



NSERC

Alliance grants

Canada's research partnerships program

Preparing an Alliance application

April 2020

Outline

- **Alliance grants: objectives and options**
- **Alliance option 1**
- **Alliance option 2**
- **Alliance grant applications: best practices**
- **Alliance grants: what's next**



Alliance grants: Objectives

- Replace prior university partnerships programs.
- Support research in the **natural sciences and engineering** (NSE) led by strong, complementary, collaborative teams.
- Enable collaborations with a broader set of partner organizations.
 - private, public, not-for-profit sectors
- **Remove barriers** and provide **more flexibility** in building partnerships that will effectively generate new knowledge and accelerate the application of research results for the benefit of Canadians.



Enable researchers, through such partnerships, to go **beyond** what would have been possible for them to accomplish using our prior programs.



Alliance grants: Options

- **1 funding opportunity, 2 options**
 - option 1
 - option 2
- **The 2 options have the same**
 - objectives
 - evaluation criteria
 - peer review process for overall merit assessment
 - academic community and types of partner organizations served
 - requirements for the recognition of partner organizations



Alliance option 1



Alliance option 1

- **Funding: \$20,000 to \$1M per year; from 1 to 5 years**
 - The limits of the funding range are **not** yearly averages.
- **Cost-sharing: 50% to 66.7% from NSERC**
 - Determined by **type** of partnership and **global** size of the partner organization(s) **recognized** for cost-sharing.
- **Partner organizations**
 - Can be from private, public or not-for-profit sector.
 - **At least 1** must be **recognized for cost-sharing** and must make a cash contribution commensurate with applicable cost-sharing ratio.
 - **Each** must be involved in the project and contribute to its success.
 - **At least 1** must have the ability to exploit the research results and to achieve the desired outcomes.



Alliance option 1

- **Cost-sharing: 50% from NSERC (1:1 ratio)**
 - large organizations (≥ 500 employees globally) as a sole partner organization or in partnership **exclusively** with other **large** organizations within **the same sector** (private, public or not-for-profit)
- **Cost-sharing: 66.7% from NSERC (2:1 ratio)**
 - large organizations (≥ 500 employees globally) in partnership with other **large** organizations from a **different sector** or in partnership with **small and medium-sized** organizations from **any** sector
 - small and medium-sized organizations from any sector as a sole partner organization or in partnership with organizations of any size from any sector



The cost-sharing is calculated based on the sum of cash contributions from all recognized partner organizations.



Alliance option 1

- Application

- application [template](#)
- NSERC's [On-line System](#)
- apply at any time
- no limit on number of applications

- Follow [instructions](#).
- Keep template's headings and bullets.
- Do not change font, font size or margins.
- Keep within page limit (includes template's headings and bullets).

- Evaluation

- **administrative** assessment: completeness and compliance
 - ▶ NSERC
 - ▶ *application not accepted if not complete or not compliant*
- **merit** assessment: to determine priority for funding on a competitive basis
 - ▶ *peer review, NSERC*



Alliance option 1

- Merit assessment: process

Small project	Medium project	Large project
Annual request of \$20k or more, up to average of \$30k	Average annual request of more than \$30k, up to \$300k	Average annual request of more than \$300k, up to \$1M
<p>N SERC: evaluation supported by existing NSERC peer review (applicant and co-applicant[s])</p> <p>OR</p> <p>External reviewers with expertise directly related to the proposal, if no existing NSERC peer review evidence</p>	<p>External reviewers with expertise directly related to the proposal</p>	<p>Ad hoc review committee with expertise directly related to the proposal</p> <div data-bbox="1727 919 2372 1133" style="border: 2px solid red; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; text-align: center;"><p><i>NSERC does not hold evaluation site visits for Alliance grants</i></p></div>



Alliance option 1

- **Merit assessment: evaluation criteria** (each with multiple subcriteria for a total of 11)
 - relevance and outcomes
 - partnership
 - quality of the proposal
 - training
- **Merit assessment: to determine the application's overall merit**
 - NSERC uses [merit indicators](#) to rate each subcriterion/criterion for each application
- **Funding**
 - applications selected for funding by NSERC on a competitive basis
 - based on applications' merit ratings



Alliance option 1

Merit indicators

1. Relevance and Outcomes

	Exceptional	Exceeds	Meets	Does not satisfy
1.1 Significance of the intended outcomes and of the economic, social and/or environmental impact for Canada.	The proposed outcomes are of exceptional importance to Canada and may also be important internationally . This research will overcome knowledge gaps to develop new and innovative policies, standards, products, services, processes or technologies in Canada. The expected outcomes will be of the highest impact for Canadians.	The proposed outcomes are very important to Canada. This research will address knowledge gaps to develop new and innovative policies, standards, products, services, processes or technologies in Canada. The expected outcomes will have high impact for Canadians.	The proposed outcomes are important to Canada. This research will contribute to addressing knowledge gaps to develop new and innovative policies, standards, products, services, processes or technologies in Canada. The expected outcomes will have impact for Canadians.	The proposal did not adequately establish why the topic is important to Canada. It did not sufficiently identify how the research will address knowledge gaps related to developing new and innovative policies, standards, products, services, processes or technologies. It did not adequately identify how outcomes will have impact for Canadians.
1.2 The need for original research to address the topic and the potential for generating new scientific knowledge.	The proposal demonstrates that the topic will be addressed through exceptionally innovative research . The research has potential to contribute to a scientific breakthrough .	The proposal demonstrates that the topic will be addressed through highly original research . The research has potential for a significant advance in the field .	The proposal demonstrates that the topic will be addressed through original research . The research includes some concepts or directions that may lead to an advance in the field .	The proposal did not sufficiently demonstrate that the topic will be addressed through original research or is not well positioned within the state-of-the-art. It is not clear how the research will lead to new concepts or directions.
1.3 Extent to which the strategy to apply the research results is likely to achieve the intended outcomes.	A comprehensive strategy indicates how the partners will translate the research results into application, such that the outcomes and impacts are very likely to happen.	A clearly defined strategy indicates how the partners will translate the research results into application, such that the outcomes and impacts are likely to happen.	A strategy may lead the partners to translating the research results into application, such that the outcomes and impacts may happen.	The strategy to translate the research results into application is not convincingly presented, such that the outcomes and impacts are unlikely to happen.



Alliance option 2



Alliance option 2

What is particular compared to option 1?

- 3 specific characteristics
- 90% to 100% funding from NSERC, if the characteristics are met
- additional section in the application template
- 3-stage assessment process



Alliance option 2 – Characteristics

3 specific characteristics

- societal impact
- making connections
- broad outcomes



Alliance option 2 – Characteristics

Societal impact

- **generates societal benefits** (e.g., improving quality of life, health and safety, public goods and resources, prosperity, sustainability)
- **tackles national or regional priorities or global issues where Canada is involved**
- **builds capacity to transform a sector and its practices**
- **provides evidence for new policies or regulations**
- **solves an issue affecting a whole business area or creates a new area of the economy**



- **results in new technical knowledge and societal impact**
- **more than improving a product/service for increased profit**
- **impacts beyond near-term economic success**
- **outcomes beyond the partner organizations**



Alliance option 2 – Characteristics

Making connections

- meaningful partnership
- working with end users and implementers ➡ needs-driven
- societal perspectives/skill sets ➡ merge ideas, overcome barriers and find creative solutions
- creates new relationships or builds on existing efforts, and integrates solutions with decision-makers within and across sectors



Despite a limited financial contribution:

- partners are active and highly committed
- valuable opportunity to connect with others
- partners are committed to sharing results beyond their own organizations



Alliance option 2 – Characteristics

Broad outcomes

- outcomes benefit beyond the partner organizations
- results accessible by all stakeholders in society
- strategy to raise awareness on the resulting products, services or policies among potential users
- intellectual property management not a barrier



Alliance option 2 – Characteristics

When to consider option 2

- challenge in the NSE
- important unmet societal need
- expected societal impact
- barriers preventing the research from happening
- financial support scarce or not available

AND

- A viable solution can be envisioned to significantly contribute to long-term societal benefits.
- **Higher NSERC support is key to enabling these advances.**



Alliance option 2 – Characteristics

Option 2 is not

- Engage grants or Strategic Partnership grants
- a means to provide a test ground to establish new partnerships
- a means to offset the cost of research where investments are available
- a means to address research challenges for the strict benefit of the partner organizations



Alliance option 2 – Cost-sharing and initial launch phase

- **Cost-sharing:** NSERC may cover up to
 - **100% of the project cost** – public or not-for-profit partner organizations only
 - **90% of the project cost** – participation of private-sector organizationsRequirement: 10% of project costs covered by partner organizations recognized for cost-sharing
- **Mandatory:** Participation of **at least 1 partner organization** whose contributions would normally be recognized for cost-sharing (even if NSERC is providing 100% of the funding)



During initial launch phase

- funding: more than \$30,000 up to \$100,000 per year; 1 to 5 years
- 1 application per applicant (PI or co-PI) per 12 months
- 2 applications per partner organization per 12 months



Alliance option 2 – Application

Application process

- same as for option 1 ([On-line System](#))

Differences in application

- cost-sharing ratio (90% or 100%)
- Public Impact Value Proposition (PIVP) section in the [proposal](#)
 - must address 5 points to justify fit to option 2's characteristics
 - use up to 3 pages for this section, which comes **in addition** to the page length for the rest of the proposal, as per [instructions](#)



- Keep headings and bullets from the template.
- Do not change font, font size or margins.
- Keep within page limit (which includes template's headings and bullets).



Alliance option 2 – Evaluation process

Assessment

- administrative assessment – completeness and compliance
 - application not accepted if not complete or not compliant
- PIVP selection committee – fit to option 2 characteristics
 - quarterly meetings
 - application will not proceed to next merit assessment stage if characteristics deemed not met
- merit assessment – peer review
 - same process as for option 1
 - **PIVP section not provided**
- funding decision
 - same process as for option 1

PIVP selection committee

- 15 to 20 members
- multidisciplinary & multisectoral
- broad knowledge and experience
- focus on 3-page PIVP section



Best practices for Alliance applications (options 1 & 2)



Alliance applications – Best practices

Almost 1 year of experience ...

- many applications have not been accepted
- need to provide further guidance to help applicants submit a complete application



Alliance applications – Best practices

Main reasons for not accepting applications

- altering the proposal template's format, text or margins; not keeping bullet points in the proposal template
- not complying with NSERC presentation standards for proposal
- exceeding the total allowed number of pages
- not addressing each of the requests listed in the bullet points included in the proposal template under each heading
- missing adequate demonstration that equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI), with **explicit practices**, has been considered in the training plan

(cont'd)



Alliance applications – Best practices

Main reasons for not accepting applications (cont'd)

- inadequate cost-sharing ratio
- erroneous recognition of partner organizations' cash contributions in cost-sharing calculations
- no in-kind contributions from partner organizations
- **annual** requested amount below \$20,000 (this minimum is not an average over the project's duration)
- inclusion of a letter of support rather than a [Partner Organization Form](#)
- use of Form 100 free-form section instead of Form 100A; non-compliance with instructions for Form 100A
- out-of-date CCV (6 years)



Alliance grants – Brief overview

Resources on the Alliance website

In particular

- [Recognition and role of partner organizations](#)
- [Funding your research project \(cost-sharing options\)](#)
- [Instructions for completing an application](#)

NEW

- [Alliance grant application checklist](#)
- [Equity, diversity and inclusion in your training plan](#)
- [Partner organization self-assessment tool](#)



Alliance applications – Best practices

Alliance grant application checklist



ALLIANCE GRANT APPLICATION CHECKLIST

Before submitting an application, ensure that all mandatory and optional (when applicable) requirements are effectively addressed, and that the [instructions](#) are followed. Missing components or non-compliance with the instructions will result in the application being rejected.

MANDATORY	OPTIONAL
OPTION 1 AND OPTION 2	
<input type="checkbox"/>	If this application is a new submission of a previously unsuccessful one, all issues that were identified in the preceding application have been addressed. A cover letter explaining the changes is recommended. This letter would not be shared with external reviewers.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The application's research challenge is in the natural sciences or engineering (NSE).
<input type="checkbox"/>	If the proposed research includes collaborations outside the NSE, their costs must be identified in the project budget, up to a maximum of 30% of the cost-shared project costs.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The application involves at least one partner organization that is recognized for cost-sharing with NSERC.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The cash contributions by partner organizations recognized for cost-sharing with NSERC must be sufficient for the selected cost-sharing ratio (refer to Role of partner organizations and Funding your research project).
<input type="checkbox"/>	Taking into account the partner organizations' type and global size, the appropriate cost-sharing ratio has been selected (refer to Funding your research project).
<input type="checkbox"/>	The partner organizations' cash contributions are in Canadian dollars.
<input type="checkbox"/>	Each partner organization participating in the application must play a role in it, regardless of whether the organization is recognized for cost-sharing with NSERC, and regardless of whether it makes cash contributions. Except for organizations whose mandate is to provide financial support to R&D, each partner organization must provide in-kind contributions, which must be well described and justified.
<input type="checkbox"/>	For each partner organization, the application includes a completed Partner Organization Form , including the one-page partner organization profile. Support letters are not allowed and will be removed from the application.
<input type="checkbox"/>	For each partner organization with fewer than five full-time employees, the application includes a completed Partner organization supplemental information questionnaire , unless the partner has already provided that document within the last 12 months.
<input type="checkbox"/>	For Option 1 , <u>each annual amount</u> requested from NSERC is not less than \$20,000 and does not exceed \$1,000,000. For Option 2 , <u>each annual amount</u> requested from NSERC is not less than \$30,000 and does not exceed \$100,000 (these limits may be reassessed within 12 months after the launch of Option 2).
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cash contributions provided in advance by partner organizations, and recognized and necessary in the cost-sharing calculation with NSERC, were not spent in part or in total prior to three months before the application submission date.
<input type="checkbox"/>	All planned expenditures are eligible (refer to the Tri-Agency Financial Administration Guide), well described and well justified.

<input type="checkbox"/>	In case of a large project (average of more than \$300,000 per year requested from NSERC) involving multiple partner organizations and/or universities, project management costs do not exceed 10% of the total direct research costs.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The Proposal makes use of the template presentation structure, without altering the headings, text, bullet points or margins, while complying with the NSERC Online Presentation and Attachment Standards . In particular, all text must be in 12 point Times New Roman font, and margins must be set at a minimum of ¼-inch (1.87 cm).
<input type="checkbox"/>	The length of the Proposal does not exceed the total page limit outlined in the instructions . This limit depends on the average annual request from NSERC. Excess pages will be removed, and if this results in information addressing one or more evaluation criteria or sub-criteria being truncated, NSERC will reject the application.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The Proposal addresses each of the requirements listed in the bullet points included in the Proposal template under each heading. Failure to do so will result in the application being found incomplete and being rejected.
<input type="checkbox"/>	In case of a large project (average of more than \$300,000 per year requested from NSERC) involving multiple partner organizations and/or universities, you may add up to three additional pages strictly for the purposes of detailing topics such as project management, governance structure and university support. These pages must be included under the "Team" heading. If any of these additional pages are used for purposes other than those prescribed, NSERC will remove them, and if this results in information addressing one or more evaluation criteria or sub-criteria being truncated, NSERC will reject the application.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The Proposal includes a training plan that is principally intended for undergraduate, graduate or postdoctoral trainees.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The Proposal includes a detailed training plan describing specific practices that consider equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and that will be implemented during the project to ensure an inclusive research and training environment. Generic statements or references to the current environment in the applying team will not be considered sufficient. If the training plan does not adequately demonstrate that EDI has been appropriately taken into consideration, NSERC will reject the application.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The Form 100A and the CCV for the applicant and each co-applicant are complete and up to date, complying with the instructions (Form 100A ; CCV). Failure to provide Form 100A and CCV that comply with the instructions will result in the application being found incomplete and being rejected.
<input type="checkbox"/>	If you deem it relevant, the application can include biographical sketches or CVs for collaborators and/or key staff of the partner organizations. Such biographical sketches or CVs must comply with the instructions and not exceed two pages each in length. Excess pages will be removed.
OPTION 2 ONLY	
<input type="checkbox"/>	The applicant and the co-applicants have not submitted an Alliance Option 2 application in the past 12 months (this limit may be reassessed within 12 months after the launch of Option 2).
<input type="checkbox"/>	None of the partner organizations (or any of their divisions, subsidiaries, agencies) that are recognized for cost-sharing have been part of more than one Alliance Option 2 application in the past 12 months.
<input type="checkbox"/>	The Public Impact Value Proposition (PIVP) section of the Proposal template is complete. This will be the primary source of information for the Option 2 Selection Committee, which will determine if the application meets the requirements for Option 2 and if it can proceed to peer review for its overall merit assessment, similar to Option 1. The remainder of the Proposal, exclusive of the PIVP, must include all relevant information necessary for its evaluation through peer review.



Alliance applications – Best practices

Alliance grant application checklist

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	OPTIONAL
	OPTION 1 AND OPTION 2
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Alliance applications – Best practices

Alliance grant application checklist

<input type="checkbox"/>	The application involves at least one partner organization that is recognized for cost-sharing with NSERC.
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Alliance applications – Best practices

Alliance grant application checklist

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<input type="checkbox"/>	All planned expenditures are eligible (refer to the Tri-Agency Financial Administration Guide), well described and well justified.
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Alliance applications – Best practices

Alliance grant application checklist

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Alliance applications – Best practices

Alliance grant application checklist

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<input type="checkbox"/>	The Proposal includes a detailed training plan describing specific practices that consider equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and that will be implemented during the project to ensure an inclusive research and training environment. Generic statements or references to the current environment in the applying team will not be considered sufficient. If the training plan does not adequately demonstrate that EDI has been appropriately taken into consideration, NSERC will reject the application.



Alliance applications – Best practices

Alliance grant application checklist



The Form 100A and the CCV for the applicant and each co-applicant are complete and up to date, complying with the instructions ([Form 100A](#); [CCV](#)). Failure to provide Form 100A and CCV that comply with the instructions will result in the application being found incomplete and being rejected.



If you deem it relevant, the application can include biographical sketches or CVs for collaborators and/or key staff of the partner organizations. Such biographical sketches or CVs must comply with the [instructions](#) and not exceed two pages each in length. Excess pages will be removed.



Alliance applications – Best practices

Alliance grant application checklist

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Alliance applications – Best practices

Alliance proposal template



Alliance grants Proposal template

General instructions:

1. Provide responses in place of **INSERT YOUR TEXT** using the suggested number of pages per section in the [instructions for completing an application](#).
2. Complete the Public Impact Value Proposition section only if you are requesting cost-sharing Option 2 using a maximum of three pages including the template text. This section will be shared only with the selection committee. If your application is selected for the second step, external reviewers will not have access to this section. Make sure the rest of your application contains all the information that is relevant to the Alliance evaluation criteria.
3. Delete the Public Impact Value Proposition section for all other applications.
4. Do not alter the template text or margins.
5. Figures and tables are welcome.
6. Do not submit this cover page.

Date updated, March 4, 2020 | Ce formulaire est disponible en français

Insert your name here

BACKGROUND AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- Outline the goals of the partnership and explain the potential outcomes and impacts.
- Describe the importance of the topic to Canada and how the expected outcomes will benefit Canada.
- Explain the new concepts or directions needed to address the topic and how this research will fill knowledge gaps related to developing new and innovative policies, standards, products, services, processes or technologies in Canada. Position the proposed project relative to other efforts by the researchers and partner organizations and to any related research.
- Outline efforts the partner organizations will invest following the project's completion to advance the results in Canada.

INSERT YOUR TEXT RESPONDING TO THE ABOVE POINTS HERE

PARTNERSHIP

- List all partner organizations expected to play a key role in the activities or to make cash and/or in-kind contributions.
- Describe the core activity of the partner organizations and their experience related to the research project, such as any efforts to date that the partner organizations has invested toward addressing this problem, the need for this research project and how the topic is relevant and aligned with the partner organizations' activities.
- Explain how each partner organization will be actively involved (through cash and/or in-kind contributions) to co-designing and implementing the research program. Describe the value added through in-kind contributions and how these are important to realizing the project's intended outcomes.
- Outline each partner organization's strategy and capacity to translate the research results into practical application to achieve the desired outcomes and impacts, including any planned knowledge translation activities and integration of the research results into its operations.

INSERT YOUR TEXT RESPONDING TO THE ABOVE POINTS HERE

PROPOSAL

- Outline the research objectives. Detail the resources and activities needed to achieve the anticipated results.
- Indicate approximate timelines for the activities to lead to milestones and deliverables using a Gantt chart, table or diagram.
- Explain how equity, diversity and inclusion have been considered in the research design.
- Identify the indicators and methods for monitoring progress during the project and for assessing the outcomes. You may include a chart or table.

INSERT YOUR TEXT RESPONDING TO THE ABOVE POINTS HERE

TEAM

- List the applicant, any co-applicants and key staff of the partner organizations.
- Explain how the knowledge, experience and achievements of these individuals provide the expertise needed to accomplish the project objectives. Discuss the role of each individual and how their contributions, including those of staff from the partner organizations, will be integrated into the project.
- Explain how equity, diversity and inclusion have been considered in the academic team composition.

1



Alliance applications – Best practices

Alliance proposal template

<p style="text-align: right;">Insert your name here</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">For large or multi-party projects (multiple universities and/or partner organizations), it may be appropriate to provide a description of up to three additional pages detailing university support, governance structure and project management. If applicable, please detail the project manager's qualifications, involvement, role and responsibilities. <p>INSERT YOUR TEXT RESPONDING TO THE ABOVE POINTS HERE</p> <p>TRAINING PLAN</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Indicate how the knowledge and experience gained by research trainees and the partners' staff members are relevant to the advancement of the field, to applying knowledge or to strengthening the partners' sectors.Describe how the project and the partnership offer opportunities for enriched training experiences that will allow research trainees (undergraduates, graduates and postdoctoral fellows) to develop relevant technical skills as well as professional skills, such as leadership, communication, collaboration and entrepreneurship. Include the nature of the planned interactions with the partners and other relevant activities.Explain how equity, diversity and inclusion are considered in the training plan (see here for guidance). <p>INSERT YOUR TEXT RESPONDING TO THE ABOVE POINTS HERE</p> <p>REFERENCES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Use this section to provide a list of the most relevant literature references. Do not refer readers to websites for additional information on your proposal. Do not introduce hyperlinks in your list of references.These pages are not included in the page count. <p>INSERT YOUR TEXT RESPONDING TO THE ABOVE POINTS HERE</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Insert your name here</p> <p>OPTION 2: PUBLIC IMPACT VALUE PROPOSITION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Describe the issue the project aims to address and explain the societal impact the project results will have. Describe the new technical knowledge that will be generated. <p>INSERT YOUR TEXT RESPONDING TO THE ABOVE POINTS HERE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Describe the current barriers impeding a solution and the proposed novel strategy for addressing the issue. Explain why and how the research team and partner organizations are positioned to address the challenge. <p>INSERT YOUR TEXT RESPONDING TO THE ABOVE POINTS HERE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Describe how the project is designed to take into account the needs of end-users and implementers. Outline the project's plan to involve groups in your partner organizations' network to achieve optimal results and impact. <p>INSERT YOUR TEXT RESPONDING TO THE ABOVE POINTS HERE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Explain how the project outcomes will reach beyond the partner organizations to impact society. Describe the ways in which interested individuals or groups will be able to learn about and use the products, services or policies that stem from this research. <p>INSERT YOUR TEXT RESPONDING TO THE ABOVE POINTS HERE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Justify why a higher level of investment of public funds is required for this project. <p>INSERT YOUR TEXT RESPONDING TO THE ABOVE POINTS HERE</p>
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Remember

- Keep headings and bullet points from the template.
- Do not change font, font size or margins.
- Keep within page limit (includes template's headings and bullets) – refer to [instructions](#).
- Address **all** of the bullet points' requests.



Alliance applications – Best practices

Instructions

Proposal sections and length					
Section	Percentage of evaluation	Average annual request <u>Suggested</u> number of pages per section			
		Up to \$30,000/year* ⚠	Up to \$300,000/year	More than \$300,000/year	More than \$750,000/year
Background and expected outcomes	25%	1	2	3	3
Partnership	25%	1	2	3	5
Proposal	25%	1.5	4	5	15
Team		0.5	1	2** ⚠	4**
Training plan	25%	1	1	2	3
⚠ <u>Maximum</u> number of pages, including NSERC template text					
Total		5	10	15	30

- * No active NSERC peer-reviewed grant: you may submit a maximum of 10 pages
- ** Multi-party projects: you may add up to 3 pages (under Team) strictly to provide details on project management, governance structure and university support



Alliance applications – Best practices

Partner Organization Form – refer to [instructions](#)

- Online form **must** be completed by authorized contact for the partner organization.
- Form **must** include partner organization profile: 1 free-form page.
- Profile **must** address 2 requirements:
 - description of organization, including nature of its operations in Canada and how it **intends to grow them** by developing innovative new or improved products, services, processes or policies
 - demonstration that organization has existing or planned **capacity** to achieve the project's expected results (human resources, facilities and financial capabilities)
- Reference to partner organization's website is **not acceptable** in lieu of the profile.



Alliance applications – Best practices

[EDI in your training plan \(help guide\)](#)

Context

- NSERC is committed to promoting the integration of EDI in research design and practice.
- Consideration of EDI in the training plan is part of the evaluation criteria.
- Explaining how EDI is considered in the training plan is mandatory.

Expectations

- Applicants must describe **specific, concrete practices** that **will be put in place** to ensure that EDI is intentionally and proactively supported in the training **plan**.



Alliance applications – Best practices

EDI in your training plan (help guide)

Do not

- provide vague or generic statements.
 - e.g., “in future hiring, EDI will be considered” or “the university is committed to EDI”
- refer to the team’s current diversity.
- refer to EDI general best practices only.
- refer to the university’s EDI policy alone.



What specific initiatives, measures, actions will be put in place in the project’s training plan to support EDI in the team?



Alliance applications – Best practices

EDI in your training plan (help guide)

Resources

- [NSERC's Guide for Applicants: Considering EDI in your application](#)
- [Best Practices in EDI guide for applicants to the New Frontiers in Research Fund](#), including the section on Research team and environment
- university's EDI plan, if applicable



Alliance applications – Best practices

Partner organization self-assessment tool

- The tool helps a potential partner organization determine if its cash contributions to an Alliance project may be recognized in cost-sharing calculations with NSERC.
- NSERC's final decision on the recognition of a partner's cash contribution will be made in the context of the proposed project.



Alliance applications – Best practices

While addressing all requirements in bullet points, remember to

- under “Background and Outcomes”, describe the **need for original research** to address the project’s topic and the potential for generating **new scientific knowledge**
 - How will the topic be addressed through original research?
 - What are the concepts or directions that may lead to advances in the field? What is the type and scope of the anticipated advances?
 - How is the proposed project positioned relative to the state-of-the-art?



Alliance applications – Best practices

While addressing all requirements in bullet points, remember to

- under “Partnership” explain **how** each partner organization has been involved in the co-design of the project and **how** it will be actively involved in it
 - complemented by the description of in-kind contributions in the pertinent section
- under “Partnership” outline each partner organization’s strategy and capacity to **translate** the research **results into practical application** to achieve the desired outcomes and impacts
 - not just the strategy and capacity to participate in carrying out the project



Alliance applications – Best practices

While addressing all requirements in bullet points, remember to

- under “Proposal” identify indicators and methods for monitoring progress during the project and for assessing the outcomes
 - not just **how** progress will be monitored (e.g., regular meetings with partners, oversight committee), but also what **metrics** will be measured/monitored
 - **during** the project and **after** its completion
- under “Training” describe how the project and the partnership offer opportunities for **enriched** training experiences
 - including the nature of planned interactions with the partners



Alliance applications – Best practices

Equipment requests in Alliance applications

- Need must be well justified. Equipment must be **essential** to the project's success and **not available/accessible** at university or through the partner organization(s).
- No set limit for budget fraction that may be dedicated to equipment, but Alliance grants are **not** infrastructure/equipment grants.
- If total expected equipment cost (incl. operation and maintenance) exceeds **\$400k** over project's duration
 - you should apply for an alternate source of funding such as the Canada Foundation for Innovation's [John R. Evans Leaders Fund](#).
 - NSERC and CFI have developed a **joint application and review procedure** for these cases.



Useful links



Useful links

- [Alliance grants website](#)
- [Alliance research topics](#)
- [Role of partner organizations](#)
- [Funding and cost-sharing](#)
- [Instructions for completing an Alliance grant application](#)
- [Alliance proposal template](#)
- [Review mechanisms and evaluation criteria](#)
- [Merit indicators](#)
- [Alliance resources](#)
- [Alliance FAQ](#)
- [Use of grant funds](#)



What's next



Alliance – What's next

- **Communicating Alliance decisions – Effective by end of May 2020**
 - **Applicant:** individual SharePoint library
 - **RGO:** monthly reports through GSAP
- **As per updated terms and conditions, grantees will be asked to provide contact information of all students, fellows and other research trainees **paid out** of their Alliance grants**
 - obligation for grantees to inform trainees
- **Reporting will be streamlined**
 - simplified yearly status reports done online through mostly checkboxes (< 10 minutes)
 - projects of 3 years or more: single simplified mid-term report
 - final report



Alliance grants – Yours to actively use!

- Alliance grants provide you with flexibility in building partnerships that will effectively generate new knowledge and accelerate the application of research results for the benefit of Canadians.
- We invite you to make Alliance **your partnerships program** and to actively use it to go beyond what would have been possible to accomplish using our prior programs, and to have an impact on the economic prosperity, environmental quality and social well-being of Canadians.





Thank you!

For any questions, please contact us

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