



ANNOUNCEMENT - 2018/2019 CCO CALL FOR RESEARCH PROPOSALS

To: CCO Research Community and research partners
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CCO is calling for proposals from investigators, scientists and clinicians to undertake research projects in a number of priority areas.

Application Deadline: Monday, January 22, 2018 at 11:59 p.m. EST

Funds Available: Total funding available for the 2018/19 competition varies by the four CCO portfolios:
\$180,000 from Analytics & Informatics;
\$525,000 from Clinical Programs & Quality Initiatives;
\$320,000 from the Ontario Renal Network; and
\$368,000 from Planning & Regional Programs.

Funding Amount: The maximum grant amount per project varies by CCO portfolio. Please see pages 2 and 3 for that information as well as each portfolio's application form.

Funding Period: April 1, 2018 to March 31, 2019 (12-month term)

Anticipated Notification-of-Results: early March 2018

Eligibility Criteria:

1. Principal Investigators are permitted to submit only one application to this *CCO Call for Research Proposals*. Applicants must select from one of the four listed portfolios – Analytics & Informatics, Clinical Programs & Quality Initiatives, Ontario Renal Network or Planning & Regional Programs - and submit only one application as the named "Principal Investigator". A separate application by the same "Principal Investigator" to each portfolio's *Call for Research Proposals* is not permitted.
 2. The research must be in areas which are related to the selected portfolio's research priority areas/topics listed below.
 3. The research must be undertaken by a Principal Investigator affiliated with an eligible organization within Ontario (i.e., university, college, academic hospital, health care agency or non-profit research institution).
 4. Applicants with all ranks of appointments at an Ontario university are eligible to apply as a Principal Investigator.
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5. Trainees (e.g. fellows, post-docs, graduate/undergraduate/co-operative students) are ineligible to apply as a Principal Investigator or Co-Principal Investigator.
6. Collaboration with a CCO staff member/team is encouraged and they are eligible to apply as a Principal Investigator, Co-Principal Investigator and/or Co-Investigator.

For additional details on eligibility criteria, please see the *Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)* on page 10 of this call announcement.

Priority Research Areas/Topics by CCO Portfolio:

Applicants must select from one of the four listed portfolios – Analytics & Informatics, Clinical Programs & Quality Initiatives, Ontario Renal Network or Planning & Regional Programs - and submit only one application as the named “Principal Investigator”. The same “Principal Investigator” can only submit **one application** to this call.

1) Analytics & Informatics’ Priority Areas/Topics; maximum \$60,000 per project

The following topics will be given priority in the Analytics & Informatics’ *Call for Research Proposals*:

- Evaluation of outcomes (e.g., clinical, health services or costs) related to eCTAS implementation in the province of Ontario;
- Evaluation of outcomes (e.g., clinical, health services or costs) related to wait times in the province of Ontario;
- Evaluation of the etiology and factors influencing the risk of cancer in Ontario, especially for high mortality or difficult to treat cancers;
- Evaluation of the etiology and factors influencing the risk of renal disease in Ontario;
- Understanding the role of multiple primary cancers on outcomes (e.g., survival, health services and costs) in the province of Ontario;
- Systematic review of methodological choices, analytical plans, operations research techniques and model development practices around capacity planning in the province of Ontario;
- Assessment of CCO population-based health research in informing or influencing provincial policy and practice;
- Understanding the economic impact of waiting in Quality Adjusted Life Years for long wait cases;
- Understanding how machine learning methods can be used to extract clinical and process features from administrative data, including but not limited to clinical cohorts, care pathways, disease severity, provider/patient networks, and clinical outcomes; and,
- Other priority research areas as identified by Analytics & Informatics across the province of Ontario.

2) Clinical Programs & Quality Initiatives’ Priority Areas/Topics; maximum \$100,000 per project

Innovative projects that align with the mandate of Clinical Programs & Quality Initiatives are sought and include:

- Projects aligned with the diagnostic and treatment phases of cancer care;
- Projects that advance person-centred care;
- Projects that evaluate the provision of care from a system perspective;



- Projects which will improve the quality as well as evaluate the quality of palliative care; and,
- Other priority research projects as identified by Clinical Programs & Quality Initiatives across the province of Ontario.

3) Ontario Renal Network's Priority Areas/Topics; maximum \$150,000 per project

In the Ontario Renal Network's *Call for Research Proposals*, the research must align with the Ontario Renal Plan II goals and ORN priority topics listed below:

- **Ontario Renal Plan II goals (at least one):**
 - Empower and support patients and family members to be active in their care
 - Integrate patient care throughout the kidney care journey
 - Improve patients' access to kidney care
- **ORN priority topics (at least one):**
 - Evaluation of interventions, programs or policies that aim to:
 - Support the early identification and management of people with early CKD
 - Improve quality of care and outcomes among people with CKD and ESRD
 - Improve access, integration and utilization of CKD system resources
 - Improve access to community care and home dialysis
 - Improve access to transplant, including pre- and post- transplant care
 - Improve access to CKD care for First Nations, Inuit and Métis, and rural and remote communities
 - Improve the quality of palliative care for people with advanced CKD/ESRD
 - Support person-centered approaches to the delivery of quality care to people with CKD/ESRD
 - Economic analysis of interventions, programs and policies that aim to improve patient outcomes among the CKD and ESRD population
 - Compare and assess performance management tools and processes specific to the management of chronic kidney disease across high-performing health systems
 - Elucidate characteristics (e.g. rates, risks factors, outcomes, geographic distribution etc.) of people at high risk for developing CKD/ESRD in Ontario, including:
 - First Nations, Inuit, and Metis communities
 - People with acute kidney injury (AKI)
 - People with glomerulonephritis (GN)

4) Planning & Regional Programs' Priority Areas/Topics; maximum \$100,000 per project

The following topics will be given priority in the Planning & Regional Programs' *Call for Research Proposals*:

- Value for Money Evaluation of Systemic Treatment QBP focusing on behavioural change: How did the introduction of the Systemic Treatment QBP change the behaviour of medical oncologists?
- Comparison study of health systems: What are the differences and similarities in management tools and processes across high performing health systems?
- Study comparing facility characteristics and outcomes: Is there a relationship between facility treatment volumes and patient outcomes across Systemic Treatment Level 4 Satellites?



- Validation study of Health Human resource workload: What is the Medical Oncologist workload for academic and clinical work in Ontario?

CCO Research Strategy Themes:

Proposed research projects must align with one of the following *CCO Research Strategy* themes - namely Population Health, Health Services Delivery, Value Determination and Best Evidence.

Population Health

Prevention

- Track disease incidence and prevalence as well as predictors of survival
- Identify health system and population-level risk factors

Screening

- Understand barriers and facilitators to screening at a population level
- Identify and study high-risk populations

Health Services Delivery

Person-Centred Experience

- Understand and evaluate the patient and family experience and quality of life throughout the journey
- Understand and evaluate the patient and family experience with respect to safety, complications and adverse events
- Understand and evaluate system access, timing of access and regionalization of care

Integrated health services research

- Understand and evaluate system transitions and models of care
- Understand and evaluate barriers to integrated care

Value Determination

Economic Evaluation

- Understand and evaluate health system cost drivers
- Conduct real-world economic evaluations

Efficiency

- Ensure appropriate and efficient systems

Best Evidence

Dissemination

- Understand the process and pathways for rapidly translating the research knowledge into the health system
- Identify optimal methods for disseminating evidence into central and regional health systems

Implementation

- Understand the methods and process for promoting integration of evidence into healthcare policy
- Develop and test models to promote the integration of evidence across the health system



Application Process:

1. The appropriate CCO portfolio application form must be used to submit the research proposal.
2. Please submit the completed application form including appendices **by 11:59 pm (EDT) on Monday, January 22, 2018** to the CCO Research Office (research@cancercare.on.ca).
3. Applications will be reviewed and applicants will be notified of the outcome **by early March 2018**.

Application Evaluation/Review Criteria:

- Alignment with the selected portfolio's priority areas/topics (as outlined in this call announcement as well as on the application form)
- Alignment with *CCO Research Strategy* themes (as outlined in this call announcement)
- Scientific merit
- Feasibility of project completion within time horizon
- Proposed budget for project
- Benefit of project results to the cancer or renal system
- Benefit of project results to impact patients and the patient community
- Demonstrates a "person-centred" approach (involvement of patients, family members and/or caregivers in the design, implementation and evaluation of the project)

For additional information, please see the *CCO Application and Review Process* on page 7 of this call announcement.

Reporting Requirements:

Successful applicants will have to provide the following reports to CCO at the conclusion of their projects:

- Financial Statement-of-Account
- Final Progress Report which includes:
 - Scientific Progress Summary (objectives, methods, results & conclusions)
 - Impact of research (how these results can be incorporated into CCO programs/policies/initiatives)
 - Future plans for advancing the research
 - Knowledge Translation & Exchange (KTE) activities at CCO

Communication Requirements:

Investigators agree to acknowledge the support of Cancer Care Ontario on any scientific publications, communications, correspondence, and press releases related to the project with the following acknowledgement as per the terms of their funding agreements:

This study was conducted with the support of Cancer Care Ontario through funding provided by the Government of Ontario. The opinions, results, view, and conclusions reported in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of Cancer Care Ontario. No endorsement by Cancer Care Ontario is intended or should be inferred.



Investigators must also notify the [CCO Research Office](#) of any manuscripts, pending publications and presentations (i.e. conferences, stakeholder meetings) **upon acceptance** and 30 days prior to publication and/or presentation.

Questions:

Please see the *Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)* on page 10 of this call announcement as well as the *CCO Application and Review Process* on page 7 of this call announcement.

If applicants have additional questions about the priority areas, research topics and/or the application process, please contact the [CCO Research Office](#) at research@cancercare.on.ca.



2018/2019 CCO Call for Research Proposals

Application and Review Process

1. Description

In its role leading and enabling research that will improve population health as well as the quality and value of care for Ontarians, CCO offers *Calls for Research Proposals* to support high-quality cancer and renal research across Ontario. Applications are reviewed and evaluated to ensure that funded projects are aligned with the mission of the organization as well as to priority research topics and areas identified by various CCO portfolios (which includes the Ontario Renal Network). CCO is committed to a focus on person-centred care; as such, CCO engages patients, families and caregivers to provide feedback on the potential of this research to impact them.

There are currently three steps in the review and funding process: application, review and funding decision. The following sections will highlight the process with respect to each of these areas.

2. Application Process

Investigators submit an application with a research proposal detailing the background and objectives of the research, its significance/benefits to patients as well as the cancer or renal systems, the proposed research design and methods, proposed budget, available resources and, as appropriate, preliminary results.

The application itself, all materials accompanying the submission and the reviews of the application are treated as confidential materials. All reviewers - as members of the Research Review Panels - are required to sign a Code of Conduct to signify that they agree to the terms respecting such confidentiality and declaring conflicts-of-interest.

3. Review Process

The aim of CCO's review process is to ensure projects with the greatest merit and alignment to the organization's research priorities receive financial support to permit the ideas to be tested and proposed research be undertaken.

(a) Research Review Panels

CCO convenes Research Review Panels for each of its *Calls for Research Proposals*. Each panel is chaired by the respective CCO portfolio VP and members are chosen by the VP in consultation with the CCO Research Office. Members can be internal CCO staff or external reviewers selected for their specific scientific expertise, policy knowledge and understanding of the organization's priorities.

In addition, at least one Patient & Family Advisor (PFA) participates on each Research Review Panel. The PFAs are members of one of CCO's Patient & Family Advisory Councils and are either patients, former



patients, family members or caregivers. PFAs come from a variety of backgrounds and are involved in the review process to ensure openness and public accountability of the review process.

Once applications are submitted, staff in the CCO Research Office check the applications to ensure that all submission requirements have been met. Panel members are polled to identify potential reviewer conflicts-of-interest on each application. Two panel members (primary and secondary reviewers) and at least one PFA are assigned to review each application. The PFA's review is an important one in the process as s/he evaluates and comments on patient/family involvement in the proposed research project as well as alignment to the portfolio's priority topics/areas of focus. All reviewers assigned to an application complete a scoresheet including written comments. All members of the Research Review Panels are requested to read the applications, but only the "assigned" reviewers are required to provide a scoresheet.

The reviewer scoresheets contribute to the ranking of the applications and form the basis for discussion of the highly-ranked applications at the meeting of each Research Review Panel. Reviewers are free to comment on any aspect of the proposal; they are asked to provide details on what they consider to be the strengths and weaknesses of the application. Panel members are also invited to comment on issues they have identified. Other aspects relating to policies may also be discussed.

Following discussion of the application, the assigned reviewers are asked if they would like to change their scores based on the panel's comments and feedback. Reviewers are free to rate applications according to their own assessment and are not required to arrive at a consensus.

(b) Rating of Applications

In evaluating each application, every panel member is required to decide whether the proposed work is i) aligned to CCO's mission and research priorities, and ii) likely to have an impact on population health (including for people with cancer and renal disease) as well as the value and quality of care for Ontarians. As detailed in the *Call for Research Proposals*, the evaluation criteria is:

- Alignment with CCO and portfolio priority research topics
- Alignment with *CCO Research Strategy* themes
- Scientific merit
- Feasibility of project completion within time horizon
- Proposed budget for project
- Benefit of project results to the cancer or renal system
- Benefit of project results to impact patients and the patient community
- Involvement of patients, family members and/or caregivers in the design, implementation and evaluation of the project



In scoring the application, panel members use the following scientific and alignment rating scale. Additional scales may be used depending on the competition.

- 5.0** = excellent science and extremely aligned
- 4.0 - 4.9** = very good science and very aligned
- 3.0 - 3.9** = acceptable science and aligned
- 2.0 - 2.9** = marginally acceptable science and somewhat aligned
- below 2.0** = not acceptable science and not aligned

Following the conclusion of the review process, all applicants are provided with the ranking of their application by the Research Review Panel, scoring range of their application and the number of applications funded in the current *Call for Research Proposals*.

4. Funding Decision

The third step in the review process is the review of submitted budgets in the applications. The Research Review Panel will review the submitted budget to determine whether it is appropriate for the work proposed and a “recommended budget” will be decided upon. This can result in changes to the budget requested by applicants (i.e. budget reductions reflected in the final “recommended budget”). Based on the ranked order of applications within a panel and the total “recommended budgets”, applications will be recommended for approval up to the amount of funding available as per the CCO portfolio said applications were submitted to. That will ensure expenditures are within the approved CCO research budget envelope.

Contact Us - if applicants have any additional questions, please contact the [CCO Research Office](#) at research@cancercare.on.ca.



2018/2019 CCO CALL FOR RESEARCH PROPOSALS
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQs)

Number of Applications:

#1. Is there a limit to the number of applications that an investigator can submit?

A named “Principal Investigator” is permitted to submit only one application to this *Call for Research Proposals*. Applicants must select from one of the four listed portfolios – Analytics & Informatics, Clinical Programs & Quality Initiatives, Ontario Renal Network or Planning & Regional Programs - and submit only one application as the named “Principal Investigator”. A separate application by the same “Principal Investigator” to each portfolio’s *Call for Research Proposals* is not permitted.

#2. Can I submit more than one application as a “Principal Investigator”?

An applicant can only submit one application as a named “Principal Investigator”.

#3. Can I apply as a “Co-Principal Investigator” or “Co-Investigator” on more than one application?

Applicants can be a named “Co-Principal Investigator” or “Co-Investigator” on more than one application.

Applicant Eligibility:

#4. Are CCO staff eligible to apply as “Principal Investigator/Co-Principal Investigator/Co-Investigator”?

CCO staff are eligible to apply as “Principal Investigator”, “Co-Principal Investigator” and/or “Co-Investigator”. They are encouraged to be named as project team members in order to ensure alignment with CCO’s research priorities and foster research collaboration. For CCO program evaluation projects, applicants without a scientist-level position and/or PhD are eligible to apply as “Principal Investigator” or “Co-Principal Investigator” (such as managers, directors, data scientists, etc).

#5. Are trainees eligible to apply as a “Principal Investigator” or “Co-Principal Investigator”?

Trainees such as fellows, post-docs, graduate/undergraduate/co-op students are ineligible to apply as a “Principal Investigator” or “Co-Principal Investigator”. They can apply as a “Co-Investigator” however, they cannot claim a trainee stipend in the project budget; see question #11 below – *Are trainee stipends an eligible budget expense?*

#6. Can I apply as a “Principal Investigator” without a PhD?

Applicants without a PhD are eligible to apply as a “Principal Investigator”.

#7. Are non-scientists and/or non-physicians eligible to apply as a “Co-Investigator”?

Non-scientists and non-physicians (including lay people, hospital staff, community nephrologists and others) are eligible to apply as a “Co-Investigator”.



#8. Is there a limit on the number of “Co-Investigators” on a project team?

There is no limit on the number of “Co-Investigators” named on an application.

#9. What types of organizations are eligible as a Principal Investigator’s “Host Institution”?

The research project must be undertaken by a “Principal Investigator” affiliated with an eligible Ontario organization such as a university, college, academic hospital, health care agency or non-profit research institution. Applicants with all ranks of academic appointments at an Ontario university are eligible to apply as a “Principal Investigator”.

Budget:

#10. Can a “Principal Investigator/Co-Principal Investigator/Co-Investigator” receive salary support?

“Principal Investigator/Co-Principal Investigator/Co-Investigator” are not eligible to receive salary support. Those are ineligible expenses and cannot be listed in the budget section of the application form. In addition, any “scientist” level position is ineligible as a “personnel” expense in the budget section.

#11. Are trainee stipends an eligible budget expense?

Trainee stipends are an eligible budget expense as long as the trainee is not named as a “Co-Investigator” on the project team. Trainees are not eligible to be named as a “Principal Investigator” or “Co-Principal Investigator”.

Application & Review:

#12. Is an appendix permitted? Are references, figures, tables and/or papers permitted?

For named project team members, a separate appendix of CVs is permitted. In the “Research Proposal” section, a separate appendix containing references, figures, tables and/or papers is permitted; it is excluded from the page limit in that section.

#13. Who can sign as “Signing Authority at Host Institution” on the application form?

Directors, Deans, Vice-Presidents and/or CEOs are eligible signatories as the “Signing Authority at Host Institution”.

#14. Is research ethics’ approval (REB) required prior to submitting an application?

It is expected that applicants obtain ethics/REB approval if their application is successful. No awarded funds will be released until REB approval has been received by CCO.

#15. How are the applications reviewed and evaluated?

Please see the *CCO Application and Review Process* section on page 7 of this call announcement.



#16. When is the application deadline?

The completed application form including appendices must be submitted to the [CCO Research Office \(research@cancercare.on.ca\)](mailto:research@cancercare.on.ca) by 11:59 pm (EST) on Monday, January 22, 2018. Applications received after that deadline will not be accepted nor will the application deadline be extended.

Project Term:

#17. What is the start date for funded projects?

The start date for funded projects is April 1, 2018.

#18. What is the maximum term for funded projects?

With an April 1, 2018 start date, the maximum term is 12 months (April 1, 2018 – March 31, 2019). Awarded project funding must be fully expended by March 31, 2019.

#19. Are No-Cost Extensions (NCEs) permitted for funded projects?

As per CCO policy, requests for No-Cost Extensions will not be accepted nor will NCEs be permitted; successful applicants must expend all awarded funding by March 31, 2019.

Notification of Results:

#20. When will the results of my application be known?

Applicants will be notified as to the results of their application by early March 2018 via email to the Principal Investigator only. Once applicants have been notified, results will be posted on [CCO's internal collaboration site](#) (for CCO staff only) as well as [CCO's external website](#) (for non-CCO applicants).

Contact Us - if applicants have any additional questions, please contact the [CCO Research Office](mailto:research@cancercare.on.ca) at research@cancercare.on.ca.