

What is “Innovation”?

The mandate of the Innovation Fund is to support the development of novel strategies to transform health care delivery in Ontario. *Innovation* usually refers to changing things or introducing new ways of doing things. Accordingly, it is important that each submission to the Innovation Fund states why the proposal is novel and potentially transformative.

The Innovation Fund Guidelines consider projects particularly innovative if they:

- Have definite potential to impact health care delivery
- Are implementable (realistic project goals)
- Have clear measurable metrics for success
- Offer opportunities to translate new knowledge into medical practice
- Are transferable to other institutions or regions of the province

The Innovation Fund Provincial Oversight Committee (IFPOC) considers the following examples of proposals to be less innovative:

- Drug or other industry-related projects
- Projects designed to evaluate a new device/drug in which there is already significant industry sponsorship

New Submission Process for 2025

There is a new submission process for the 2025 Innovation Fund competition. Previously, practice plans would collect all applications from their members and upload the forms to their SharePoint folder.

However, starting this year, Innovation Fund proposal submissions will be submitted by the applicant directly through IFPOC’s new grant management system. Pls will create an account and follow the directions in the system to submit their proposals; short instructional videos will be provided to help with the process.

Please note: Although we are sending out the call for proposals, IFPOC’s new grant management system is not yet live. We will share full details and links to access the system as soon as they are available. In the meantime, if there are any delays or ongoing issues with the platform, the AMO has a contingency plan in place to ensure proposal submissions can proceed without disruption.

***All applications will still require the completion of the P1 and P2 forms (attached to the call for proposals email) provided by IFPOC – these should be complete and ready to upload when you submit your proposal.*

Submission Deadline

All proposals and budgets must be submitted through the grant management system by **September 26, 2025, at 5:00 PM**. Late submissions will not be accepted. Please use only the current P1 (proposal) and P2 (budget) forms included in the attachments.

Funding Streams

There are 3 funding streams:

1. Early Career Investigators (ECIs) – a minimum of 3 projects will be funded for up to \$200,000 (\$100,000 per year for 2 years).
 - ECIs are defined as individuals who are within 5 years of their first staff academic hospital appointment.
 - ECIs are to indicate that they are eligible for this stream of innovation funding by checking the tick box above 'Project Title' on the P1 application form.
2. "Super project" – a maximum of 1 project may be funded with a budget of up to \$500,000 (\$250,000 per year for 2 years).
 - While the maximum is 1 super project per competition, there is no guarantee the AMO will fund a super project – this determination will be based entirely on merit.
 - Pls **cannot** submit a similar proposal to both the 'super project' and the regular funding stream competition.
 - All proposals submitted as 'super projects' must be accompanied by a one-page letter from the PI outlining the potential impact of the project and providing justification for the enhanced budget. The one-pager should also include information about the multidisciplinary research team, the team track record of productivity, and a description of how the project aligns with the innovation fund mandate. To be funded, the super project must closely align with one of the provincial priorities outlined by IFPOC.
 - 'Super projects' will be adjudicated with strict adherence to the eligibility criteria for Innovation Funds as described in Section 4.1 of IFPOC's Framework and Guidelines document. Projects deemed out of scope will not be considered for funding.
3. Traditional stream - a maximum of \$200,000 (\$100,000 per year for 2 years)

Assessment of proposals and scoring criteria

All proposals will be scored by 3 reviewers. There are 4 criteria – set out below – with equal weighting. The maximum score is 20. The top scored and ranked projects will be shortlisted and discussed by the review panel where a final decision on funding will be made. Reviewers will also provide written feedback and comments for every proposal, which will be shared with PIs at the conclusion of the competition. The assessment of proposals for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) considerations is discussed below.

Scoring Criteria		Score
Criteria 1	Proposal Merit How is the proposal innovative and original? Is the proposal well-written and focused? How is the proposal relevant to the scope of the Innovation Fund? How does the proposal demonstrate feasibility with the requested budget?	/5
Criteria 2	Team Strengths How does the team have the collective experience and skill set to complete the work? Does the team have a strong record of productivity? Does the team include early career investigators? Are necessary collaborations in place?	/5
Criteria 3	Assessment Are there comprehensive metrics for evaluation of the project? Are the timelines appropriate? Does the proposal consider sex/gender and EDI? How will the team determine if the project is a success?	/5
Criteria 4	Impact How does the project have the potential to scale and spread beyond the local institution? How will the project generate new knowledge? Do the investigators have a coherent plan for knowledge translation? Will the project support future funding?	/5
Total Score		/20

Overall Score:

18 - 20	Outstanding - Fundable - Should be funded
16 - 18	Excellent - Fundable - May be funded
14-16	Very Good - Fundable - Unlikely to be funded
< 14	TRIAGE - Not Fundable – The proposal will not be discussed

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

The MSH UHN AMO is committed to achieving a more equitable, diverse and inclusive Innovation Fund program. These are essential factors in creating the impactful research necessary to advance knowledge and to respond to health system challenges in Ontario.

The MSH UHN AMO is therefore committed to:

- supporting equitable access to funding opportunities
- promoting the integration of EDI-related considerations in research design and practices
- increasing equitable and inclusive participation in the research system, including on research teams
- collecting data to allow us to measure our progress

To achieve these goals, the MSH UHN AMO will continue with the following changes that were implemented in the previous Innovation Fund competition:

1. Confirmation of completion of CIHR online training modules on sex and gender.

In alignment with CIHR, all applicants are required to complete **ONE** of the three [online training modules on sex and gender](#) and submit confirmation of course completion with their application.

- Course 1 - Sex and Gender in Biomedical Research
- Course 2 - Sex and Gender in Primary Data Collection with Human Participants
- Course 3 - Sex and Gender in the Analysis of Secondary Data from Human Participants

2. Assessment of project proposals for EDI considerations.

All project proposals will be assessed for EDI considerations. Though a dedicated EDI score will not be assigned to proposals, these considerations form an important part of an application, as outlined above in the scoring criteria, and will be explicitly discussed by the Review Panel. The following resources provide guidance on how to incorporate EDI considerations in your project proposals:

[CIHR - Equity, diversity and inclusion resources](#)

[NFRF – Best Practices in Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Research](#)

[Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council - Guide to Including Diversity Considerations in Research Design for Doctoral and Postdoctoral Award Applicants](#)

[Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada - NSERC guide on integrating equity, diversity and inclusion considerations in research](#)

Additional Information for Applicants

Please note the following information when sharing this announcement and appended documents with your physician members:

- Applicants are strongly encouraged to review the entire “AHSC AFP Innovation Fund Framework and Guidelines” document.
- Applicants should not include overhead costs in their budgets, these are accounted for by the MSH UHN AMO in the global Innovation Fund budget for Round 12.
- Per MSH UHN AMO policy, travel expenses for innovation fund projects cannot exceed \$2,500 regardless of project duration and/or extensions.
- The Innovation Fund Provincial Oversight Committee (IFPOC) has developed a formatted Project Proposal form in Word, which offers enhanced usability and eliminates many of the technical issues encountered with the previous Adobe Acrobat version. The Proposal Budget has also been revised and now combines all elements of the proposal budget, interim budget and final report budget. **It is essential that PIs do not use application/budget forms from previous funding cycles.**
- The Principal Investigator (PI) of an AFP Innovation Fund project must be a group physician under the terms of the MSH UHN AHSC AFP Agreement (see below for definition) during the entire period of their Innovation Funding, which requires that they be included in the FTE count of their applicable practice plan. For greater certainty, to be eligible for funding in this upcoming round, an applicant requesting AFP Innovation Funding to support a 2-year project commencing April 1, 2026 and ending March 31, 2028 would need to be included in their practice plan’s FTE counts, effective April 1, 2026, October 1, 2026, April 1, 2027 and October 1, 2027. Given that FTE counts are conducted every 6 months, the aforementioned FTE counts would cover the period of April 1, 2026 – March 31, 2028. If the innovation project were to be extended beyond March 31, 2028, the PI must be included in their practice plan’s FTE count for the duration of the extension.
- Please visit IFPOC’s website (link below) to view the list of projects, with abstracts, for all MSH UHN AMO Innovation Fund recipients, which we hope will provide potential applicants with a sense of the types of projects that were successful in previous competitions.

https://ifpoc.org/search-project-abstracts-governance-organization/?org_id=378

Group Physician

Every Group Physician who is a natural person, and every Designated Physician where the Group Physician is a Medicine Professional Corporation, shall:

- (a) be a member of the Physician Organization;
- (b) be a member of the College and hold a certificate of registration to practice medicine issued by the College under the Medicine Act;
- (c) have malpractice protection through a commercial insurance program or membership in the CMPA or its equivalent;
- (d) have a medical staff appointment at the Hospital, with hospital privileges attached to the appointment;
- (e) be a member of a department at the Hospital;
- (f) have an appointment at the University; and
- (g) be an AFP Practice Plan Member or an AFP Practice Plan Associate.