

## Application Guidelines

### Internal Research Grants – NSE Stream

Overview	
Value	Maximum \$4,000 per application; combined maximum including other Internal Research Grants (Seed and Impact) is \$5000 per year.
Term	Start date is the application deadline. Maximum up to 1 year
Application Deadlines	May 15 <sup>th</sup>
Results Announced	Usually within 3 weeks after deadline
How to Apply	Email complete submission as a single PDF document to <a href="mailto:research@concordia.ab.ca">research@concordia.ab.ca</a>

#### Description

The Office of Research Services is pleased to announce the launch of the **NSE Grant** program. These awards are specific for projects in the areas of Natural Sciences and Engineering. The Concordia University of Edmonton **NSE Grants** provide funding for eligible faculty in the Natural Sciences and Engineering for research projects aimed at supporting the preparation of applications for NSERC Grants in the Discovery and Alliance Programs. Grants awarded through this fund serve as seed funding to carry out essential developmental work that will be used to generate research required or an application, including:

- Proof-of-concept experiments to support the project hypothesis
- Employment of Research Assistants
- Purchase of reagents, non-CUE-provided equipment, fees for services for equipment use (i.e., flow cytometry, DNA sequencing, etc.), or other expenses directly related to the project and for which the Department does not provide direct funding
- Purchase of software not provided by CUE
- Computer upgrades not provided by CUE (specialized video cards, hard drives, specialized computer screens) as needed for the research
- Research article publication costs, when required to enhance CV for application
- Employment of Research Assistants to help the Faculty Member in the preparation of the application, including literature searches, experimental design and execution, or other
- Other expenses directly related to an application

**NSE Grants** are intended to strengthen a vibrant research culture in the Natural Sciences and Engineering at Concordia University of Edmonton and to develop and support research and innovation, enhancing competitiveness in Tri- Agency and other external funding opportunities.

#### Special considerations for **NSE Grants**

Due to the nature of these awards, the proposed research project must meet NSERC's subject matter eligibility requirements. Successful recipients must agree to submit an application to the NSERC Discovery Grant or to the Alliance Grant within two years of the award start date.

Knowledge dissemination activities (i.e. conference travel) are not eligible. However, networking activities (e.g., research travel, workshops) related to the preparation of a grant application to NSERC are eligible, and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Applicants are encouraged to read the details of the NSERC [Discovery Grant](#) and [Alliance](#) Programs. Funds from these awards cannot be used as cash or in-kind contributions for Alliance grant applications.

### **Value and Duration**

The grant start date is the deadline of the application. Once awarded, grant funds remain active for one year from the deadline of the application submission. After completion, funds will expire, and unused funds will be reclaimed. The maximum level of support is \$4,000 for an application. The maximum total of \$5000 in combined grants (including NSE, Impact Grants and Seed Grants) per year applies. As the demand for funds normally far exceeds the funds available, not all meritorious proposals can be adequately supported

### **Deadlines**

Application deadline are midnight (Mountain Time).

- May 15<sup>th</sup>

Late submissions will not be accepted, and incomplete applications will not be considered. Results are usually announced within 3 weeks of the deadline; however, timelines may vary depending on the number of applications received.

It is the sole responsibility of the applicant to ensure compliance with these Guidelines during the application process and for the duration of the award, if successful.

### **COVID-19 considerations (transitory)**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, activities that include travel are not allowed. The Office of Research Services regularly notifies members of CUE of changes to research activities via Inside CUE. Please consult this newsletter regularly for information related to how COVID-19 affects our grant streams.

## Eligibility

The primary applicant must be a Concordia University of Edmonton faculty member at the time of application. Non-regular faculty members interested in taking part in this program are encouraged to partner as co-applicants with regular faculty members. Team grants led by an eligible applicant with one or more co-applicants or collaborators (academic, industry, and non-profit organizations) are accepted.

Investigators who hold NSERC Discovery Grant funding are ineligible to apply under the NSE program to prepare another application to the same program. However, they may use these funds to prepare an application to the Alliance program.

While the applicant can have an appointment in any of the faculties at CUE, the proposed research project must meet NSERC's subject matter eligibility requirements. This is an excerpt from the ["Selecting the Appropriate Federal Granting Agency" website](#):

### ***General Guidelines for the Eligibility of Subject Matter at NSERC***

*Applications to NSERC as the primary source of research or research training support must meet the following criteria:*

- 1. The program of research must be primarily in the natural sciences and engineering, other than the health sciences (i.e., aligned with NSERC's function legislated in the NSERC Act); and*
- 2. The intended objective(s) of the research must primarily be to advance knowledge in one or more of the natural science or engineering disciplines.*

According to CUE's Internal Research Grant Policy, applicants are allowed a maximum of two unsuccessful applications in any twelve-month term.

Research and Faculty Development Committee members may apply to the **NSE Grant** program; however, they may not participate in the adjudication process.

All applicants must have completed and reported on any previously funded Internal Research Grants and must be in good standing with the Concordia Research Ethics Board. Ineligible applications will be removed without adjudication.

## Multiple Applications

For each deadline, applicants may apply for one **NSE Grant**, with one additional application under the Seed and Impact programs (maximum of 2 applications in total submitted in a call for applications). Researchers may only hold one **NSE Grant** per any twelve-month period.

## Reviewers

Applications are assessed by the Research and Faculty Development Committee. The Research and Faculty Development Committee is composed of continuing faculty members from across the Concordia University community. Each faculty will have representation on the committee. The committee provides a cross-section of research experience, methodological approaches, and

disciplinary knowledge. Applications should be crafted so that they can be reasonably evaluated by a multidisciplinary committee.

### **Adjudication**

Applications are adjudicated, and available funds are awarded, through a competitive process. Applications are evaluated through a single-stage committee review process. Each reviewer will read and score all applications based upon the Evaluation Criteria. Scores will then be averaged, and applications ranked. The RFDC then provides a list of applications recommended for funding and their ranking. This process will determine which applications will be selected for funding. Applications will be evaluated based upon Tri-Agency evaluation criteria. As the demand for funds normally far exceeds the funds available, not all meritorious proposals can be awarded.

### **Important changes to CV requirements**

Effective on November 18th, 2020, CUE Research no longer accepts CAQC-format or free-form CV for applications for internal grants and other awards. CUE Research will now only accept Common CV-formatted documents as part of an application. The decision was made to provide consistency in the application process; in addition, the Campus Alberta Quality Council (CAQC) has phased out the use of the CAQC CV format. This change will also help those who are considering applying or have already applied for Tri-Agency funding.

Please consult these resources (<https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/forms-formulaires/instructions/ccv-eng.aspx> and <https://concordia.ab.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/How-to-create-an-application-version-of-the-Common-CV-for-CUE-Research.pdf>) to prepare the NSERC Researcher version of the Common CV for an application. We have also prepared instructional videos on this new requirement, which you can request from the Office of Research Services.

CUE Research schedules training workshops for the Common CV. Keep an eye on Inside CUE for future workshops.

## Evaluation Criteria and Scoring

The following criteria and scoring scheme are used to evaluate **NSE Grants**

<b>Challenge 60%</b>	<b>The aim and importance of the proposed research</b>
	Originality, significance and expected contribution to knowledge
	Clarity of objectives
	Appropriateness of the literature review
	Appropriateness of the theoretical approach or framework
	Appropriateness of the methods / approach
	Quality of training and mentoring to be provided to students, emerging scholars and opportunities for them to contribute
	Compliance of the proposed research with NSERC's subject matter eligibility
<b>Feasibility 20%</b>	<b>The plan to achieve excellence</b>
	Probability that the objectives will be met within the timeline proposed
	Appropriateness of the requested budget and justification of proposed costs
	Probability that the proposed research will provide substantial support for an application to NSERC Discovery Grant or Alliance Programs. Suitability, eligibility and contributions of the partner, for Alliance Grants.
	Appropriateness of the research design and strategies for conducting the activity/activities proposed
<b>Capability 20%</b>	<b>The expertise to succeed</b>
	Quality, quantity and significance of previous research experience and published and/or creative outputs of the applicant(s) relative to their roles in the project and their respective stages of career
	Evidence of other knowledge mobilization activities (e.g., films, performances, commissioned reports, knowledge syntheses, experience in collaboration/other interactions with stakeholders, contributions to public debate and media), and of impacts on professional practice, social services and policies, etc.
	Evidence of contributions to the development of students and emerging scholars; Support for new faculty members and emerging scholars
	Potential of the applicant/co-applicant to make future contributions and secure external grants.

Adjudication committee members assign a score for each of the criteria listed above and arrive at a final score. The Office of Research Services will notify applicants of the results of their applications and provide a brief outline of committee feedback to applicants who were not selected for funding.

Score	Descriptor
5-6	Very Good - Excellence
4-4.9	Good – Very Good
3-3.9	Satisfactory -Good
Below 3	Unsatisfactory

## Terms and Conditions of the Grant

### Compliance with University Research Policies

All policies, regulations and administrative processes of Concordia University of Edmonton apply. Research must comply with University policies on the conduct of research, policies on research ethics, and research integrity. It is the responsibility of the primary applicant to secure the appropriate permissions and approvals for the proposed activity.

### Research Ethics and Certifications

The [Tri-Council Agreement on the Administration of Agency Grants](#) and related documents require that researchers at eligible institutions ensure human ethics oversight for all funded research which involves human participants (regardless of the source). Applicants whose research involves human participants must submit a research ethics application to the Concordia Research Ethics Board and secure Research Ethics Board (REB) approval. REB approval must be in place before funding can be released and before any research involving human participants can take place.

### Research Definition

Research is defined as the process of purposeful inquiry that generates new insights, knowledge, and innovation through scholarly investigation, experimentation, scientific practices, or artistic practices in a field of specialization. Research activities typically result in quantifiable outcomes and knowledge mobilization activities where research knowledge is communicated to audiences both within and beyond academia to create positive impacts.

### Partnerships

CUE encourages partnerships in research. However, Internal Research Grants are personal awards. Any co-applicant, whether internal or external, must be included in the application form. In case funding will be used to cover expenses of an external co-applicant, you must contact the Office of Research Services to request that an Agreement for Funds Transfer is prepared by Finance to manage the transfer to the collaborating institution. Approval for such Agreements must be obtained from the Vice-President Academic and Provost. Expenses for external partners in absence of an Agreement may be ineligible, becoming the sole responsibility of the investigator.

## Duplicate requests for funding

Applications with significant conceptual and/or budgetary overlap with existing or upcoming awards, internal or external, will not be accepted. If you have applied for, or are considering applying for additional funds, internal or external, to support the research that you are submitting for consideration for the competition, you are required to immediately disclose it to the Office of Research Services and include this information in the appropriate sections of the application form. Failure to disclose duplicate requests for funding may result in disciplinary actions. Please contact the Office of Research Services for any inquiries.

## Responsible Use of Grant Funds

The policies and requirements of the agencies stated in the [Tri Agency Guide on Financial Administration](#) apply at all times. The award recipient is responsible for the use of the funds and for any over- expenditure of accounts.

Expenditures are permitted only for those elements identified in the application. Reasonable substitutions or alterations may be permitted as well as minor transfers of funds from one budget category to another. Use of funds for a previously unspecified purpose, or major changes in the scope of work must be submitted to the Office of Research Services for approval.

Cash advances of internal research grant funds are not permitted; however, some expenses can be covered directly by the institution (e.g. purchase orders). All activities and expenditures must be completed within the duration of the grant. Upon completion of the grant, the grant account will be closed and all unused funds will expire and be reclaimed.

Equipment purchased shall remain the property of Concordia University of Edmonton and costs associated with the care and use of any equipment purchased will be the responsibility of the award recipient and their department.

## Expense Claims

Expense claims must be prepared using the forms prepared by Finance, which can be found in Alfresco. The onus is on the investigator to use the proper, updated forms, and to prepare acceptable expense claims. Information on how to prepare an expense claim can be found online in CUE's Research website and in Alfresco. All expense claims must first be submitted to the Office of Research Services for compliance review.

## Eligible Expenses

**NSE Grant** funding is intended to cover the direct costs of the research or creative activity, including, but not limited to: hiring student research assistants, specialized software, materials and supplies not available through the institution, data collection costs including travel to field research sites for data collection, libraries, archives, and institutions, and for specialist services such as translation. All items must be essential to the proposed work and must be carefully justified. A list of eligible expenses can be obtained from the ORS [website](#). Any expense not included in the list must be consulted with the Office of Research Services.

## Ineligible Expenses

University finance policies and guidelines must be adhered to for all requested budget items. Funds are not intended to provide release time for faculty, salaries, or living expenses. Funding does not support credential research, tuition and other costs affiliated with the completion of degrees or coursework. Retroactive funding and expenses incurred prior to the deadline of the call for applications, or after the end date indicated in the award letter will not be considered. Expenses related to dissemination activities are ineligible.

## Term of the Grant

The maximum term of an award is twelve months from the submission deadline of the call for applications. The term is specified in the Letter of Award. After this date, funds will expire and unused funds will be reclaimed. A signed Acknowledgement and Acceptance of the Award, included in the Letter of Award, must be returned to the Office within 10 days of receipt; otherwise, the award will be considered forfeited and the funds will be returned to CUE.

## Appeals

All applications are confidential and the decision of the Research and Faculty Development Committee is final. There is no provision for appeal of funding decisions.

## Acknowledgement

Public acknowledgement of Concordia University of Edmonton financial assistance is a condition of receiving a grant. Recipients should acknowledge support from the institution in publications, presentations, and other forms of dissemination

## Reporting

Within 30 days of the termination of the grant, a report is to be submitted to the Office of Research Services. This final achievement report form is available by emailing [research@concordia.ab.ca](mailto:research@concordia.ab.ca) or through the website. Failure to provide an end-of-grant report may result in forfeiture of the existing award and ineligibility for subsequent applications.

## Commitment to CUE dissemination

CUE's Research Community acknowledges the importance of giving back to the members of our Institution. For this, all recipients of Internal Research awards must participate in the upcoming Faculty Symposium that is closest to the end date of the award. Information on this new activity, sponsored by the Office of Research Services, can be obtained by email at [research@concordia.ab.ca](mailto:research@concordia.ab.ca).



## Application Procedure

1. Ensure you are using the correct grant application form.
2. Complete all sections of the application. Use the checklist.
3. Sign application and obtain Department Head signature.
4. Attach all requested attachments or supplemental documents.
5. Submit complete application package as a single document in PDF format. No other types of submission are accepted.
6. Send application package by email to [research@concordia.ab.ca](mailto:research@concordia.ab.ca)
  - Paper submissions will not be considered.
  - Applications received past deadline or that are not complete will be not be considered.
  - **Up until 2 working days before the competition deadline**, application components that are incomplete or deficient submissions will be returned to the applicant for correction. **Submissions that do not comply with the guidelines and application form that are received past the 2-day before deadline time limit will not be accepted, and will be removed from the competition. Deadlines still apply.** Unrequested and extraneous attachments or supplemental material will be removed from the application.