
PROGRAM GUIDE: Strategic Networking & Development (SND) Program

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Background

Emerging Technologies offer the promise of new industries and transformational solutions to challenges across Alberta's key sectors. Bringing together groups of Alberta researchers, graduate students, industry and others is an important part of building on ideas and moving key research forward in Emerging Technologies.

The Strategic Networking and Development (SND) Program makes funding available to researchers at **Alberta post-secondary institutions** to support activities ('Projects') such as workshops, conferences, competitions and other events which advance Alberta's research and innovation focus in the Emerging Technology Priority Areas of *Information and Communications Technologies (ICT)*, *Nanotechnologies (Nano)* and *'Omics technologies*.

This Program provides funding for Projects which have as a primary objective research collaboration, academic-industry/end-user collaboration, recruitment of highly-qualified and skilled people (HQP) to Alberta, the employment of HQP by industry in Alberta; and/or profiling of Alberta's research and innovation strengths in Emerging Technology Priority Areas.

Program Details

The program offers financial support of **up to \$10,000** per Project to researchers at [Alberta Post Secondary Institutions](#) to support Projects such as workshops, conferences, competitions and other events which advance research and innovation focus in the **Emerging Technology Priority Areas listed below.**

Emerging Technology Priority Areas		
Area	Intended Outcomes of Activity / Event	Opportunity Areas (Not Exhaustive)
Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • research collaboration; • academic-industry/end-user collaboration; • recruitment of highly-qualified and skilled people (HQP) to Alberta; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data-enabled Innovation: Artificial intelligence, Machine Learning, Big Data and Data analytics, Quantum Technologies, Communication Technologies, Cloud computing, Augmented Reality/Virtual Reality • Digital Technology for Business Transformation: Visualization, Cryptocurrency, Cybersecurity, Geomatics, Geospatial technologies, Internet of Things (IoT) • Innovative Production and Distribution: Robotics, Autonomous transportation, advanced manufacturing technologies including 3-D printing & fabrication • Virtual service delivery • Smart Grid and Smart communities
Nanotechnologies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • employment of HQP by industry in Alberta, and/or; • profiling of Alberta's research and innovation strengths 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Innovative Production and Distribution: Advanced Nano engineered materials, devices and systems • Atomic & molecular systems, Quantum Technologies, Sensors and MEMS
'Omics Technologies		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Genomics, Proteomics, Metabolomics, Metagenomics, Glycomics, etc. • Bioinformatics

Alberta Innovates' Strategic Networking & Development Program supports Emerging Technology Priority Area-aligned workshops, conferences, recruitment events, competitions and other focused gatherings, held in Alberta, organized/attended by Alberta researchers and/or post-secondary students.

HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS

Eligibility

(a) Applicant Eligibility Criteria - To qualify, an Applicant:

- Must be a post-secondary institution that is one of [Alberta's Publicly Funded Institutions](#)
- Generally, the Applicant Representative on an Application must be entitled to hold a grant account at the institution (i.e. Faculty member). In the case of an Application from a student, a Faculty

member willing to oversee the grant must be identified in the Application. Students considering applying should first consult the Program Lead before submitting an Application.

(b) Project Eligibility Criteria

To qualify for funding all Projects must:

- Align with one or more of the Emerging Technology Priority Areas listed in this Program Guide;
- Deliver an activity such as a workshop, conference, recruitment event, competitive event, or other focused gathering, the primary objective of which must be one or more of the following:
 - Identify/develop research or academic-industry/end-user collaborations;
 - recruit highly-qualified and skilled people (HQP) to Alberta;
 - encourage retention and employment of HQP by industry in Alberta and/or;
 - profile Alberta research and innovation strengths
- The objective of the activity cannot be primarily research dissemination;
- Deliver the activity within Alberta, except in exceptional circumstances involving travel to workshops or international competitions;
- be completed within the Term; and
- submit to other criteria that Alberta Innovates may develop from time to time.

Program Objectives and Performance Measurement

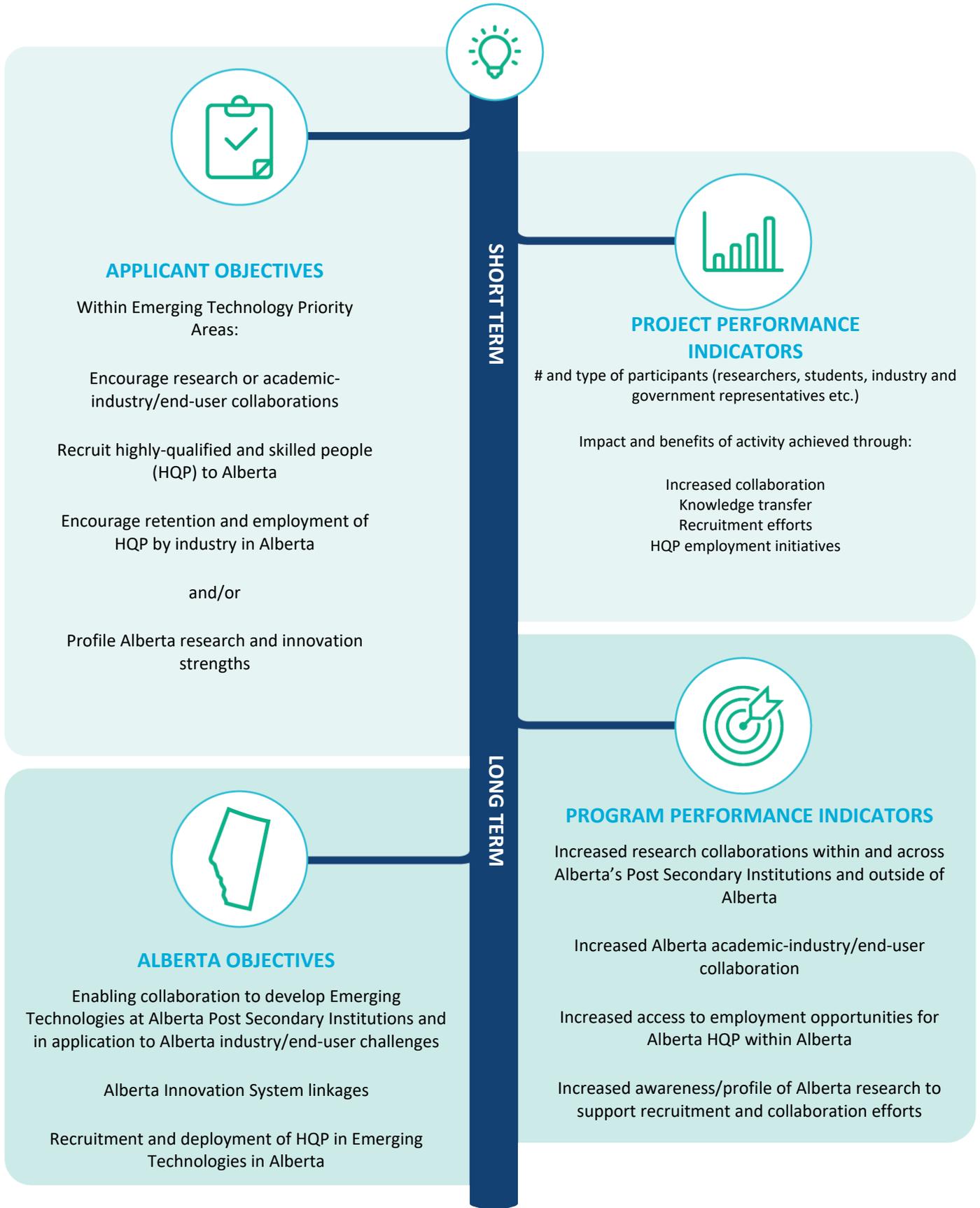
Over the life of a Project, Alberta Innovates employs an active project management philosophy, monitoring performance and supporting the Applicant to reach their objectives.

Once Projects are completed, Alberta Innovates continues to monitor performance for five (5) years to accurately evaluate the economic, social and environmental benefits realized for the province.

All Investment Agreements outline performance indicators tracked over the course of the Project and the responsibilities of the Applicant to report on outcomes subsequent to the completion of the Project.

Alberta Innovates has a common set of performance metrics it monitors, both at the individual Project level and for the aggregate Program. These are highlighted on the next page.

Objectives and Performance Metrics



How Funding Works

(a) Project Funding

The maximum Alberta Innovates investment for a single Project under the Strategic Networking & Development Program is \$10,000.

There is no funding matching requirement under this program. However, Applicants are expected to demonstrate both the need for support, and when feasible (most cases), that they have secured or requested funding from other sources to cover a portion of the total Project cost. For example, typically the organizing researcher's department/faculty may contribute, industry may contribute, workshop fees offset some costs, and/or the Institution's facilities are made available for the event at no cost.

A typical Project Term for SND grant is approximately 2.5 months, beginning 45 days before an activity or event and ending one month after. This allows for grant expenditures for event costs leading up to and following an event. The maximum term for a SND grant is one year.

(b) Eligible and ineligible expenses

Alberta Innovates only funds reasonable costs incurred after the Effective Date on an Investment Agreement with you. Any costs incurred prior to the Effective Date in the Investment Agreement, or costs greater than market prices are deemed ineligible.

Costs must be incurred between arm's length entities. Please refer to our standard form Investment Agreement found on our [website](#) to get an in-depth understanding of eligible and ineligible costs.

HOW TO APPLY



STEP 1 Application Submission

Applicants are strongly encouraged to contact the Program Lead to discuss the proposed Project before submitting an Application.

Complete and send your application through Alberta Innovates' [Applicant Portal](#).

Applications are accepted year-round. Applications should be submitted a minimum of 8 weeks before the activity start date.



STEP 2 Evaluation Process

Applications will be reviewed by Alberta Innovates.

Funding decisions can typically be communicated within 4 weeks of receiving an Application.

Alberta Innovates will execute an Investment Agreement with the Applicant for approved Projects.



STEP 3 Project Management

Applicants will complete and submit a Progress Report at the end of the Term.

An authorized financial statement of revenues and expenditures is required to be submitted along with the Progress report.

EVALUATION PROCESS

During the different phases of the program, Alberta Innovates leverages internal staff and external expert reviewers to evaluate the Applications submitted. Alberta Innovates evaluates Applications aligned with the Emerging Technology Priority Areas as shown in this Program Guide.

Alberta Innovates retains the sole right to determine the evaluation process and does not disclose the names of its external reviewers to ensure their objectivity and impartiality. All external parties are subject to both confidentiality and conflict of interest policies set by Alberta Innovates.

The assessment criteria and all investment decisions are at the sole discretion of Alberta Innovates.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

This Program Guide is intended as a high-level overview of the Program. It provides interested Applicants with a roadmap of what to expect over the lifecycle of a Strategic Networking & Development Project, from the announcement of the program, through the Application stage, during the Project and post-completion. Should you have any questions about this guide or what is expected, please contact Alberta Innovates. Please be aware Alberta Innovates may modify this guide from time to time in keeping with any changes to the program.

Alberta Innovates will only correspond in writing and provide copies of the Application to the person named in the Application form as the one authorized to speak for the Applicant.

Once we have evaluated and approved an Application for funding, Alberta Innovates will require the Applicant to sign our standard form Investment Agreement. A copy of the Investment Agreement is available on the Alberta Innovates [website](#). The Investment Agreement sets out in detail the roles, responsibilities and obligations of the various Parties to ensure a successful Project. Alberta Innovates will not provide any funding until the Investment Agreement has been signed by all Parties.

Alberta Innovates will only fund Applicants who have satisfied all eligibility criteria. Meeting the eligibility criteria does not guarantee access to funding, and all funding decisions will be made by Alberta Innovates at its sole discretion.

EQUITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION (EDI)

Alberta Innovates believes the Research and Innovation ecosystem is stronger and more sustainable when it is broadly reflective of the overall diversity of our community and therefore embraces the principles of Equity, Diversity and Inclusivity.

CONTACT INFORMATION

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