Eligibility

Research topics should be Research and Development projects that seeks to respond to a research challenge in the natural sciences or engineering. Developing and implementing policies or directly applying the research results may depend on socio-economic or other requirements, as well as scientific understanding beyond the Natural Sciences and Engineering (NSE) and collaborations with researchers in fields other than NSE is encouraged.

Alliance Advance grant funding from NSERC is based on cost-sharing and will cover the direct costs of the research, in proportion to the cash contributions provided by eligible partner organizations for the direct costs of research (not including university indirect costs or overhead). Cost-sharing ratio is 66.7% (2:1 leverage). (Cost-sharing ratios)

Alliance Society grant funding from NSERC requires a partner that is recognized for cost-sharing and who will make in-kind contributions to the project. To be eligible for 100% funding support from NSERC, the project must also include societal groups affected by the challenge that can benefit from and use the results of the project. Societal impact, making connections and broad outputs criteria must also be met. (Cost-sharing ratios)

The minimum funding request is $20,000 per year from NSERC, and maximum is $1,000,000 per year.

You should confirm the applicant and co-applicant(s) can apply for this program. (NSERC eligibility)

University faculty: You must hold or have a firm offer of an academic appointment at an eligible Canadian university at the time of application. Your position must require you to engage in natural sciences and engineering research that is not under the direction of another individual, and permit you to supervise or co-supervise the research of postdoctoral fellows or students registered in an undergraduate or graduate degree program.

Adjunct professors: Adjunct professors who meet NSERC's eligibility criteria and whose primary place of employment is at an eligible Canadian university can apply. Those whose primary place of employment is outside the university sector (e.g., government, industry or colleges) are eligible to apply as co-applicants.

The partner organization(s) can be private, public or not-for-profit. You may involve whichever partner organizations you need to achieve your research goals and successfully mobilize your research results to achieve the desired impact (see Role of partner organizations). Any proposed partner must play an active role in the project research activities, use the results, and play an active role in translating or mobilizing knowledge to ensure the research results have an impact. Use the Partner Organization self-assessment tool to assist in the determination that your partner can participate in the project.

Considerations related to Collaborative Research Agreements for NSERC Alliance funded research

All NSERC Alliance Advantage (including joint funding with Mitacs Accelerate) projects will be required to enter into an Alliance research collaboration agreement. Consider discussing **Intellectual property** requirements with your partner:

Under the NSERC IP Policy, access to research results developed wholly or in part using NSERC funds, may include the following arrangements: open dissemination with no restrictions; non-exclusive licensing; exclusive licensing; joint ownership; partial assignment of ownership; or full assignment of ownership. The University of Alberta generally uses inventor assigned ownership, including joint ownership and non-exclusive licensing.

IP should conform to the following guiding principles:

1. Encourage the utilization of research results, developed wholly or in part using NSERC funds, in Canada for the benefit of Canadians.

2. Promote the development of fruitful and productive partnerships and recognize the unique contribution each partner brings to the partnership and the need for each partner to benefit from the relationship and have their interests protected.
3. Support the publication of research results in the open literature. NSERC does not support secret or classified research.
4. Ensure that a student's graduation is not impeded by IP issues.
5. Support a researcher's right to use his/her research results for non-commercial purposes in future research and in teaching.

Completing the Application

Attached documents are to be prepared following the [NSERC On-line Presentation and Attachment Standards](#). NSERC's instructions for completion of the NSERC Alliance Grant Form 101 can be found [here](#).

Co-applicants, Collaborators, Industry Partner participation confirmation (signatures)

- By linking their Form 100A to the Form 101, co-applicants are deemed to have provided their electronic signature on the application. U of A co-applicants also need to electronically accept and complete the co-applicant declarations on the Researcher Home Page, request for new research project.
- Ensure that the co-applicants from other institutions obtain the appropriate signature from the authorized officer of their organization prior to submitting the application to NSERC using the [NSERC external co-applicant confirmation form](#).
- By completing the Partner Organization Form, partners are deemed to have provided their electronic signature on the application, confirmed commitments for cash and in-kind contributions described in the proposal, and have agreed to the program terms and conditions.
- If a principal of a collaborating organization is going to have a role similar to that of a co-applicant, another senior official needs to complete the partner organization form (sign) on behalf of their organization.
- Collaborators (no signatures required). You can include a 2 page CV or biographical sketch for each collaborator. Provide the individual's Name/affiliation, Education/training, Employment/affiliations, Research funding, and up to five significant contributions related to the project.
  Note: For upload purposes, all collaborator biographical sketches or CVs must be saved as a single PDF file.

Proposal: USE THE PROPOSAL TEMPLATE. The proposal must include the section headings and the text of the bullets from the proposal template. Do not change font or margin size. In developing the proposal, consider the Merit Indicators that will be used in the evaluation ([Alliance Grants – Merit Indicators](#) and in addition for [Alliance Society – Research Topics](#))

The Proposal page limits are based on the funding request amount

Section	Average annual request - The number of suggested, maximum or additional pages always includes the NSERC template text.		
	*Up to $75,000/ year ***	*75,001 to $300,000/ year*	*$300,001 to $1,000,000/ year*
Background	0.5	0.75	1
Partnership	1	2	5
Research Plan	1.5	4	11
Team	1	1	4
Training Plan	2	2	4
Impacts and venefits to Canada	1	1.25	2
Maximum # pages including template text	***7***	***11***	***27***
Public impact value proposition (PIVP): Alliance Society applications only	*Add three pages to the maximum above for the PIVP section*		

*Projects requesting up to $75,000 per year: At the time of application, if you and your co-applicant(s) are not an Early Career Researchers (ECR) and **do not** hold an active peer-reviewed grant from NSERC as the

primary applicant, you may submit a maximum of 11 pages (as if applying for up to $300,000). If this applies, the application will be sent to external reviewers. To encourage established researchers to mentor ECRs as co-applicants, ECR's hot holding an active peer-reviewed grant from NSERC can submit a 7 page proposal.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

Consider sex, gender and diversity in the project's research design and consider how to promote and support a variety of forms of mentoring to ensure trainees' equitable participation and growth. ([Guide for applicants: Considering equity, diversity and inclusion in your application](#))

It is a mandatory requirement to explain how equity, diversity and inclusion are considered in the training plan. You must describe **specific, concrete practices** that you will put in place to ensure that EDI is intentionally and proactively supported in your training plan. Describe, for example, your plans for promoting participation from a diverse group of highly qualified personnel (HQP), equitable recruitment processes, mentorship approaches and other initiatives aimed at fostering an inclusive research and training environment.

> Note: Vague or generic statements (e.g., "in future hiring, EDI will be considered" or "the university is committed to EDI") will not be sufficient and will lead to your application being rejected.

- Instead of simply stating that the team is already complete and/or diverse*, give examples of specific initiatives and measures that you have or will put in place to support EDI in your team.
- Instead of simply stating that your institution's EDI policy will be followed, describe specific actions that you have or will put in place in the context of your training plan.

Project Funding

Include all of the project direct costs funded by NSERC and other sources. All costs must be explained in the proposal and will be considered in the merit assessment of the proposal. All partner organizations participating in the project must play an active role and make in-kind contributions through such involvement which are also considered in the merit assessment. ([Funding your research project](#))

[Expenditures related to project management](#) are eligible as a direct cost of research up to a maximum of 10% of the total direct costs for projects involving multiple partner organizations and/or universities.

You can include the costs of equipment, provided the equipment is essential to achieving the objectives and is incremental to the equipment already available at the university or at a partner organization. Total expected equipment costs including operation and maintenance cannot exceed $400,000 over the project duration.

NSERC Alliance Advantage – Mitacs Accelerate grants must provide a breakdown of funds requested from both NSERC and Mitacs in support of HQP, including Mitacs interns. There is a Mitacs Accelerate Supplemental Form that must also be completed and uploaded to the Alliance application in the other documents section. The form can be obtained from one of the [UofA Mitacs business development representatives](#).

National Security Guidelines for Research Partnerships' risk assessment Form

To ensure the Canadian research ecosystem is as open as possible and as safeguarded as necessary, integration of national security considerations into the development, evaluation and funding of research partnerships are required. All Alliance grant applications involving one or more partner organizations from the private sector, including producer groups and industrial associations, must complete this form to identify and mitigate potential national security risks linked to research partnerships.

If your application requires this form you must complete the ***Introduction to Research Security***, ***Cyber Security for Researchers*** courses available through eClass (to register, send an email request to safegrd@ualberta.ca) and ***Open Source Due Diligence*** (available on the ISED Learning webpage). You should also develop a research data management (RDM) plan https://www.library.ualberta.ca/research-support/data-management/begin.

Please contact your Research Partner or safegrd@ualberta.ca to initiate the internal review to obtain an approved risk assessment form to include in the application. Materials required for the review include completed Form 101 and Partner Organization Form, Certificates of completion for the three courses, and the completed Risk Assessment form. Inclusion of your Data Management plan is optional.

Reviewer Suggestions

For small projects (request of $20,000 to $75,000 average per year) you do not need to provide reviewer suggestions as these applications are reviewed by NSERC file managers with evaluation supported by existing NSERC Peer review of currently held NSERC projects by the applicant and any co-applicants.

For all other projects, suggest the names of five independent experts competent to assess the technical aspects of the proposal. This list should include experts from the academic community and non-academic community. Also include reviewers competent to assess any research aspects outside the natural sciences and engineering. This list should take into consideration equity, diversity and inclusion (include women, and both early career and established researchers).

Personal Data Form (Form 100A) for the Applicant and each Co-applicant must be completed and linked to the Form 101.

Do not used the Contributions attachment from the old Form 100. This one can only contain 3 sections in a maximum of 5 pages detailing contributions to R & D and HQP training in the past 6 years. 9,000 characters for most significant contributions to research, 3,000 characters for additional information on contributions listed in the CCV, and 6,000 characters to discuss past contributions to HQP training (including Training environment, HQP awards and research contributions, and Outcomes and skills gained by HQP sections).
https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/OnlineServices-ServicesEnLigne/instructions/100/100A_eng.asp#contributions

Common CV Attachment – a final / submitted version must be generated from the Canadian Common CV system and uploaded. Instructions on how to complete an NSERC CCV can be found
https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/ResearchPortal-PortailDeRecherche/Instructions-Instructions/ccv-cvc_eng.asp

Information Required from Supporting Organizations (Partner Organization Form)
https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/OnlineServices-ServicesEnLigne/instructions/Alliance_Partner-Alliance_Partenaires_eng.asp

Each Partner must complete this form. The University applicant generates an invitation to the partner from within the Form 101 and the partner will receive an email with a link to complete the form. The partner must include a one-page partner organization profile that would describe the organization. They must include the nature of their operations in Canada and how they intend to grow in Canada by developing innovative new or improved products, services, processes or policies (if applicable). They should demonstrate they have existing or planned capacity to achieve the expected results of the project (human resources, facilities and financial capabilities). It should reference the specific project outcomes relevant to the partner. This would take the place of a letter of support.

U of A Approval (signature) Requirements (proposal request)

For a successful Alliance grant application, RAS needs to setup two research projects on your Researcher Home Page as we cannot co-mingle NSERC and partner cash. If your Partner cash contribution is already setup at the UofA under an existing project, you only need to create a proposal request for the NSERC Alliance component. If partner cash is not yet setup at the University, create and complete two University of Alberta (U of A) Proposal Requests in your Researcher Home Page (Create Application/Proposal/Project). One for the NSERC Alliance component, and a second for the partner(s) cash component.

The NSERC component of the Alliance Grant will not incur Indirect Costs of Research (ICR). There is an exception noted in our Indirect Costs of Research Procedure such that indirect costs will not apply to matching funding for awards involving contributions from Tri-Agencies and partner organizations to the University, and the NSERC Alliance fits the criteria to meet this exception. Partner funding toward the project will not incur Indirect Costs of Research.

The Supporting Organization must provide cash toward the project (Advantage Grant). On your Alliance grant proposal request, select **YES** to the question "Are matching/partner funds in place or intended to be obtained for this project". Very rarely will an Alliance Grant application not require cash contributions from the partner (Society Grant). Use the comments section to confirm if cash is already here and if so include the Project RES #. If the cash is not already here, provide the partner contact details or refer to the Partner Organization Form for contact details and proceed to create a second U of A Proposal Request in your Researcher Home Page (as outlined above).

Add U of Alberta Co Applicants to the NSERC component proposal form.
External co-applicants will require sign-off from their institution on an NSERC external Co-Applicant confirmation form.
Note: RAS must verify that external co-applicants have advised the authorized officer of their organization that the applicant is participating in the application. If you are participating as a co-applicant on an NSERC Alliance Grant lead by another institution, RAS must sign the NSERC Form 101 or an equivalent external co-applicant confirmation form from the lead university indicating U of A support for your participation in the proposal.
Attach the full NSERC application including the Form 101, all Form 100A's, all Partner Organization Forms, and institutional approval for any external co applicants as one combined pdf to the NSERC component proposal form.
Indicate in the comments of the partner component proposal form which of the following options you want to initiate with RAS:
1. Move forward with a Contract Specialist to negotiate an agreement (partners are willing to fund the research irrespective of NSERC Support). Or
2. Negotiate during the period of NSERC review to have an agreement ready to execute when we receive NSERC's funding decision.

Submit both forms for online approvals of Applicant, Chair, Dean and all U of A co-applicants (if any).

Merit Assessment

Small projects (request of $20,000 to $75,000 per year) are reviewed by NSERC file managers based on the evaluation criteria with the evaluation supported by existing NSERC Peer review of current NSERC projects held by the applicant and any co-applicants.

Medium sized projects (request over $75,000 up to $300,000 per year) will be reviewed by external reviewers with expertise directly related to the proposal and will provide a review based on the evaluation criteria.

Large projects (requests over $300,000 up to $1,000,000 per year) will be reviewed by an ad hoc committee of external reviewers with expertise directly related to the proposal and will provide a review based on the evaluation criteria.

For Society Grant projects that address a societal challenge, an initial assessment will be made by a multidisciplinary and multisectoral selection committee that will assess if it justifies a higher NSERC contribution. If selected in the first step, it will proceed to the second step to be reviewed by external reviewers with expertise directly related to the proposal and will provide a review based on the evaluation criteria.