
CITF request for Expressions of Interest: COVID-19 Hot Spots

Sponsor

McGill University and Health Canada

Program

COVID-19 Hot Spots

For More Information

Please visit <https://www.covid19immunitytaskforce.ca/research/funding-opportunities/> [1]

Proposal Preparation Workshop: Following screening of the EOIs by the COVID-19 Immunity Taskforce (CITF) Secretariat, those deemed to have the most potential will be invited to a mandatory proposal preparation workshop on October 6, 2020.

The workshop aims are threefold:

1. to provide further context of the CITF and to ensure Provincial/Territorial and Federal perspectives are fully considered;
2. to foster linkages between population studies with studies of immune response to infection; and
3. to align EOIs on similar topics to facilitate the development of team proposals.

Description

The COVID-19 pandemic has been experienced unequally within countries and Canada is no exception. Most COVID-19 deaths in Canada have been in long-term care facilities, cases have clustered in select neighbourhoods and within the hardest hit provinces, and working whose jobs require routine direct interaction with the public appear at greater risk of SARS-CoV-2 infection.

Understanding the factors that give rise to COVID-19 “Hot Spots” is critical to informing the design and assessing the effectiveness of efforts aimed at reducing disproportionate risk to SARS-CoV-2/COVID-19.

This Request for Expressions of Interest (RFEOI) is for population-based studies that will report novel data relating to COVID-19 infection and immunity in three types of COVID-19 “hot spots” detailed below.

The three “Hot Spots” for Study:

1. **Geographic Areas:** Neighbourhoods, boroughs, and municipalities with disproportionately high rates of COVID-19 (defined as cases per thousand above a defined threshold), where there are often high concentrations of racialized populations, Indigenous populations, recent immigrants, and homeless persons.
2. **Long-Term Care Facilities:** About 25% of long-term care facilities in Canada have suffered COVID-19 outbreaks with extremely high mortality rates. Residents, front-line workers, families, visitors and personal care companions all factor into infection risk, yet 75% of facilities have not experienced outbreaks.
3. **Occupation Groups and Populations Served:** Those who are at higher risk because working from home is not an option and the nature of the work setting places them in close proximity and requires significant interactions with the population served, the general public, and/or co-workers. Priorities include:
 - Education workers and students – i.e. teachers, support staff and students;
 - Public service workers – fire, police, transport, security;
 - Industrial workers – meat/fish packing, seasonal agricultural;
 - Retail workers – grocery, restaurant, personal goods.

Studies focusing on these “hot spots” are expected to provide a more in-depth understanding of the dynamics of SARS-CoV-2 infection and immunity in high- versus low-risk communities and/or prospectively evaluate interventions to decrease risk of infection in these settings.

Expressions of Interest are expected to:

- Focus on only one of the three “hot spot” areas defined above;
- Demonstrate active engagement of relevant stakeholders in the community(ies) within the “hot spot”, from inception through to dissemination of the research;
- Draw on measures of COVID-19 immunity (serological, cellular, salivary) and also acute infection (RT-PCR/NAATs);
- Consider a range of relevant independent variables that determine individual, household, and/or workplace risks or protective factors;
- Be innovative, interdisciplinary and of high scientific quality;
- Be carried out within a 12-18-month time horizon.

Eligibility

Academic Institutions.

Funding Availability

The CITF intends to fund multiple studies in each “hot spot” category that meet or exceed expectations related to scientific value, community/stakeholder engagement, and policy relevance. An overall funding envelope of up to \$30 million is available.

Indirect Costs

To be determined once confirmed.

Project Duration

A 12-18-month time horizon for each project.

Special Notes

Please note that research activities carried out in the context of COVID-19 need to adhere to the University of Guelph COVID-19 research principles, policies, guidelines and processes as they may be updated from time to time and communicated on the [Office of Research web-page](#) [2].

Health care workers in the acute care setting as well as prisons and correctional workers are not included in this RFEOI as there are other funding opportunities covering these groups.

Deadlines

If College-level review is required, your College will communicate its earlier internal deadlines.

Type	Date	Notes
External Deadline	Monday, September 21, 2020 - 4:30pm	Expression of Interest submission deadline.
Internal Deadline	Tuesday, October 6, 2020 - 4:30pm	Full proposal deadline. Please submit a PDF copy of your application, along with an OR-5 Form to the Office of Research Services (research.services@uoguelph.ca [3]) a minimum of one week prior to the external deadline.
External Deadline	Monday, October 12, 2020 - 4:30pm	Full proposal deadline. The CITF secretariat will work with the teams that emerge

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Type	Date	Notes
		from the workshop to develop a final, full proposal of 10-12 pages. The proposals must be submitted no later than October 12, 2020.
Internal Deadline	Monday, October 19, 2020 - 4:30pm	Those selected to submit a final revised proposal must forward a copy of the revised submission to the Office of Research Services (research.services@uoguelph.ca [3]) a minimum of one week prior to the external deadline.
External Deadline	Monday, October 26, 2020 - 4:30pm	<p>Submission of revised full proposal.</p> <p>After independent review and revision, final revised proposals must be submitted on October 26, 2020.</p> <p>Those selected will be given instructions as to how to submit.</p>

How to Apply

The Expression of Interest (EOI) is a five-page form, submitted in either English or French, that includes:

1. study focus;
2. study questions, design and methods;
3. description of geographic area, long-term care setting, or occupation group;
4. demonstration of stakeholder engagement; v) anticipated timeline for results;
5. budget; and
6. investigator details/biosketch.

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<https://www.covid19immunitytaskforce.ca/research/funding-opportunities/> [1]

Information For Co-applicants

Please see the application form for more information regarding co-applicants

<https://www.covid19immunitytaskforce.ca/research/funding-opportunities/> [1]

Attachment(s)

Attachment	Size
 CITF Application Form [4]	60.06 KB

For Questions, please contact

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URL: <https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/alerts/content/citf-request-expressions-interest-covid-19-hot-spots>

Links

[1] <https://www.covid19immunitytaskforce.ca/research/funding-opportunities/>

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[2] <https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/>

[3] <mailto:research.services@uoguelph.ca>

[4] <https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/alerts/sites/default/files/attachments/CITF-RFEOI-Covid-19-Hotspots-FORM.docx>

[5] <mailto:wtherrien@univcan.ca>

[6] <https://can01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.univcan.ca%2F&data=02%7C01%7CChantal.Couture%40USherbrooke.ca%7C5d75177c4ba247de770b08d84b8683e5%7C3a5a8744593545f99423b32c3a5de082%7C0%7C0%7C637342388390675196&sdata=BI3AJBVkj1X7zQv8IFu7LJybQ6My3L%2BIOYZZdLYUb80%3D&reserved=0>

[7] <mailto:lawsong@uoguelph.ca>