

College and Community Social Innovation Fund (CCSIF) – Frequently Asked Questions

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General

1. Whom should I contact if I have questions?

General inquiries can be directed to ccsif-fiscc@nserc-crsng.gc.ca.

2. Is curriculum development allowed in a CCSIF grant?

Projects whose primary objective is solely curriculum development are no longer eligible for funding under the CCSIF initiative. Projects must have a research component or must address research challenges in community innovation, with curriculum development as a component of the project.

3. Is research ethics board (REB) approval required before submission of the application?

REB approval is not required before submitting the application. If the application is successful and there are budget items requiring REB approval, approval must be obtained before the funds can be used for these expenses.

4. I have already started working on a project. Can I still submit an application?

Yes, but NSERC funds can only be used for expenses incurred after the grant has been approved.

5. Is it appropriate to address COVID-19 impacts on the proposed research and training plan?

NSERC recognizes the uncertainty involved in planning research and training activities at this time. Applicants are encouraged to prepare research and training plans based on information available at the time of application. For example, if the proposed research plan involves field work that requires travel, they may describe an alternative plan in the event that travel restrictions are in place. While reviewers will assess the feasibility of research and training plans as part of their evaluation, they are also aware that the context surrounding the COVID-19 pandemic is continuously evolving.

Applicant, participant and collaborator roles

6. What is the difference between a participant and collaborator?

Participants are members of the research team affiliated with the college. Collaborators are members of the research team not affiliated with the college, who bring their own resources to the collaboration. Both participants and collaborators are expected to contribute to the overall intellectual direction of the research project.

7. Can the applicant and project director be the same person?

The applicant is expected to be a senior manager in the administration of the college, and it is possible that this person is also the project director on a proposal. Colleges can submit up to five proposals per competition, but it is recommended that each proposal should be led by a different project director. A new proposal may be submitted even if the proposed project director is already leading a CCSIF grant.

8. Can the project director be listed on multiple CCSIF grant applications submitted in the same competition year?

It is recommended that each proposal be led by a different project director; however, a project director may participate on several proposals as a participant or collaborator.

9. If the applicant does not have a role in the intellectual direction of the project can their CV (Form 103CV) be omitted?

The Form103CV should still be included even if the applicant will not have a role in the intellectual direction of the project; however, a brief mention should be made in the proposal under the team expertise section that the applicant will only have an administrative role in the project.

Partners

10. What are the partner contribution (cash and in-kind) requirements for this funding opportunity?

Partner organization(s) must provide contributions (cash and/or in-kind) directly related and relevant to supporting the activities of the project. Organizations must participate meaningfully in the project and demonstrate their level of involvement in their partner letter. The involvement of the partner organization(s) in the design and conduct of the research and/or related activities is a sub-criterion in the assessment of applications.

11. Can the partner be an international organization?

No. It is expected that the partner organization(s) will have the capability and willingness to implement and exploit the results of the research to the benefit of the college's local community and/or Canadian society.

Budget

12. What are additional eligible expenses covered under CCSIF?

A salary research allowance can be requested for a not-for-profit organization that has an employee listed as a collaborator on the application. Salary research allowances are a contribution from the college to a not-for-profit organization to help compensate for the time an employee will spend participating in a CCSIF-funded research project. Applicants may request for up to 50% of the total salary costs of the collaborating employee, including benefits, to offset some of the costs of hiring a replacement employee.

13. Can two (or more) colleges partner in one application, and are the staff and faculty participating in the project considered participants? If so, what are the means of compensating faculty, staff and students from both (or more) colleges?

Faculty or staff from other colleges (other than the host institution) can be considered participants. These individuals would need to include their Form 103CVs in the application. There are two ways to compensate faculty, staff or students from other colleges: either a **transfer of funds between institutions**, or a participating college could invoice the host college.

14. How do you calculate overhead?

Overhead costs can only be applied to the CCSIF grant funds, to a maximum of 20% of the annual grant installment. For example, for a \$120,000 per year CCSIF grant, the overhead can be a maximum of \$24,000 per year. The remaining funds, \$96,000, can only be used for direct project costs.

15. Are food and transportation expenses eligible as incentives to participate in a research project?

For projects requiring participation studies, costs relating to food and transportation as a modest incentive could be eligible provided that the college's research ethics board (REB) has approved the incentive plan (method of distribution, value of incentives, number of people receiving incentive), and the college can demonstrate proof of payment/receipt of the incentives (e.g., signed receipt, coded list of recipients, attestation of researcher and/or others involved in incentive payment).

16. What sorts of salary or travel allowances are in place for visiting researchers and collaborators?

Salary and travel costs for collaborators, including researchers from Canadian universities, are not eligible expenses. Stipends for visiting researchers referred to in the CCI program [Tri-agency Financial Administration Guide](#) apply specifically to the scenario of visiting scholars from foreign postsecondary institutions for research collaboration purposes.

17. How many pages are allowed for the Budget justification section?

As per the [instructions](#), four pages are allowed for the Budget justification section. The important thing is for applicants to provide as much detail as possible and show how they arrived at the totals presented (i.e., show your calculations). A Gantt chart (or similar) may also be included in this section. This section should only contain information pertinent to the budget.

18. What should be included in the Quotations section of the application?

Quotations are not required. Upload one blank page (8 ½" x 11" page).

CCI/Mitacs joint funding opportunity

19. Who should I contact if I have questions related to the CCI/Mitacs joint funding opportunity?

Applicants with questions related to the Mitacs Accelerate internships should contact their local  [Mitacs Business Development Representative](#). Please note that the NSERC application deadline is firm, as such you are encouraged to contact Mitacs early in the process.