

SUMO INNOVATION FUND – FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (FAQ)

A. PROGRAM OVERVIEW

1. What is the SUMO Innovation Fund?

The SUMO Innovation Fund supports physician-led projects that develop innovative approaches to improving health care delivery, patient outcomes, and health system efficiency. The program is part of Ontario's Academic Health Science Centre Alternative Funding Plan Innovation Fund program.

2. Who oversees the Innovation Fund program?

The program is overseen provincially by the Innovation Fund Provincial Oversight Committee (IFPOC) <https://ifpoc.org/>. SUMO administers the program locally for physicians participating in the Sinai-UHN Academic Health Science Centre.

3. What are the goals of the Innovation Fund?

The innovation fund has several goals, including

- To improve patient care and health outcomes
- To develop innovative health care delivery models
- To generate knowledge that can be implemented across the health system
- To demonstrate potential for broader system impact.

4. How often does the Innovation Fund competition occur?

The SUMO Innovation Fund competition is held annually. A call for proposals is issued to SUMO practice plans in late June with a proposal submission deadline of late September.

5. What types of funding are available through the SUMO Innovation Fund?

SUMO currently has several streams of funding

- Traditional grants with a budget of \$200,000 over 2 years
- Early career investigators for those within their first 5 years of practice as AHSCs
- Super projects with a budget of \$500,000
- Innovative Sabbatical Funding

6. How many projects are funded each year?

In the most recent Round 12 competition, SUMO supported:

- 15 traditional
- 4 early career investigators
- 1 Super Project
- 7 Innovation Sabbaticals

B. ELIGIBILITY

1. Who can apply for the SUMO Innovation Fund?

Applicants must be physicians participating in the Sinai-UHN Academic Health Science Centre Alternative Funding Plan (AFP).

2. Can early career investigators apply?

Yes. Early career investigators are encouraged to apply and are actively supported through the competition with dedicated funding.

3. Can non-physicians lead Innovation Fund projects?

No. The Principal Investigator must be an AFP physician, although multidisciplinary teams are encouraged.

4. Can collaborators from other institutions participate?

Yes. Collaborators may include clinicians, researchers, trainees, and partners from other institutions.

C. TYPES OF PROJECTS FUNDED

1. What kinds of projects are eligible for Innovation Fund support?

Projects typically focus on innovations in:

- clinical care delivery
- health system efficiency
- digital health and AI tools
- surgical or procedural innovations
- patient safety and quality improvement
- patient engagement or education.

2. What makes a project “innovative”?

Projects should demonstrate:

- novel approaches to health care delivery
- potential system impact
- measurable outcomes
- potential for broader adoption.

D. APPLICATION PROCESS

1. How do I apply to the SUMO Innovation Fund?

Proposal submissions are made through IFPOC’s Grant Management System (GMS). The steps to create an account and instructions on how to navigate the system can be found using the links below:

- [AHSC Portal – Account Creation Instructions](#)
- [How to Apply to the Innovation Fund Competition](#)
- [How to Navigate the Website](#)

- [How to Edit an Application](#)

2. How are proposals reviewed?

Proposals are evaluated through a peer-review process conducted by the SUMO Innovation Fund Review Committee. Please review the [assessment process and scoring criteria](#) for details.

3. When are Innovation Fund competition results announced?

Results are typically announced in late December or early January following the peer-review process. The list of proposals selected for funding is distributed to SUMO practice plans representatives who are asked to share the results with their members

4. How are applicants notified of the results?

All applicants are initially notified of the competition results by their practice plan representatives. SUMO does not communicate directly with applicants whose proposals are declined for funding.

5. When will applicants receive their funding

Award letters will be issued to successful applicants after IFPOC has reviewed and approved SUMO projects selected for funding. This typically happens in late February/early March. All successful applicants must establish an account at RFS at their hospital. RFS will be responsible for administering the research account.

6. Will applicants receive reviewer comments?

Yes. Written reviewer feedback from the Innovation Fund Review Panel is shared with applicants in February/March following a competition.

E. PROJECT ADMINISTRATION

1. When do funded projects begin?

Funding officially begins on April 1 of each year.

2. How long do I have to finish my projects?

Applicants can request either one year or two years of funding.

3. Are extensions allowed?

Yes. Projects may be extended for up to 2 additional years. However, additional funding is not available.

4. How do I apply for a project extension

Extensions can be requested using the *SUMO Progress Report and Extension Request* form. SUMO will request the completion of this form for project's approaching the end of Year-2 and are due by February. The SUMO Innovation Fund Sub-Committee reviews extensions requests in March and if granted, the extension will be for 1 year.

5. Do Innovation Fund projects require reporting?

Yes. Investigators must submit periodic reports during the project lifecycle including:

- Progress Report and Extension Request
- Final Report - P3
- Final Budget Report – P4

PIs with active projects will be contacted directly on an annual basis about the specific report required as well as timelines for submission.

6. How are reports submitted?

Reports are submitted through [IFPOC's Grant Management System \(GMS\)](#) which is the online system used to manage the full lifecycle of Innovation Fund projects.

7. How do I create an IFPOC portal account?

Click the 'New Member' registration link on [IFPOC's Grant Management System \(GMS\)](#) login page. Please note that you already have an IFPOC GMS account if you applied for an Innovation Fund project in 2025, or if you currently have an active Innovation Fund project.

10. Contact Information

Who should I contact with questions about the Innovation Fund?

Questions regarding applications, reporting, portal access, or extensions should be directed to info@thesumo.ca.