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Request for Proposals 2019- 2020 Muscular Dystrophy Canada's Research Grants

RFP Announced:	September 12, 2019
Letter of Intent Deadline:	October 17, 2019 at 11:59 pm (EDT)
Full Application Deadline:	November 28, 2019 at 11:59 pm (EDT)
Notice of Decision:	early March, 2020
Funding Start Date:	March 2020

For more information, contact:

Muscular Dystrophy Canada Grant Administration

Email: research@muscule.ca

Visit: <http://muscule.ca/researchers/funding-guideline-deadlines/>

Summary

Muscular Dystrophy Canada (MDC) is a national, non-profit organization whose mission is to enhance the lives of those impacted with neuromuscular disorders by continually working to provide ongoing support and resources while relentlessly searching for a cure through well-funded research. Muscular Dystrophy Canada works to meet the needs of individuals affected by Neuromuscular Disorders (NMD) today through our personal empowerment program which assists in funding personal assistive equipment, system navigation and education. We also invest in tomorrow by funding research which fosters advances in treatments, cures and health policy as well as increasing public awareness of NMD and advocating to government and stakeholders on behalf of those affected by NMD.

The intent of this request is to solicit research proposals related to NMDs which fall under MDC's umbrella. These disorders include: Muscular dystrophies; Congenital muscular dystrophies; Congenital myopathies; Myotonic Syndromes; Ion channel muscle diseases; Metabolic myopathies; Congenital myasthenic syndrome; SMA & Motor neuron diseases; Hereditary ataxias; Hereditary motor and sensory neuropathies; Neuropathy (Immune-mediated), Mitochondrial disease (muscle / nerve predominant).

Projects should be carried out within a maximum two-year period, beginning March 2020.

Project budget should not exceed a total of \$100,000 for two years and is limited to \$50,000 per year.



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Grant Guidelines

Objectives

The primary objective of this RFP is to solicit research proposals under the two categories outlined below that will have an impact on a single Neuromuscular Disorder (NMD) or with cross-cutting impact across different types of NMDs covered under Muscular Dystrophy Canada's umbrella.

Applicants may apply for one of the following two categories: Please select the category where your proposal would align best.

Translational Science Seed Grants

Research under this theme will translate knowledge from basic biology to discovering and developing potential therapeutic interventions in pre-clinical settings as well as improving molecular diagnostic tools. The aim of these grants will be to obtain results that will be leveraged by the researcher to apply for larger grants outside of MDC.

These grants should include:

- description of how this research will impact patient lives; or how the project fulfills unmet need in the specific research area;
- collaboration between researchers, clinicians and knowledge-users;
- a plan to collect preliminary data to lay the foundation for a larger study.

Clinical Health Management Grants

Research under this theme will seek to improve or inform clinical health management and policy including decreasing secondary health conditions, improving quality of life and developing standards of care. This may include novel research that focuses on evaluating potential therapeutic interventions like physical agents; medical devices; surgery; pharmaceuticals; biologics in a clinical setting, innovations in transitions of care from pediatric to adult settings.

These grants should include:

- description of how this research will impact patient lives, or how the project fulfills and unmet need in the specific research area;
- collaboration between researchers, clinicians and knowledge-users;
- if study involves healthcare system and services research it must be conducted in Canada or with the inclusion of Canadian healthcare system and be relevant to Canadians affected by NMDs.

NOTE: Proposals for knowledge translation projects must include a clearly-defined assessment component.



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Funds Available

MDC has designated \$600,000 to support research projects from this RFP that receive excellent evaluations through the peer review process. Additional funds are available in disease-specific areas, through designated funds generously provided by donors, which may be accessed to fund relevant meritorious applications. Special consideration will be given to the applications falling in the areas of Myotonic Muscular Dystrophy, Spinal Muscular Atrophy, Polymyositis, Pediatric neuromuscular disorders and transition from pediatric to adult care.

The maximum budget per project is \$100,000 (maximum of \$50,000 per year for two years). For two year projects, the funding for a second year will be contingent on the Year 1 progress report evaluation.

Expenses

Allowable expenses include:

- Salaries for staff engaged with the project, including technicians, research coordinators and qualified trainees (Students and Postdoctoral fellows)
- Costs for data and information collection
- Research reagents, materials, as well as items of equipment
- Communication-related costs (meetings, phone calls)

NOTE: Indirect expenses (i.e. payments towards general institutional overhead) are ineligible and therefore must be excluded from the budget.

Eligibility

The applicant(s) is/are recognized by Muscular Dystrophy Canada as the author(s) of the intellectual content of the application submitted. In the case of multi-authored applications, Muscular Dystrophy Canada will correspond with the first (principal) applicant listed.

Principal applicants must:

- hold an affiliation with a not-for-profit Canadian research institution,
or
- be affiliated with an internationally-recognized academic institution and have a partner applicant who has an affiliation with a not-for-profit Canadian research institution.

Eligible research institutions include those that are accepted under CIHR and NSERC's grant policies. Other institutions, including those outside of Canada, will be considered on an ad hoc basis as part of the peer review process, and may be required to provide additional documentation to support the application.



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Principal applicants may only submit one application per grant call. Principal applicant(s) cannot submit application as the Principal applicant to both the Translational Seed Grant theme and Health Management theme simultaneously. An applicant may be a Principal applicant on one application and a team member on another application.

NOTE: Private corporate entities are not eligible for funding.

Guidelines and Conditions of Funding

- MDC does not provide grant funds directly to the grantee; funds are distributed to the recipient's institution, which will hold the funds and administer a specific account from which the grantee can draw.
- Ethics approval, if required, is the responsibility of the researcher(s) within their affiliated institution(s).
- Copyright and intellectual property will reside with the lead investigator unless otherwise negotiated.
- MDC must be acknowledged as a founder of the project in all communications (including presentations, materials, publications, etc.).
- MDC has the right to publicize the grant, its investigator(s) and affiliate institution(s) in its digital and print communications vehicles, including annual reports, website, and other publications.
- MDC may invite funded researcher(s) to present their work at corporate events/conferences and discuss its relevance to the neuromuscular community.

Grant Reporting

- All reports must use the forms provided on the grant portal and submitted via proposalCENTRAL.
- For two year grants, a year one, one-page progress report will be required by March 1, 2021 before second year funds are released.
- For all grants, (one and two year), the financial and end of grant report must be submitted at the latest 3 months after the grant end date
- For all grants, a follow up research update will be requested 2 years after the end of grant.

Application Deadlines and Procedure

Applicants must complete the online applications available via the proposalCENTRAL website. Applications are not accepted via email or mail.

Review Muscular Dystrophy Canada's 2019-2020 Grant Guidelines

<http://muscle.ca/researchers/funding-guideline-deadlines/> for details on how to submit an application.

Applications must be submitted through a two-stage application process. By the deadline specified, applicants must submit a Letter of Intent to Apply via proposalCENTRAL. The completed Letter of Intent to Apply are used by MDC to identify suitable peer reviewers to review full applications. All Applicants who submit a Letter of Intent to Apply must submit a Full Application by the deadline specified.



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Note: Applicants must submit a Letter of Intent to Apply to be eligible to submit a Full Application. It is the responsibility of applicants to ensure their applications are complete. Incomplete applications will be disqualified from the competition.

Evaluation Process and Criteria

Applications will be awarded through a competitive peer-review process. Proposals will be reviewed by MDC's Medical and Scientific Advisory Committee. Additional external expertise may be sought to enhance the review process (i.e., when gaps in expertise are noted or another opinion is beneficial or there is a conflict of interest). Review panel members will declare any conflict of interest with any application and excuse themselves from its review.

Evaluation criteria include:

- The potential of the proposed approach to achieve its objectives;
- The achievements and track record of the applicant(s);
- The feasibility of the proposed work plan, timelines and budget. Length of project should be between 12-24 months; Conformance with the stated objectives and scope of this RFP; and
- Relevance of the outcomes of the project and relevance to selected Grant Program.

In accordance with Board direction, Muscular Dystrophy Canada's program priorities and budgetary constraints, Muscular Dystrophy Canada, informed by the Medical and Scientific Advisory Committee, considers the ratings and the recommended budgets and announces the final decision. There will be no appeals of these decisions.

For Support

For technical support with the online application, contact proposalCENTRAL:

pcsupport@altum.com

1-800-875-2562 (Toll-free) Weekdays, 8:00 am to 5:00 pm (Eastern)

For program information or application content requirements, contact Muscular Dystrophy Canada:
research@muscle.ca