



# Collaborative Research and Training Experience (CREATE) Program

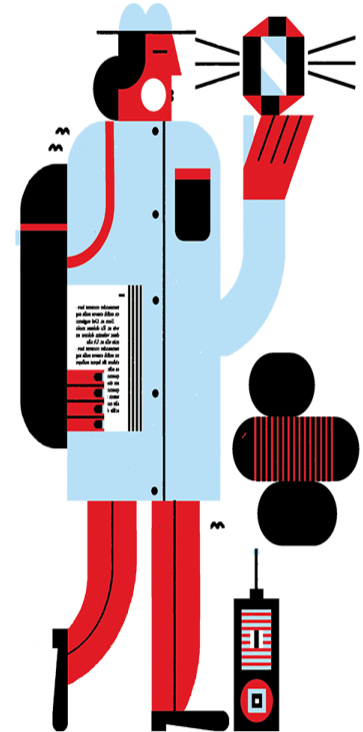
Information session for prospective applicants

February 6, 2025

# Welcome

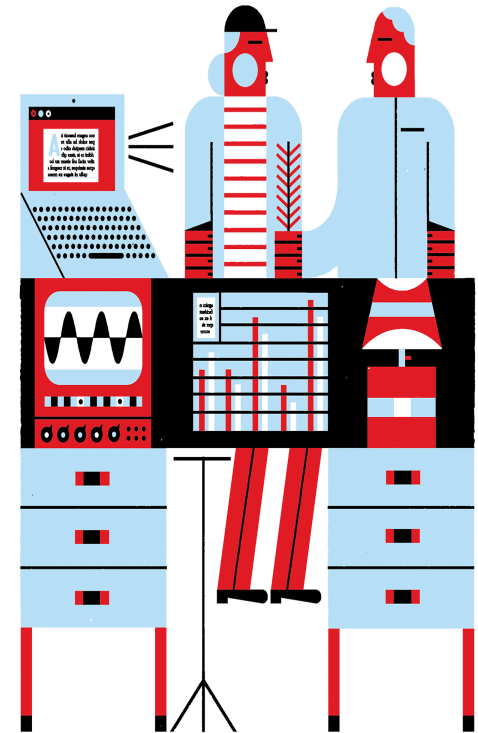
- Manager: Judy Paron
- Program Officers:
  - Guy Faubert (pre-award)
  - Samantha Gollop (post-award)
- Program Assistant:
  - Kelsey Danielli

**[CREATE@NSERC-CRSNG.GC.CA](mailto:CREATE@NSERC-CRSNG.GC.CA)**

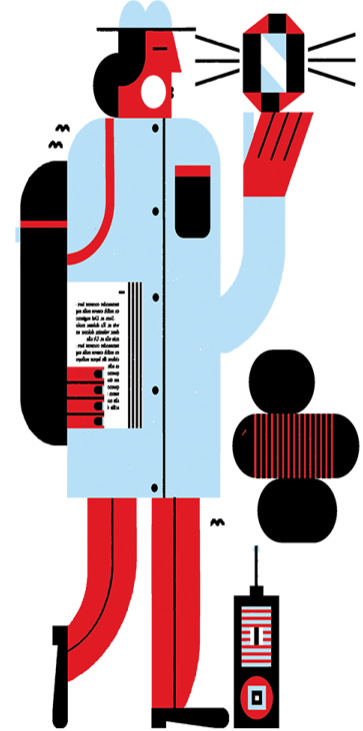


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# 1. Program Overview



## Program overview

# New this year

1. An unlimited number of Letters of Intent (LOIs) can be submitted by an institution. There are no LOI quotas for eligible institutions.
2. The LOI stage will be semi-competitive. NSERC will admit, via peer review using established criteria, a specific number of LOIs from each institution to the application stage
3. Only when an institution submits a number of LOIs greater than their allotment will their LOIs be evaluated to determine which of these will advance to the application stage.
4. Each institution's allotment for the 2026 competition year is posted on the university GSAP website. LOIs submitted to the International stream are exempt from the institution's allotment.
5. The total number of new CREATE grants that can be awarded to an institution is capped at 3 per competition year.

## Program overview

# New this year - continued

## 6. Call for applications in Genomics – 2026 competition year

- NSERC will fund four CREATE initiatives in Genomics.
- Applications will be evaluated through the normal CREATE peer review process, but applications should include “Genomics” in the title.
- LOIs submitted to the Genomics call are not included in each university’s allotment of LOIs advancing to the application stage.
- Each university can submit up to two LOIs for the Genomics call.

## Program overview

# New this year - continued

## 7. STRA

- Applicants must identify whether the grant application aims to advance a Sensitive Technology Research Area (STRA). If so, the submission of [attestation forms](#) will be required from [researchers with named roles in the grant application](#) (for CREATE, these are the **applicants** and **co-applicants** only) to certify that they are not currently affiliated with, nor are in receipt of funding or in-kind support from, a [Named Research Organization](#) (NRO).
- Review the list of [Sensitive Technology Research Areas](#) and the [list of NROs](#) to understand which versions of the lists apply to this competition.
- The applicant is responsible for collecting and merging all completed attestation forms, in read-only format, to be submitted with the grant application.
- Attestation forms are not required from CREATE Collaborators
- For more information: [Tri-agency guidance on the STRAC Policy and responsibilities of researchers](#) and [responsibilities of institutions](#).



## Program overview

# Program objectives

CREATE supports the training and mentoring of students and postdoctoral fellows from Canada and abroad through the development of innovative training programs that:

- Raise the standards in graduate training
- Encourage collaborative and integrative approaches that address significant scientific challenges
- Facilitate the transition of new researchers from trainees to productive employees in the Canadian workforce

NSERC invites applicants to submit their application in the language of their choice, either French or English.

## Program overview

# Program objectives - Continued

- Technical and professional skills development
- Mobility experiences for trainees
- Collaboration: multi-sectorial, national and international
- Interdisciplinary research
- Equity, diversity and inclusiveness of research team and trainees

## Program overview

# Value of grant

Year 1: Normally, \$150,000 ( $\pm$  \$50,000)

Years 2 – 6: Normally, \$300,000 ( $\pm$  \$50,000) per year

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**Total: up to \$1,650,000 over 6 years**

- Non-renewable
- Start Date: April 1 default or Sep 1 by request

## Program overview

# Expectations

- **Year 4-6 funding is dependent on positive performance evaluations by NSERC.**
- 1 progress report and a final report are required. An improvement report may be required due to inadequate progress or missing information in the progress report.
- Must demonstrate that proposed objectives, professional and technical skills training, graduate student mobility, HQP targets, EDI actions, etc., are being met.
  - Mobility experiences (exchanges, internships, etc.) are mandatory for graduate students, and must be a minimum of 1 month duration for M.Sc. and minimum 2 months duration for Ph.D.
- **i.e., applicants are held accountable and must follow through on what is presented in the proposals.**

## Program overview

# Allowable expenses

- At least 70% to trainee stipends
  - Up to 30% of this may go toward non-NSE trainees
- Remaining 30% may be used for...
  - Trainee travel (conferences, exchanges, internships, etc.)
  - Training program administration (e.g., salary of program coordinator)
  - Dissemination of training materials
  - Initiative website
  - Travel & accommodation costs of the applicant, co-applicants or program coordinator to attend training events
  - Etc.

## Program overview

# Trainee stipends

- No minimum or maximum
- May be complemented by other sources
  - Supervisors
  - Collaborators
  - Scholarships
- A stipend from CREATE is not a requirement for trainee participation in the initiative
- Emphasis of the initiative must be on graduate students, but undergraduate and postdoctoral trainees may also be supported
  - At least 60% of the trainees need to be graduate students

## Program overview

# Teams leading CREATE initiatives

- A complementary group of researchers
- From eligible Canadian universities
- For multi-university applications: must have at least one co-applicant involved for trainees at that institution to be eligible to receive CREATE stipends
- Work collaboratively to offer a defined training program to a group of trainees

## Program overview

# Teams leading CREATE initiatives

- Lead applicant must be from an NSERC-supported field at an eligible university and a full-time professor
  - If the lead applicant leaves their institution, a replacement should be found at the lead institution
- At least **70%** of the group of co-applicants must be in NSE
  - An NSE researcher conducts most of their work in areas supported by NSERC, as evidenced by their publication record/history of support.
- A researcher can participate in a maximum of two CREATE grants/applications at any given time and a maximum of one as the lead applicant or grantee.
- **New!** If a researcher is already a grantee or co-grantee on two active grants, the timeline for determining eligibility to apply for a new initiative depends on the grant end date of the oldest of the two grants
- The grant end date includes the 1-year Covid extension!



## Program overview

# Program committee

- Program committee (PC) consists of a variety of stake holders
  - e.g. potential future employers of graduates, collaborators, curriculum developers, trainees
- Program evaluation and guidance
- Refer to the [program committee guidelines](#) webpage for more information

## Program Overview

# Equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI)

CREATE initiatives are expected to increase the inclusion and advancement of under-represented groups in the natural sciences and engineering as one way to enhance excellence in research and training.

- Team (self-ID questionnaire)
- Program Committee
- HQP
- NSERC guide on integrating equity, diversity and inclusion considerations in research

## Program overview

# Evaluation criteria

- Merit of the proposed training program – 50%
- Excellence of the team of researchers – 25%
- Program management and long-term sustainability – 25%

The focus should be on new training initiatives; i.e., as CREATE initiatives cannot be renewed nor duplicated, a new proposal must be different in theme, approaches to training, and applicant team from previous grants.

## Program overview

# Streams

- **Regular stream** may involve any collaborations: academic/government/industry/NGO, Canadian/international
- **International stream** For collaboration with researchers in Germany. Funding aligned with DFG-IRTG program duration: up to 9 years instead of 6 years for regular stream CREATE (same grant value).
- Applications to the international stream are not evaluated separately from the regular stream applications

## Program overview

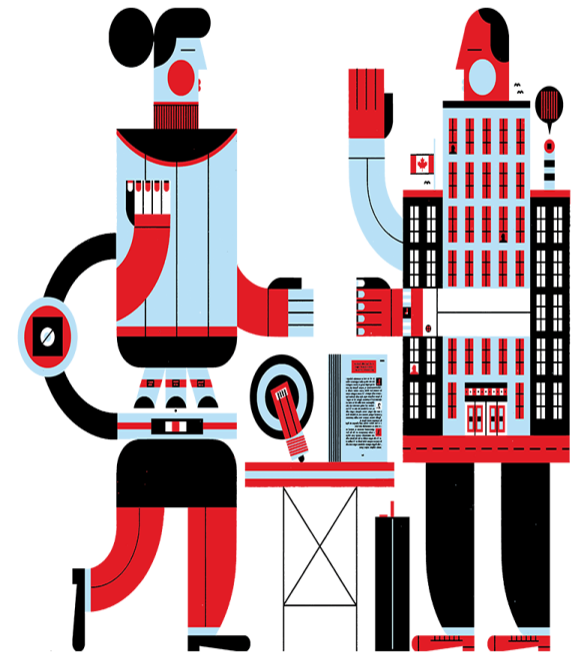
# Mobility - locations

- Mobility experiences are mandatory for graduate students (minimums: 1 month for M.Sc. and 2 months for Ph.D.) and are encouraged for undergraduate or PDF trainees but are not mandatory.
- Can occur in industry, government, non-governmental organizations and/or academia, in the field, at locations inside or outside of Canada.
- Due to conflict of interest, trainee internships at companies owned wholly or in part by the applicant or by a co-applicant are prohibited.
- To expose trainees to new environments and to promote networking opportunities, internships at university incubators, on campus industrial parks, or companies started by a trainee do not count.
- For the international stream: Same minimum durations, but at the laboratories of collaborators in Germany.

# 2. Application Procedures

Phase 1: Letter of Intent (LOI)

Phase 2: Application



## Application procedures

# Phase 1: Letter of Intent (LOI)

1. Internal selection at university
2. **New!** LOIs are only reviewed by the Selection Committee if the number of LOIs submitted by the university exceeds the university's allotment of LOIs that can be admitted to the application stage.
3. The LOI procedures apply to both the regular and international streams. For the international stream, the title must reference the international stream.
4. At the LOI stage the applicant's submission proceeds directly to NSERC via the NSERC Online System without intervention from the research grant office.

## Application procedures

# Phase 1: Letter of Intent (LOI)

## Selection process & criteria

- All applicants must submit an LOI - international and regular streams
- Selection Committee review - For universities submitting a number of LOIs higher than their allotment
  - Merit of proposed training program (60%)
  - Excellence of the team of researchers (40%)
- Committee comments for adjudicated LOIs only



## Application procedures

# Phase 1: Letter of Intent (LOI)

## Form 187: LOI to apply for a CREATE grant

- List co-applicants (min 1, max 10)
- Collaborators
- External Reviewers suggestions (8)
  - Including 2 from Canada and at least one from abroad
  - LOIs are NOT sent for external review

## Application procedures

# Phase 1: Letter of Intent (LOI)

- Personal Data Form (Form 100) – applicant only
- Letter from VP Research of the lead university:
  - Indicate the total number of LOIs the university will be submitting this competition year.
  - Do not provide support details, as these will be included in the support letter provided at the application stage.
  - The letter is for NSERC administrative purposes only and should not be more than 1 page long. The letter must be written on letterhead, signed and saved in a portable document format (PDF).

## Application procedures

# Phase 1: Letter of Intent (LOI)

## Outline of Training Program (**New!** max 3 pages)

- Objectives, novelty, how trainees would be better prepared for careers, involvement of stakeholders, description of potential future employers, and an assessment of job prospects for trainees
- Yearly recruitment targets, professional and technical skills training and mobility experiences should be described
- **New!** Proposals that include Indigenous research activities must describe the measures that will be taken to respond to community and/or partner needs and priorities. Consult the [Indigenous research](#) webpage for more information.
- CREATE initiatives are not renewable. Previous CREATE grantees and co-grantees must describe how this application differs from those previously funded in terms of participants, training approach, theme and subject matter.

## Application procedures

# Phase 1: Letter of Intent (LOI)

## Excellence of Proposed Team (max 3 pages)

- Complementarities
  - Expertise
  - Roles, responsibilities
  - Training and mentoring experience
- } EDI should be considered

## Application procedures

# Phase 2: Application (invitation only)

## Selection process & criteria

- Merit of proposed training program (50%)
- Excellence of the research team (25%)
- Program management and sustainability (25%)

## Application procedures

# Phase 2: Application

- Personal data form (Form 100) for the applicant
- Personal data form (Form 100), or CCV, or regular CV for all co-applicants (max 10)
- Self ID questionnaire for applicant and co-applicants
  - For more information, refer to the [FAQ about the self-identification questionnaire](#).
  - Application can only be submitted if and only if the applicant and all co-applicants complete the self ID questionnaire
- **New!** STRAC attestation forms for applicant and co-applicants if working in a STRA
- One support letter from the lead applicant's university
- Up to 3 support letters from collaborators

Application procedures

## Phase 2: Application

### Form 102 – Application for a CREATE grant

- Application profile
- Plain language summary of proposal
- Co-applicants and collaborators
- Proposed expenditures

## Application procedures

# Phase 2: Application

## Research training program proposal

- Free-form, 14 pages + 1 page for references
- Objectives
- Elements of the training program
- Estimated number of trainees
- Job prospects
- Program Committee
- List of deliverables - used by NSERC to assess the program's effectiveness at the progress reports

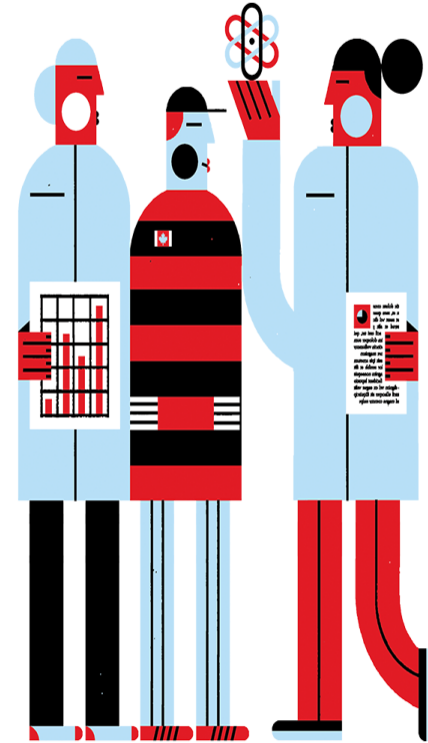


## Application procedures

# Phase 2: Application

- Budget justification (free form, 2 pages)
- Support from other sources (free form, 2 pages)
- Maximum 1 Letter of support from lead university:
  - List of all contributions from the university
  - Describe the details of support
  - Involvement in the training program
  - Plans to ensure sustainability
- Application is submitted by the RGO office at the lead university

# 3. Competition statistics and other information



# Competition Statistics

	2021	2022	2023	2023 Quantum call	2024	2025
LOIs received	118	123	123	17	97	127
Candidates invited	38	43	51	9	41	127
Applications received	37	42	49	9	38	94
Grants awarded	13	13	17	3	17	TBD

## Other information

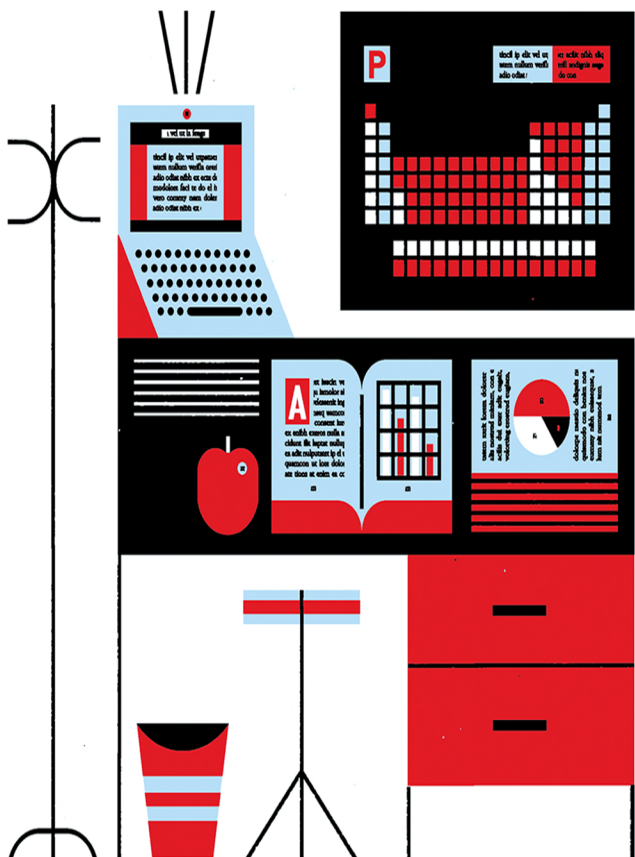
# Important Dates

- March/April 2025: Letter of Intent deadline (Univ.)
- May 1, 2025: Letter of Intent deadline (NSERC)
- Sept. 22, 2025: Application deadline (NSERC)
- June 2025: Notification of results – LOI
- March 2026: Notification of results – Application

Other information

# More Information

- [Program description](#)
- [FAQ](#)
- Your university's research grant office
- The CREATE Team
  - E-mail: [CREATE@nserc-crsng.gc.ca](mailto:CREATE@nserc-crsng.gc.ca)



# Questions?

**CREATE Team**

[CREATE@nserc-crsng.gc.ca](mailto:CREATE@nserc-crsng.gc.ca)

**Connect with us**

 @nserc\_crsng

 facebook.com/nserccanada