



Alliance grants

Presented by: Nicole Whiteway & Reinack Hansen – Program Officer

Research Partnerships Division

Natural Sciences and Engineering Council of Canada

August 2024



Supporting research at Canadian universities

The Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) is the **largest provider of grants & scholarships** in Canada in the fields of Natural Sciences and Engineering

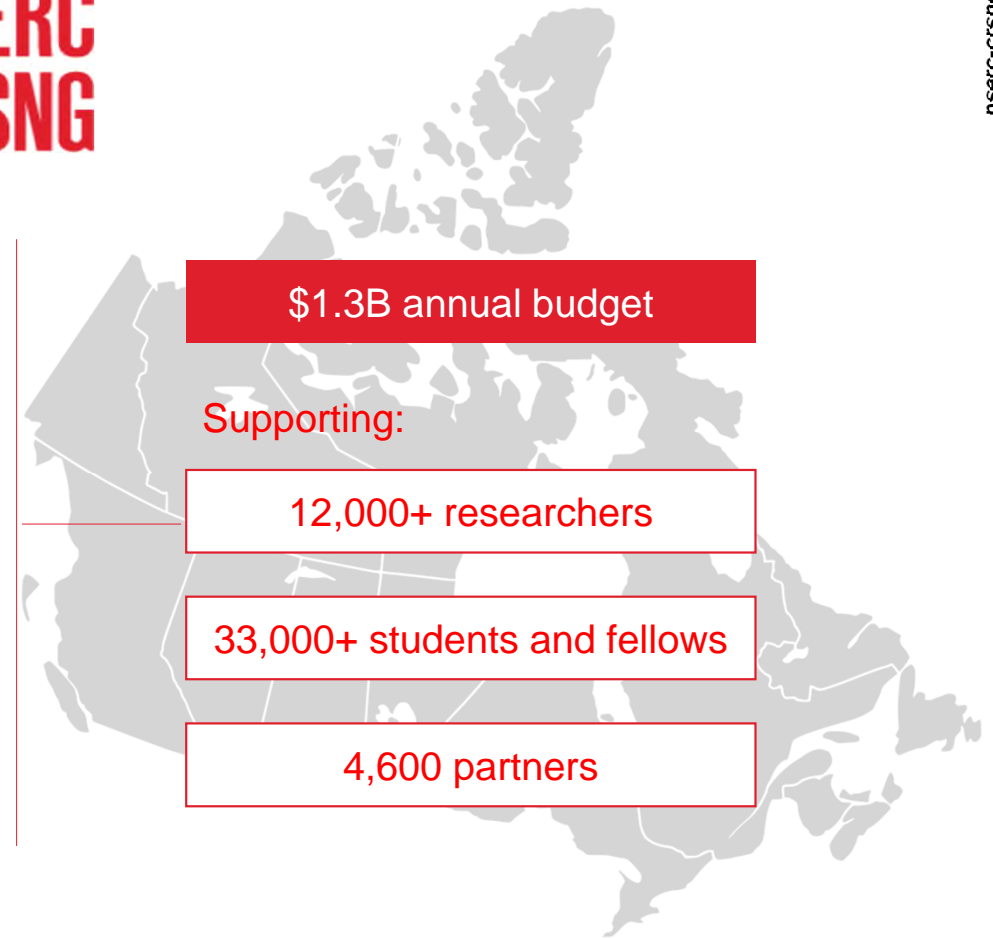
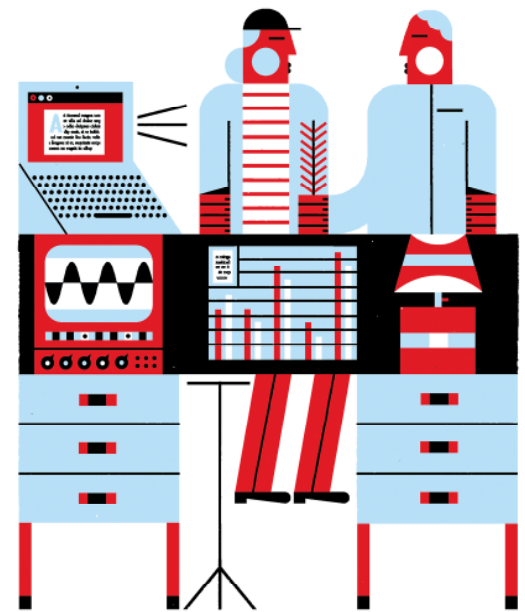


Table of contents

Overview of Alliance Grants

- Best Practices
- Alliance Advantage
- Alliance Society
- Alliance International
- Alliance joint funding opportunities
- Useful links



Alliance grants

Alliance - Program objectives

Support

- **Research** in the **natural sciences and engineering (NSE)** led by strong, complementary, collaborative teams
- **Collaborations** with **partner organizations** from multiple sectors (private, public, not-for-profit) as well as with national and international **academic researchers**
- Projects that will generate new knowledge and accelerate the application of research results **for the benefit of Canadians**

Alliance grants

Program objectives

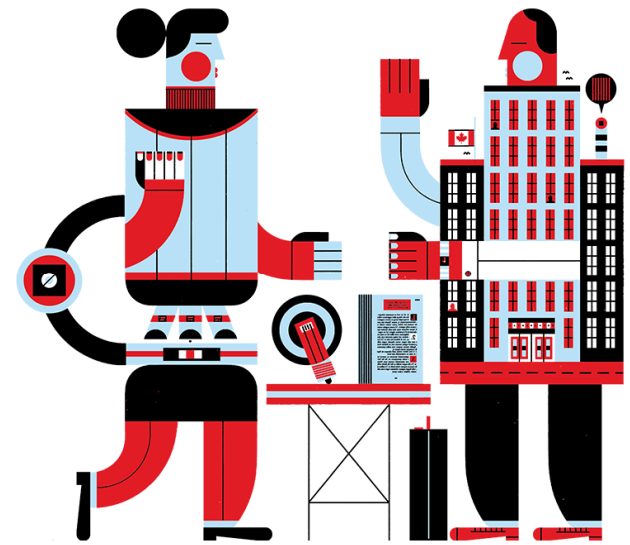
- **Alliance Advantage grants:** Support partner-driven projects. They fund projects focused on the partners' goals, with at least one partner sharing in the costs of research
- **Alliance Society grants:** Support projects with societal impact as the main driver. They draw on the relevant perspectives and skill sets of active participants that help accelerate the translation and application of research results
- **Alliance International grants:** Help researchers establish and grow collaborations with academic research groups that have a high potential for impact in NSE disciplines
- **Alliance Special calls:** Enables researchers to align their efforts with those of unique partners in specific areas and technologies

Alliance grants

Recent updates to Alliance Grants

- **Interactions between trainees and partner organizations:** The training plan must include interactions between trainees and partner organizations that enrich their training, provide mentoring and experience relevant to both academic and non-academic research environments
- **Merit indicator for EDI in the training plan:** Applicants are asked to provide context for the concrete practices they are proposing. Applicants who cite evidence supporting the proposed practices and propose methods for monitoring success will receive higher merit scores
- **Conflict of Interest (COI) guidelines:** Institutions must manage COI and put mitigation plans in place according to their own policies. PI will be required to attest that all members of the team comply
- **National Security Guidelines for Research Partnerships:** In the Partnership section of the online application system, you must select yes or no to indicate if your application includes a partner organization from the private sector. If you select “yes” in the Partnership section, you will be required to upload the Risk Assessment Form, in its new dedicated section

Best Practices



Alliance Best Practices

Area of research

- Main challenge is in natural sciences and engineering
- Up to 30% of the budget for non NSE research activities:
 - Necessary to achieve the project's objectives
 - Well justified
 - Integrated in the research strategy
 - **Identified in the budget justification**

Guidelines

- [Selecting the Appropriate Federal Granting Agency](#)
- [Addendum to the guidelines for the eligibility of applications related to Health](#)

Where is the main challenge?

- **Assess your partner organizations**

Size and sector?

Can the contributions be recognized?

What role has each partner in the project

Strategy to exploit the results?

[Role of partner Organizations - Self Assessment tool](#)

- **Partner Organization form**

Ensure the questions are appropriately answered

Ensure the one pager description is appropriate

- **Partner supplemental information form**

When partner has less than five full time employees

Partnership

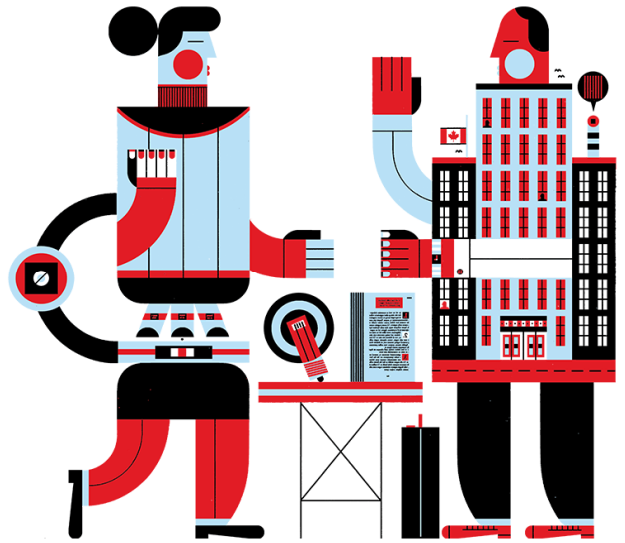
- **Recognition of cash contributions in cost sharing**
- **Depends on the partner's role in the project**

- **Observe the page limits**
the size of the sections are suggested
Do not refer to other documents to save space (e.g. MITACS,...)
- **Use the latest template**
- **Keep the original formatting and bullets**
- **Address each bullet**
- **Do not attach documents that are not requested**
- **Do not add hyperlinks**
- **Unilingual proposals**

Proposal

- **Format and page length**
- **Template**
- **Completeness**

EDI

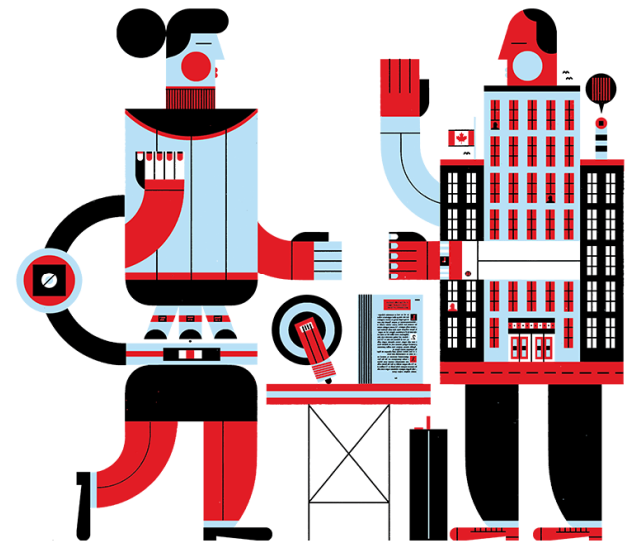


Ensuring inclusive research support

Changes to indicators for EDI in training

	Meets	Exceeds	Exceptional
Describes specific and concrete practices	✓	✓	✓
Provides context for the proposed practices		✓	✓
Addresses multiple aspects of the training plan (e.g., training philosophy, recruitment, training environment, development opportunities for and skills gained by trainees)		✓	✓
Bases plan on evidence of effective practices			✓
Presents non-demographic indicators of success and plans to monitor/adapt as required (e.g., retention, advancement, sense of inclusion)			✓

Alliance Advantage



Alliance Advantage

Overview

Who can apply?	University researchers working with partner organizations, co-applicants and collaborators
Essential?	Cash and in-kind contributions from partner organizations
How much?	\$20,000 to \$1 million per year
Cost-sharing?	2:1 leverage
How long?	1 to 5 years
When to apply?	Anytime

Alliance Advantage

Partner-driven projects, focused on the partners' goals

Alliance Advantage objectives:

- Generate new knowledge and technology
- Contribute to Canada's competitiveness
- Train highly qualified personnel in areas that are important to Canada
- Accelerate the translation and application of research results

Key benefits:

- Cost-sharing investments from partners could be eligible for SR&ED tax credits and could also be leveraged by other funding organizations, further reducing financial risk
- Applications can be submitted anytime
- Applications that request \leq \$75,000/year are processed internally with a decision time within 5 to 9 weeks

Alliance Advantage

Role of the partner organizations

The partner organizations involved in your Alliance project can be from the **private, public or not-for-profit sectors**

At least one partner organization must be recognized for cost sharing and make a cash contribution that NSERC will be leveraged at the cost-sharing ratio of 2:1



Each partner organization must be actively involved in the project and support it through in-kind contributions



At least one partner organization must have the ability to exploit the research results and to achieve the desired outcomes



Producer groups and industrial associations

Role	Producer Groups	Industrial Associations
Coordinating & Funding Research	On behalf of their members and/or to mobilize knowledge to encourage the growth and sustainability of the industry	For the group or sector the organization represents
Collaboration	Through organization's board or committees or through one or more of the organization's members	Directly , or through one or more of the organization's members
In-kind Contributions	Project design, project oversight, meetings, participation of staff, board or committee members or member producers	Typically, by the association members with project management by the association
HQP Training	Through the producer group or its members	Through a member company or companies
Research Results	Disseminates information to all members; translates and mobilizes knowledge from the project to members	Demonstrates availability of resources to implement the results , either directly or through one or more of the organization's members

See [Partner page](#) for full list of requirements

Alliance Advantage

How to apply

1. Apply at any time by filling out the [proposal template](#).
No limit on the number of applications you can submit
2. Assess and address potential conflicts of interest to discharge professional and institutional obligations, maintain public confidence and ensure accountability
3. Describe **concrete, context-specific** and **evidence-based** EDI practices to ensure that EDI is supported in your project's training plan
4. Complete the [National Security Guidelines for Research Partnership's Risk Assessment Form](#), if your application involves private sector partner organizations
5. Submit a complete application through the [NSERC's online system](#)

Proposal:

- Follow the [instructions](#)
- Keep the headings and bullets, the font and font size, as well as the margins
- Keep within page limit (includes the template's heading and bullets)
- Any document that is not requested will be removed

Risk Assessment Form:

- Complete the risk assessment questionnaire and the risk mitigation plan (when applicable)
- Consider the risks associated with each private sector partner organization involved in your project

https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Innovate-Innover/alliance-alliance/apply-presentez_votre_demande_eng.asp
https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Innovate-Innover/alliance-alliance/EDI_training-EDI_formation_eng.asp

Alliance Advantage

Evaluation process

- 1 Administrative assessment
- 2 Risk assessment (when applicable)
- 3 Merit assessment
 - I. Review mechanisms
 - II. Evaluation criteria
 - III. Determining the overall merit
- 4 Funding decision

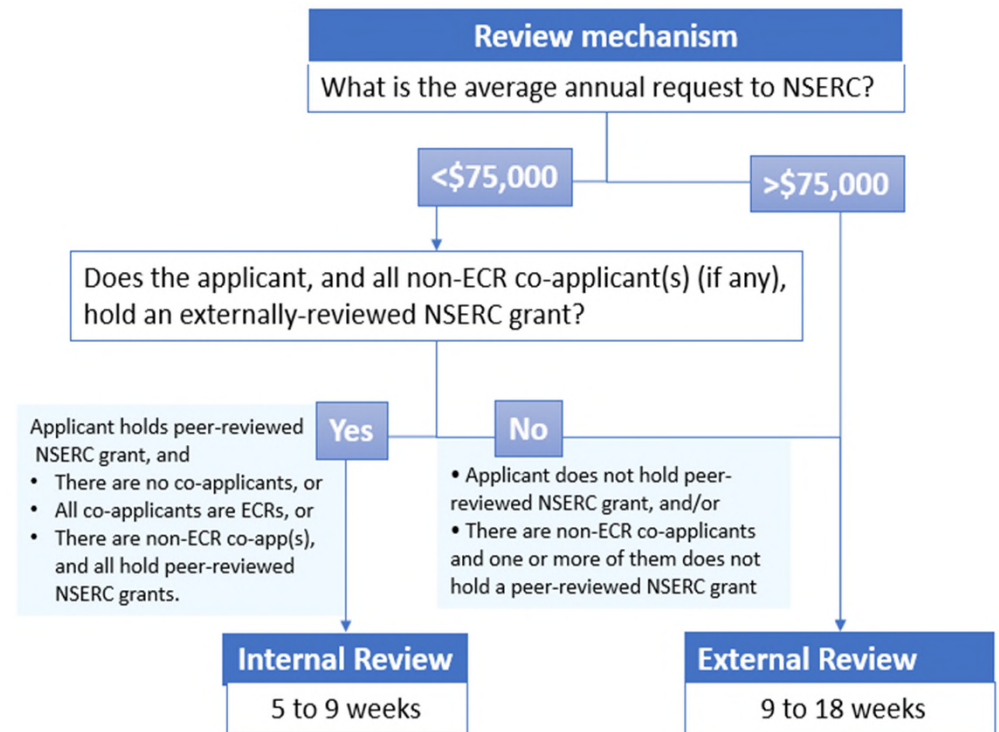
Size of project	Small	Medium	Large
Average annual request	\$20k to \$75k	\$75k to \$300k	\$300k to \$1M
Review mechanism	NSERC File Managers or External reviewers *	External reviewers with expertise directly related to the proposal provide a review	
Maximum total number of pages	7	11	27
Expected assessment time	5 to 9 weeks	9 to 18 weeks	

* If there is no existing NSERC peer review for the applicant or one of the co-applicants (except co-applicants who are early career researchers)

Alliance Advantage

Shorter assessment times for small applications

- Alliance applications may be reviewed internally or externally. Internal review is faster than external
- Previously, only applications requesting less than \$30k/year could be internally reviewed. This threshold is now increased to \$75k/year
- Internal review is only used when the applicant and all co-applicants hold a peer-reviewed NSERC grant. *Co-applicants who are early career researchers (ECRs) are now exempt*



Alliance Advantage

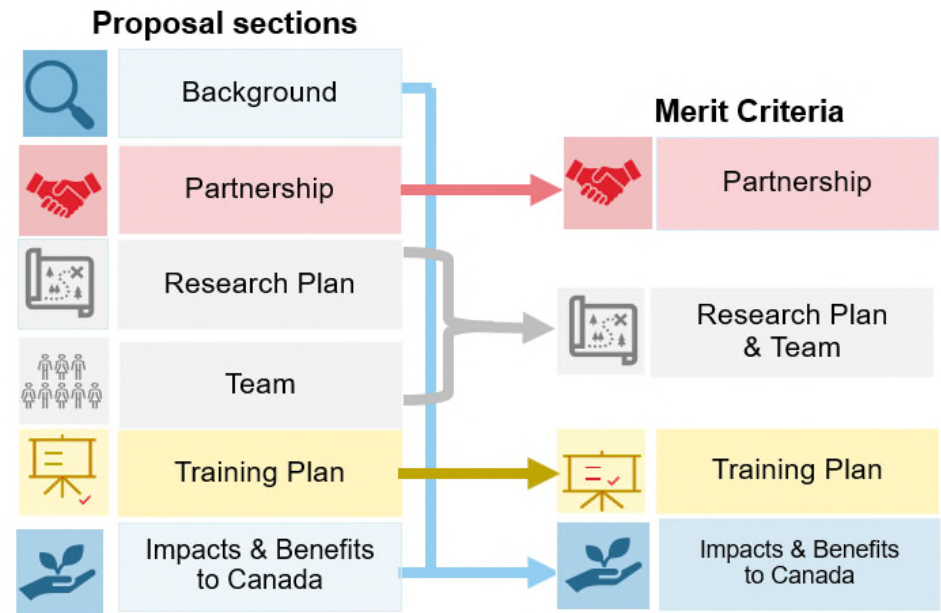
Evaluation process – merit assessment

The proposal template has been revised and reorganized into six distinct sections :

- guide and help applicants develop more streamlined research proposal
- easier for reviewers and NSERC staff to find needed information

Merit evaluation is based on four criteria

- two sub-criteria per criteria



Alliance Advantage - Best practices

Partner organizations must:

- Be active and engaged in the project
- Contribute to reaching the objectives
- Exploit the results and generate outcomes

Each partner organization completes a one-page profile addressing these two requirements:

- Description of organization, including the nature of its operations in Canada and how it intends to grow them by mobilizing the research results
- Demonstration that the organization has the capacity to achieve the project's expected results (HR, facilities and financial capabilities)

Are cash contributions recognized for cost sharing?

[Role of partner organizations](#)

[Partner org. self-assessment tool](#)

[Tri-agency guide on fin. admin.](#)

Reference to partner organization's website is not acceptable in lieu of a comprehensible profile

Refer to the [instructions](#)

Changes to indicators for EDI in training

	Meets	Exceeds	Exceptional
Describes specific and concrete practices	✓	✓	✓
Provides context for the proposed practices		✓	✓
Addresses multiple aspects of the training plan (e.g., training philosophy, recruitment, training environment, development opportunities for and skills gained by trainees)		✓	✓
Bases plan on evidence of effective practices			✓
Presents non-demographic indicators of success and plans to monitor/adapt as required (e.g., retention, advancement, sense of inclusion)			✓

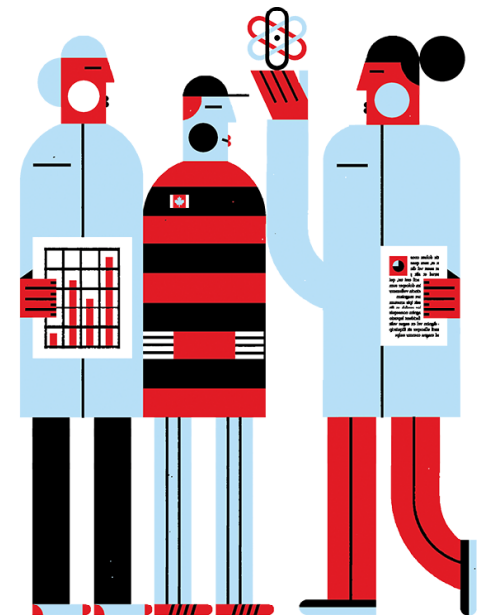
Alliance grants

Merit Indicators

1. Partnership

- [Merit Indicators](#)

Alliance Society



Alliance Society

Overview

Who can apply?	University researchers working with partner organizations, co-applicants and collaborators
Essential?	Active societal groups participation and societal impact
How much?	\$20,000 to \$1 million per year
Cost-sharing?	No cost-sharing. 100% NSERC funding.
How long?	1 to 5 years
When to apply?	Anytime

Alliance Society

Projects that aim for society-wide impact

Societal challenges and societal impacts are the main drivers

Societal Impact

Teams include societal groups representing the people affected by the issue

Making Connections

Project organized for active collaboration, dissemination and translation of results

Broad Outputs

https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Innovate-Innover/Alliance_society-Alliance_societe/index_eng.asp

https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Innovate-Innover/alliance_society-alliance_societe/research_topics-sujets_de_recherche_eng.asp

Alliance Society

Key steps

- Identify all relevant stakeholders, including societal groups outside natural sciences and engineering when appropriate
- Integrate scientific, technical and societal perspectives and skill sets throughout the collaboration's activities
- Plan how all stakeholders will benefit from the knowledge and results being disseminated and mobilized through the collaboration's activities

How to apply:

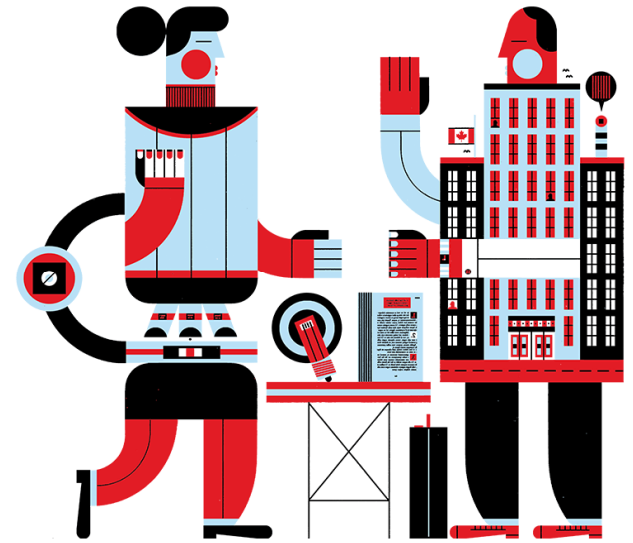
- Apply at any time. Fill out the [proposal template](#) and complete the three-page **Public Impact Value Proposition (PIVP) section**
- Submit a complete application through [NSERC's online system](#)

Alliance Society

Public Impact Value Proposition template (3 pages)

- Describe the issue the project aims to address and explain the societal impact the project results will have. Describe the new technical knowledge that will be generated
- Describe the current barriers impeding a solution and the proposed novel strategy for addressing the issue. Explain why and how the research team and partner organizations are positioned to address the challenge
- Describe how the project is designed to take into account the needs of end-users and implementers. Outline the project's plan to involve groups in your partner organizations' network to achieve optimal results and impact
- Explain how the project outcomes will reach beyond the partner organizations to impact society. Describe the ways in which interested individuals or groups will be able to learn about and use the products, services or policies that stem from this research

Alliance International



Alliance International

Alliance International - Catalyst grants

Up to \$25,000 for one year *

Goal: Support Canadian researchers** in initiating international research collaborations in the NSE disciplines with foreign academic researchers.

The aim is to:

- Ensure that the first personnel exchanges for Canadian researchers can take place
- Support exploratory research activities that will pave the way for sustained collaboration

Your international collaborator(s) must:

- Be **exclusively** from the academic sector
- Have secured funding to cover their participation in the project
- Play an active role in the project (research activities, providing enriched training, using results to achieve outcomes)

* One application with a 12-month period as either applicant or co-applicant

** Canadian applicant and co-applicants must hold an active NSERC peer-reviewed grant at the time of application

Alliance International

Alliance International - Collaboration grants

Up to \$100k /year, for up to three years*

Goal: Allow Canadian researchers** to participate in international NSE projects with foreign academic researchers. The aim is to:

- Help leverage world-class expertise in NSE disciplines for research and training
- Participate in the development of solutions that are likely to generate outcomes and benefits for Canada
- Cover the direct costs of research of the Canadian research team

Your international collaborator(s) must:

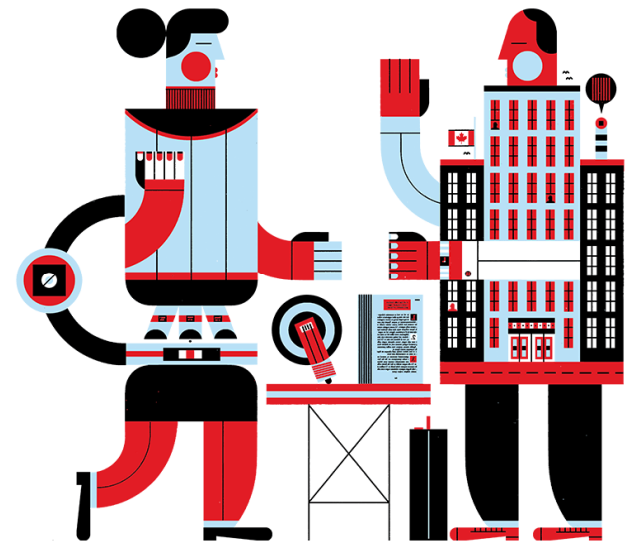
- Be exclusively from the academic sector
- Have secured peer-reviewed funding from their national granting agency, in which the Canadian participants and their role in the project are detailed.
- Provide a copy of the submitted proposal and proof that the grant was awarded to them***, within three months preceding the submission of the Alliance International Collaboration application*** to NSERC.

* One application with a 12-month period as either applicant or co-applicant

** Canadian applicant and co-applicants must hold an active NSERC peer-reviewed grant at the time of application.

*** To be eligible, the foreign project and Alliance application cannot include non-academic participants

Alliance special calls and joint funding opportunities



Slide 34

- 0 Note to presenter: if you choose to remove the provincial joint funding opportunity slides, you will be left with Alliance-Mitacs Accelerate only. You may want to rename this slide as such.

Remmler,Lauren, 2024-02-07T20:23:50.448

Alliance Grants - Special calls and joint funding opportunities

NSERC Alliance-Mitacs Accelerate grants

- Streamlined submission and single review process at NSERC, the lead agency
- Funding for up to five years
- Applicants must meet both NSERC's and Mitacs' eligibility criteria
- Number and role of the Mitacs interns, as well as the supervision and mentorship by the partner organization are described
- NSERC and Mitacs communicate the funding decisions to the applicants under separate cover

How to apply:

- Contact your local Mitacs representative
- Complete an Alliance Advantage application
- Complete the Mitacs Accelerate supplemental application to request Mitacs Accelerate internships as a component of HQP training

Note: *Mitacs internships cannot be the only mechanism for HQP training in the joint proposal; HQP should also be supported by NSERC funds*

Special calls / Joint funding opportunities

NSERC Alliance-Mitacs Accelerate grants

- Joint application process
- Principles and requirements of both Alliance and Accelerate must be met. Where there is variance on program eligibility or terms, the stricter of the two will apply.
- Limited to Alliance Advantage

Questions? alliance@nserc-crsng.gc.ca

Learn more → nserc-crsng.gc.ca / [Alliance-Mitacs Accelerate](#)

NSERC Alliance-Mitacs Accelerate grants

Duration	Up to 5 years
Deadline	No deadline
How to apply	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contact Mitacs business development representative 2. Submit a joint Alliance-Accelerate application to NSERC 3. Duration and funding from NSERC: normal limits 4. Review completed by NSERC – joint funding decision with Mitacs

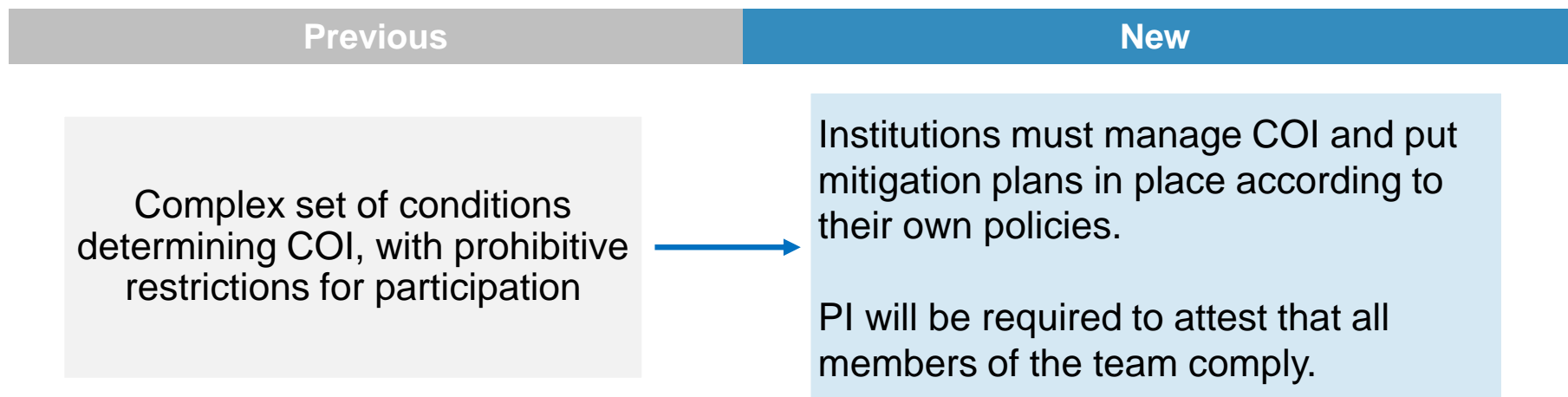
FS0 Alliance Mitacs (EN)

Contact(s): Maja Bracovic

Saintonge,Félix, 2024-02-26T18:22:25.171

Changes to Conflict of Interest (COI) guidelines

- To facilitate innovation and support entrepreneurship
- Increased opportunities for university spin-offs to be recognized for cost sharing



Refer to [Partners section](#) of Alliance Advantage page

Useful links



Alliance grants - Best practices

Useful links

[Alliance grants website](#)

[Research topics](#)

[Funding and cost-sharing](#)

[Use of grant funds](#)

[Safeguarding your research](#)

[Equity, diversity and inclusion in your training plan](#)

[Role of partner organizations](#)

[Partner organization self-assessment tool](#)

[Proposal template](#)

[Instructions for completing an application](#)

[Application checklist](#)

[Review mechanisms and evaluation criteria](#)

[Merit indicators](#)

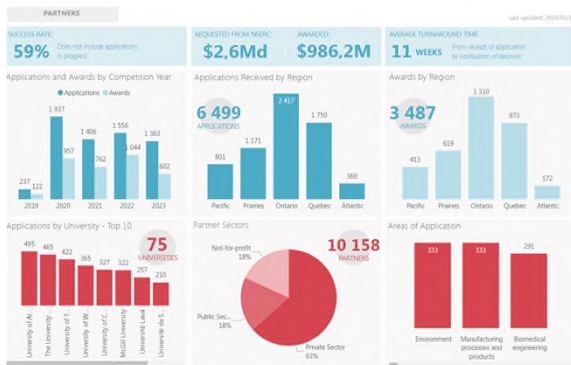
[PIVP selection committee review instructions](#)

[Alliance Advantage resources, FAQ](#)

[Alliance Society resources, FAQ](#)

Alliance grants - Best practices

Alliance dashboard, funding decisions, database and news



NSERC's Awards Database

Search

Fiscal Year
From: [] To: 2022-2023

Competition Year
From: [] To: []

Name of Person
[]

Keywords in (Application ID, Award Title and Summary)
[]

Institution & Province
[All Universities Colleges All]

Area of Application
[All] OR []

Research Subject
[All] OR []

Advanced Search

Display Results By
Detailed List of Awards

Reset Search



NSERC announces improvements to Alliance grants program

December 5, 2023

NSERC is pleased to announce the launch of several improvements to its Alliance grants program. This update is in response to feedback received and builds on our experience with the program over the last four years.

Alliance grants were launched in 2019 to encourage university researchers to collaborate with partner organizations from the private, public or not-for-profit sectors. By partnering with organizations that can use their work, researchers can turn their discoveries into impact.

In 2022-23, NSERC evaluated the program through surveys, consultations and interviews with stakeholders. The perspective of the community, along with NSERC's experience to date, shaped the changes described below.

These changes aim to make the Alliance grants program even more simple, flexible, modernized and responsive. They will help to:

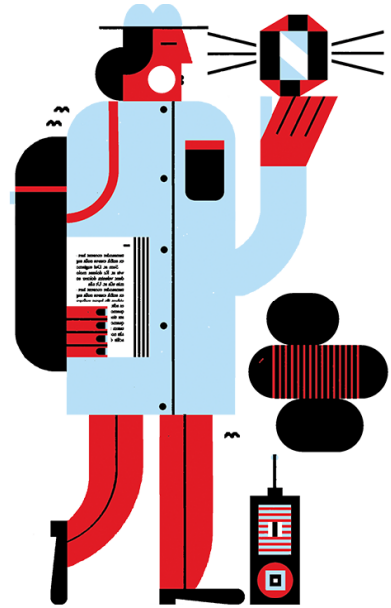
- remove barriers to collaboration
- champion more research partnerships
- provide efficient and responsive proposal assessment
- strengthen relationships with the research community

https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Innovate-Innover/alliance-alliance/results-resultats_eng.asp

https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/ase-oro/index_eng.asp

https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Media-Media/NewsDetail-DetailNouvelles_eng.asp?ID=1433

Conclusion



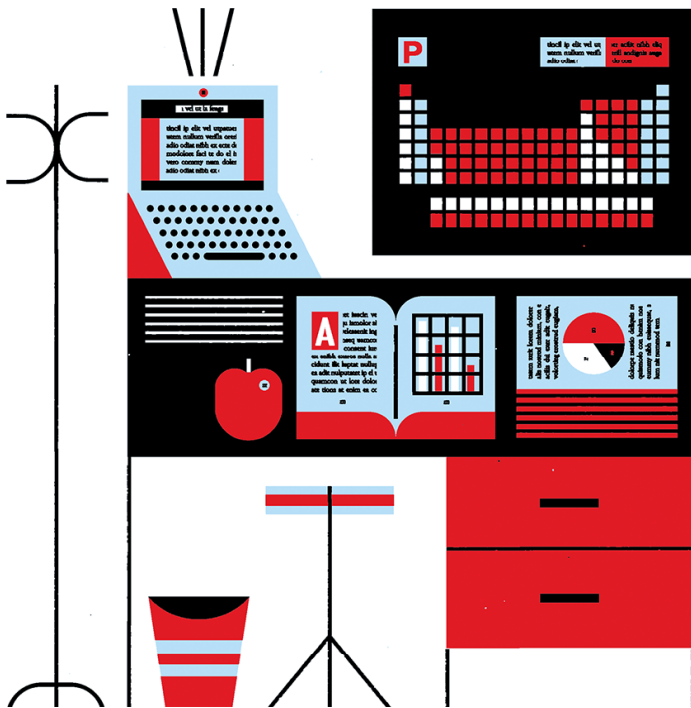


Alliance grants provide you with
flexibility in building partnerships

The recent improvements to the Alliance grants program should help you effectively generate new knowledge and accelerate the application of research results for the benefit of Canadians.

NSERC Alliance grants

https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Media-Media/NewsDetail-DetailNouvelles_eng.asp?ID=1433



Questions?

NSERC Alliance grants team

1-855-275-2861

alliance@nserc-crsng.gc.ca

NSERC Alliance International

Allianceinternational@nserc-crsng.gc.ca

Connect with us

 @nserc_crsng

 facebook.com/nserccanada