permits, Leases, etc.	☐	☐	☐	☐
Negotiating Agreements (e.g. service agreements)	☐	☐	☐	☐
Ontario Land Registration (e.g. land title)	☐	☐	☐	☐

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What would you like to gain from participating in the ATR Support Program?

Describe your First Nation's need to increase capacity for navigating an ATR?

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APPLICANT CONTACT INFORMATION

PRIMARY CONTACT INFORMATION

First Name:		Last Name:	
Department:		Position:	
Email:		Phone:	

_____   _____
Signature   Date

ALTERNATE CONTACT INFORMATION

First Name:		Last Name:	
Department:		Position:	
Email:		Phone:	

_____ _____   _____
Signature   Date

Check Your Application:

- ☐ Completed Application Form with Applicant Signatures
- ☐ Demonstrated need to increase capacity in ATR's
- ☐ OALA member in good standing (Fees up to date for the 2025-2026 Fiscal Year)
- ☐ Band Council Resolution (BCR) from Chief and Council demonstrating support for application (see attached application BCR template)

Due to limited capacity, applications will be assessed based on demonstrated need.

Completed application to be sent via email to:

Georgette Howard
ATR Support Coordinator

atr@oala-on.ca
_____

For Office Use Only:

Date Received: _____   Time Received: _____

Confirmed OALA Member in Good Standing: ☐ Yes ☐ No

Application Accepted: ☐ Yes ☐ No

APPENDIX A – SCOPE OF SERVICES

The following scope of services may be provided to the successful applicants that are dependent on a variety of factors, including the applicant's internal project team and capacity, ATR proposal and related parcel(s), status of the ATR proposal, and other internal and external factors.

The Pilot Program objective, within the 1-year timeframe of the program, is to complete Phase 1 of the ATR process, which involves the completion and submission of an ATR proposal to the ISC NATS system. Further assistance may be provided for further phases of the ATR process if they are reached within the one-year project period.

The table below provides an overview of the scope of services that may be provided to the applicant for the different phases of the ATR process.

Phase and Item	Scope of Services
Phase 1 Initiation	
Project Management / Planning	• Project management training and capacity building. • Preparation of an ATR work plan, budget, project team, and funding opportunities • Preparation of community engagement and communications plan • Identifying required technical and legal services and providers
Additions-to-Reserve Proposal Submission	• Collection of all required information for NATS submission • Preparation and support of the required BCR for Chief and Council • Education and capacity building on using the NATS systems • ATR proposal submission using the NATS system, including all required documentation
Capacity Building	• General education and awareness building at Council and administrative levels • Community engagement support, including communication and engagement material preparation (in-person facilitation not included) • Support in engaging and communicating with local governments, First Nations, and Ontario government • Technical coaching and capacity building for land management professionals
Preliminary Land Use Planning	• Land use opportunities and constraints desktop reviews of ATR parcels • Identification of potential land uses for ATR parcels (for purposes of supporting the ATR proposal)
Phase 2 Assessment and Review	
Coordination	• Support communication and coordination activities between ISC/Canada and the applicant
Phase 3 Proposal Completion (Technical and Legal Requirements)	
Survey	• Reviewing land survey instructions provided from Canada • Supporting the procurement of a legal surveyor, including preparation of procurement documents (e.g. RFQ) if required

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Environmental	• Supporting the procurement of environmental services to complete a Phase 1 ESA (and additional environmental assessments as required) • Reviewing environmental reports and providing technical guidance to the applicant (as required) • Coordinating with Canada/ISC on additional environmental assessment and remediation activities required
3rd Party Interest Support	• Proactive identification of 3rd Party Interests (as part of Phase 1 activities) • Identifying strategies to address and rectify 3rd party interests • Identifying replacement tenure options and supporting the development and registration of related instruments • Providing support in engaging with 3rd party interest holders (where applicable) that does not involve legal agreements or negotiations • General coordination with ISC and Ontario on 3rd party interests • Procurement of legal services (as required) to support 3rd party interest rectification ***Note: this does not include and legal counsel or services that may be required.***
Municipal Service Agreements	• Identification of municipal servicing requirements (as part of Phase 1 activities) • Engagement and communications support with local governments • Facilitation of Government-to-Government meetings • Strategic support in establishing required agreements, including MSAs and MOUs • Community engagement support (local government focus) ***Note: this does not include and legal counsel or services that may be required.***
Other Activities	• Appraisals • Identify strategies to address other requirements and special conditions as they emerge

Phase 4 Approval	
Approval Coordination	• Support engagement and communications between the ISC and Canada (as required)

Services Not Included	
Technical and Legal Services Not Included	• Completion of ESA and supplementary environmental work (e.g. Phase II-III, remediation activities, etc.). • Completion of legal survey(s) • Legal services required for the development and execution of legal agreements and documentation • Real Property Appraisals as completed by a certified appraiser

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APPENDIX B – Band Council Resolution (BCR) Template

The following template BCR text may be used by the applicant to fulfill the application requirement for a BCR from Chief and Council, expressing support for the application to the ATR Direct Support Program. If the applicant opts to use their own BCR text, we ask that it reflects the contents of the template provided below.

The Council of the: (insert First Nation name)				

Date of duly convened meeting	Day	Month	Year	Province Ontario

WHEREAS (*insert First Nation name*) seeks to expand its reserve land base through the Federal Additions-to-Reserve (ATR) process in the immediate future and has identified a specific parcel(s) of land to include in an ATR proposal to Indigenous Services Canada (ISC);

WHEREAS, Chief and Council of *(insert First Nation name)* support the submission of an application to the 2025-2026 OALA ATR Direct Support Program to receive technical assistance and funding support (as available);

WHEREAS, Chief and Council of *(insert First Nation)* are aware of the ATR Direct Support Program eligibility and application requirements and confirm that accurate information has been provided in the application to the best ability of the applicant;

WHEREAS, Chief and Council of *(insert First Nation name)* recognize the ATR Direct Support Program aims to advance an ATR proposal being undertaken by *(insert First Nation name)* through the delivery of technical assistance and potential funding support and does not focus on advocacy or other efforts focused on amending existing legislation, policy, and processes for ATR;

WHEREAS, upon successfully entry into the ATR Direct Support Program, Chief and Council of *(insert First Nation name)* agree to sign a Terms of Reference document outlining the specific technical assistance and potential funding supports that will be provided over the programs timeline as included in the Expression of Interest (EOI) document; and

WHEREAS, upon successful entry into the ATR Direct Support Program, Chief and Council of *(insert First Nation name)* understand that the sharing of sensitive information (e.g. Claim/Settlement Agreement) with OALA may be required as a condition of entry into the program; and

WHEREAS Chief and Council confirm that a dedicated representative of (insert First Nation name) will be appointed as the ATR Direct Support Program lead and be responsible for working with OALA's ATR Support Coordinator and technical advisory team consisting of ISC, NALMA, and program consultant representatives throughout the duration of the program.

NOW THEREFORE, be it resolved that Chief and Council of *(insert First Nation name)* support the following:

a) An application be made on behalf of *(insert First Nation name)* for entry into the 2025-2026 OALA ATR Direct Support Program and submitted to the OALA ATR Support Coordinator by April 30, 2025.

SIGNATURE BOX (with quorum)
Chief and Council

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APPENDIX C – APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Criteria	
First Nation Applicant Requirements	• The applicant must be a First Nation government and current OALA member. • First Nation organizations (e.g. Tribal Council) representing a First Nation who is a current OALA member may be considered, but preference will be given to individual First Nations. • The Chief and Council of the First Nation applicant must express support for the application to the program through a Band Council Resolution signed by a quorum of the Chief and Council. • First Nation applicants who are applying to the Direct Support Program to advance a Comprehensive of Specific Claim involving land transfer and reserve creation may be required to provide legal documentation specifying the lands and conditions for transfer and reserve creation (e.g. TLE Lands Settlement Agreement). • The First Nation applicant must have a dedicated staff position in place (e.g. Lands Manager, officer, or other position) who is responsible for managing and advancing ATR proposals.
Land Requirements **(e.g. land, parcel, property included in the application)**	• Preference will be given to First Nation applicants who are seeking support for reserve creation proposals that include one parcel/property. Applications for support for reserve creation proposals that include multiple parcels/properties may be considered. • The First Nation applicant must have ownership of the parcel/property subject to the application or a legal agreement (e.g. Settlement Agreement) that identifies the specific parcel/property to be included in a transfer and reserve creation process. • The property(s) subject to the application, if privately owned by the First Nation applicant, must be owned/held through a corporation (e.g. land holding company). Property(s) where ownership (e.g. title) is under the First Nation will not be considered for entry into the program. • Property(s) with existing or historic uses that are known to contain or pose significant risk for environmental contamination will not be considered for acceptance into the program.

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