

Joint Initiative with the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council

Defence Research and Development Canada (DRDC), an agency of the Department of National Defence (DND) and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) have signed a joint initiative agreement to support social sciences research and related activities pertaining to military personnel readiness, organizational and operational effectiveness, and human effectiveness in modern operations.

DRDC conducts social science research to support the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) and DND in developing effective, efficient and affordable evidence-based strategies, policies, programs, procedures, processes and technologies, that, together:

- Optimize the intake, training and management of the Defence Team, ensuring a workforce at the right numbers, at the right ranks/occupations, and with the appropriate skills and experience to meet future operational needs. This includes research in support of strategic and operational priorities in domains such as attraction and recruitment, selection and assessment, motivation, career management, training and education and workforce analytics;
- Enhance individual and family well-being, care for the ill and injured, and prepare members for the transition to civilian life. This includes research with a focus on health, resiliency, morale, welfare and compensation;
- Enable the effective employment of the Defence Team in operational and organizational environments, and strengthening of the operational and strategic leadership capacity of the CAF. This includes research addressing the physical, psychological, social and cultural demands of military operations, as well as the efficient governance, agility and adaptiveness of the organization; and
- Enhance the command and intelligence effectiveness of the CAF, and the ability to achieve their missions in complex campaign environments. This includes research with a focus on understanding the social and cultural factors that provide context for effective operations in the non-kinetic sphere; understanding and predicting the intention, behaviour and influence of relevant individuals and collectives; and effective collaborations in contemporary multifunctional mission environments.

Interested researchers should develop proposals related to this focus and submit their applications through SSHRC's [Insight Grants](#) or [Insight Development Grants](#) competitions. For information about this program, visit [Defence Research and Development Canada's](#) website or contact:

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Defence and Security Target Research Area Descriptions

We are currently interested in proposals focussing on: Enabling sustained and effective military organizational culture change; Developing trust in diverse organizational teams and in cross-cultural settings; and Trust in autonomous intelligent systems, as detailed below.

1. Enabling Sustained and Effective Military Organizational Culture Change

Military institutions are responsible for maintaining organizational effectiveness and the well-being of their members. At the same time, militaries are expected to support culture change, achieve efficiencies, optimize governance and processes, and adapt to a continuously changing environment while facing ever-increasing competition for resources. “Personnel” is recognized as a critical component of organizational culture change, yet current change approaches seem to lack a personnel component rooted in a scientific framework. Thus, projects under this research challenge should focus on approaches and frameworks to understand the interdependencies between the multiple layers in the military organization that include the personnel component.

2. Developing Trust in Diverse Organizational Teams and in Cross-Cultural Settings

Projects under this research challenge should focus on frameworks to understand, and techniques to enhance, development of trust in Diverse Organizational Teams and/or in Cross-Cultural Settings, in the context of defence and security. The intention should be to further existing knowledge to improve engagement, shared understanding, motivation and collaboration, planning, decision making and execution of activities in, and leadership of, multi-organizational and/or multicultural teams. Research could involve the development of frameworks, models and theories to better understand the psychological and group dynamics in either diverse organizational or diverse cultural teams, as well as the development and validation of techniques, approaches and technologies to: facilitate initial trust building, detect decreases in trust, and develop strategies for the repair of broken trust and/or how to mitigate the destructive effects of distrust in these settings.

3. Trust in Autonomous Systems

With advances and adaptation of autonomous systems in numerous applications, from vehicles to information management, the relationship between human and technology has evolved and become more complex and important. As the roles of humans increasingly change from “operators” to “partners” of autonomous systems in a team, trust becomes an increasingly complex issue. Projects under this research challenge should focus on, but are not limited to, furthering the knowledge and understanding of trust development with autonomous systems with regard to, for example, human-autonomy teaming; how humans perceive and interact with autonomous systems; approaches/criteria to measure and assess trust; the level of risk and error that humans are willing to tolerate from autonomous systems; what the defining attributes of a system that allows humans to establish trust are; synergistic interaction between human and machine intelligence; complacency/over-trust in autonomous systems; and differences in human and machine perception and cognition.