

Ontario Research Fund – Research Excellence (ORF–RE) Program Round 9

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Ministry of Research, Innovation and Science

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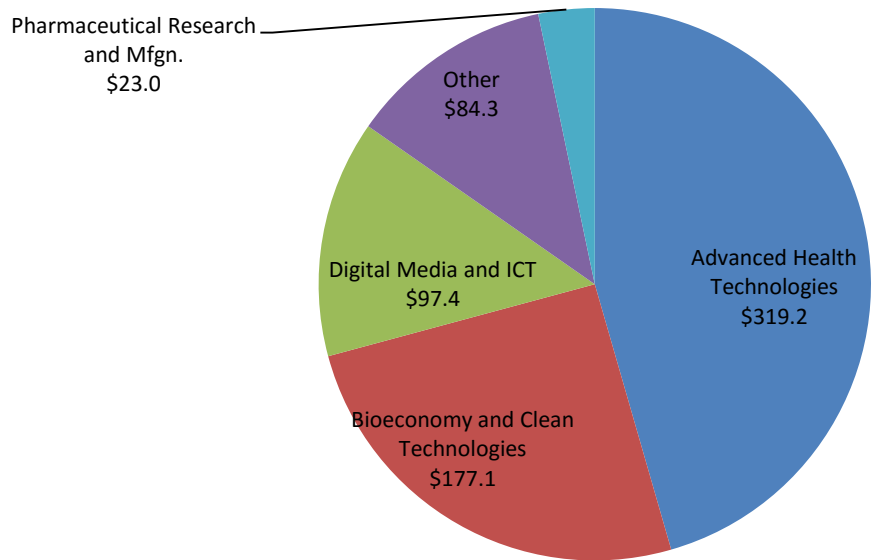


Overview

- The Ontario Research Fund–Research Excellence (ORF–RE) program promotes research excellence in Ontario by supporting transformative, internationally significant research.
- The ORF–RE focuses on research excellence and benefits to Ontarians, and targets new leading–edge research initiatives.
- The program was introduced in 2005, has held 7 general and 2 special rounds.
- Round 8 was completed in September 2016 and 24 projects were approved for funding, totaling \$66.6M.
- Success rate in Round 8 was approximately 25% (24 out of 94 applications) and in Round 7 was 20% (21 projects funded out of 97 full applications received).

Program Stats

ORF-RE Funding by OIA Category (\$ million)



To date, the Ministry has announced \$701 million towards 201 projects.

ORF-RE Program Structure

- Round 9 of the ORF-RE program has three application streams:
 1. General: Open to all disciplines.
 2. Disruptive Technologies focused on Clean Technologies.
 3. Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities (SSAH): Open to proposals in the arts, the humanities and social sciences.
- Institutions must select the stream the application will be submitted to in the Notice of Intent (NoI) form and Application form. The same application can not be submitted to two different streams.
- The application and submission process is the same for all three streams.

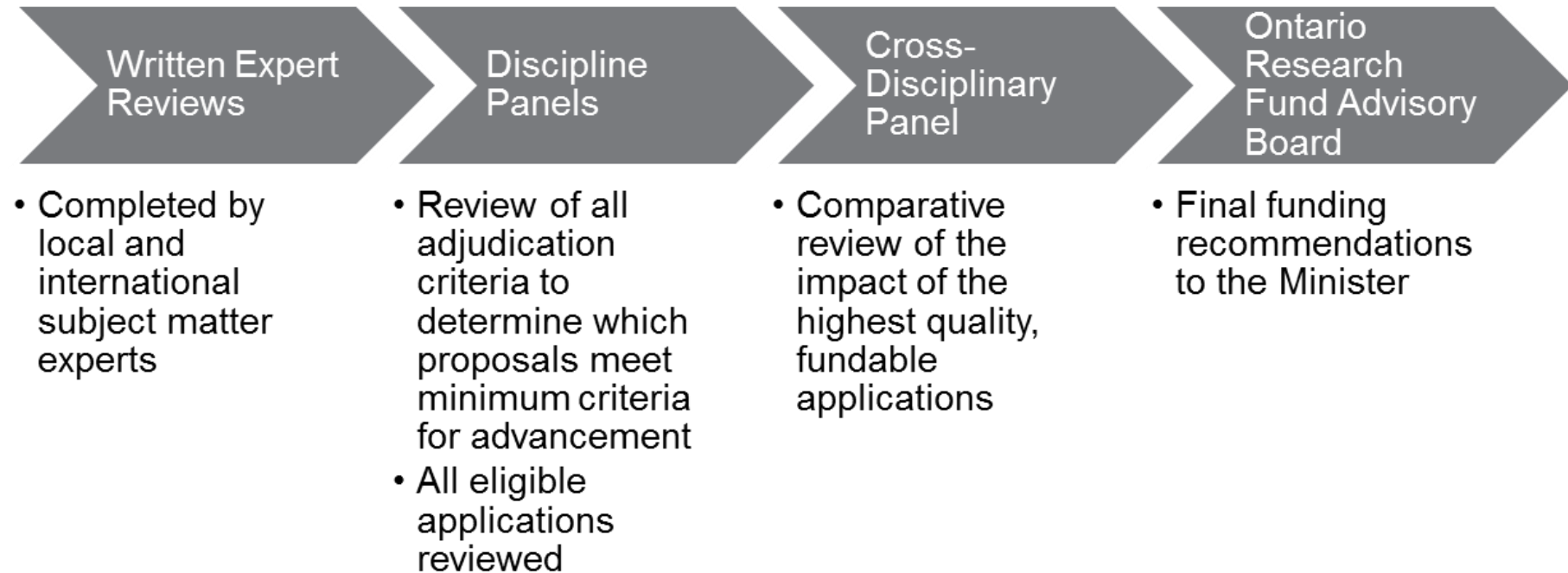
Eligibility

- Funding is open, on a competitive basis, to the following Ontario institutions:
 - Publicly assisted universities
 - Colleges of applied arts and technology
 - Hospital research institutes
 - consortia of the above, with one institution as lead applicant, assuming responsibility and accountability for the consortium
 - other Ontario not-for-profit research institutions at the discretion of the ORF Advisory Board
- The ORF-RE grant can be used for the following direct costs (and limited indirect costs) of conducting research:
 - Salaries and benefits
 - Facilities and equipment
 - Other direct research costs
 - Management and administration

Application Process

- Institutions submit Notices of Intent (Nols) by May 2, 2017.
- Nols will be posted on the Ministry's website to help institutions identify opportunities for meaningful collaboration on projects with similar research topics or objectives.
- Nols are mandatory but non-binding.
- Institutions submit full applications by September 25, 2017.
- This application process is the same for the three streams in this round of the program (same application, same due dates).
- The Nol and Application form will be available on the Ministry's website

Adjudication Process



Adjudication Criterion

Research Excellence:

All proposals must demonstrate leading edge research and discovery potential and the expertise to realize that potential through:

- Scientific merit
- Proposed innovation
- Credentials and appropriateness of the research team
- Where applicable, degree of inter-institutional and international research collaboration

Adjudication Criterion

Research Impact:

- Proposals should demonstrate their anticipated value to Ontarians across three categories:
 - Economic Benefits
 - Societal Benefits
 - Commercialization
- Applications should emphasize the most relevant area to their proposal.
- All above categories are viewed equally.
- Impacts may be short or long term, but the timeframe should be specifically addressed in the application.

Adjudication Criterion

Plan for Achieving Impact:

All proposals must demonstrate their ability to achieve the identified Research Impact through a plan and engagement with users of the research, including but not limited to:

- Firms
- Trade associations
- Clinicians
- Researchers in the scientific community
- Non-profit organizations
- Community/patient groups
- Government and agencies
- Inter-institutional partnerships

Adjudication Criterion

Development of Highly Qualified Personnel:

- Recruitment, retention and training of highly qualified personnel (HQP).
- Meaningful engagement of graduate and post graduate students and post-doctoral fellows.
- This should be demonstrated with a coherent plan and strategy for building and supporting an appropriate training environment.
- The number and type of HQP should be both necessary and appropriate to both the budget and milestones being proposed.

Adjudication Criterion

Project Management and Governance:

Proposals must demonstrate the ability to manage a project of the scope and scale requested:

- Business plan for the management of the project, including governance structure (i.e. management team, arm's length advisory board, scientific advisory committee, etc.)
- Sustainability plan for the research capacity that is created
- Project budget, budget justification and method for ensuring accurate forecasts
- Clear, specific and measurable milestones and deliverables
- If applicable, a data management plan

Funding Overview

- The minimum support provided to a project in the General and Clean Technologies streams will be \$1 million. The maximum support provided will be \$4 million.
- For proposals in the Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities, the minimum support is \$200,000 and the maximum is \$1M.
- ORF-RE will contribute a maximum of 1/3 of the total project value, with 1/3 of the project value coming from the applicant institution(s) and 1/3 from the private sector.
- The Ministry may considered 'blended funding formulas' in cases where the institution and private sector partners make up 2/3 of the required funding match to the ORF 1/3. The funding breakdown should be outlined in the budget justification section of the application.
- The project start date will be negotiated as part of the contracting process. The earliest a project can start is March 14, 2017, which was the date of the call for proposals.

Preparing the Budget

- Institutional and private sector contributions may be cash or in-kind.
- Eligible expenses include:
 - Salaries and benefits claimed in proportion to the time spent working on the project
 - Facilities and equipment: up to 10% of total direct costs
 - Other direct research costs including, but not limited to, materials fieldwork expenses, and dissemination of research
 - Management and administration: up to 10% of total direct costs
- Applicants should prepare a realistic budget that reflects the true rate of expenses.
- Indirect expenses are also eligible to a maximum of 40% of the total direct expenses. The ORF grant is inclusive of direct and indirect costs.
- As an example on a \$1M grant, the institution can take a maximum of \$285,714 from the grant towards indirect costs ($\$1,000,000 / 1.4 * 0.4 = \$285,714$).

Institutional Matches

- Expenses are only eligible from the project start date.
- Cash and in-kind contributions may be secured, as early as one year prior to the application deadline which is September 25, 2016, but can not be shown as expensed prior to the start date of the project.
- Eligible sources of Institutional matching (not necessarily exhaustive):

Eligible Sources	Ineligible Sources
Tri-Council grants	CFI Infrastructure funds
CFI IOF funds	Any grants from the Ontario government or an Agency of the Ontario government
Any research funding, philanthropic gift, or grants and gifts directed in general to the research institution	Any funding already fully leveraged by Ontario funds.

Private Sector Contributions

- Contributions from the private sector may be cash or in-kind.
- Letters of support from private sector partners must accompany the full application and detail the type and amount of support and the interest that the private sector has in the project.
- Private sector support letters must also clearly justify the valuation of any in-kind support.
- Similar to institutional contributions, private sector contributions are only to cover eligible expenses which are incurred after the start date. Funds may have been received at the institution prior to the start date (no earlier than September 25, 2016) but must be spent after the project start date to be considered eligible.

What has changed from the previous round?

- There are no significant changes from the previous round in either the process or the criteria.
- The main difference in this round is the three application streams (General, Clean Technologies, Social, Sciences, Arts and Humanities).

ORF-RE Round 9 Competition Key Dates

Dates	Activity
March 14, 2017	Call for proposals
May 2, 2017	Notices of Intent (NOI) due
September 25, 2017	Full applications due
December 2017 – January 2018	Review Panels
February 2018	ORF Advisory Board and Minister's approval of projects
March 2018	Decisions communicated to Institutions

Application Tips

- Clearly outline how the proposal relates to or enhances the current state of the art research in the field, within the Ontario context as well as nationally and internationally.
- Ensure the application has a clear focus/hypothesis and is not a collection of unrelated subprojects.
- Clearly show how subprojects or themes fit together.
- Clearly describe the preliminary research that led to the proposed new concept.
- Ensure that the application adequately demonstrates the impact of the research.
- Do not 'oversell' the research impact.
- Clearly demonstrate the steps that will be taken to maximize the likelihood of achieving the research impacts and engagement with the next-stage recipients of the research or end-users.
- The proposed research should be ground-breaking and/or innovative.
- The budget should be realistic and adequately justified.
- Do not duplicate content in each of the sections on the application. Use the sections on the application effectively.

Questions?