

# Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC)

This fact sheet is part of a set of eight on *Research Granting Agencies* produced by the Association pour la recherche au collégial. It introduces the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, an agency that supports public research in the area of natural sciences and engineering throughout Canada, and situates it within the overall configuration of agencies that, in Québec and in Canada, support public research in the areas of health, natural sciences and engineering, social sciences, humanities, fine arts and literature, as well as the acquisition or maintenance of the infrastructures needed for conducting such research.

## ARC?

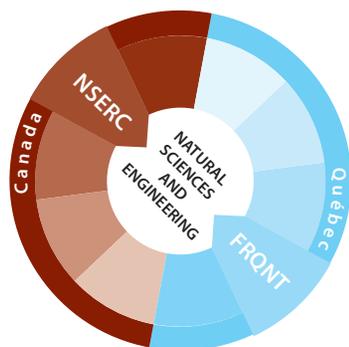
As a professional association, ARC fosters the development of research throughout the college system, in particular through the dissemination of position papers on research issues, the hosting of research-related activities and conferences, the establishment of research support measures, the awarding prizes and, more recently, through meta-research projects.

Any questions?

Contact us!

514 843-8491  
arc@cvm.qc.ca

[www.cvm.qc.ca/arc](http://www.cvm.qc.ca/arc)



# Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC)

NSERC is the national instrument for making strategic investments in Canada's capability in science and technology. NSERC reports to Parliament through the Minister of Industry Canada.

[www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca)  
[Contact](#) Newsletter

The [Impact Stories](#) section of NSERC's website presents NSERC-funded research and the outcomes and impacts of these projects.

## Mandate

NSERC's is to increase Canada's scientific and technological capabilities in order to make it more competitive in the global marketplace and benefit the Canadian economy. This mandate is threefold:

- The advancement of knowledge in natural science and engineering by funding of basic university research through Discovery Grants
- Promotion of innovation through incentives and the funding of research projects through partnerships among postsecondary educational institutions, governments and the private sector
- The advanced training of highly qualified people in sciences and technology through the provision of financial assistance to postsecondary students and postdoctoral fellows

## Eligible projects

A large share of [NSERC investments](#) is distributed over six priority areas:

- Aerospace
- Automotive
- Forestry and Wood Products Research
- Northern Research
- Oil Sands and Heavy Oil
- Water-Related Research

### Research areas

NSERC has determined five areas of strategic research in which it allocates a large share of its investments:

- Environmental Science and Technologies
- Health and Related Life Sciences and Technologies
- Information and Communications Technologies
- Manufacturing
- Natural Resources and Energy

Researchers who submit an application for a research project involving more than one area of research (such as applications in the areas of health sciences or psychology) should consult the [General Guidelines for Submitting and Accepting Applications](#) to make sure they are submitting their applications to the right funding agency.

## Applying for a grant

### Roles of individuals participating in a grant application

In accordance with NSERC's eligibility requirements, an individual may participate in a grant application in three different ways: as an *applicant*, a *co-applicant* or a *collaborator*. The *applicant* is the principal investigator and his or her name appears on the application. This person is responsible for the intellectual direction of the research and for administration of the grant. The *co-applicant* is a research group member who submits a team grant application, contributes significantly to the intellectual direction and the conduct of the research and may assume some degree of responsibility for the financial administration of the funds. The *collaborator* is a researcher or engineer from any sector. He or she may belong to a research group that submits a team grant application, but does not have access to grant funds; this person must supply his or her own resources for the purpose of collaboration. A collaborator must be qualified to undertake research independently and contribute to the intellectual direction of the research.

### Status of the applicant or co-applicant

The roles of applicant and co-applicant are generally reserved for researchers who are faculty members at a university. In some grant programs targeted by NSERC, a researcher who is a faculty member of a college may be an applicant or co-applicant.

To be recognized as a faculty member of a college, applicants must hold an academic position or have a firm offer of an academic appointment (not subject to obtaining a grant) at an eligible Canadian college at the time they submit their applications. This can take the form of:

- a permanent, tenured position
  - A term or contract position of no less than three years
- Certain [additional eligibility requirements](#) also apply.

## Management of federal grants

### Institution or organization

Under NSERC rules, applicants must entrust the management of their grants to the institution with which they are affiliated. Colleges may administer NSERC funds, provided that they have been recognized as [eligible](#) to submit an application and receive funding from the Council (consult the [list of eligible institutions](#)).

### Eligible and non-eligible expenses

According to the guidelines in the [Use of Grant Funds](#) section, which apply to all three federal granting agencies – the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), NSERC and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) – NSERC grants fund most of the direct costs of the research. They therefore do not cover the salaries, either in full or in part, paid to applicants or co-applicants for a funded project.

## Regular NSERC operating grants

Within all of its programs NSERC has set aside grants for college researchers as applicants or co-applicants, provided that they are faculty members of a college. These grants are directed toward applied research and innovation support, while Discovery Grants are intended for universities.

### Grants available to college researchers as applicants

- [Idea to Innovation \(I2I\) Grants](#)

### Grants available to college researchers as co-applicants

- [Department of National Defence/NSERC Research Partnerships](#)
- [Collaborative Health Research Projects \(CHRP\)](#)
- [Partnership Workshops Grants \(PWG\)](#)
- [Strategic Projects Grants \(SPG\)](#)
- [Collaborative Research and Development \(CRD\) Grants](#)
- [Strategic Network Grants \(SNG\)](#)

## Grant program specific to colleges

The [College and Community Innovation Program \(CCI\)](#) is a joint initiative of the three federal granting agencies: SSHRC, NSERC and CIHR.

This program is addressed specifically to colleges. Its objective is to increase innovation at the community and regional levels by enabling Canadian colleges to increase their capacity to transform the results of research and development into useful economic activities in natural sciences and engineering, in partnership with the private sector.

Under the CCI program, the applicant is a [college](#) administrator and assumes administrative and financial responsibility for the grant. In this case, applicants are members of the faculty and professional or technical staff of the applicant college. They must be qualified to undertake research independently, but are not required to meet the criteria of the regular SSHRC programs. The college uses its own criteria to determine who can participate in the funded project.

In accordance with the guidelines in the [Use of Grant Funds](#), section, the CCI program provides financial measures tailored specifically to the reality of colleges. In particular, it provides that part of the grant funds can be used to cover some of the costs associated with the reduction in the teaching load so that faculty can take part in applied research projects. Also, for some types of grants offered under the program, colleges may apply for funding to cover overhead and administration costs associated with the project; such costs may not exceed 20% of the grant.

Six types of grants are offered under this program:

- [Technology Access Centres \(TAC\) Grants](#)
- [Applied Research Tools and Instruments \(ARTI\) Grants](#)
- [Industrial Research Chairs for Colleges \(CRIC\) Grants](#)
- [College-University Idea to Innovation \(CU-I2I\) Grants](#)
- [Applied Research and Development \(ARD\) Grants](#)
- [Innovation Enhancement \(IE\) Grants](#)

## Submitting applications

The requirements for submitting an application are described in the specific rules for each of the various grant programs. To access the forms and complete a grant application, applicants must open an electronic account on the NSERC [website](#).

## Other funding opportunities

The [Indirect Costs Program \(ICP\)](#) awards grants to institutions that are either eligible for NSERC funding or are receiving NSERC funding to cover the indirect costs of research or research infrastructures. However, colleges that receive funds under the CCI program are not eligible for the ICP.

Research and writing: **Lynn Lapostolle, Émilie Lemire Auclair and Hélène Tardif**

Content revision: **Marie Thibault, for NSERC**

Translation: **Jim Edwards**

Revision: **Susanne de Lotbinière-Harwood**

Graphic design: **Guyline Hardy Design**

Project coordination: **Sylvie Charbonneau**

Internet-accessible: <http://vega.cvm.qc.ca/arc/doc/RGA-NSERC.pdf>

© Association pour la recherche au collégial, 2014

This publication was funded by the Canada-Québec Agreement on Minority-Language Education and Second-Language Instruction.

*Version française aussi disponible*