

Collaborative Research Seed Grants Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry Terms of Reference

Purpose: The Collaborative Research Seed Grants (CRSG) program provides seed funding to foster interdisciplinary collaborative research teams. The intent is to: (1) encourage collaborations that build on different scientific and scholarly backgrounds; (2) facilitate breakthroughs in solving research questions in a collaborative manner; and (3) position Schulich researchers to successfully apply to Tri-Council or other external funding agencies. The program is designed to help increase Schulich's competitiveness in research involving innovative approaches and to build our portfolio of translational and interdisciplinary research projects.

CRSG will support:

- new collaborations between basic and clinical researchers;
- existing collaborations between basic and clinical researchers to further enhance or expand their research program; or
- faculty members from different disciplines/departments to collaborate in a new area of research or to approach a problem in an innovative way.

Grants are intended to provide seed funding to help generate novel data, initiate new intellectual directions for faculty, and foster relationships across disciplines and/or departments. Only proposals which clearly describe a collaboration between faculty members will be considered for funding. Proposals must describe a definitive plan for continuing the research effort proposed once the CRSG funding ends.

Eligibility: CRSG is open to all faculty in the Schulich School of Medicine & Dentistry. The Principal Investigator (PI) and Co-Investigator(s) must have their primary appointment in Schulich. The PI and Co-Investigator(s) may propose a new collaboration, or may propose to enhance or expand on an existing collaboration.

While researchers from outside of Schulich may be Collaborators on projects, they may not be PIs or Co-Investigators. Funding will not be made available to Collaborators from outside of Schulich.

Schulich faculty members can only submit one CRSG application as a PI and only one additional application as a Co-investigator. Faculty members who do not submit an application as a PI can participate as a Co-Investigator on a maximum of two CRSG applications.

Projects will only be eligible for funding once. Renewal applications will not be accepted. Applications for funds to augment or supplement currently funded projects will not be accepted. ***Proposals for clinical trials are not eligible for this competition.*** Project success should not be contingent on obtaining additional funds from other sources (in addition to CRSG).

Previous CRSG awardees will not be eligible to apply as PI for a new project until the funding period for their previous CRSG award has been ended, and the work on the project has been completed.

Funding: We expect to fund 3-5 awards through this competition. While there is no specified maximum amount for proposal budgets, the amount available for this competition is approximately \$140,000. There is no obligation to dispense funds if applications do not meet the standards set by the terms of reference for the award.

Successful applicants will be asked to meet with the Vice Dean, Research and Innovation, and Schulich Research Officers to discuss their plans for seeking external funding to sustain the collaborative effort.

Location of Project: The research activity is expected to be performed at Schulich or an affiliated site. If another location is proposed, a justification must be provided.

Management of Funds: Funds will be administered through a research account established through Research Western.

A ROLA form to establish a research account at Western will be initiated for successful applicants following the adjudication of the competition. A ROLA is not required at the time of the application. If research involves human subjects, animals, or biohazards, appropriate approvals must be in place before funds can be accessed.

Award Duration: Projects are expected to begin April 1, 2020, and be completed by March 31, 2022. Funds must be utilized within 24 months from the date of award. Any unexpended funds at the end of the award period must be returned to Schulich.

Reports: A final report signed by the PI and Co-Investigator(s) must be submitted to the Schulich Research Office within 60 days after the project period end date.

It is expected that any presentations or published materials generated as a direct result of this funded research will acknowledge this award.

Application Process: Submit the application with required signatures in a **single** PDF file to research@schulich.uwo.ca by **4:00 p.m. EST on Wednesday, December 18, 2019**.

Applications submitted with multiple PDF attachments will not be accepted. Separate attachments will not be accepted.

Adjudication: Proposals will be reviewed by a committee convened by the Vice Dean, Research and Innovation.

Questions: Any questions may be directed to Mary Ann Pollmann-Mudryj in the Schulich Research Office, maryann.pollmann-mudryj@schulich.uwo.ca or x24271.

Collaborative Research Seed Grants Evaluation Criteria (updated October 2019)

Adjudicated Criteria

Interdisciplinarity and Innovation

- Does the proposed project involve a collaboration between a clinician and basic scientist or involves faculty members from at least 2 different disciplines?
- Does the research entail a new or leverage an existing interdisciplinary collaboration?
- Is there a clear explanation of why an interdisciplinary approach is required to address the identified important problem or critical barrier?
- Does the proposal suggest and explore a novel or potentially transformative concept, theory, approach or line of inquiry?

Scientific Merit of Proposed Research

- Is the rationale clear?
- Does the proposal identify and addresses an important problem, need, gap or critical barrier in the field?
- Are the overall goals, aims and hypothesis are well-defined and clear?
- Are the conceptual framework, design, methods and analyses adequately developed, well integrated, and well-reasoned?
- Is the proposed methodology appropriate and justified for the stated research aims?
- Is the proposed timeline is realistic and achievable?
- Is the importance and potential impact of expected outcomes clearly explained?

Team and Environment

- Are the roles and expertise of each team member clearly defined?
- Is there evidence of complementary and integrated expertise?
- Is it clear why each team member is important to the collaboration?
- Is the team's expertise well suited to carry out the work?
- Is the project feasible?

Other Considerations

Future Plans and Funding Prospects

- Is there a description of how the team plans to continue the collaboration beyond the term of the grant
- Are there clear plans for seeking external funding (including what potential targets are; can be provincial or federal granting agencies, foundations, industry or non-profit support)
- Will it lead to external funding?
- Have applicants clearly justified why it is appropriate to apply for this seed funding rather than apply to the target external agency now?

Budget and Budget Justification

- Is the budget reasonable and well justified relative to proposed project?