UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT,
RESEARCH AND INNOVATION

Connaught Major Research Challenge for Black Researchers
2023-24 COMPETITION

Program Objectives: *Major Research impact, New interdisciplinary collaboration, Knowledge mobilization, Training excellence*

Overview	
Sponsor	Connaught Fund
Grant Value	Up to $250,000
Grant Duration	2 years
Theme Areas	Open to all areas of scholarship. Optional: Applicants are encouraged to work with an international institution, where possible.
Application Deadlines	**NOI: June 30, 2023** **Full Application: October 2, 2023**
Application Procedure	Notice of Intent (NOI) are to be submitted to connaught.secretariat@utoronto.ca Full applications are to be submitted via MRA by the application deadline.
How to Apply	See application instructions

Purpose:

The purpose of the Connaught Major Research Challenge for Black Researchers program is to strengthen U of T's Black researchers' contribution to addressing and proffering solutions to major research challenges through the advancement of knowledge and the transfer and application of solutions. Black-led major-research challenge teams will initiate collaborations involving U of T researchers and students f*rom multiple disciplines*, along with international collaborators, innovators and thought leaders from other sectors.

The program objective is to seed *new* research collaborations that will be competitive for subsequent external funding opportunities, establish important new partnerships and/or new research-oriented academic programs, provide unique training opportunities and thereby enhance U of T's capacity to develop solutions to major research challenges.

Eligibility:

Project team: The project must be led by a Black researcher at the University of Toronto, with a primary appointment at one of U of T's three campuses, with a team consisting of faculty representing a minimum of two SGS divisions, including junior and senior level faculty members.

Proposals must demonstrate meaningful engagement of graduate students, as trainee development opportunities. Appropriate partner organizations from the public or private sector should be involved in the planning of the proposal to ensure their engagement in knowledge exchange activities.

Project Expenses: The fund can be used flexibly providing support to develop new research collaborations. Eligible expenses include symposia, workshops, visiting scholars, and other mechanisms for bringing diverse sets of expertise to bear on important global challenges. The program is not intended to support ongoing research operating expenses such as consumables, academic conference travel, equipment, etc.

International Partners: Applicants are encouraged to work with international partners, where possible, however this is not a requirement for this program.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion:

The University of Toronto recognizes that diversity is essential to the creation of a vibrant intellectual community that allows our researchers to maximize their creativity and their contributions. The Connaught Committee is therefore strongly committed to diversity in research and especially welcomes applications that engage racialized persons/persons of colour, women, Indigenous/Aboriginal Peoples of North America, persons with disabilities, LGBTQ2S+ persons, and others who may contribute to the further diversification of ideas.

The University also acknowledges that scholars have varying career paths and that career interruptions due to personal circumstances can be part of an excellent academic record. Review panel members have been instructed to give careful consideration to, and to be sensitive to the impact of, career interruptions in their assessments.

All applicants to this funding opportunity are required to answer the University of Toronto's Employment Equity Survey by no later than the application deadline. In completing this survey, applicants may voluntarily self-identify in all applicable groups, or they may log a response indicating that they decline the survey. Self-identification data is important to the University's ability to accurately identify barriers to participation and to develop strategies to eliminate these barriers. Aggregated results as of the closing of this posting will be sent to the Research Equity and Diversity Strategist in the Division of the Vice-President

Research and Innovation (VPRI) and may be accessed by only a small number of designated senior administrators within the division. Any information directly related to you is confidential and cannot be accessed by the reviewers or by VPRI staff. If you have already completed the survey, thank you; your responses will be included in the aggregated results.

Applicants are also asked to describe how equity, diversity and inclusion have been considered and addressed in the development of the project team and how considerations of sex, gender and/or diversity have been integrated into the research design and methods, as applicable to the project.

Adjudication:

Applications to this program will be assessed by a Review Panel, co-chaired by the Associate Vice President Research and the BRN Director, with a membership comprising a member of the BRN Steering Committee and leading researchers from across academic disciplines that include 2-3 Black researchers. Funding recommendations will be made to the Connaught Committee for final decision.

Evaluation Criteria:

Equal weighting will be given to these 4 criteria:

- Excellence in research and innovation
- Equity, diversity, and inclusion
- New cross-divisional institutional capacity
- Enhancement of U of T's research impact
- Measurable outcomes and impacts

Application Content:

Please complete the application as per the template and instructions provided and submit via MRA by the application deadline.

Proposals should describe, in language suitable for a non-specialist audience, the global challenge to be addressed and the plan for bringing key complementary perspectives to bear on a solution

Competitive proposals will:

- Relate to a timely area of academic inquiry
- Meaningfully involve students (undergraduate and graduate)
- Demonstrate consideration of equity, diversity, and inclusion in the development of the project team and (where applicable) in the objectives of the proposed project
- Engage, as appropriate, external partners (community, government, private sector, and/or other academic institutions)
- Present achievable goals
- Where possible, leverage additional internal or external resources in support of the initiative
- Have the potential to attract further major research investment to the University or other concrete outcomes (e.g., new research based academic program) in the future

Reporting

Successful fund recipient will be required to submit an interim progress report and a final report on the use and impact of the funding, highlighting opportunities and unforeseen challenges, and plans for advancing the research through external funding opportunities.