

Call for Submissions BRC-Innovation Grant Programme – 2024



1. Overview:

The Brain Repair Centre BRC-Innovation Grant Programme is intended to enhance the BRC's mission to improve brain and neurological health outcomes for Nova Scotians and elsewhere. The BRC-Innovation programme is designed to support new research discoveries that will have broader impact outside the immediate research/academic community.

Innovation occurs along a spectrum of activities. As such, the BRC-Innovation programme will provide funding for proof of principle research projects related to neurological health that support high-risk or high-reward research. The proposals should critically test a key hypothesis to demonstrate the feasibility of an approach that could lead to new avenues of research and leverage additional funding from larger granting agencies or commercial investors.

Grant requests in the range of \$5,000-\$30,000 CDN will be considered, to be spent over a 12-18-month period. It is anticipated that up to three (3) grants will be awarded in this round of applications.

The specific objectives must include ANY of the following:

- The development of proof of principle research projects related to neurological health that support high-risk, or high-reward, research for continuing innovation or commercialization
- Validation of data to increase grant capture
- Determine the potential for commercial viability, etc.
- Provide the opportunity to strengthen the value of IP
- Promote economic development through neuroscience research in the DAL/NSH/IWK community

All proposals MUST include a description of how this research will be used to leverage additional funding from larger granting agencies (e.g., CIHR, NSERC, SSHRC) or commercial investors.

2. Eligibility:

For your application to be eligible, it must fit the following criteria:

- The Principal Applicant must be a member of BRC since September 01, 2023
- The focus of the application must be directly related to medical neuroscience research
- Demonstrate how this research will move this knowledge along the spectrum towards improving neurological health that could lead to fundamentally new avenues of research and/or to leverage additional funding
- There must be evidence in the application documenting how the proposed research builds upon the researcher's preliminary evidence
- The Principal Applicant must be an independent researcher; applications from graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, resident-physicians, and other learners/trainees will not be accepted or considered
- Applicants must have an established track record of provincial, national and/or international peer-reviewed funding from well-recognized agencies for research in areas related to the proposed project
- Summaries of all held grants must accompany this grant application

Additional note for previous applicants: If you have applied for a BRC Knowledge Translation (KT) grant in the past, your application must be a new request OR if a follow on from previous grant must demonstrate substantial progress including a summary of expenditures from previous grant AND be a substantially distinct program versus a continuation of previous KT grant.

3. Guidelines for Application Preparation:

3.1. Application format:

- One inch (2.54 cm) margins, all four edges, (8.5 x 11 inch paper)
- 12 pt. font (one of Times New Roman, Arial or Calibri); except cited bibliographic references which may be given in 10 pt. font; single-spaced
- All pages numbered, lower right corner
- No appended manuscripts (either published or in press); no attached protocols or supplementary data or information packages
- Exception: a single letter (maximum length 2 pages) from an industrial or commercial partner or sponsor in support of the application may be appended
- Any and all additional or extraneous materials will be removed and discarded.

3.2. Application Components:

A full application will be comprised of a cover page and four modules, as detailed below:

1. Lay Summary
2. Programme Description
3. Budget
4. CV

Cover Page (1 page)

The cover page will contain the title, and the names and full addresses (including telephone number and e-mail) of the principal investigator (PI) and all co-applicants. It must be signed by the PI and all co-applicants, and by the Department Head for the department in which the PI holds his/her primary appointment. Co-applicants may be from universities, hospitals, government laboratories or industrial laboratories from any other province or country.

However, the funding requested must remain with the DAL/NSH/IWK institutional complex (with the only exception being fee for service analyses, data acquisition or assays being done by a contract research organization (CRO) laboratory).

Module 1: Lay Summary

Provide a lay summary to be shared publicly and a scientific summary for the reviewers (~500 words combined).

Module 2: Programme Description - max 3 pages*, to include:

- A description of the research objectives and how they demonstrate novelty of the innovation
- Action plan (i.e., what work is being proposed)
- Anticipated outcomes AND how BRC-Innovation funding will leverage additional funding from larger granting agencies or commercial investors

*References and figures can be included - up to a maximum of 3 additional pages

Module 3: Budget Request and Justification - max. 2 pages, to include:

- Budget Request (1 page)
List of items and/or services for which funding is requested
- Budget Justification (1 page)
Complete justification for the funding requested. Quotes for services or pieces of equipment (<\$5,000) are requested, but not mandatory. In addition, include a statement of milestones and timeline

Module 4: Curriculum Vitae

The CIHR Biosketch format must be used (<https://ccv-cvc.ca>; type in CIHR as Funding Source and choose CIHR Biosketch as CV type) for the principal applicant; no other CV format will be accepted.

Note: Applicants who have not prepared a CIHR CV in the past are advised that this document requires a substantial amount of work to prepare.

4. Eligible and Ineligible Expenses

4.1 Eligible expenses

A representative (but not all-inclusive) listing of example eligible expenses is as follows:

- Materials consumed during the project
- Funding of subcontractors and consultants to permit/facilitate key experiments
- Fee-for-service data acquisition and analyses, construct preparation, animal care costs, assays, or custom mouse model production
- IP Due diligence
- Patenting and prototyping expenses
- Consulting fees associated with business plan preparation or business-related advice
- Salaries (e.g., student stipends, fellowships, and technical support).

4.2 Ineligible expenses

A representative (but not all-inclusive) listing of example **ineligible** expenses is as follows:

- Salary support of principal or any other named applicant
- Any expenses incurred at an institution (university or hospital) other than Dalhousie University; IWK Health Centre; Nova Scotia Health Authority
- Any piece of equipment of value greater than \$5,000 CDN (this is not an equipment grant programme)
- Retiring existing or already incurred debts
- Building renovations and/or any structural or infrastructure modifications, even if deemed “essential” to completion of the described research
- Company registration costs
- Operating costs such as rent, rates, furniture etc.
- Travel costs

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Funds Available:

Grant requests in the range of \$5,000-\$30,000 CDN will be considered. Requests exceeding \$30,000 will not be considered, even under exceptional circumstances. It is anticipated that up to three (3) Innovation grants will be funded during the 2024 funding period.

5. Evaluation Criteria:

The BRC grant submissions will be evaluated by an independent peer review panel. It includes an established evaluation framework and discussion amongst the reviewers to finalize decisions.

Each application is evaluated on its own merit in relation to the objectives of the BRC-Innovation Programme. Items that will be considered by the selection committee will include the following:

- Originality of the programme
- Relevance of project and how it aligns with the overall mission of the Brain Repair Centre
- A clear description of the operational plan that demonstrates knowledge translation/innovation for use outside the immediate research/academic community
- Demonstrate how the proposal will move the overall programme towards broader application
- Identification of potential hurdles and how they will be addressed
- Anticipated outcomes AND how the grant will be used to leverage additional funding
- Track record of the applicant(s)

6. Submission Process

Applicants are requested to submit the full application in .pdf format, with CV* of the PI only (in a separate .pdf file) via email to brainrepair@dal.ca on or before: **January 10, 2024**

*CV format should be CIHR Biosketch format.

It is anticipated that results will be posted by end of February 2024.