

Clinical Research Fund Program Terms of Reference

Overview

UCalgary and Alberta Health Services (AHS) have entered a memorandum of understanding (MOU) for joint management of clinical trials overhead funds. Funds are managed by the Calgary Centre for Clinical Research (CCCR) with oversight from a joint UCalgary/AHS Working Group. Administrative costs related to clinical research at UCalgary and AHS will be paid first, and the remaining funds will be re-invested into supporting clinical research.

This document outlines the terms of reference for the use of these overhead funds.

Objectives

To promote high-impact clinical research at UCalgary through:

- a. Enhancing the quality and impact of clinical research
- b. Increasing the number of submitted and funded peer-reviewed clinical research studies
- c. Increasing the number of high-impact clinical research publications from UCalgary
- d. Enhancing the number and quality of UCalgary investigator-initiated clinical research studies
- e. Increasing the number of investigator-initiated, industry-partner clinical research studies

These will be accomplished by:

- **Enhanced education in clinical research for:**
 - Students / Trainees
 - Investigators
 - Supporting Personnel
- **Support services for clinical research at UCalgary through:**
 - Legal services
 - Regulatory services
 - Pharmacy services
 - Industry liaison and start-up services
 - Financial services

- IT system enhancements and maintenance
 - Data services
 - **The CRF grant competitions**, including Ignite grants, Research Enhancement Grants and Transdisciplinary Connector Grants (Consolidating Stream) that offer opportunities for funding of clinical research at UCalgary.
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CRF Grant Competitions Overview

A. Ignite Grants

Purpose & Objectives:

The **CRF Ignite Grant** is designed to invest in clinical research projects that increase the likelihood of success in future Tri-Council funding competitions. Applicants must clearly justify how the requested funds will support their success in securing such funding.

Eligibility:

- Open to all UCalgary faculty members.
- Graduate students and postdoctoral scholars can serve as co-investigators, in collaboration with their supervisors.
- Non-UCalgary researchers may also participate as co-investigators, provided their roles are clearly defined.

Research Scope:

- Must be a clinical research study likely to lead to a Tri-Council application within two years.
- Clinical research includes studies conducted on or for the treatment of human subjects, such as:
 - Clinical trials
 - Epidemiological studies
 - Outcomes and health services research
 - Population health studies
- Research typically aligns with **CIHR pillars 2, 3, or 4**.
- Molecular studies using patient samples are eligible **only if directly linked** to health, clinical/epidemiological data, or patient outcomes.

- **Cancer-related applications are not eligible** (these are funded through Alberta Cancer Clinical Trials).

Funding Details:

- Maximum **\$15,000 in cash**.
- **Early career researchers** (within 5 years of their first UCalgary appointment) may request an **additional \$5,000 in service credits**, usable at:
 - Centre for Health Informatics (CHI)
 - Ward of the 21st Century (W21C)
 - Calgary Centre for Clinical Research (CCCR)
 - Heritage Medical Research Clinic (HMRC)

Note: Service credits are paid directly to the service providers.

- Budgets must be **well justified** and **free of conceptual or funding overlap** with other projects.
- Applicants may request less than the maximum.

Duration:

- Funds must be used within **2 years** of award.
- Extensions may be granted upon request to the CRF committee (contact: crf@ucalgary.ca).

Application Process:

- **Rolling intake** – applications are accepted year-round.
- CIHR Biosketch is the preferred CV format for the PI (alternative: max 10-page academic CV).

Grant Holder Obligations:

1. Commit to submitting a related Tri-Council grant application within two years.
 2. Participate in the peer-review of future Ignite applications if requested.
 3. Comply with all reporting and expenditure requirements as outlined in the Notice of Award.
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B. Research Enhancement Grants

The Research Enhancement Program, administered by the Office of the Associate Dean of Research (OADR) receives funds from the Clinical Research Fund Granting Program to enhance the success of CSM faculty in their pursuit of future grants.

The program includes three funding streams for faculty to access support at various stages of their research projects and grant application development.

- **Stream 1 – New Techniques/Methodologies:** this stream provides training for a faculty member or lab/team member to obtain training in new technologies and methodologies.
- **Stream 2 - Grant Editing, Grant Writer, Illustrator, Project Management:** this stream supports large, complex grants with unique funding opportunities, short turnaround times and heavy administrative or organizational burdens.
- **Stream 3 – External Honoraria for Scientific Review:** this stream supports external scientific reviews of grant applications.

Duration of the Award: Year round

Eligibility

Open to primary faculty members of the Cumming School of Medicine at all career stages.

Details

For more details go to: <https://cumming.ucalgary.ca/research-institutes/funding-opportunities/internal-funding>

C. Transdisciplinary Connector Grant Program: Consolidating Stream

The Transdisciplinary Connector Grant Program is designed to promote initiatives that enable UCalgary teams to explore societal questions, challenges and opportunities that demand a transdisciplinary approach. Consolidating grants offer the ability to build on and deepen existing transdisciplinary activities and connections. The CRF's investment will be used to provide matching funding for successful Consolidating Connector Grant projects that align with the definition of clinical research and apply for the additional funding.

Application Deadline: Three Intakes Per Year.

Deadlines for Consolidating Grant applications are Oct. 1, Feb. 1, June 1.

Eligibility

Open to UCalgary researchers whose research project falls within the clinical research definition.

Details

For more details go to: <https://research.ucalgary.ca/research/transdisciplinary/connector-grants>