

[revised Dec. 16, 2020]

Child Health and Wellness Grand Challenge Catalyst Awards

Overview

With generous support from the UCalgary VPR office and the Alberta Children’s Hospital Foundation (ACHF), catalyst funding will be available to the Child Health and Wellness Research community in an open competition. Four awards valued at up to \$50K each (“Seedling Awards”) and six awards valued at up to \$200K each (“Branch Awards”) will be available for multidisciplinary teams to address CHW Grand Challenges.

These **Grand Challenge Catalyst Awards** are designed to initiate and catalyze research teams to increase competitiveness for larger scale external funding opportunities. Grand Challenge research teams are expected to address one or more of the identified grand challenge areas (*orange boxes in figure below*) and/or overarching approaches to solving these grand challenges in Child Health and Wellness (*blue bars in figure below*).

We anticipate that Grand Challenge Catalyst Awards will, as a whole¹: (i) support child health and wellness researchers looking to launch a new area of research with potential for high reward; (ii) provide opportunities for early career researchers to gain experience on a multidisciplinary team; (iii) promote involvement and development of trainees; (iv) build and strengthen collaborations between researchers and community organizations.



¹ Catalyst proposals are not required to address all four areas

Timeline and Process

Grand Challenge Catalyst Awards will be awarded in two rounds of competitions throughout 2021. Each award will span up to a 24-month period. The first round of applications is due February 10, 2021. The second round of applications is due August 1, 2021. Each round of competition will be advertised through VPR communication channels and through existing ACHRI communication channels, at least six weeks in advance of the application deadline.

An application template is available, with up to four pages allowed for the written research proposal for “Seedling Awards” and up to five pages allowed for the “Branch Awards”. Figures and tables are included in the page limit, but references and other relevant supplemental content may be in addition to the specified page limits.

Criteria

- The Grand Challenge Catalyst Awards are aimed at initiating and catalyzing research teams to increase competitiveness for larger scale external funding opportunities that will contribute to solving the grand challenge.
- A minimum of five independent researchers (for Branch Awards) and 3 independent researchers (for Seedling Awards) from more than one discipline should be included on the team²
 - Proposals should include a review of available expertise to carry out the proposed solution and outline contributions of each team member
 - Involvement of early career researchers is encouraged
 - Collaboration with community partners is encouraged
 - Collaboration with national and international researchers and child health and wellness experts is welcomed
 - A researcher can only be listed as Nominated Principal Investigator or Principal Investigator on one Grand Challenge Catalyst Award application in each category (“Seedling” or “Branch”) and in any given round of applications
- Funds will be held by the Nominated Principal Investigator, who must be a UCalgary faculty member with an active engagement in one of the Child Health and Wellness research priorities.
 - Transfer of a proportion of funds for use outside of UCalgary is allowed, with justification provided
 - Team members (both internal and external to UCalgary) may provide matching fund contributions (cash or in-kind) to increase the value of the award
- Funds may be used for:
 - Key preliminary data generation: e.g., pilot lab tests and experiments, access to key data sources, survey development and generation, evidence review
 - Capacity building: e.g., trainees and highly qualified research personnel to obtain preliminary data or develop research tools
 - Team coordination and development: e.g., personnel to bring researchers and stakeholders together and synthesize information
 - Creation of EDI-focused career advancement or leadership opportunities for child health and wellness researchers, trainees, care providers, and other stakeholders
 - Education and training: e.g., workshops and courses for new investigators, trainees, staff, and other stakeholders
 - Team grant and program development: e.g., working group sessions and writing support

² Team members will be listed as one of the following: Nominated Principal Investigator (only one), Co-Principal Investigator, Co-Investigator, or Collaborator; ACHRI program directors may be involved in any capacity

[revised Dec. 16, 2020]

- Developing partnership with other strategies, including UCalgary's Indigenous Strategy: e.g., consultation and use of resources developed and managed through other strategies
- Fostering community partnerships: e.g., knowledge translation and exchange, compensation for front-line service provider and agency time

Expected Outcomes

The primary outcome of catalyst awards will be a program proposal that is ready for submission to relevant team grant funding opportunities through local, provincial, national, or international funding agencies and partners.

Over the long-term, Grand Challenge research teams will be evaluated for:

- Success in obtaining external funding
- Success of team trainees at all levels
- Peer-reviewed publication of results
- Policy and practice changes, if applicable
- Scale and scope of dissemination and implementation (*e.g.* presentation of results at national and international meetings; uptake of new care pathways, guidelines, tests, and/or novel interventions in the healthcare system; implementation of a novel screening tool or program in the education system or a community setting)
- Career awards and recognition of grand challenge team members
- Public awareness of research conducted through the grand challenge teams (*e.g.* public events, media and social media dissemination)
- Commercialization activity related to outputs from the grand challenge catalyst awards
- Any other measures that demonstrate return on investment (including social return on investment)

Frequently Asked Questions:

1. *What about community agencies? How can they be involved in a Catalyst Award?*

Community agencies and organizations are welcome to join Grand Challenge teams as either Co-Investigators or Collaborators. Principal Investigators on the application must be UCalgary faculty members. Community agencies are invited to reach out to researchers directly, through existing relationships or through contact information listed on UCalgary webpages. For agencies looking to contribute to a specific grand challenge who do not have an existing relationship with a researcher, please reach out to ACHRI staff directly (r4k@ucalgary.ca); we will endeavour to connect agencies with potential research partners.

2. *How much funding can be used outside UCalgary?*

Typically, we expect the majority of catalyst award funding to be used at UCalgary. However, there may be situations in which a major component of the proposed work involves community partnership or external collaboration. Therefore, we are not setting an absolute limit on the proportion of funds that may be used outside UCalgary. Use of funds externally will be evaluated within the context of the proposal.

3. *What if I'm a UCalgary faculty member who is not an ACHRI member? Can I still apply for these awards?*

Yes, you can still apply for any type of Grand Challenge Catalyst Award. If your application is successful, we will also invite you to join the Child Health and Wellness research community by becoming an ACHRI member.

4. *Can I re-purpose a grant that I recently submitted to a tri-council agency to submit as a Grand Challenge Catalyst Award?*

No. These awards are intended to kick-start new teams and new ideas. While other funding sources can be leveraged for this work, the idea itself would not necessarily be competitive for tri-council in its current stage of readiness. If you have a proposal that is suitable for submission to a tri-council funding competition, ACHRI has research support services available to Child Health and Wellness Researchers (visit <https://research4kids.ucalgary.ca/> or contact r4k@ucalgary.ca for more details).

5. *I'm proposing a new collaboration and new idea that is multidisciplinary, but there are less than five team members on our Grand Challenge Catalyst Award application. Can we still apply?*

A minimum of five team members are required for the Branch Awards, whereas a minimum of three team members are required for the Seedling Awards. Applications with less than three team members will not be considered for funding in either case.

6. *What is the difference between NPIs, Co-PIs, Co-Is, and Collaborators and who is eligible to apply in these roles?*

The Nominated Principal Investigator (NPI) is responsible for the direction of the project and the coordination of proposed activities, in conjunction with the co-principal investigators (if applicable). The NPI also assumes the administrative and financial responsibility for the award.

Co-principal Investigators (Co-PIs) and Co-Investigators (Co-Is) share responsibility with the NPI for the direction of the proposed activities and may have access to award funds. The only difference between a Co-PI and Co-I is their role: co-principal investigators work with the NPI to direct the project in addition to contributing to its execution, while co-investigators contribute to the execution of the project. Team members can be practitioners, policy-makers, educators, decision-makers, health care administrators, Indigenous elders and knowledge keepers, patients, community leaders, individuals working for a community organization, and a range of other individuals. To be eligible as a Nominated or Co-Principal Investigator, researchers must be considered independent researchers*. Postdoctoral fellows, clinical

[revised Dec. 16, 2020]

fellows, research associates, and those in similar positions, are not eligible to apply as NPIs or Co-PIs. **Postdoctoral fellows, clinical fellows, research associates, and those in similar positions, may apply as Co-PIs**.**

Collaborators contribute to the execution of research activities but do not have direct access to grant funds. Collaborators do not need to be affiliated with a Canadian academic institution; they may be affiliated with another Canadian or international organization. Any individual who will contribute to the project is eligible to be a collaborator. Collaborators may include individuals affiliated with a federal, provincial, territorial or municipal government department or a for-profit company. **Students, postdoctoral fellows, clinical fellows, research associates and those in similar positions are eligible to participate as a collaborator**.**

*An independent researcher is an individual who:

- engages in research-related activities that are not under the direction of another individual; and
- has an academic or research appointment that:
 - is in effect by the start date of the award;
 - allows the individual to pursue the proposed research project, to engage in independent research activities for the entire duration of the funding, to supervise trainees (if applicable) and to publish the research results; and
 - obliges the individual to comply with institutional policies concerning the conduct of research, the supervision of trainees (if applicable) and the employment conditions of staff paid with award funding³

****All trainees listed on a Grand Challenge Catalyst Award application must also provide a letter from their research supervisor (or clinical program director) that outlines the supervisor's support of the trainee to apply in the role specified on the application.**

7. *How will the Grand Challenge Catalyst Awards be reviewed?*

ACHRI staff will coordinate the review process and conduct an initial administrative review. Award applications will then be evaluated by reviewers with a broad range of expertise. Reviewers from across the UCalgary campus will be chosen who are not perceived to have any conflict of interest with any of the team members listed on the application. If warranted, one or more reviewer will be sought from outside UCalgary. Each reviewer will review up to six applications.

8. *How many awards will be available in each round?*

Two awards of up to \$50,000 (“Seedling Awards”) and three awards of up to \$200,000 (“Branch Awards”) will be offered each round.

9. *When will funds be made available to successful applicants?*

Our goal is to have funds available for use as soon as possible following award notification.

10. *How should these awards be acknowledged in presentations and in print?*

Award acknowledgement depends on the source of the award. The \$50,000 “Seedling Awards” in both rounds of competition come from the **UCalgary VPR Fund**. The \$200,000 “Branch Awards” in the first round of competition come from separate endowed sources generously provided by the Alberta Children’s Hospital Foundation, namely the **Research Excellence Award** and the **BMO Research Award in Healthy Living**. The \$200,000 “Branch Awards” available for the second round of competition come from the

³ The definition of team member roles and independent researchers was adapted from the [New Frontiers in Research Fund competition](#) (definitions are similar between the Exploration and Transformation stream).

[revised Dec. 16, 2020]

UCalgary VPR Fund. Successful applicants will be notified of the source of award funding and acknowledgement guidelines.

11. *The Alberta Children's Hospital Foundation (ACHF) has funded Child Health research in the past. Will they be involved in funding any of these initiatives?*

ACHF will continue to partner with ACHRI and the CHW Research Priority to support Grand Challenge research programs that align with fund-raising priorities and have a high potential for return on investment. ACHF has already contributed existing research grants to the first round of "Branch Awards" (see answer to question 10 above). Successful catalyst award applications will be shared with ACHF to gauge suitability for development into larger scale Child Health Grant Program proposals. Larger scale proposals must undergo scientific review, facilitated by ACHRI, prior to submission to ACHF, who review proposals on a rolling schedule.

12. *Will the research team need to provide a report at the end of the award?*

Final reports will be required for all awards, reflecting the expected outcomes and metrics provided in the award application.