SMART Network Innovation Fund

Competition Guidelines

(September 2019)

Overview

The SMART Network secured funding from the Government of Alberta in April 2019, including an Innovation Fund focused on supporting interdisciplinary, innovative projects that shall facilitate one or more of the following:

1) establishing proof-of-concept of a novel idea
2) collecting preliminary data for a novel approach in preparation for submission to a national or international funding agency
3) collaborating with the health sector on translating a lab finding to the clinic
4) collaborating with industry on translating an invention into a commercial product

The available funding from the SMART Network is $100,000 per year for 3 years, pending continued support by the Department of Economic Development, Trade and Tourism. The size of the fund is further increased by the contribution of collaborating faculties, institutes and private industry.

The fund is dedicated to supporting the salaries of research assistants who are co-mentored by at least two professors or experts from different disciplines and/or sectors. The fund will support up to 5 or 6 projects per year.

Successful post-doctoral research assistants will be granted $40,000 over 12 months, and each co-mentor is expected to commit to supplementing the salary by contributing $5,000 each.

Successful graduate research assistants will be granted $20,000 over 12 months, and each co-mentor is expected to commit to supplementing the salary by contributing $2,500 each.

The disbursement of funds will be based on a competitive review by an adjudication committee of the submitted applications.

The duration of each award is one year.

Applications will be reviewed on a monthly basis each year, commencing in or before September, and continuing until the funds are committed.
Evaluation Criteria

- **The Project (1 page)**
  - Clarity of Project description
  - The scientific basis and novelty of the interdisciplinary approach

- **Translational Path of the Project (0.5 page)**
  - The immediate, i.e., short-term, plan for the project past the year of support
  - The translational path of the project should the work be successful
  - The long-term impact of the project on health/society

- **Suitability of the Applicant for the Project (0.5 page)**
  - The applicant’s background and preparedness
  - The applicant’s academic and research record
  - The applicant’s transcripts and CV (as attachments)

- **The Mentoring Plan (0.5 page):**
  - The interdisciplinary nature of the mentoring plan
  - The commitment of the co-mentors to contributing to the applicant’s stipend
  - Letters of commitment of the co-mentors should also be included (as attachments)