

Digital Health Sandbox

August 28, 2023

*Open to Applications from August 28, 2023 to
September 22, 2023*

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.

This Program is managed through the Health Innovation Business Unit within Alberta Innovates. The Health Innovation Business Unit is on a mission to strengthen economic competitiveness and enhance the well-being of people living in Alberta by cultivating a health innovation ecosystem that excels at converting research and technology into sustainable human-centered care. To achieve this mission, we are focused on advancing Digital Health in Alberta. For us, Digital Health is a revolutionary approach to health that integrates digital technologies into the life sciences and healthcare sectors.

Program Overview

Since the emergence of the internet, the healthcare industry, including health systems and other stakeholders, has been exploring ways to utilize digital technologies in order to enhance care, streamline processes, and reduce costs. The implementation of electronic medical records, driven by legislative measures, has led to a vast amount of data and the potential for valuable insights. These digital technologies are commonly referred to as Health System Clinical (HSC) and Health System Operational (HSO) solutions. While not directly focused on patient interaction, HSC and HSO digital technologies have a significant impact on patient care at both the individual and population levels. As a result, efficient data aggregation and accessibility across various systems and locations, facilitated by Health System Clinical and Health System Operational solutions, are crucial aspects of delivering comprehensive Digital Health-based care.

Health System Clinical technologies are primarily used by healthcare professionals to assist in the delivery of clinical care. Solutions that arm healthcare providers with enhanced views of their patients, supported by data, to enable better clinical decision-making and stop short of making specific care decisions on their own.

Health System Operational technologies are primarily used by healthcare management to minimize the costs of delivering care. Operational solutions include Integration/Interoperability Engines, Security/Data Management, Business Analytics and Data Management.

This Program is designed to support SMEs working with health system providers in Alberta with developing and/or implementing Health System Clinical Solutions and or Health System Operational solutions that:

- ✓ Enhance interoperability between clinical products from different vendors, based on leading interoperability standards.
- ✓ Allow for regulation compliant communication and/or data-sharing that support workflows of physicians and patient care teams.
- ✓ Effectively mitigate risks related to privacy while significantly enhancing data sharing capacity for care and innovation.
- ✓ Software or web portal used to identify, characterize, and quantify patient populations based on RWE/RWD.

The objectives of the **Program** are to:

- ✓ Strategically invest in research & innovation that aim to benefit Alberta.
- ✓ Support SMEs to develop and commercialize innovations.

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

- ✓ \$ invested in areas of research, innovation and commercialization.
- ✓ Revenue growth for Alberta-based SMEs.
- ✓ # of new hires (jobs) in Alberta in SMEs funded by Alberta Innovates.

Funding

The **Program** provides support for up to \$300,000 CAD per project.

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 B in the Investment Agreement posted on the Digital Health Sandbox web page for detailed information, including eligible and ineligible expenses.

Key Dates

Aug 28, 2023 – Competition Open.

Sept 22, 2023 – Application Submission is Due.

October 11, 2023 – Competition Results Communicated.

November 1, 2023 – Investment Agreements Executed.

Eligibility

Applicant Eligibility

Program is open to:

- For-Profit and Not-for-Profit organizations.

In addition, to qualify for funding, the **Applicant** must:

- Exist as a corporate person, with up-to-date corporate filings;
- 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.
- Be incorporated in Alberta AND/OR incorporated in another jurisdiction and extra-provincially registered in Alberta;
- Be a General Partnership, Limited Partnership or Limited Liability Partnership and registered in Alberta.
- To qualify as for-profit, a company must have fewer than 500 full-time employees and less than \$50,000,000 in annual gross revenue.
- Companies must be Alberta-based with an Alberta footprint, which includes a significant physical and corporate operational presence in Alberta; appropriate Alberta ownership; and discernible intent that operational benefits will flow primarily within the Province of Alberta.

Please note: For Applicants that are **not** 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.

Optional Sub-section

Testing Site Co-Applicant Eligibility

All projects must include a third party independent clinical/user testing site as a Co-Applicant.

Testing Sites are required to:

- Exist as a corporate person, with up-to-date corporate filings (operating anywhere in Canada);
- Be authorized to undertake the proposed project;
- Demonstrate that the relationship between the Applicant and Testing Site does not create a conflict of interest;
- Be at arm's length from the Applicant (i.e., no legal relationship with the Applicant);

- Provide a letter indicating the Testing Site’s intention to participate in the Project at the time of application; and
- 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.

Note: For partners, collaborators and/or service providers that are **not** post-secondary institutions, Alberta Innovates may perform corporate, bankruptcy and litigation searches, and other forms of due diligence.

Project Eligibility

To qualify for funding, all Projects must:

- Align with the objectives of the **Program**;
- Technology being developed by the Project must be within TRL levels 6-8.
- Be stepped with critical “go/no-go” milestones.
- Be completed within an 18-month term.
- Comply with other criteria that Alberta Innovates may develop from time to time.

How to Apply



PHASE 1

Full Proposal

Submission Deadline: September 22, 2023

Applicant Representatives use the SmartSimple portal to fill and submit an Application for review. The review process is highly competitive and only the highest-quality projects will be considered for funding.



PHASE 2

Agreement

Successful applicants will execute an agreement with Alberta Innovates to proceed with the Project. Agreement will include details regarding:

- Conditions related to any funding provided.
 - Reporting on progress to milestones and budget on an agreed timeline during the term of the Agreement; and
 - Reporting on progress to outcomes on an agreed to timeline during and following the term of the Agreement.
 - Project payments are based on milestone achievement and progress reporting.
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Evaluation Process

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

Alberta Innovates evaluates submitted Applications to the **Program** based on the strength of the innovation opportunity, market opportunity, commercialization pathway, project plan, team, and potential economic as well as health impacts.

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 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 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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