



OFCP RESEARCH FUND

APPLICATION GUIDELINES

Application Receipt Date: September 15, 2013

1630 Lawrence Avenue West
Suite 104
Toronto, Ontario
M6L 1C5
Phone: 416-244-9686, Ext. 224
Fax: 416-244-6543
Toll Free: 1-877-244-9686

The Ontario Federation for Cerebral Palsy (OFCP) invites grant applications from applicants committed to conducting research in areas relevant to the cure, cause, prevention, improved treatment and/or understanding of cerebral palsy and its implications on society. OFCP encourages applications from the fields of biomedicine, health services and systems research, population studies, and clinical research. Through this initiative, OFCP intends to stimulate meaningful contributions and/or innovative approaches to the area of cerebral palsy research and study in Canada, and is committed to fostering leadership in this area.

The OFCP intends to provide awards for the support of projects with budgets in the amount of \$50,000, or less, per year, over a three-year term to outstanding applicants who have been approved by the Board. Funds awarded under the Program are to be used to cover operating expenses, technical support staff salaries and equipment costs for research grants in cerebral palsy related areas.

The OFCP Research Fund is available to investigators who propose to conduct research on the biomedical, clinical, health services and systems, and population areas of cerebral palsy. OFCP plans to adopt a flexible framework in funding awards from the Research Fund.

Funds Available

The OFCP Research Fund offers awards for the support of projects with budgets in the amount of \$50,000.00, or less, per year, over a three-year term to exceptional eligible applicants who have been approved for funding by the OFCP Board of Directors.

Eligibility

The OFCP is committed to supporting the most advanced and/or highest quality of Cerebral Palsy research in Canada. As such, applications to the OFCP Research Fund will be accepted by individuals from a broad spectrum of health-related communities and sectors, including, but not limited to, researchers, scholars and health professionals.

- Canadian post-secondary institutions and their affiliated institutions including hospitals and research institutes;
- Canadian non-governmental not-for-profit organizations (including community or charitable organizations) with an explicit research or knowledge translation mandate;
- Other organization, as determined by the Research Committee of the OFCP in consultation with the Board of Directors, provided that the applicant's research or research-related activities fall within the mandate of OFCP.

The applicant must be a researcher who has completed formal training in health-related research. Applicants must have some form of research appointment with an Approved Institution, typically an employment relationship with such institution or organization.

This applicant's research appointment with his or her Approved Institution must:

- be the major research appointment of the Principal Applicant
- allow the applicant to pursue the proposed research project, to supervise trainees and to publish the results of the research
- require the applicant to conform to institutional regulations concerning the conduct of research, the supervision of research trainees, and the employment conditions of staff paid from the OFCP grant.

The applicant must be responsible for the intellectual direction of the proposed research and must be willing and able to assume administrative and financial responsibility for any funds awarded under the Program.

Researchers who do not meet the eligibility criteria established by OFCP at the time of application, but who expect to meet such criteria by the funding start date, may apply to the Program. Such applications must provide a letter, signed by the responsible official of the nominating Approved Institution, stating its commitment to confer eligible status on the application pursuant to the criteria summarized in the Request for Applications. Should the application be approved by the OFCP Board of Directors, awards granted from the Research Fund will be released to the nominating Approved Institution only upon confirmation of the researcher's eligibility status.

Applicants are prohibited from receiving the payment of a salary, stipend, honorarium, or any similar form of compensation from any OFCP grant. Fellows and trainees are not eligible to apply for funding under this Program. Applicants seeking a fellowship to support trainees at a post-doctoral level or clinical level should refer to OFCP.

Review Process

The evaluation of applications submitted to OFCP will be completed by the OFCP Research Committee.

The OFCP Research Committee is responsible for the evaluation of all applications submitted to OFCP in response to this Request for Applications, to rate each of the applications so that they may be ranked in order of priority and to recommend to OFCP the size of the award needed to support the research should the application be approved.

External reviewers will be solicited for additional expertise as needed.

The OFCP anticipates that it will provide each applicant whose application to participate in the program has been declined with written notice of such decision.

Review Criteria

The principal consideration used to evaluate applications is research excellence potential. There are, however, a variety of additional criteria that may be considered by the Research Committee in the evaluation process. Each of the criteria listed below will be considered in assigning the overall ranking of the application, weighting them as appropriate for each application. Note that the application does not need to be strong in all categories to be judged likely to have major scientific or social impact and thus deserving of a high priority score. For example, an investigator may propose to carry out important work that by its nature is not innovative but is essential to expand knowledge and understanding of Cerebral Palsy in a given field.

- Are the applicant's conceptual framework, design, methods, and analyses adequately developed, well integrated, and appropriate? Does the applicant acknowledge potential problem areas and consider alternative tactics?
- Does the project employ novel concepts, approaches or methods? Are the objectives original and innovative? Does the project challenge existing paradigms or develop new methodologies or technologies? Alternatively, does this project investigate crucial areas that may not be innovative but are meaningful and important to the given field of research? Does it build to the foundation of existing Cerebral Palsy knowledge?
- Is the applicant appropriately trained and well suited to carry out this work? Is the work proposed appropriate to the experience level of the applicant and other researchers (if any)?
- Does the scientific environment in which the work will be done contribute to the project's probability of success? Is there evidence of institutional support of this project?
- Is this project relevant to advancing the understanding of Cerebral Palsy? Does it have the potential to advance the state of science/social science relating to cerebral palsy? What can be done with the results of this proposed project?

In addition to the above criteria, all applications will also be reviewed with respect to the following:

- The reasonableness of the proposed budget and duration of the project in relation to the proposed research; and
- The adequacy of the proposed protection of humans, animals, or of the environment, to the extent that they may be adversely affected by the project proposed in the application. The Research Committee will also examine the provisions for the protection of human subjects (if any) and the safety of the research environment.

Terms and Conditions

The Request for Applications made by OFCP hereunder is subject to the following terms and conditions, which the applicant shall be deemed to have accepted upon submission to OFCP of an application to participate in the Program.

Matching Funds

Requirement that applicant provide information regarding ability to provide matching funds towards research project.

Use of Funds

Funds awarded from the Research Fund are to be used to cover operating expenses, technical support staff salaries and equipment costs required by the successful applicant to conduct his or her project over the term of the Program, as approved by the Board of Directors. OFCP will not award funds to applicants who intend to use such funds exclusively for technical support staff salaries or equipment costs. Funds for travel will be awarded to the successful applicant for reasonable travel expenses considered essential to conduct the project.

Prolonged Absence from Work

The applicant shall immediately notify OFCP of any illness or other cause necessitating the absence of the applicant from work exceeding ninety successive days. Continuation of the award will be at the discretion of OFCP.

Transfer of Award

A successful applicant who has received an award under the Program may not change projects or institutions and further, may not transfer the award, in any case whatsoever, without prior written consent of OFCP. Such change or transfer, as the case may be, may be granted at the discretion of OFCP.

No Binding Commitment

Nothing in this Request for Applications, including these Terms and Conditions, shall be deemed to obligate to award funds to an applicant. The decision to accept or reject an applicant's application rests solely with the OFCP Board of Directors acting in its sole discretion.

Financial Gain

OFCP will not award funds to applications that involve any element of financial profit from the granted funds to an applicant, or any other individual named on the Program face sheet submitted by the applicant to OFCP, including the applicant's collaborators and/or key personnel.

Ethical Considerations

Proposals that involve human subjects must be accompanied by a statement certifying that the protocol has been reviewed by the Institutional Research Ethics Board and meets the former MRC Guidelines on Research Involving Human Subjects (1987) and/or the MRC Guidelines on Somatic Cell Gene Therapy in Humans (1990).

Proposals that involve recombinant DNA molecules or pathogenic organisms or animal cells must be accompanied by a statement certifying that the protocol has been reviewed by the institutional Biohazards Committee and meets the Health and Welfare Canada and MRC Laboratory Biosafety Guidelines (1990) and will be carried out under the required level of containment.

Proposals that involve the use of experimental animals must be accompanied by a statement that the protocol has been reviewed by the Institutional Animal Care Committee and is in accordance with the Guide to the Care and Use of Experimental Animals of the Canadian Council of Animal Care (CCAC) [Vol.2 (1984)].

OFCP has carefully studied and evaluated the issues involved in using stem cells in research. OFCP has determined that: **under no circumstances will fund research that used stem cells derived from human embryos created solely for research purposes or from cloned human embryos.**

Limitation of Liability

In no event shall OFCP be liable to the applicant or an Approved Institution for costs, damages, losses or injuries arising for any reason including, without limitation, claims based in tort, contract or other legal theory. For greater certainty, OFCP shall not be liable for any direct, special, consequential, incidental, punitive or indirect damages, however caused.

Indemnification

The successful applicant and the Approved Institution (the "Indemnifiers") will be responsible for any and all risk and liability related to the training of, or work performed by, the applicant and the use of the funds awarded under the Program and shall take all necessary measures to avoid any losses or damages to OFCP. The Indemnifiers will defend, fully indemnify and hold harmless, its successors, assigns, directors, officers and employees from and against any and all claims, demands, suits, actions, causes of action and/or liability, of any kind, whatsoever, including losses, however caused, resulting from: (i) negligent acts or omissions arising in connection with the training of, or work performed by, the applicant; (ii) the use of the funds awarded under the Program; and (iii) any and all breached by the Indemnifiers of these Terms and Conditions.

No Partnership, etc.

The acceptance or deemed acceptance by OFCP, the applicant and the Approved Institution shall not create any agency, partnership, joint venture or employment relationship between the parties and neither of the parties shall have the power to obligate or bind the other party.

Governing Law

These Terms and Conditions shall be construed pursuant to the laws of the Province of Ontario and the laws of the Province of Ontario and the laws of Canada applicable therein.

Reporting Requirements and Terms of Funding

Within twelve months of receiving funding from OFCP, all successful applicants for OFCP Research support must submit a brief report in lay language of their research activities. The report should not exceed two pages and should include an up to date progress report which emphasizes the practical utility of the findings. It should be suitable for publishing on the OFCP website, newsletter and any other OFCP publications. The final 10% of the funding provided by the OFCP will not be released until that report is received. No further grants from the OFCP will be considered until the reports from all previous grants have been received by the OFCP.

OFCP requires grant recipients to submit Annual and Final Progress Reports, as well as Financial Summary detailing the use of the funds awarded under the Program. The advance of the portion of the award to be made in the second year of the term of the Program is conditional upon submission of a progress report to OFCP in substance and form satisfactory to the Board of Directors at the end of the first year of the term of the Program. The report shall be submitted to the attention of the Research Committee at the OFCP Office.

The Final Progress Report must describe the results of the successful applicant's project and the Financial Summary must detail the use of the funds awarded from the Research Fund. These reports shall be submitted by the successful applicant in substance and form satisfactory to the Board of Directors. The Final Progress Report and the Financial Summary shall be submitted to the attention of the Research Committee at the OFCP Office no later than three months after the termination of the term of the Research Grant.

When work for a project awarded from the Research Fund is not completed by the successful applicant within the term of the Research Grant, or if for any reason the work cannot be continued within this time period, the funding awarded from the Research Fund will be closed. Any funds remaining will be frozen and cannot be put to any use whatsoever. Such funds are to be immediately returned to OFCP unless the successful applicant is given written permission by OFCP to use such funds to complete the project.

The successful applicant may be asked to attend OFCP Annual General Meeting or, rarely, other special meetings during which he or she may be invited to report on the progress of his or her projects. In the event the applicant attends such meetings, at the request of the OFCP reasonable travel expenses of the applicant will be paid for by OFCP.

The public relations departments of an Approved Institution must promptly be informed of any successful application and shall publicize notice of receipt of any award under the Program as widely as possible. OFCP should receive copies of all press announcements relating to the approved project at its Office prior to publication where possible. All written or presentation references to work funded by OFCP should include acknowledgment of the support provided by OFCP and copies of all publications date where possible. OFCP shall have the right to make reference to specific projects for purposes of publicity in a manner acceptable to and in the sole discretion of OFCP. The project title and the lay summary detailed in an individual's application may be used by OFCP without notification and may be disseminated into the public domain. Applicants are cautioned to disclose anything in these sections that would endanger a proprietary position.

OFCP shall have an ownership interest in all patents, patent applications, trademarks, trademark applications and all other intellectual property rights associated with the results of the successful applicant's project. The successful applicant agrees to promptly notify OFCP of any registration of such intellectual property rights. Subject to OFCP respective rights, the successful applicant, OFCP, and any other interested party shall negotiate the development and exploitation of the results. The successful applicant shall sign all documents and do all things necessary, in OFCP sole judgment, to evidence OFCP ownership in any patents, patent applications, trademarks, trademark applications or other intellectual property rights relating to the results of the successful applicant's project and to give effect to the intent of these Terms and Conditions.

Failure to comply with these Terms and Conditions may result in termination of the award granted under the Program and exclusion from future grant and fellowship award competitions.

Applications must be submitted to OFCP no later than September 15, 2013 and must include the following:

- OFCP Face Sheet
- Project Narrative, including:
 - Background of proposed studies (1 page)
 - Specific objectives of the proposed studies (½ page)
 - Details of proposed experiment, including methods and procedures (3 pages)
 - Statement describing relevance of proposed studies in Canada (½ page)
- Lay summary of project (½ page)
- Estimated budget, including all significant aspects of the project such as salaries, materials, and overhead
 - Costs of purchasing equipment and travel expenses should not be included in application budget. Estimated budget information should be documented with sufficient detail and justification to allow reviewers to make judgments about the amount of funds necessary to allow the project to proceed. Applicants must include accurate and complete information regarding all other sources of funding support (current or pending), including title, brief abstract, annual total amount of funds, inclusive funding period, and percentage effort of the applicant (1 page).
- Biographical information/CVs of the applicant and all other key collaborators (1-2 pages)

Please note that project narratives should not exceed five (5) 8 ½" x 11" sized pages, with no less than one inch margins on top, bottom and sides of pages. Pages must be typed using Arial font, and may be double, 1.5 or single-spaced. Font size may not be less than 12 point, and may not exceed a maximum of 15 characters per inch. Any applications in violation of these guidelines will be subject to disqualification at the discretion of the OFCP Board of Directors.

Relevant and reasonable support materials relating to the application, including but not limited to photographs, literature references, publications, letters of collaboration and appendices may be included. The five-page limit applies only to the project narrative and does not include budgets, references, biographical information, ethical approvals or other support documents.

Late and incomplete applications will not be considered under any circumstances, nor will postmarks be taken into account if the application arrives after the deadline date.

All decisions reached by the OFCP Research Fund Committee and approved by the OFCP Board of Directors are final.