 

**PROGRAM GUIDE:**

**THE CANCER SCREENING RESEARCH AND INNOVATION OPPORTUNITY (CSRIO)**

**supported by the Alberta Cancer Prevention Legacy Fund (ACPLF)**

*The CSRIO Program supports the identification, development, and implementation of solutions to improve cancer screening.*

# Program Overview

Background

Alberta Innovates and Alberta Health co-designed and launched the Cancer Screening Research and Innovation Opportunity (CSRIO) with the overarching goal of reducing the toll of cancer on Albertans and Alberta’s health system through more efficient and effective cancer screening.

By facilitating early detection and treatment, cancer screening can lead to less invasive interventions and better health outcomes. Yet there are several challenges to realizing the full potential of screening. Uptake varies across population groups, with decreased access and participation often observed in those with a high number of risk factors. This is especially the case for groups experiencing social, economic, and/or geographic exclusion. Efforts to better target screening through improved understandings of population complexity and risk stratification are hindered by the fragmentation of pertinent data within and beyond the health system. Another major challenge is that efficient and effective tests are only available for a limited number of high fatality cancers.

CSRIO takes a bold three-pronged approach to supporting the identification and application of solutions that enhance population-based cancer screening, with a strong focus on underserved populations supported by robust data.

Program Details

*CSRIO is a three-year, $3 million program composed of three independent competitions:*

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Stream** | **Objective** | **Details** |
| **I Community Engagement** | Support collaboration among public, private and not-for-profit health system stakeholders, social service agencies and patient representatives to advance research and screening. | Grants of up to $10,000Continuous intake (launched August 2019).**Update**: no applications received by April 2020. Competition discontinued.  |
| **II Solution Implementation** | Support the implementation and evaluation of novel solutions that will enhance population-based cancer screening in underserved populations. | Up to $750,000 available over 24 months. **Competition closed and adjudicated in 2019.** Two applications approved for funding in Fall 2019.   |
| **III Advanced Uses of Data & Emerging Tech** | Leverage data and/or emerging technologies to:* advance understandings of risk stratification, screening uptake, and/or the complexity of patient populations; OR
* accelerate the development of new and more effective tests and approaches for screening for high fatality cancers where early detection is likely to be of significant benefit.
 | Up to $750,000 available over 24 months. **Update:** discontinued before launch. |

**HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS**

Eligibility

**(a) Applicant Eligibility** **Criteria** – To qualify as an applicant an entity must be:

* an Alberta-based Post-Secondary Institution;

**OR**

* a community-based not-for-profit organization or health delivery agent that is:
* incorporated in Alberta, or
* incorporated in another jurisdiction and extra-provincially registered in Alberta, or
* a General Partnership, Limited Partnership or Limited Liability Partnership and registered in Alberta; and
* have a physical presence in Alberta;

**AND**

* be in good financial standing with Alberta Innovates and its subsidiaries InnoTech Alberta and C-Fer Technologies

 **(b) Applicant Representative Eligibility** **Criteria -** To qualify, an applicant representative must be:

* a researcher holding an academic appointment at an Alberta-based Post-Secondary Institution OR an Executive/Clinical leader of a health delivery agent **OR** an Executive/Clinical leader of a community-based not-for-profit organization, public health entity or health delivery agent;
* be in good financial standing with Alberta Innovates and its subsidiaries InnoTech Alberta and C-Fer Technologies;
* be prepared to provide a minimum 25% cash or in-kind contribution of the total eligible Project Costs.

**(c) Project Eligibility Criteria -** To qualify for funding all Projects must:

* Address at least one of the following determinants of health:
	+ Individual behavior
	+ Social environment
	+ Physical environment
	+ Health services
* identify critical project “go/no go” milestones;
* have access to the data required to deliver on project milestones in a reasonable timeframe;
* be applicable to more than one zone, sector or hospital;
* plan to be completed within the term.

Program Objectives and Performance Measurement

Over the life of a Project, Alberta Innovates employs an active project management philosophy, regularly monitoring performance and supporting the Applicant to reach their objectives. Funding is tied to outcomes and achievement of results. For this reason, Alberta Innovates funds on a milestone completion basis. This means the Applicant are expected to submit a Progress Report before Alberta Innovates advances the next tranche of funds.

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 for CSRIO



**OBJECTIVES**

Implement engagements that will support multi-stakeholder collaborations.

Provide support for the implementation of solutions in a real-world environment.

Enable data and technology driven innovation that will enhance health, social, and economic outcomes.

**PROGRAM PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

Measurable improvement in screening rates for targeted underserved populations.

# of innovations tested & adopted

# of adopted innovations scaled beyond the initial community

# of novel population-based cancer screening models developed resulting in improved screening rates

**ALBERTA IMPACTS**

Improve robustness of health data

Improve quality of care

Reduce burden of disease

Accelerate health and wellness innovation

**PROJECT-LEVEL INDICATORS**

# of multisectoral partnerships

Proportion of target population screened

Increased awareness of underserved population cancer screening needs

# of databases linked/analyzed

# of high impact gaps identified
(in population-based cancer screening)

# of high impact publications

How Funding Works

**(a) Project Funding**

Alberta Innovates’ Investment in a successful application will be determined on a case by case basis and is provided to cover Eligible Expenses only. The Applicant must provide a minimum 25% cash or in-kind contribution of the total eligible Project Costs.

 **(b) Eligible and ineligible expenses**

Alberta Innovates only funds reasonable costs incurred subsequent to a signed Investment Agreement between Alberta Innovates and the Applicant. Any costs incurred prior to the signing of 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. Common costs for more than one Project should be allocated on an estimated usages basis by the various Projects.

The chart on the next page provides a high-level summary of eligible and ineligible expenses. If an Applicant is uncertain if a proposed expenditure is eligible or ineligible, they should contact Alberta Innovates prior to making the expenditure.

Summary of Eligible and Ineligible Expenses

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Category**  | **Eligible Expenses** | **Ineligible Expenses** |
| **Labour** | * Labour costs for staff, students or contractors directly and involved in the activities of the Project
 | * Overhead & administrative costs
* Discretionary severance and separation packages
* Salaries for academic faculty members, physicians, executives and senior management
 |
| **Materials** | * Reasonable costs of materials which can be specifically identified for use in the Project
 | * Insurance costs for equipment
* Construction, renovation of laboratories or offices
 |
| **Capital Assets & Software** | * Software critical to the Project will be considered
* Computers directly related to the activities of the Project
* Other capital assets critical to the Project will be considered on a case by case basis
 | * Acquisitions of land or buildings
* The undepreciated value of eligible capital costs which extends beyond the Project term
* Capital Improvements
* Telephone and mobile equipment and service contracts
 |
| **Travel and Relocation** |  Mileage, lowest economy class airfare, and accommodation. Travel and subsistence costs include reasonable out‐of‐pocket expenses in accordance with standard Government of Alberta rates (link) for fieldwork, research and other related activities directly related to the project | * Passport or immigration fees
* Reimbursement for airfare purchased with personal frequent flyer programs
* Commuting costs between place of residence and place of employment
 |
| **Other** |   Costs which Alberta Innovates pre-approves in writing as an eligible expense | * Pharmaceutical drug-related trials
* Alcohol, staff awards and recognition, professional training and development, clothing
* Insurance Costs, unless directly related to Project field work
* Parking fees unless directly related to Project field work
* Protection of intellectual property
 |

**HOW TO APPLY**



**STEP 2**
Evaluation Process

Applications will undergo scientific review in May **2020**, and Alberta Innovates will provide the results no later than **June 30, 2020**.

**STEP 1**
Application

Application form and supporting information for Stream I and III are accessible on our website.

Alberta Innovates will not accept partial or incomplete submissions.

**Deadlines for Application submission:**

**Stream I: Continuous Intake until discontinued in March 2020.**

**Stream II: August 30th, 2019**

Extensions will not be granted. Applications received after the deadline will not be considered.

**STEP 3**
Successful applicants

For approved Applications, the Applicant will execute an Investment Agreement with Alberta Innovates.

**All Agreements must be fully executed by July 31, 2020.**

Agreement expectations will include a graphical abstract, participation in performance management activities, and reporting on progress and budget during the term of the Agreement as well as up to five years post Investment.

Project payment is tied to progress and performance reporting.

**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 promising CSRIO projects based on the magnitude of the opportunity, the potential impact, and the potential of the project to deliver on the CSRIO objectives.

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 for CSRIO and all investment decisions are at the sole discretion of Alberta Innovates.

For the continuous intake streams, an Applicant whose Application is declined by Alberta Innovates may request permission to re-apply to Alberta Innovates to address and correct any deficiencies or issues.

**Terms and Conditions**

This Program Guide is intended as a high-level overview of the CSRIO Program. It provides interested applicants with a roadmap of what to expect over the lifecycle of an CSRIO 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.

Alberta Innovates continues to require information from the Applicant for five years following the completion of the Project to measure long-term benefits.

**Contact Information**

Should you have any questions about this guide or the CSRIO Program in general, please contact Alberta Innovates at inbox\_grants@albertainnovates.ca .

For any programmatic or strategic questions regarding potential Projects, access to data, introductions to stakeholders, or an idea for future opportunities in this space, please contact

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