

2020 SPOR Evidence Alliance Seed Grant Competition

Funding Opportunity Details	
Funding Organization	SPOR Evidence Alliance
Program Name	2020 SPOR EA Seed Grant Competition
Funding Launch Date	August 4, 2020

Important Dates

- **Application Opens:** August 4, 2020 (12:00PM EDT)
- **Application Deadline:** October 4, 2020 (11:59PM EDT)
- **Anticipated Notice of Decision:** December 1, 2020
- **Anticipated Funding Start Date:** January 4, 2021

Description

The SPOR Evidence Alliance Seed Grant aims to encourage a culture of learning, innovation, and advancement of science in the areas of knowledge synthesis, guideline development, knowledge translation, and patient-oriented research by funding methods projects at the conceptual stage.

Only projects studying **methodological advancements of guideline development in a patient-oriented research setting will be considered**. Guideline projects themselves are not eligible for inclusion. Successful projects must have a strong focus on patient-oriented research and include stakeholder engagement in the conduct of the work.

NOTE: Priority will be given to proposals that aim to engage and improve health outcomes for Black, Indigenous, and socioeconomically disadvantaged populations.

What is a guideline?

For the purpose of this grant, guidelines are defined as a set of evidence-informed recommendations related to practice, public health, or policy for informing and assisting decision-makers (e.g. policy-makers, health care providers, or patients).¹

Value and Duration

- Up to 2 awards valued at **\$10,000** each for one year (non-renewable)

Eligibility

Applicants must meet the following eligibility criteria:

- a **registered member** of the Evidence Alliance
- a **doctoral student, post-doctoral fellow or an early career investigator** (i.e., full-time, independent researcher for a period of 0 to 5 years)² **at a Canadian institution**, and

¹ World Health Organization. (2014). WHO handbook for guideline development, 2nd ed. World Health Organization. <https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/145714>

² Canadian Institutes of Health Research. (2020). Glossary of Funding-Related Terms. Canadian Institutes of Health Research. <https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/34190.html#r14>

- if **doctoral student** or **post-doctoral fellow**, your academic supervisor/mentor must also be a member of the Evidence Alliance
- your project is planning to explore **methodological advancements of guideline development in a patient-oriented research setting**

NOTE: If you are not yet a member of the Evidence Alliance, you and your academic supervisor/mentor can complete the member registration at the following link:
<https://sporevidencealliance.ca/get-involved/become-an-alliance-member/>

Expectations

Successful candidates are expected to:

- **Present their work** at a 2021 summer webinar or at the 2021 Annual General Meeting
- **Provide a financial report and an annual report** on their progress; due within 6 months after the end of the funding period
- **Acknowledge the Evidence Alliance** for provision of financial support in any publications, poster presentations, and other dissemination activities

Application Review Process

- Reviewers will be selected from a pool of Evidence Alliance members with relevant experience and expertise
- Each reviewer will be asked to declare all conflicts of interest at the beginning of the application review process
- Each application will be independently reviewed and scored using a standardized assessment form by two patient partners and two researchers
- All applicants will be ranked based on the average of the four scores they received
- The top two scoring applications will be awarded

Assessment Criteria

Each application package will be rated using the following assessment criteria:

- **Concept (25%)** – Relevance of the Research, Significance and Impact of the Research
- **Feasibility (75%)** – Approaches and Methods, Expertise, Experiences, and Resources

See [Appendix 1](#) and [Appendix 2](#).

Application Process

Important: Please read all instructions in order to become familiar with the application process before applying.

To complete your application, follow the specific instructions and submission requirements listed below.

Required Documents

- Canadian Common CV** (*draft version is acceptable*)
- Project Budget**
- Project Timeline**

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Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research
**EVIDENCE
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Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research
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- Academic Assessment Form** (for trainees, [Appendix 3](#))
- Letter of Support** (for early career investigators)

Allowable Costs

Grant funds must contribute towards the direct costs of the research for which the funds were awarded, and the benefits should be directly attributable to the grant. The host institution of the successful applicant is responsible for paying any indirect or overhead costs associated with managing the research project funded by the SPOR Evidence Alliance.

Examples of ineligible costs include but are not limited to: salaries for staff who provide administrative support only, training costs for workplace health and safety, costs related to the maintenance of libraries and laboratories, and administrative costs associated with getting a patent for an invention. For a complete list and description of eligible expenses under this grant, please consult the [Tri-Agency Financial Administration Guide](#).

Eligible expenses can include, but are not limited to the following:

- Payment for research staff (e.g., research assistant)
- Technical services, such as transcription, language translation
- Materials and supplies (e.g., copying, mailing, software/tools)
- Travel related to conducting (including meetings with decision makers/policy makers if project relevant) and/or disseminating research
- Costs related to community mobilization and engagement, including culturally relevant promotional items such as tobacco, cloth, and cash reimbursements (in a method acceptable to the individual or community being reimbursed) to compensate community participation
- Contracts and/or consultant fees for knowledge translation and communication activities

Specifications

- In order to ensure fairness in the evaluation of grant applications, equivalent time must be guaranteed for each reviewer to assess each application. As a result, **the Evidence Alliance will not accept any updates to applications after the application deadline**
- Applications will be accepted from **August 4 (12:00PM EDT) – October 4 (11:59PM EDT)**

*** Failure to comply with the above requirements will negatively impact the evaluation/rating of the applications and can lead to their withdrawal from the Seed Grant competition. ***

For Inquiries

For all inquiries, please contact the Evidence Alliance at SPOREA@smh.ca.

APPENDIX 1: Evaluation Worksheet – Researcher Reviewer³

REVIEWER NAME:

APPLICANT NAME:

APPLICANT CAREER LEVEL:

Doctoral Student Post-doctoral Fellow Early Career Investigator

Evaluation Checkpoint	Evaluation Guideline(s) for the Checkpoint	Reviewer Score out of 4.9 ⁴ <i>(to one decimal place)</i>	Reviewer Comments <i>(clearly highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the project based on the evaluation criteria)</i> <i>NOTE: Strengths and weaknesses listed here will be shared with other peer reviewers and the applicant</i>
CONCEPT – Relevance of the Research (5%)			
<i>Is the project idea relevant to guideline development in patient-oriented research setting?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The project idea is unique and will add new knowledge to the science of guideline development in patient-oriented research setting.</i> <i>The project aims to engage and improve health outcomes for Black, Indigenous, and socioeconomically disadvantaged populations.</i> 		
CONCEPT – Significance and Impact of the Research (20%)			
<i>Is the project idea creative?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The project idea is among the best formulated ideas in its field, stemming from new, incremental, innovative, or high-risk lines of inquiry; new or adapted research in basic science, or health care, or health systems or health outcomes. When applicable, knowledge translation/commercialization approaches/methodologies should be considered, as well as opportunities to apply research findings nationally and internationally.</i> 		
<i>Is the rationale of the project idea sound?</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The project rationale is based on a logical integration of concepts.</i> 		
<i>Are the overall goals and</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The overall goal and objectives of the project are well-defined and clear.</i> 		

³ Adapted from CIHR Peer Reviewer Manual – Project. Accessed May 19th, 2020 from <https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/49564.html#4.2.1>

⁴ Grading Criteria

4.5-4.9	Outstanding	The application excels in most or all relevant aspects. Any short-comings are minimal.
4.0-4.4	Excellent	The application excels in many relevant aspects, and reasonably addresses all others. Certain improvements are possible.
3.5-3.9	Good	The application excels in some relevant aspects, and reasonably addresses all others. Some improvements are necessary.
3.0-3.4	Fair	The application broadly addresses relevant aspects. Major revisions are required.
0.0-2.9	Poor	The application fails to provide convincing information and/or has serious inherent flaws or gaps.

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<p><i>objectives of the project well-defined?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>The goal states the purpose of the project, and what the project is ultimately expected to achieve.</i> ○ <i>The objectives clearly define the proposed lines of inquiry and/or activities required to meet the goal.</i> ○ <i>The proposed project outputs (i.e., the anticipated results of the project) are clearly described and aligned to the objectives.</i> 		
<p><i>Are the anticipated project contributions likely to advance basic health-related knowledge, or health care, or health systems or health outcomes?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>The context and needs (issues and/or gaps) of the project are clearly described.</i> ○ <i>The anticipated contribution(s) (e.g., publishing in peer-reviewed journals) are clearly described, and should be substantive and relevant in relation to the context of the issues or gaps.</i> ○ <i>The anticipated contribution(s) are realistic (i.e., directly stemming from the project outputs, as opposed to marginally related).</i> 		

FEASIBILITY – Approaches and Methods (50%)

<p><i>Are the approaches and methods appropriate to deliver the proposed output(s) and achieve the proposed contribution(s) to advancing health-related knowledge, health care, health systems, and/or health outcomes?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>The research and/or knowledge translation/commercialization approaches, methods and/or strategies are well-defined and justified in terms of being appropriate to accomplish the objectives of the project.</i> ○ <i>Opportunities to maximize project contributions to advance health-related knowledge, health care, health systems and/or health outcomes should be proactively sought and planned for, but may also arise unexpectedly.</i> 		
<p><i>Does the proposal describe how patient partners and other decision-makers will be engaged in the research process?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Proposal should outline a clear plan for stakeholder engagement (including patients) in the research process.</i> 		
<p><i>Are the timelines and related deliverables of the project realistic?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Timelines for the project should be appropriate in relation to the proposed project activities. Key milestones and deliverables should be aligned with the objectives of the project, and be feasible given the duration of the project.</i> 		
<p><i>Does the proposal identify potential challenges and appropriate mitigation strategies?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>Critical scientific, technical, or organizational challenges should be identified, and a realistic plan to tackle these potential risks should be described. An exhaustive list is not expected.</i> 		

FEASIBILITY – Expertise, Experiences, and Resources (25%)

<p><i>Does the applicant bring the appropriate</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>The applicant should demonstrate expertise and experience needed to execute the project (i.e., deliver</i> 		
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<p><i>expertise and experience to lead and deliver the proposed output(s), and to achieve the proposed contribution(s)?</i></p>	<p><i>the proposed outputs as well as achieve the proposed contribution(s).</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>The role and responsibility of the applicant should be clearly described, and linked to the objectives of the project.</i> 		
<p><i>Is there an appropriate level of engagement and/or commitment from the applicant?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>The level of engagement (e.g., time and other commitments) of each applicant should be appropriate to the roles and responsibilities described.</i> 		
<p><i>Is the environment (academic institution and/or other organization) appropriate to enable the conduct and success of the project?</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>The project applicant should have access to the appropriate infrastructure, facilities, support personnel, equipment, and/or supplies to: (1) carry out their role, and; (2) manage and deliver the proposed output(s), and achieve the proposed contribution(s)</i> 		
<p>Overall Score (please weight score according to section)</p>			
<p>Based on your overall assessment, would you rate this application as competitive? (Competitive applications will be considered for funding)</p>	<p>Yes, this application is competitive (top 50%) and should be considered for funding.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p>No, this application is not competitive (bottom 50%) and should NOT be considered for funding.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></p>	

Overall Score (office use only) ___ OUT OF 4.9



APPENDIX 2: Evaluation Worksheet – Patient Reviewer

REVIEWER NAME: Click to enter your name.	APPLICANT NAME: Click to enter the applicant's name.
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Please review your assigned applicant's research proposal carefully and complete the questionnaire below. Feel free to add comments to elaborate on your assessment as needed.

Research Impact and Relevance ⁵	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	Outstanding	Reviewer Comments
1. The proposal includes a clear description of the research being conducted.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
2. The proposal includes a clear rationale for why this research is important.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
3. The proposal includes a clear description of what new information this research will add to patient-engagement in research.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
4. The researcher has a plan to meaningfully engage patient partners and other decision-makers in the research conduct.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
5. In my opinion, the results of this research will make a real difference in how meaningfully patients are engaged in the research process.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Overall Score (office use only) ___ OUT OF 4.9

⁵ Grading Criteria

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APPENDIX 3: ACADEMIC REFERENCE FORM

Section A (to be completed by the Applicant)
Name:
Contact Address:
Email Address:
Section B (to be completed by the Academic Referee)
Title and Name of Referee:
Contact Address:
Email Address:
<i>Select as appropriate</i>
What is your relationship with the Applicant? <input type="checkbox"/> Academic Supervisor <input type="checkbox"/> Practicum Supervisor <input type="checkbox"/> Other
How well do you know the Applicant? <input type="checkbox"/> Very well <input type="checkbox"/> Reasonably well <input type="checkbox"/> Not very well
How long have you known the Applicant? <input type="checkbox"/> More than 3 years <input type="checkbox"/> between 2 and 3 years <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 1 year

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Evaluation of Applicant – in comparison with similar candidates with whom you have interacted.

Tick (✓) as appropriate

	Excellent (Top 5%)	Very Good (Top 10%)	Good (Top 30%)	Average (Top 40%)	Poor (Less than 60%)	Brief Justification
Intellectual Ability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Research Capability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Analytical Capability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Research Motivation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Originality and Innovation	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Teamwork and Collaboration Capability	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ambition	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sense of Responsibility	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Written/Oral Communication	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ability to Complete Projects on Time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Statement on the Applicant's research potential with specific reference to recent knowledge of the Applicant's work and any specific support the Applicant may require (maximum 2 pages):

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Signed:

Date: Click or tap to enter a date.