

## **New Investigator Research Grants Guidelines for Applicants**

### **Overview**

Through its National Grants program, SickKids Foundation seeks to strengthen Canada's capacity and knowledge to respond to children's health challenges and needs. To do so, we grant funds to research projects that have the potential for significant impact in areas of children's health needs based on scientific excellence and relevance to child health.

### **Funding Objectives**

New Investigator Research Grants provide important early career development support to child health researchers. It is intended this program will enhance the grant recipient's ability to compete with more senior investigators for research grants from other funders. Through this grants program we are seeking to fund research carried out by new investigators across Canada who successfully lead, participate in, and translate outstanding child health research that will respond to children's health challenges and needs.

The New Investigator Grants Program is a jointly sponsored program of SickKids Foundation and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research - Institute of Human Development, Child and Youth Health (IHDCYH). Grant recipients may obtain up to three years' support for research in biomedical, clinical, health systems and services, and population and public health sectors.

### **Funding for Research Operating Grant**

New investigator researchers may obtain up to a maximum of **\$100,000 annually** for up to three years **for a maximum of \$300,000** for their research project. The research operating grant may be used for:

- Research costs – materials, services, salaries of staff including research assistants /technicians etc, knowledge translation or dissemination of results, travel, supplies, resources, animals.
- Equipment purchase or rental (including computers) required for the project up to \$10,000 total including set-up.

### **We are unable to fund projects:**

- That have limited relevance to the health of children (conception up to 18 years of age).
- Primarily to the benefit of children outside of Canada.
- That are otherwise funded research projects
- Applications in which the principal applicant:
  - is a trainee (i.e. a fellow or doctoral candidate);
  - is not affiliated with a Canadian institution that is a registered Canadian charity or otherwise qualified donee. All applicants must have an affiliation with such an institution (where that institution is willing to financially administer the grant);
  - or co-principal applicant currently holds an active SickKids Foundation grant.

Funding is contingent upon availability of funds by both SickKids Foundation and the CIHR's Institute of Human Development, Child and Youth Health.

### **Who is Eligible to Apply**

The principal investigator must be a Canadian citizen or permanent resident of Canada, based in or formally affiliated with an eligible sponsoring institution within Canada. The principal investigator will usually hold a doctoral degree (Ph.D) or equivalent medical/health care degree and have had formal research training. Co-principal investigators are researchers who may or may not have a formal affiliation (faculty appointment) with the sponsoring institution, but will take responsibility for particular administrative and scientific aspects of the research project. Trainees (i.e. doctoral students or fellows) cannot be principal or co-principal investigators.

Eligible applicants **are required to include a mentorship plan and to work with a clearly-identified mentor**. The mentor will provide a letter of support as well as review the application before submission and provide advice throughout the project to ensure it is competitive in terms of both scientific excellence and relevance to child health.

**The applicant must be a new investigator at the date of application; i.e. at the time of application deadline of November 15, 2011.** For the purpose of this award, a new investigator is defined as an individual who:

- as a principal or co-principal investigator has **not** received a peer reviewed multi-year operating grant in the amount of \$100,000 or more annually. Operating grant is defined as a grant that can be used to cover administrative or any other research-related costs (including salary of trainees or students) in order to carry out a research project.

Note: Should an operating grant as described be received after the application is submitted, **but before notification of an award**, the applicant must notify SickKids Foundation immediately and the applicant would no longer be eligible for a SickKids Foundation New Investigator Grant.

- is within **five years** of their first academic appointment. Academic appointment is defined as an appointment which allows an individual to apply for research grants as an independent investigator.
- has at least 50% of protected research time for the duration of the project.
- without an academic appointment, the equivalent would be a clinician, health care worker, complementary and alternative health care practitioner, or other community worker who does not have an academic appointment, but who has institutional support (through a registered charity) to do research as a principal investigator.
- If there are two principal investigators applying for funding, both must qualify as new investigators. Co-applicants are not required to be new investigators.

- If in doubt about your status as a new investigator, please contact SickKids Foundation. The Foundation reserves the right to make the final determination as to whether, for the purposes of eligibility, an applicant will be considered a new investigator.
- A maximum of two principal investigators will be permitted per application.
- We recognize that applicants can co-submit the same project to other agencies for funding support. If funding is awarded from another agency in the same amount or more than the funding awarded from SickKids Foundation, the applicant would no longer be eligible for this grant.

**Recognition of a break in the research career:**

Individuals who have taken time off for personal reasons or for other reasons (such as to establish a private clinical practice, family or health reasons, or parental leave) within the first five years of their research career may be considered a new investigator. These individuals must include a letter documenting the duration of the interruptions and indicating whether or not there was any research productivity during that time. This time off will not count towards the five years. Please note that time spent doing industry or government research will count towards the five years. **The Foundation reserves the right to make the final determination as to whether an individual is considered a new investigator or not.**

**Assessment and Relevance Criteria**

Projects must be relevant to the Foundation's Mission to improve the lives of children and their families in Canada and around the world. Funding decisions will be based on scientific merit as well as relevance to the following criteria:

- The number of children affected
- The potential for direct impact on the care of children
- Lack of knowledge on the topic
- High incidence or high morbidity/mortality
- Highly relevant to the quality of life of children

To be considered for funding, applications must demonstrate that the proposed research will be collaborative across disciplines and include an appropriate translation and knowledge dissemination/uptake plan for the research findings.

As well, we are seeking applications from across research methodologies (quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods) and research sectors (biomedical, clinical, health systems and services, and population and public health sectors).

### **Scientific Merit**

Proposals must demonstrate excellence with respect to research design, methodology, instrumentation, statistical analysis and project outcome measurement. Projects that show a high degree of innovation and incorporate a multi-disciplinary approach will be favored. Budgets must be sound, and projects must adhere to ethical standards. If a project involves research on humans it must be in accord with the Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (for more information please visit the following website: <http://www.pre.ethics.gc.ca/eng/policy-politique/tcps-eptc/readtcps-lireeptc> ).

### **Knowledge Translation**

SickKids Foundation is committed to advancing children's health and therefore support of Knowledge Translation is an important investment in ensuring that funded research will have impact on child health practices, policies and/or further research.

To be **eligible** for consideration, applications **must include a Knowledge Translation (KT) plan**. The objectives of the KT plan are to ensure that the research is translated appropriately for relevant stakeholders and potential end-users. Up to 15% of the research operating grant may be used for knowledge translation activities.

To assist in the development of your KT plan, we encourage you to use the Knowledge Translation resources available by going to the webpage

<http://www.sickkidsfoundation.com/grants/default.asp> and clicking on Knowledge Translation Resources for Researchers.

## **Complementary and Alternative Health Care Research**

As objectives of this grants program are to fund research projects that have the potential to have significant impact on child health outcomes, we recognize that this may be done through conventional medicine or complementary and alternative health care (CAHC) or natural health products. We encourage applications that will increase knowledge and understanding on the efficacy and safety of complementary and alternative treatments and products for children and youth provided the research is directly relevant to child and youth health.

## **Deadline Date for Applications**

Applications must be received by 5:00 pm EST on **November 15, 2011**. Applicants can expect to be notified of the funding decision by end of June 2012.

Applications in French are welcomed; these applications will be reviewed by French speaking reviewers.

## **Institutional Support**

Reviewers will give preference to applications from researchers who have strong institutional support. All applications must be accompanied by a letter of support from the applicant's Department or Division Head. This letter must indicate the ways in which the institution will support the applicant, in terms of resources (lab space, computer hardware, etc.), mentorship and research time for the applicant. If the principal investigator is a Medical Doctor or Health Care Clinician, the letter from the individual's Department or Division Head must also guarantee that at least 50% of the applicant's time will be protected research time for the duration of the project.

**This competition is highly competitive with a limited funding envelope.** All applicants should contact their institution's research awards or grants management office to discuss any potential internal process that may be required that will enhance the strength of their application.

## **Review and Selection Process**

The selection process is based upon expert peer review. The Grant Review Committee will critically evaluate each grant application for scientific merit and relevance to child and youth health based on the funding criteria. Also to be considered in the assessment will be the potential impact as well as institutional and mentorship support. Overall budget and knowledge translation plan or dissemination of results as applicable are carefully reviewed. Final approval, based upon recommendation from the Grant Review Committee, rests with the Grants Advisory Committee, a standing committee of SickKids Foundation Board of Directors.

The Institute of Human Development, Child and Youth Health's mission is to promote and support research that improves the health and development of mothers, infants, children, youth, and families in Canada and throughout the world. The Institute has four Strategic Research Priorities that can be consulted at: <http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/26711.html>. Applications should be relevant to at least one or more of IHDCYH's strategic priorities.

## **Resubmission**

An applicant who did not receive funding may submit a revised application in a future competition, providing they still meet eligibility criteria. A maximum of one resubmission is permitted per project. Applicants of a resubmission should provide a letter (no longer than two pages) to the Grant Review Committee addressing itemized concerns raised by reviewers. Resubmissions will be assessed under the same criteria as first-time applications but with special attention to the responses to reviewers' comments.



## Contact Us

For any questions related to these Guidelines of Applicants, please direct an email to: [national.grants@sickkidsfoundation.com](mailto:national.grants@sickkidsfoundation.com) or telephone us at 416.813.6166 x2354.

### **Mailing Address:**

National Grants  
SickKids Foundation  
525 University Ave, 14<sup>th</sup> Flr  
Toronto, ON M5G 2L3