



**Nova Scotia Health Research Fund  
Frequently Asked Questions and Answers  
2022 Competition**

**Competition Deadlines:**

Registration due: May 11, 2023, 4 PM

Full application due: July 10, 2023, 4 PM

**General Information:**

All applications must adhere to the following format:

- If you have the technical means, please submit all your application materials in one PDF document. At minimum, all application materials must be submitted together in a single email.
- No section may exceed the maximum allowable page limits.
- Font must be 11 pt. minimum, black type. No condensed/narrow fonts, type, or spacing.
- Use 1.5 line spacing, 0.5 inch (1.27 cm) left and right margins.

**Competition Categories:**

**Category 1:** open to researchers who are physicians or other health professionals, Nova Scotia Health staff/employees, Nova Scotia Health Affiliate Scientists, and/or members of our African Nova Scotian, Indigenous, 2SLGBTQIA+ or other marginalized groups/communities.

**Category 2:** open to applicants who are physicians or other health professionals, Nova Scotia Health staff/employees, Nova Scotia Health Affiliate Scientists, and/or members of our African Nova Scotian, Indigenous, 2SLGBTQIA+ or other marginalized groups/communities (Research in Medicine students are not eligible), AND within their first two years of appointment at Nova Scotia Health OR within the first 5 years of their research career.

**Category 3:** open to work led by Nova Scotia Health staff/employees in partnership with physicians, Nova Scotia Health Affiliate Scientists, and/or members of our African Nova Scotian, Indigenous, 2SLGBTQIA+ or other marginalized groups/communities.

**Category 4:** open to applicants who: a) Are research trainees, allied health students, residents (including pharmacy and psychology), and/or a member of our African Nova Scotian, Indigenous, 2SLGBTQIA+ or other marginalized groups/communities, AND have a Nova Scotia Health mentor or supervisor to help guide their work on the proposed study. Note: **Research in Medicine students are not eligible for funding.**

Q: How long can Research Fund awards be held?

A: Research Fund awards are valid for the following periods:

- Category One – 3 years from notification of award
- Category Two – 3 years from notification of award
- Category Three – 2 years from notification of award
- Category Four – 1 year from notification of award

Q: What does the requirement that “the project must be conducted at Nova Scotia Health” mean in practical terms?

A: This means the majority (not necessarily all) of the awarded funds must be held at Nova Scotia Health AND one of the following other conditions:

- The study must involve participants recruited specifically because of and/or through their association with NS Health (as patients, staff, or otherwise)
- At least some of the work must be conducted in NS Health facilities
- The study must use tissues, samples, and/or data held at NS Health
- NS Health patients and/or personnel must be part of the research team

Q: I would like to submit multiple applications to this competition as the PI. Can I receive more than one award from this competition as PI?

A: While applicants can hold multiple awards from different Research Fund competitions simultaneously, **applicants may not submit more than 1 application per cycle.**

Q: Are quality improvement projects eligible?

A: No. as in past years, quality improvement projects are not eligible.

Q: I am a university-based researcher who does not currently have an affiliation with Nova Scotia Health. Do I need to apply for a Scientific Affiliate appointment for research in order to apply to this competition?

A: Yes. If you do not have a current Scientific Affiliate appointment with Nova Scotia Health, you must have submitted an application (or re-application, for expired appointments) for Scientific Affiliate status before submitting your Registration (e.g. by May 11, 2023).

Q: Are Canadian Common CVs (CCVs) needed for all team members?

A: No. A CCV is only required for the Primary Applicant.

Q: Can I seek feedback prior to submitting my application?

A: Yes. Applicants can request an administrative pre-review of their application by contacting [ResearchDevelopment@nshealth.ca](mailto:ResearchDevelopment@nshealth.ca)

For assistance with project design, methodology or data analysis, contact: [RMU@nshealth.ca](mailto:RMU@nshealth.ca).

Please contact RMU at least 4 weeks prior to the funding deadline if you are seeking full support for the development of your grant application.

Applications will be pre-reviewed and supported on a first-come-first served basis.

Q. How will my application be assessed by the committee?

A: The Research Fund peer review committee uses the CIHR point rating scale (0-4.9) and assesses applications based on the criteria below:

- a. The quality and scientific merit of the proposal
- b. The feasibility of the project
- c. Fit with Nova Scotia Health priorities
- d. The research team
- e. Knowledge translation and dissemination plan
- f. Budget and budget justification

Q: What do I need to include if I am resubmitting an application?

A: Resubmissions to the Nova Scotia Health Research Fund must include an appendix to the application explaining how the previous reviewers' comments have been addressed.

Q: I am a student/trainee/resident. If I am successful in obtaining a Research Fund award, am I able to hold the funds in my own research account at NSH?

A: No, student/trainee awards are held in a Nova Scotia Health research account in the name of the supervisor, even though the student remains the principal investigator on the study. Awardees can have access to these accounts with designated signing authority. Note that supervisors must be eligible to hold research accounts at Nova Scotia Health. Students/trainees/residents should have their supervisor complete the Nova Scotia Health Supervisor/Mentor Agreement form.

Q: What type of CVs am I required to submit?

A: Your application must include the Principal Applicant's validated Canadian Common CV in Biosketch format. Five-page (max) CV's are required for all team members listed on the application and they can be included in any format.

Q: What do I include in the lay summary?

A: The lay summary is a very important part of your application and, for successful applications, is used in communications regarding the competition and as a means of soliciting continued investment in the Fund by donors. A lay summary is used to explain complex issues and scientific terms to people who do not have prior knowledge of the subject. This should include a brief statement of the research area of interest, or the problem to be researched, as well as the project objectives. Summarize the potential impact of the proposed project on the health of Nova Scotians, and/or how the project will strengthen a grant submission to a peer-reviewed provincial, national or international health research competition. Please ensure that your lay summary is written in plain English and is understandable to someone who is not an expert in your field (e.g. write for a grade 10 level). Include the rationale and outline of your proposed research. Some examples of resources to assist with writing plain language summaries are provided by the Michael Smith Foundation for Health Research at <https://www.msfr.org/news/blog-posts/plain-language-summaries>.

Q: Whose signatures do I need to include on my application?

A: The Principal Investigator must sign the application. Electronic signatures are accepted. Signatures are not required for other team members. For Category 4 (trainee) applicants, an email from the supervisor/mentor containing the supervisor/mentor agreement and indicating their agreement with it is acceptable in place of a signature.

Q: How do I submit my application?

A: For large files, please use the MOVEit secure file transfer service to send your application: [MOVEit Transfer | Nova Scotia Health Authority - Corporate \(nshealth.ca\)](https://www.nsh.ca/apply/submit)

Q: When will applicants be notified about the funding decision?

A: We anticipate being able to announce funding awards by late summer, 2023

Q: Do you expect the Research Fund to be offered twice annually? Is there a set schedule?

A: The Research Fund competition is expected to be held once annually with a Spring deadline.

Q: Is there a mailing list I could sign up for to receive Research Fund updates?

A: The Research, Innovation and Discovery newsletter "Research in Action" is circulated every 2 weeks and provides information on internal and external funding opportunities (including Research Fund). [Signup Form \(constantcontactpages.com\)](https://constantcontactpages.com)

Q: Is there a Research Funding Application Checklist that needs to be submitted with the final grant application?

A: The Research Funding Application Checklist is required for submission to **external funding** competitions. The checklist is not required for Research Fund or QEII TRIC competitions.

Q: I meet the requirements to serve as the PI for the application, but I would like to include a team member who is a faculty member at a university. Is that permitted?

A: Yes, the PI must meet eligibility criteria for Research Fund, but is welcome to include other non- NS health individuals on the project team.

### **Registration/Application Form:**

Q: How do I "unprotect" the Research Fund application form so I can add figures, signatures, font changes, etc.?

- i) Under 'Review' in Microsoft Word, click 'Restrict Editing' on the righthand side. Click 'Stop Protection'
- ii) If you would like to "re-protect" the application form, in the same panel, click 'Yes, Start Enforcing Protection' and leave the password fields blank.

Q: Can a Research Fund application have Co-PI's, or can only one person be the PI?

A: There can be Co-PI's however, for one person will be designated as the lead PI for administrative purposes (e.g. contact, finance). To be a PI, you must be affiliated with Nova Scotia Health.

Q: Should we indicate only one priority area per application?

A: Please indicate all of the priority areas that apply to the project.

Q: The research team and lab are based in Central Zone, but recruitment will be from all NS Health Zones. Would this be considered Central Zone or Provincial?

A: Provincial

Q: Should the proposal be entered into the application in the grey box above the appendices on Page 5 of the application, or can the proposal be appended at the end of the application form?

A: The proposal can be attached at the end of the application form.

Q: If the research team includes a patient partner, what information does the patient need to provide?

A: Indicate in the proposal what the role of the patient will be. If possible, include a 5-page (or less) CV as part of the application package.

Q: For Category 4 applications, which team members require a CV in CIHR Biosketch form?

A: The student/trainee submits a CV in CIHR Biosketch format. The rest of the team, including the supervisor/mentor, submits a CV in any form with a 5-page limit.

### **Categories:**

Q: For early career researchers applying to Category 2, will time off for parental leave be permitted if needed (i.e., can the 3 years of the award be extended if needed)?

A: If the PI takes parental leave during the award, they will be granted additional time to complete the project.

Q: Will applicants to Categories 1 or 2 who are not chosen, be considered for category 3? Or should applicants check off any relevant categories?

A: The PI must select one category and choose the Category that is most appropriate for their career stage and application funding requirement. Please contact [Research.Fund@nshealth.ca](mailto:Research.Fund@nshealth.ca) if you are uncertain which category to apply to.

### **Knowledge Translation:**

Q: What might Research Fund reviewers expect to see in the knowledge translation plan section of the project proposal?

A: The expectation is that the KT plan should be more robust than just a conference presentation and/or a publication. Consider your audiences and innovative ways to get information to them. Consider reviewing the Toolkit of Research Resources on the NS Health website: [Research Development | Research Toolkit](#), or contact the Maritime SPOR Support Unit for a consultation: [Home - MSSU](#)

### **Budget/Financial Questions and Answers:**

Q: I am applying as a medical resident or other student. If my application is successful, will I be eligible to hold these funds at Nova Scotia Health?

A: No. As part of their application, residents and other students must identify a supervisor or mentor who is eligible to hold funds at Nova Scotia Health to hold the awarded funds on their behalf.

Q: Can funds from this competition be used to pay the Principal Applicant?

A: No, this is not an allowable expense for this competition.

Q: Are price quotes that support budget items necessary?

A: No, price quotes are not necessary but are often helpful and could be included as appendices.

Q: Can I hold my Nova Scotia Health Research Fund award at another institution such as Dalhousie or the IWK?

A: It is generally expected that funds awarded through the Research Fund competition will be held at Nova Scotia Health; however, in cases where it is required, funding may also be transferred to other institutions within Nova Scotia. Applicants must indicate their proposed host site in the application and should contact [Research.Fund@nshealth.ca](mailto:Research.Fund@nshealth.ca) for further [information](#).

Q: What expenses are considered to be eligible expenses?

A: Eligible expenses can be broken down into five main categories:

- a. Personnel
- b. Service providers
- c. Equipment
- d. Materials, supplies and administrative services
- e. Knowledge translation and dissemination
- f. Other

**Eligible Expenses**

<i>Type</i>	<b>Examples</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<i>A. Personnel</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Salary expenses for technician, research assistant, data entry clerk, biostatistician</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Salary justification must include estimated number of hours required.</li> <li>• Salary and benefits scales. Contact <a href="mailto:Dawn.Munroe@nshealth.ca">Dawn.Munroe@nshealth.ca</a> for assistance with determining the appropriate salary scales for research positions. Note that 25% must be added on top of salaries to cover the cost of benefit entitlements for PT and FT Long Assignment positions. 15% benefits are required for PT or FT Short Assignments and Casual Relief positions.</li> <li>• If salaries are outside the standard range, an explanation must be provided in the budget justification section.</li> </ul>
<i>B. Service Providers</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Testing, lab shared services, diagnostic imaging, Immunovaccine Inc. etc.</li> <li>• Consulting fees from Research Methods Unit</li> <li>• Creation and printing of surveys</li> </ul>	
<i>C. Equipment</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equipment required to carry out research project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Partial funding for equipment intended for both clinical and research purposes will be considered as an eligible expense only if the research portion can be clearly separated from the clinical use portion and guarantees provided that clinical needs will not infringe upon research needs. Equipment purchased with funds from the Nova Scotia Health Research Fund is Nova Scotia Health property and must remain in the applicant's department when it is no longer required for the research project or if the applicant leaves Nova Scotia Health.</li> </ul>

<i>D. Materials, Supplies and Administrative Services</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cadavers</li> <li>• Software</li> <li>• Courier services</li> <li>• Videoconferencing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Include price quotes and source; e.g., page from software supply company catalogue showing prices of software.</li> </ul>
<i>E. Travel, KT and Dissemination</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Travel costs</li> <li>• Presentation costs</li> <li>• Publication fees</li> <li>• Patent fees</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Nova Scotia Health Research Fund recognizes the importance of knowledge translation (KT).</li> <li>• Open access publication fees should not be included as part of your project budget; however, once you have an accepted open access publication, please contact <a href="mailto:Research.Fund@nshealth.ca">Research.Fund@nshealth.ca</a> to see if support is available to offset publication fees.</li> <li>• In light of the global COVID-19 pandemic, KT plans should not rely heavily on travel.</li> <li>• Travel for KT purposes is an eligible expense as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ For <b>Category 1, 2, and 3</b> applicants, travel costs cannot exceed 10% of the study budget.</li> <li>○ Note: It is the expectation that the departments of <b>Category 4</b> (trainee) applicants will bear <b>all</b> costs for travel and knowledge dissemination.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<i>F. Other</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Participant cost reimbursement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• For other types of costs, provide an explanation in the budget justification section.</li> </ul>

Q: Are external biostatistical, qualitative, health economics, or data management supports an eligible cost?

A: Yes. If you require biostatistical, qualitative, data management, or health economics support for your proposed research study, please contact Nova Scotia Health’s Research Methods Unit (RMU). Please contact RMU for support at: [RMU@nshealth.ca](mailto:RMU@nshealth.ca)

Q: If the project requires funding from another agency, in addition to Research Fund, does this need to be stated in the application?

A: The Budget table in the Research Fund application should include the funding that you are requesting from the Research Fund competition only. If your project requires additional funding (e.g. beyond the Research Fund award), please explain these sources in the Budget Justification.

**Please Note**

Successful applicants will be required to agree to the following:

1. Acknowledgement of Nova Scotia Health as funder in all presentations, publications
2. Serving as reviewer on subsequent competitions administered by Nova Scotia Health
3. Submitting a final report that includes outcomes of the funding award
4. Prior to accepting new funding, successful applicants must submit any outstanding reports from previously funded Nova Scotia Health research awards.

**Equity, Diversity and Inclusion**

Priority will be given to applications that are led by and/or directly impact African Nova Scotians, Indigenous People, people of color, 2SLGBTQIA+ and other marginalized groups and communities.

Demonstrated evidence of community consultation and collaboration where applicable is required for applications indicating alignment with this priority.

Please visit the website for further updates on Research Fund: [Nova Scotia Health Research Fund \(NSH RF\) | Nova Scotia Health Innovation Hub \(nshealth.ca\)](#)

Questions? Please email: [Research.Fund@nshealth.ca](mailto:Research.Fund@nshealth.ca)

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