



## **2020 Catalyst Grant Competition**

### **About The Edwin S.H. Leong Centre for Healthy Children**

It is well established that socioeconomic, political and cultural factors throughout childhood can have a direct impact on children's health and development, with long-lasting effects continuing into adulthood. Known as the social determinants of health (SDoH), these factors can differ significantly between and within populations, leading to socially produced variability in childhood development and long-term health outcomes. By minimizing these inequities in childhood, all children have the same strong foundation on which to grow-up and lead healthy, happy and productive adult lives. Findings from the WHO-UNICEF-Lancet Commission<sup>1</sup>, note that "early investments in children's health, education, and development have benefits that compound throughout the child's lifetime, for their future children, and society as a whole". Investing policy and intervention efforts in early childhood, a developmental period that is particularly sensitive to the SDoH, creates an opportunity to ensure that our children flourish. In particular, Canada's children and youth stand to benefit from increased focus on these issues, as we currently rank 30th out of 38 Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) countries in the indices of mental wellbeing, physical health and skills for life.<sup>2</sup>

To improve child health through research and its application, Dr. Edwin S.H. Leong generously donated \$25 million to the University of Toronto Faculty of Medicine, in partnership with The Hospital for Sick Children (SickKids), who both increased the impact of this gift by matching additional funding. Launched in 2020, the Edwin S.H. Leong Centre for Healthy Children will bring together scholars from across the University of Toronto and fund work to address inequities in child health in Canada. Canada is well positioned as a laboratory for innovative solutions due to available data assets, strategic partnerships of researchers with policymakers, size and diversity. Situated within the SickKids Research Institute, the Leong Centre is led by Co-Executive Directors Dr. Astrid Guttmann and Dr. Eyal Cohen with oversight from SickKids and U of T Medicine. It is guided by a Scientific Leadership Advisory Council with members from various University of Toronto faculties and an International Scientific Advisory Committee.

### **Funding Request Guidelines**

The Edwin S.H. Leong Centre for Healthy Children is committed to supporting multi-disciplinary teams of investigators to seize upon their most innovative, disruptive ideas and new avenues of inquiry that will have a major impact on child health equity. The COVID-19 pandemic, with its associated impact on broad array of critical sectors including healthcare, social services, childcare, schools and the larger impact on employment and family economic outcomes, poses a monumental threat to the well-being of children and youth, especially related to socio-economic status. Catalyst Grants will be awarded to develop unique concepts, approaches or methodologies that have the potential to meaningfully improve outcomes and address inequities for children and their families in the context of Covid-19. Awards will be granted following rigorous peer review by a Selection Committee drawn from across the University of Toronto and SickKids. In advance of reviewing full applications, there will be a Letter of Intent (LOI) stage to both vet potential applications for relevance and help foster potential collaboration of groups working on similar proposals.

- The proposed project must be related to equity in the health and well-being of children and their families in the context of the Covid-19 pandemic. Well-being can be broadly defined.
- Applicants must indicate a collaborative approach to the research, with multi-disciplinary investigators engaged in the work.
- Applicants can request funding of up to \$75,000 total for up to 2 years, with priority given to projects that can be completed in 1 year. Grants needing smaller amounts are very welcome and the committee will try to fund as many high-quality projects as possible. In exceptional circumstances, the maximum budget requested can be up to \$125,000 for larger scope projects.



## Eligibility & Allowable Expenses

- Principal Investigators must hold a faculty level appointment at the University of Toronto and be eligible to hold grants. Students, trainees and fellows without staff appointments may be listed as co-applicants or team members but cannot apply as principal applicants.
- Principal Investigators and all team members must first register as Leong Centre members in order to qualify for funding.
- More than one application can be submitted by the same applicant; however, priority will be given to funding as many distinct research groups as possible. A condition of the grant is that investigators commit to present findings at Leong Centre rounds and include acknowledgement of the Leong Centre in all associated presentations and publications.
- Applicants successful at the LOI stage must submit a completed application by the deadline, using the template provided.
- Applications must include the project outline, detailed budget and alignment with Leong Centre vision and mission. Incomplete or late applications will not be accepted.
- Awards will be provided at the discretion of the Selection Committee and based on the grant criteria and the innovative nature of the project submissions.
- Allowable expenses include trainee salaries, conferences and knowledge translation activities, equipment and open access journal fees, in adherence with the [Tri-Agency \(CIHR, NSERC & SSHRC\) Financial Administration Guide](#).

## Funding Request Process

### *Letter of Intent – Due Friday October 16, 2020 – 12 (noon) EST*

We invite interested applicants to submit a Letter of Intent by **Friday October 16, 2020** as follows:

- Submission is electronic ONLY and must be sent as a single PDF file containing:
  - Completed Leong Centre Catalyst Grant Letter of Intent form
  - CV from the nominated Principal Investigator, including current appointments, grants and relevant publications (abbreviated version, maximum five pages)
  - The project will be reviewed by the Leong Centre Co-Executive Directors and a Selection Committee. Feedback to Investigators who are invited to submit complete applications, will be provided no later than **Monday November 2, 2020**.

### *Full Application – Due Tuesday December 15, 2020 – 12 (noon) EST*

The deadline for complete final applications will be **Tuesday December 15, 2020**. Notice of awards will be delivered in **March 2021**.

## Adjudication Process

- Applications will be reviewed by the Selection Committee; ad hoc reviewers may be included in the review process as subject matter experts.
- Result of funding decision will be provided by the Leong Centre Program Manager.
- If a Selection Committee member wishes to apply, they will be excused from the adjudication process for that application and a replacement Committee member will be appointed.
- Multi-disciplinary research is strongly encouraged including involvement of team members outside of the department or faculty of the Principal Investigator. Applications for projects that build on existing research infrastructure are welcome.

**Questions?** [leong.centre@sickkids.ca](mailto:leong.centre@sickkids.ca)