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## NEW FRONTIERS IN RESEARCH FUND (NFRF) – TRANSFORMATION 2022 LETTER OF INTENT (LOI) CHECKLIST

Research Services Office  
November 2021

### KEY DATES

<b>Internal Deadline (on Convergence Portal):</b>	<b>January 4, 2022, 12:00 pm ET</b>
<b>Sponsor Deadline (RSO submits to NFRF):</b>	<b>January 11, 2022, 8:00 pm ET</b>

### BEFORE YOU BEGIN

This document includes a checklist to consult when preparing your Transformation LOI and tips to guide you in completing the various sections of the LOI and fully addressing the assessment criteria. This document is not intended to replace a careful review of the [Transformation competition overview](#) or the [LOI instructions](#).

**Updates to the Funding Opportunity:** We recommend checking the [competition overview page](#) periodically for any revisions/clarifications. NFRF will also periodically update its [FAQs section](#).

**Creating the Full Application:** The [Convergence Portal](#) will open for the LOI on November 9, 2021. Only the latest versions of Google Chrome, Microsoft Edge, Apple Safari, and Mozilla Firefox will be compatible

**Assessment Criteria:** Please keep in mind the criteria that the multidisciplinary panel will use when reviewing your LOI.

- Interdisciplinarity
- Equity, diversity, and inclusion, and early career researchers
- High risk
- High reward
- Feasibility

**NOTE:** Reviewers will assess Interdisciplinarity, EDI, and Early Career Researchers on a pass/fail basis. The High Risk, High Reward, and Feasibility will be assessed on a seven-point scale, ranging from “Exceptional” to “Poor” (see the [merit indicators](#) for details).

### LOI CHECKLIST

#### PREPARING YOUR LOI ON THE [CONVERGENCE PORTAL](#)

- ☐ **Changes to NOI Content.** NOI content may be updated at the LOI stage. Please see section 2 of the [NOI instructions](#) for details.

**NOTE:** The following sections will be locked at the LOI stage and cannot be modified at the Full Application stage: application title; language; Indigenous research; research fields; keywords; outline of challenge; GBA+; EDI; and Early Career Researchers.

- ☐ **Additional Team Members.** Additional Co-PIs, Co-Applicants, and collaborators can be added at the LOI stage. Additional Co-PIs and Co-Applicants must complete their profile in the Convergence Portal. Collaborators do not need to create an account in the Convergence Portal.

**NOTE:** All core members of the team are expected to be confirmed when the LOI is submitted.

**TIP:** Reviewers from the previous LOI competition noted that teams based at one institution or in one province were less competitive than LOIs with broader geographic representation. Wherever possible, include team members from **multiple institutions and multiple provinces/regions**.

- ☐ **Budget table.** Enter the planned amount of funds to be spent in each category (direct and indirect costs) for each year of the project. U of T applicants must request **25%** of their direct costs budget for indirect costs. E.g., if you have requested the maximum \$3.2M each year for direct costs, you must request \$800K each year for indirect costs.
- ☐ **Gender-based Analysis Plus (GBA)+.** The purpose of including GBA+ is to promote rigorous research that considers identity factors so that the results are applicable and relevant to the diversity of the Canadian population. Applicants **must provide a strong rationale** if they believe no aspect of the proposed research's design, methods, analysis and interpretation, and/or dissemination of findings should take GBA+ into consideration.

**NOTE:** GBA+ will be considered under the Feasibility criterion. GBA+ is distinct from the EDI criterion. EDI context and practices should not be discussed in this section.

**TIP:** For more information on integrating sex, gender, and other diversity factors into your proposed research design and methods, please consult the [resources available on the EDI in Research & Innovation website](#). Here you will find resources related to a variety of disciplines and approaches.

- ☐ **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI).** The research team must demonstrate a commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion, as demonstrated by specific promising practices and the meaningful engagement of members of under-represented groups. Please complete the required information in the text boxes provided on the Convergence Portal.

**NOTE:** This section **should not include personal or demographic information** about team members.

More detailed information about the completing EDI section is included in the LOI tips and resources document on the [U of T funding opportunity page](#).

- ☐ **Support for Early Career Researchers.** Explain how ECRs will be included in the team and integrated in a meaningful way, including plans to support their leadership and development throughout the project.

**NOTE:** This section should not include personal or identifying information about team members, including names.

More detailed information about completing the ECR section is included in the LOI tips and resources document on the [U of T funding opportunity page](#).

- ☐ **Supporting Documents – Attachment Formatting.** Documents must be uploaded as separate PDF attachments. Attachments must adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Any acronyms and abbreviations must be explained.
2. Pages must be 8 ½" x 11" (216 mm x 279 mm).
3. Text must be single-spaced, with no more than six lines of type per inch.
4. All text must be in black, using the 11-point Arial font; condensed fonts will not be accepted.
5. Margins must be set at a minimum of ¼" (1.87 cm).
6. In multi-page attachments, pages must be numbered sequentially.
7. The application identification number (i.e., NFRFx-xxxx-xxxxx) must appear at the top of each page of the attachment.
8. No personally identifying information should be included in the headers and/or footers (e.g., name, PIN, institution, etc.).
9. The name of the document must appear at the top (e.g., Literature References).

- ☐ **Research Proposal (maximum 10 pages).** Describe the proposed research project in language appropriate for a multidisciplinary audience.

There is no set format for this section, but be sure to address all of the points below:

- **Novelty of approach:** explain the approach, how it differs from other approaches, and why it is likely to succeed
- **Interdisciplinarity:** describe the interdisciplinary nature; explain who brings different disciplinary perspectives and how they will be integrated
- **Feasibility:** provide a brief overview of the methodological plan, indicating GBA+ considerations (or providing a justification if no GBA+ consideration); describe access to needed infrastructure (if applicable); and summarize the team's strength and expertise
- **Anticipated transformation/change/impact:** describe the anticipated impact/its significance, the likelihood of the impact being realized, and the short- and long-term benefits

More concrete strategies for completing the research proposal are available in the LOI tips and resources document on the [U of T funding opportunity page](#).

- ☐ **References (no page limit)**  
Applicants are strongly encouraged to include only the main references required to support the proposal.

## SUBMITTING YOUR LETTER OF INTENT ON THE [CONVERGENCE PORTAL](#)

- ☐ **Finalize and Submit to the Research Services Office (RSO).** The internal deadline to submit on the Convergence Portal is **January 4, 2022, 12:00 pm ET**. Once submitted, the status of the application will change to “Received by Administrator.”

**IMPORTANT:** Submitting your LOI on the Convergence Portal means you are ready for Research Services to forward the LOI to the sponsor.

- ☐ **RSO Approves and Submits.** Once RSO has approved and submitted the LOI, the status will change to “Received by Agency.” **No changes can be made after submission to NFRF.**
- ☐ **Invitation to Full Application.** Only successful LOIs will be invited to submit a Full Application. LOI results will be announced on May 3, 2022. The [Convergence Portal](#) will open for Full Applications on May 4, 2022.

## UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO NFRF CONTACT

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