

# Accelerating Innovations into CarE (AICE) – Validate program

*February 20, 2024*

# About Alberta Innovates

Innovation is the catalyst for sustainable jobs, economic and community strength, improved health and environmental benefits. Alberta Innovates leads and accelerates innovation from discovery to use across all sectors in all parts of the province. As Alberta's largest research and innovation agency, we are uniquely positioned to propel great ideas forward to improve the lives of Albertans today and for generations to come.

Alberta Innovates believes the research and innovation (R&I) ecosystem is stronger and more sustainable when it is broadly representative of the overall diversity of our community. We strive to ensure that all interested and qualified parties have an equitable opportunity to participate and contribute to the ecosystem and that our processes are inclusive.

The projects that our programs invest in are critical to how Alberta Innovates achieves positive impact for Albertans in alignment with the Government of Alberta's R&I priorities, as expressed in our corporate Business Plan. (See the most recent Business Plan on our [Publications](#) page on our website.) Accordingly, it is essential for project outcomes to align with those of the program.

The AICE-Validate Program is managed through the Health Innovation and Platforms business unit within Alberta Innovates. The Health Innovation and Platforms group works closely with health service delivery partners, innovators, researchers, and patients to:

- facilitate the testing and adoption of novel care models that are powered by emerging technologies;
- deliver skills development opportunities and build partnerships to help grow the talent needed to drive our future health economy;
- work collaboratively with innovators to understand and reduce barriers that will accelerate innovations into care; and
- build, integrate, and sustain platforms and activities to support a health innovation ecosystem.



# Program Overview

Alberta Innovates supports the advancement and commercialization of emerging health technology through the Accelerating Innovations into CarE (AICE) suite of programs. The goal is to simultaneously deliver economic outcomes to Alberta and health impact at home and abroad. Emerging technologies, particularly digital and data-enabled technologies, are enabling the development of patient-focused clinical solutions, new models of care, digital therapeutics, and an acceleration of research into innovation that will form the future foundation of a more affordable, accessible, and high-quality health system for all Albertans. The acceleration of new health technologies to market will attract external investment and grow the life sciences industry as a viable job creator and source of economic prosperity in Alberta.

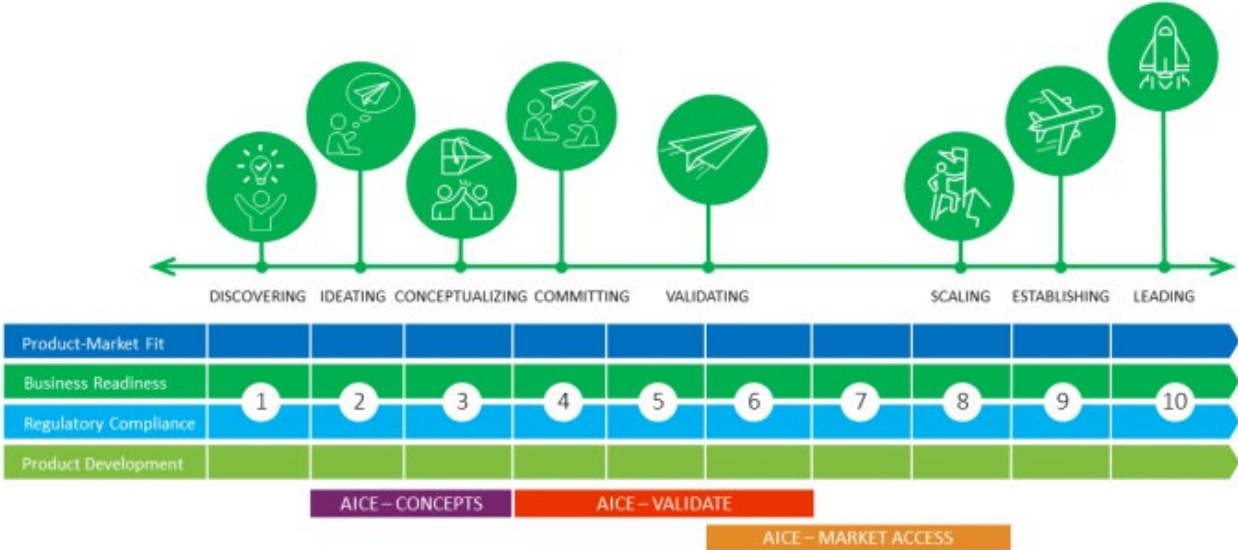
**The Accelerating Innovations in CarE (AICE)-Validate program** (“The Program”), specifically provides support for Alberta innovators that have proof of concept and are now ready to refine and validate their health technology and value proposition.

The objectives of the AICE-Validate program are to:

- advance commercialization of health technologies with potential to improve health outcomes and generate economic returns to Alberta; and
- enable Alberta health technology innovators to validate their product value proposition to enable follow-on private investment and/or revenue generation.

Projects are supported to advance Product-Market Fit, Business Readiness, Regulatory Compliance, and Product Development during the committing and early validation phases of their commercialization journey (see figure below).

## CLIENT JOURNEY AND AICE PROGRAMS



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*The AICE-Validate Program is designed to accelerate innovators through committing and early validation stages of the journey for health innovations.*

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Details of specific activities and milestones within each domain and stage can be found in the [Detailed Health Innovation Journey Framework](#)

The following emerging technology areas are **high priority areas** (but not a requirement) for the program:

- **Data-Enabled Innovation** – technology that supports the creation, amalgamation and analysis of complex data sets to improve decision making related to health outcomes; or
- **Digital Tech for Business Transformation** – technology that collects, senses, measures, connects, and distributes information to improve health outcomes or realize health economic value;

The key outcomes (i.e., measurable effects) the program will accomplish for the benefit of Albertans are to:

- increase the number of Alberta technologies, including digital or data-enabled technologies, that successfully advance along the [Detailed Health Innovation Journey Framework](#); and
- attract investment and stimulate revenue and job growth.

## Funding

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*Alberta Innovates will contribute up to \$300,000 CAD (to a maximum of 75% the total eligible Project Costs) to support approved Projects over a maximum term of 24 months.*

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The AICE-Validate Program provides support for up to \$300,000 over a maximum term of 24 months. A minimum of 25% of total eligible Project Costs must be provided by the Applicant as cash or in-kind contributions. Applicant cash contributions cannot be made using funds from other Government of Alberta funding sources.

In-kind Contributions are defined as the non-cash provision of goods or services by the Applicant valued in monetary terms according to rules agreed upon beforehand by all parties, and within the purview of generally accepted accounting principles. The value placed on In-kind Contributions may not exceed the fair market value of the product or service.

In-kind Contributions may include provision of any products or services deemed to be Eligible Expenses as outlined in the Investment Agreement and directly related to the Project. These costs would have to be paid for if they were not provided by either party.

Alberta Innovates only funds reasonable costs incurred after an Investment Agreement is signed by Alberta Innovates and the Applicant. Any costs incurred prior to the signing of the Investment Agreement, and costs greater than market prices, are ineligible. Costs must be incurred between arm's-length entities. Please refer to [Schedule C](#) in the [Investment Agreement](#) posted on the [AICE-Validate web page](#) for detailed information, including eligible and ineligible expenses.

## Key Dates

The program has multiple submission dates through-out the year. The submission deadlines are posted on the [Program webpage](#). See the How to Apply section below for more details.

# Eligibility

## Applicant Eligibility

The AICE-Validate program is open to:

- Alberta based Post-Secondary Institutions and Government Entities with clear intent of creating a for-profit company to commercialize the technology; and
- For-Profit Small-medium sized Organizations (SME) that are:
  - a company with fewer than 500 full-time employees and less than \$50,000,000 annual gross revenue;
  - incorporated in Alberta AND/OR incorporated in another jurisdiction and extra provincially registered in Alberta;
  - a General Partnership, Limited Partnership, or Limited Liability Partnership and registered in Alberta; and
  - existing as a corporate person, with up-to-date corporate filings.

All Applicants must also:

- be an Alberta-based entity with an Albertan footprint, which is determined by the following: significant physical and corporate operational presence in Alberta, appropriate Alberta ownership, and discernable intent that operational benefits will flow primarily within the province of Alberta.
- have completed all relevant milestones from “Discovering” through and including the “Conceptualizing” stages of the [Detailed Health Innovation Journey Framework](#);
- be authorized to undertake the proposed project, and execute a grant with Alberta Innovates on our standard terms;
- not otherwise be prohibited from receiving Alberta Innovates funding, for instance due to a past bad debt or otherwise not be in good financial standing with Alberta Innovates or its subsidiaries, InnoTech Alberta and C-FER Technologies; and

**Please note:** For Applicants **not** at post-secondary institutions, Alberta Innovates may perform corporate, bankruptcy and litigation searches, and conduct other forms of due diligence on the Applicant company and its principals.

## Project Eligibility

To qualify for funding, all Projects must:

- align with the objectives of the AICE-Validate program;

- **have completed all relevant milestones up to and including Step 3 (Conceptualizing)** and focus on steps 4-6 (“Committing” and initial “Validating” stages) of the [Detailed Health Innovation Journey Framework](#),
- focus on activities across the multiple domains of Product-Market Fit, Business Readiness, Regulatory Compliance, and Product Development (see the [Detailed Health Innovation Journey Framework](#) for milestone details);
- focus on a technology that has potential to improve health outcomes (i.e., purely business management or operational clinic/hospital backend software is not a fit for this program);
- be stepped with critical “go/no go” milestones;
- be completed within the 2-year term; and
- submit to other criteria that Alberta Innovates may develop from time to time.

# How to Apply?

The application process consists of two stages: an Intake Form, followed by the Full Application. Applicants who meet basic eligibility criteria will be invited to submit a Full Application. Full Applications are accepted and reviewed at specific times through out the year. Please see the [AICE-Validate website](#) for up to date submission deadlines.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to submit an Intake Form as early as possible, and no later than 4 weeks before a Full Application submission deadline (deadlines are posted on the [Program webpage](#)).



## STEP 1 Intake Form

Complete the [AICE Market Access/Validate Intake Form](#) in [our grants portal](#)

Eligible Applicants must submit an Intake Form to establish readiness for the Program, along with [relevant documents demonstrating full completion of Stage 3 of the Detailed Health Innovation Journey Framework](#).

Please contact the AICE-Validate Program Advisor with any questions.



## STEP 2 Intake Meeting

An Intake meeting is held between the Applicant, Alberta Innovates and any relevant project partners.

This meeting ensures that all parties are aligned in terms of the program fit and desired Project objectives, deliverables and outcomes.

Applicants who meet basic eligibility requirements will be invited to submit a Full Application.



## STEP 3 Full Application

Applications will be reviewed by internal and external reviewers with relevant clinical, health technology commercialization, and business expertise.

. Please see the [AICE-Validate website](#) for more information regarding Full Application submission deadlines.



# Evaluation Process

All applications are reviewed and evaluated to determine fit with the AICE-Validate Program objectives and intended outcomes. Alberta Innovates staff and external expert reviewers are engaged to evaluate Applications.

Alberta Innovates evaluates submitted Applications to the AICE Validate Program based on the strength of the market opportunity, competitiveness, advance to market plan, the project plan, and potential economic impact for Alberta.

An Applicant whose Application is declined by Alberta Innovates **may re-apply to the Program after a 6-month cooling-off period.**

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

All investment decisions are at the sole discretion of Alberta Innovates.

# Performance Measurement

Alberta Innovates invests in research and innovation activities on behalf of Albertans to help build a healthier, more sustainable and prosperous future for the province.

To maximize the impact of these investments, our funding is tied to achievement of results and outcomes. For this reason, Alberta Innovates funds on a milestone completion basis. This means the Applicant must submit a Progress or Final Report and demonstrate sufficient progress before Alberta Innovates advances the next milestone payment.

The Investment Agreement outlines the responsibilities the Applicant has in reporting Project outcomes to Alberta Innovates over the course of the Project and following completion of the Project. Outcomes of the Project may be monitored for up to five years after Project completion, so Alberta Innovates can evaluate the economic, social, health and/or environmental benefits to Alberta resulting from our investments.

Alberta Innovates has a common set of performance metrics it monitors, both at the individual Project level and for the aggregate Program. These metrics may evolve over time.

# Terms and Conditions

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](#) for your reference.

The Investment Agreement sets out in detail the roles, responsibilities and obligations of the various Parties to ensure a successful Project. Alberta Innovate 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 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.

Should you have any questions about this guide or what is expected, please contact Alberta Innovates (see contact information below). Please note that Alberta Innovates may modify this guide from time to time in keeping with any changes to the program.

# Contact Information

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