Health Outcomes Theme Collaborative Research Initiative Grants

BACKGROUND
The Alberta Children’s Hospital Research Institute (ACHRI) recognizes the tremendous health research capacity of our members that is founded in the ingenuity and dedication of individual researchers, clinicians and entrepreneurs. Building on this foundation of great ideas, the ACHRI Healthy Outcome (HO) theme is offering a Collaborative Research Initiative Grant (CRIG) to provide seed money to support collaborative, interdisciplinary and innovative research projects that represent the first steps toward pursuit of more comprehensive and competitive funding. Funding provided by HO CRIG is intended to foster creativity, novelty and innovation in research that has potential to benefit the health of children and families and strengthen future funding applications.

OBJECTIVES
- To support innovative research including:
  - The development of novel research questions;
  - The use or development of novel approaches or methodologies, including integrated knowledge translation methodologies; and
  - The application of existing methods or concepts to novel research questions, in new ways or in new settings.
- To support scalable research projects, such as pilot, feasibility or translational studies that position teams for success in applications for larger, more substantial external funding sources (e.g., AIHS, Tri-Council) within two years following the initiation of CRIG funding.
- To support research with potential to benefit the health of children and families.

SCOPE
Research supported must be in a field of human maternal or pediatric health research, defined broadly as encompassing biomedical science, clinical research, population health, and health services and systems research.

VALUE
Up to $25,000 is available per research project. Amount of funding is dependent on the scope of activity; alignment with the HO theme’s mandate, funding received from other sources, number of applications received, and anticipated impact of proposed activity. Funding is non-renewable.

DURATION
The grant provided by CRIG is for a maximum of 24 months and any unused funds will be returned at the end of the project.
AVAILABLE FUNDING
$50,000 allocated for this competition, which is enough to fund at least two grants.

IMPORTANT DATES
Competition Launch: September 3, 2019
Registration Deadline: November 1, 2019 (5:00 p.m. MST)
Full Application Deadline: December 17, 2019 (5:00 p.m. MST)
Funding Decisions: February 7, 2020
Funding Start Date: February 7, 2020

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS
Team Membership
The nominated principal applicant must be a full or associate member of ACHRI’s HO theme and meet the requirements for a principal applicant as outlined below. Inclusion of additional ACHRI members on the research team is encouraged, but not required. There is no maximum number of investigators; however, all team members should have a clear role and bring expertise to the proposed project. This program is open to new and established investigators as well as new and established collaborations. Where possible, applicants are encouraged to have both early career and established investigators on the team for the purpose of mentorship and capacity building. In particular, novice and early career researchers are encouraged to have experienced team co-leads. You will be asked declare overlapping funding in the budget.

Multiple Applications
Individuals can submit only one application per competition as a principal applicant. However, there is no limit to the number of additional applications where an individual can be included as a co-investigator.

Renewal
Funding is non-renewable. Projects previously funded through this program are not eligible to apply for further funding. If new research questions emerge as a result of work completed from a funded CRIG grant, these may be considered new applications.

Role Definitions
- Nominated Principal Applicant (NPA): The team member who will be responsible for the direction of the proposed activities assumes the administrative responsibility for the grant and receives all related correspondence from the HO theme. The NPA must be an independent researcher; able to hold peer-reviewed funds (according to U of C policies); and a member of the HO theme.
- Co-Principal Applicant (co-PA): A team member who makes a significant contribution to the intellectual or scientific direction of the proposed work and shares responsibility for the direction of the proposed activities at a level similar to that of the NPA, but who is not the designated project manager. Knowledge users may be co-principal applicants. Trainees with expertise to contribute to the research may be included as co-principal applicants provided they are not compensated from grant funds.
- Co-Applicants (co-A): A team member who makes a significant contribution to the intellectual or scientific direction of the proposed work and shares responsibility for the
direction of the proposed activities. Knowledge users may be co-applicants. Trainees with expertise to contribute to the research may be included as co-applicants provided they are not compensated from grant funds.

- **Collaborators:** Individuals whose role in the proposed activities is to provide a specific service (e.g. access to equipment, training in a specialized technique, access to a patient population, statistical analysis, etc.) to facilitate the proposed work and/or who is a knowledge-user who is likely to be able to use the knowledge generated through this and future research, but whose level of engagement in the research process is limited to a defined role. Collaborators must provide a letter of support outlining their contribution and/or support for the research. Collaborators are not considered co-applicants.

- **Knowledge Users:** A knowledge user is a person who is interested in the applications of the knowledge generated and who does not hold a position with research responsibilities. For example, a knowledge user may be a practitioner, patient, health system manager, policy maker, educator, decision-maker, health care administrator, community partner, or an individual in a health charity, patient group or private sector organization. Knowledge users can be team members or collaborators, depending on their level of engagement in the proposed project.

**Budget**

Allowable expenses for the request from CRIG are those necessary to carry out the proposed activities and not provided through other means. Budgets are reviewed carefully and should include only those expenses allowed and necessary for the proposed research. If available, please include in-kind and other sources of funding in the proposed budget and justification. Please also clearly identify any funding overlap with existing funds held.

CRIG only funds the research and closely related components of projects. CRIG does not pay for overhead or administration of research funding and does not fund health care service programs. Funds may not be transferred to other institutions and may not support trainees or research staff based outside of the University of Calgary. All purchases, reimbursements for services, travel costs and personnel support must follow guidelines and rates set by the University of Calgary and must be undertaken according to the University of Calgary standard procedures.

Release time allowance may be requested to facilitate the participation of a knowledge-user in the proposed research (See Role Definitions). Funds for research time allowance must be requested and justified in the budget section of the grant application and supported by a letter from the relevant employer confirming support for the hours allocated. Release time allowance cannot be used for clinicians and anyone with research responsibilities as a component of their job.

Honoraria for patients and families participating in research should follow guidelines set by the University of Calgary.

Equipment purchase is not an allowable expense for this grant.
REGISTRATION
All applicants who are considering applying to this competition must register their intent to apply by emailing Jill Vaughan (Jill.Vaughan@albertahealthservices.ca) with the name of the NPA and a project title by the stated deadline. Applications will not be reviewed for teams that do not register by the stated deadline.

APPLICATIONS
The full application must be completed and submitted electronically as a single PDF to Jill Vaughan (Jill.Vaughan@albertahealthservices.ca). Application files should be named NPA’s Last Name CRIG Application. It is the NPA’s responsibility to ensure all information is complete and properly formatted, and all supporting letters and CVs are included before the deadline. Applications received in any other format, exceeding page limits or submitted incomplete, will be declared ineligible and will not be reviewed. Material extraneous to that requested in the application will be removed before the application is sent for review. Late applications will not be accepted. The HO theme assumes no responsibility to notify applicants or follow-up with respect to particulars of incomplete or non-compliant applications.

PEER REVIEW PROCESS
Applications are evaluated in a competitive, peer-review process. Applications are assigned to a multidisciplinary committee whose members are selected by the HO theme’s leadership committee.

Review Criteria
- **Innovation (20%)**
  - Degree to which research is original, unique and creative
  - Research addresses an important problem in a new way by: investigating novel ideas, questions, approaches or methods; developing novel approaches that may be adopted for future use; applying existing concepts, approaches or methods in new ways or in new settings
  - Innovation demonstrated beyond an incremental advance upon published data or existing knowledge; refinement of concepts, approaches, methods, tools or interventions
- **Collaboration and Expertise (20%)**
  - Team members bring complementary and interdisciplinary knowledge, experience and expertise to benefit the research question(s)
  - Collective expertise is present to address question(s) and carry out activities
  - Roles and responsibilities of team members are clear and engagement is evident
  - Experience and track record of the team members are strong relative to career stage, including research productivity and impact
- **Development and Impact (20%)**
  - Importance and expected contributions of the research are evident
  - Knowledge gained will be useful in addressing health issues relevant to children and families
  - Plans for sharing knowledge gained with stakeholders and/or target audiences outside the academic community (if appropriate) are meaningful and well-described
The proposed research will strengthen future funding request(s)
Research team is likely to succeed in developing future funding request(s)
Potential for future impact to health of children and families is well-described, including as appropriate: building capacity for addressing issues relevant to children; advancing knowledge and contributing to our understanding of important health issues; informing decision-making; and leading to health, social and/or economic impacts

- **Quality of Methods and Feasibility (40%)**
  - Appropriate background information and convincing rationale provided
  - Clarity of objectives, goals and target audiences
  - Quality and appropriateness of methods, including plans to address potential difficulties
  - Clarity and reasonableness of project timelines
  - Plans to pursue more comprehensive funding are appropriate and feasible
  - Research environment is supportive
  - Appropriateness and justification of the budget for the proposed activities
  - Overall readability

**Funding Recommendations**
Funding will be allocated by score from highest to lowest until funds for this competition are exhausted. To ensure applicants have sufficient resources to complete their proposed plans, funding will only be provided to fund whole grants as recommended by the review committee. Committee recommendations are considered final; there is no appeal process.

**Accountability**
Successful applicants will be required to present their findings at the Child Health Research Rounds upon the completion of the funding period.

**Acknowledgment & Reporting**
Successful applicants must acknowledge ACHRI and the HO theme support verbally, on print and digital material and in any media work.

**APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS**
**Application Format**
A single PDF should be sent to Jill Vaughan (Jill.Vaughan@albertahealthservices.ca) and it must adhere to the following format:
- File format: PDF only
- Page Size: 8.5" x 11"
- Margins: 2 cm
- Font: Times New Roman Size 12
- Line Spacing: Single-spaced
- Header: NPA’s last name and label of attachment (e.g. research proposal)
- Footer: Page X of X for the particular attachment
- File Name: NPA’s last name CRIG Application
Application Content

- Cover Page (1 page maximum)
  - Title
  - Total amount requested
  - Names of NPA and all other team members

- Research Proposal (2 pages maximum)
  - Provide a clear and concise description of the proposed research project, demonstrating how it is innovative, important and feasible. Include the following elements:
    - Project goals and objectives
    - Current state of knowledge and rationale for proposed research, including how the project relates to previous work done in this area
    - Describe the relevance of this research question to the health of children and families
    - Methodological approach, including study design, analysis plan, etc.
    - Plans to address potential pitfalls or difficulties
    - Identify target audiences and plans for knowledge translation, as appropriate
  - NOTE: Figures, diagrams, illustrations, etc. required to describe the proposed project must be included within the two-page limit. References can be included on additional pages. There is no limit to the number of references cited.

- Timelines (1 page maximum)
  - Provide a clear, visual timeline indicating project start and end dates, various steps and stages, details on activities including team members responsible, and identify milestones/indicators of success. Timelines may be up to a maximum of 24 months. Please note that the feasibility of the proposed timeline will be evaluated by the review committee.

- Development and Impact (1 page maximum)
  - Describe how this project represents the first steps toward pursuit of more comprehensive funding within two years
  - Address how the current proposal will strengthen the team’s potential for obtaining future funding
  - Describe how the team’s research would evolve in the future if long-term funding is secured
  - Outline the steps that will be taken to develop future funding application(s)
  - Identify at least one potential source of funding for future research

- Team Composition (1 page maximum)
  - Describe the project team, highlight team members' roles and time commitment. Demonstrate the team's ability to successfully conduct the proposed research. Describe roles and responsibilities of trainees involved in the research, identifying specific individuals where relevant.

- Applicant CVs and Letters of Collaboration
  - All principal and co-applicants must provide a CIHR Biosketch CV.
  - Collaborators/knowledge users must include a letter of collaboration.

- Budget Justification (2 pages maximum)
The budget should reflect the plans outlined in the project description. Contributions from other funding sources and in-kind contributions required to complete the work described in the application should be outlined in the budget justification section. If any proposed research activities are dependent on other sources of funding not yet secured, this contingency should be clearly identified and its impact on the execution of the research addressed.

Items to be included in the budget justification include:

- **Personnel Costs (Salaries and Benefits):** Include details of hourly wage, work hours per week and number of weeks to work for each personnel position listed. You should identify the role (i.e. Research Assistant, Technician, Other) and whether they are a trainee and at what level (i.e. undergraduate, master’s, PhD, postdoctoral).
- **Professional/Technical Services Contracts:** Provide details of any contracts or arrangements that have been made.
- **Materials and Supplies:** Price estimates, including applicable taxes and other costs that are part of the purchase must be detailed in the justification.
- **Research Field Travel:** Include travel costs related to the work on the project (i.e. travel to conduct focus groups, team meetings etc.).
- **Meetings and Honoraria:** Include honoraria, meeting room rental fees, hospitality costs, etc. for data collection and outreach activities.
- **Knowledge Translation:** Include costs related to knowledge sharing activities within and beyond the academic community. Include travel related to knowledge translation (e.g. conferences, community forums to present results), preparation of research knowledge to share with stakeholders/target audiences, or hospitality costs to bring together stakeholders/target audiences.
- **Other:** Provide relevant details related to any items listed under this budget item.

**General Conditions of Funding**

- No extensions will be granted without a written explanation of extenuating circumstances, submitted at least 90 days prior to expiry of the award, for consideration by the Healthy Outcome Theme Lead.
- Nominated principal applicants will be required to present their findings at the Child Health Research Rounds within 6 months of the completion of the award period.
- Any unspent funds or ineligible expenses shall be returned at the end of the award term.
- Award recipients must abide by all University of Calgary policies and procedures including, but not limited to, intellectual property, integrity in scholarly activity, and employment of family/relatives.
- Awards may be terminated with or without notice if any conditions are not observed.