



NSERC Alliance Grants

Canada's research partnership program

Jennifer Bean, NSERC Ottawa
Megan Griffith, NSERC Pacific

One
New
Flexible
Simplified
Enhanced
Responsive
Partnerships
Program

Alliance grants encourage university researchers to collaborate with partner organizations, which can be from the private, public or not-for-profit sectors. These grants support research projects led by strong, complementary, collaborative teams that will generate new knowledge and accelerate the application of research results for the benefit of all Canadians.



Alliance Grants...

were designed in consultation with the community and create an enabling platform for starting and growing research partnerships, while building on the strengths of our previous Research Partnerships Programs.

Previous Programs

- Engage Grants
- Collaborative Research & Development Grants
- Strategic Grants
- Industrial Research Chairs

Alliance Grants

- more flexible
- more eligible partners
- no restriction on research topic
- no application deadlines
- simpler process
- faster decision times



Alliance Grants support collaborative projects that will...

Generate new knowledge / technology

Create economic / social / environmental benefits

Contribute to Canada's long-term competitiveness

Support public policy

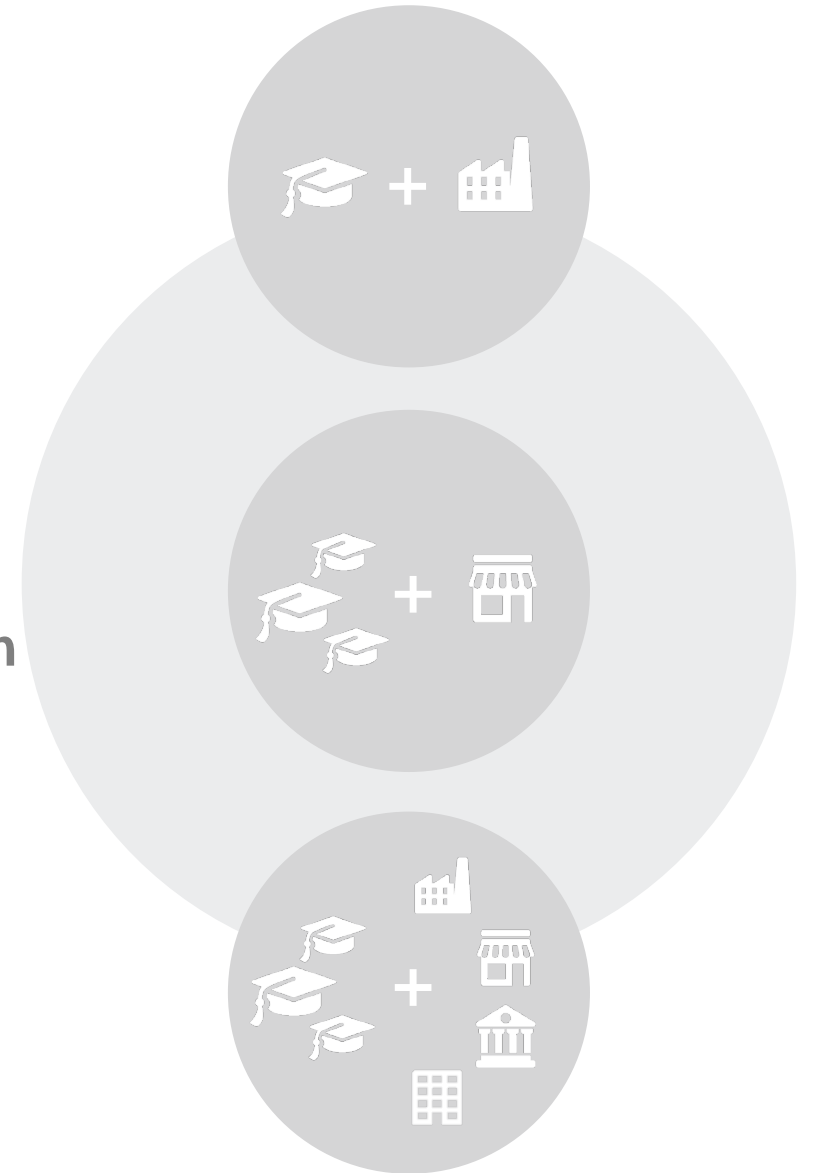
Train new researchers

Draw on diverse perspectives / skill sets



Projects can vary in size and scope

- Short-term projects with one researcher
- Long-term projects involving several researchers
- One-on-one collaborations with one partner organization
- Projects involving many partners organizations from different sectors



Examples of eligible partner organizations

Private Sector	Public Sector	Not-for-profit Sector
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Canadian private companies• Multinationals with presence in Canada• Foreign companies (not as sole partner)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Municipalities, local/regional governments• Federal/provincial/territorial government departments (not funding agencies)• Public utilities• Crown corporations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Producer groups• Industrial associations• Registered charities with a research mandate• Museums/libraries• Indigenous groups• Community groups



Role of partner organizations

Every partner organization must do at least one of:

- Play an active role in research activities
- Utilize the research results and achieve desired outcomes
- Play an active role in mobilizing knowledge

At least one partner organization must demonstrate ability to exploit research results

- Other partners may be chosen for their ability to generate and mobilize knowledge

Partner organizations must collectively support the project through cash and/or in-kind contributions



Research topics

Alliance Grants can support any R&D project that responds to a research challenge in the natural sciences or engineering

- See: *Selecting the Appropriate Federal Granting Agency*

Applicants are encouraged to collaborate with academic researchers in fields other than the natural sciences or engineering

- Costs for these collaborations must be identified in the project budget
- Up to a maximum of 30% of the project costs



Collaborating internationally

Project proposals may incorporate international collaborations

- Alliance Grant researchers may interact with foreign colleagues in a variety of ways
- See: *Use of Grant Funds guidelines*



Grant size and project duration

The minimum grant size is **\$20,000** per year

The maximum is **\$1 million** per year

Alliance Grant projects can range from **1 year** up to **5 years** in duration

Shorter projects can be scaled up or extended within the maximum 5-year period



Cost-sharing

Alliance Grants are calculated based on cost-sharing with the partner organizations

- **The portion that can be cost-shared with NSERC includes only the cash contributions from partner organizations recognized for cost sharing**

In-kind contributions are important for the success of the project

- **In-kind contributions are considered as part of the proposal evaluation**
- **In-kind should not be considered when determining NSERC's contribution to the project costs**

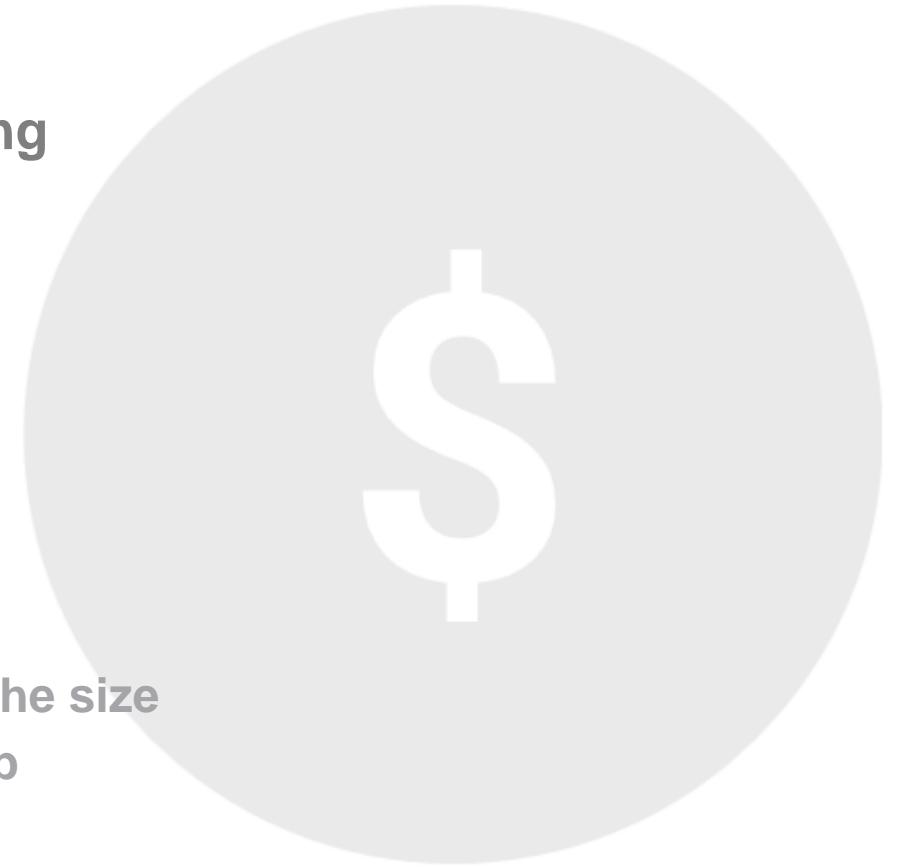


Cost-sharing options

Alliance Grants incorporate a three-tiered cost-sharing structure

NSERC will provide:

- 1 **50%** (a 1:1 leverage ratio),
- 2 **66%** (a 2:1 leverage ratio), or
- 3 **90% to 100%** of the shareable costs, depending on the size of the partner organizations and the type of partnership



Cost-sharing options

Option 1

Size of partner organization	Type of partnership	NSERC Contribution to Project costs	Parameters
Large organizations* 500+ employees globally	Sole partner organization or in partnership exclusively with other large organizations	50% (1:1 leverage)	Applications per year: no limits Grant size: \$20,000 to \$1 million per year Duration: 1 to 5 years
	As a partner with small and medium-sized enterprises such as in value- or supply-chain relationship, or with other sectors*	66% (2:1 leverage)	
Small and medium organizations* Fewer than 500 employees globally	Sole partner organization or in partnership with other sectors*	66% (2:1 leverage)	

*including private, public and not-for-profit



Cost-sharing options

Option 2

Size of partner organization	Type of partnership	NSERC Contribution to Project costs	Parameters
All partner sizes Partnership must include one organization that is recognized for NSERC cost-sharing	Exclusively not-for-profit and public partner organizations	100%	Applications within a 12-month period: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Two for non-academic partners Two for applicants (one as the principal investigator, one as co-applicant) Grant size: \$20,000 to \$200,000 per year Duration: 1 to 5 years
	Any private-sector partner organization Requires a 10% cash contribution from the combined partner organizations	90%	



Cost-sharing example

OPTION 1

Large partner organization(s)* only

**public, private, or not-for-profit*

**50% cost-sharing
(1:1 ratio)**

Total project cost: \$180,000

- **Partner(s) cash contribution**: \$90,000**
- **NSERC contribution: \$90,000**

***Contributions recognized in cost-sharing calculation*



Cost-sharing example

OPTION 1

Large partner organization(s) with not-for-profit and/or public sector organizations

**public, private, or not-for-profit*

66% cost-sharing
(2:1 ratio)

Total project cost: \$180,000

- Partner(s) cash contribution^{**}: \$60,000
- NSERC contribution: \$120,000

***Contributions recognized in cost-sharing calculation*



Cost-sharing example

OPTION 1

Small / medium-sized organizations*

**public, private, or not-for-profit*

**66% cost-sharing
(2:1 ratio)**

Total project cost: \$180,000

- **Partner(s) cash contribution**: \$60,000**
- **NSERC contribution: \$120,000**

***Contributions recognized in cost-sharing calculation*



Cost-sharing example

OPTION 2

Any size of private-sector partner organization

90% NSERC cost-sharing

Total project cost: \$180,000

- Partner(s) cash contribution^{**}: \$18,000
- NSERC contribution: \$162,000

***Contributions recognized in cost-sharing calculation*

Limit of two applications in a 12-month period



Cost-sharing example

OPTION 2

**Not-for-profit and/or
public-sector only**

**100% NSERC
cost-sharing**

Total project cost: \$180,000

- **Partner(s) cash contribution^{**}: \$0**
- **NSERC contribution: \$180,000**

*^{**}Contributions recognized in cost-sharing calculation*

Limit of two applications in a 12-month period



Partner organizations recognized in cost-sharing calculations

Private Sector

Cash contributions <u>can</u> be recognized*	Cash contributions <u>cannot</u> be recognized
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Canadian private companies• Multinationals with a presence in Canada• Foreign companies (but not as the sole partner organization)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Venture capital / Angel investors / Seed companies• Holding companies• Companies with fewer than two full-time employees

*if NSERC cost-sharing requirements are met



Partner organizations recognized in cost-sharing calculations

Canadian Public Sector

Cash contributions <u>can</u> be recognized*	Cash contributions <u>cannot</u> be recognized
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Municipalities and local or regional governments established by or under provincial or territorial statute• Provincial/territorial government departments• Federal government departments• Indigenous organizations• Public utilities• Crown corporations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Funding organizations (federal, provincial, territorial, international) whose primary mission is to fund R&D• Organizations whose primary mission is to perform R&D and are funded or controlled primarily by government• Foreign governments

*if NSERC cost-sharing requirements are met



Partner organizations recognized in cost-sharing calculations

Canadian Not-for-Profit Sector

Cash contributions <u>can</u> be recognized*	Cash contributions <u>cannot</u> be recognized
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Producer groups• Industrial associations• Registered charities that have a mandate to carry out and apply research (within natural sciences and engineering)• Organizations whose primary mission is to maintain collections (e.g., historical, scientific, artistic, or cultural) for the public good, such as libraries, museums, zoos or aquariums• Community organizations	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Not-for-profit organizations whose primary mission is to fund R&D and are funded or controlled primarily by government• Post-secondary institutions• Incubators and accelerators• Other registered charities• Hospitals and medical/clinical research institutes• Philanthropic organizations• Consortia with the majority of their funding originating from government sources• Foreign not-for-profit organizations• Individuals

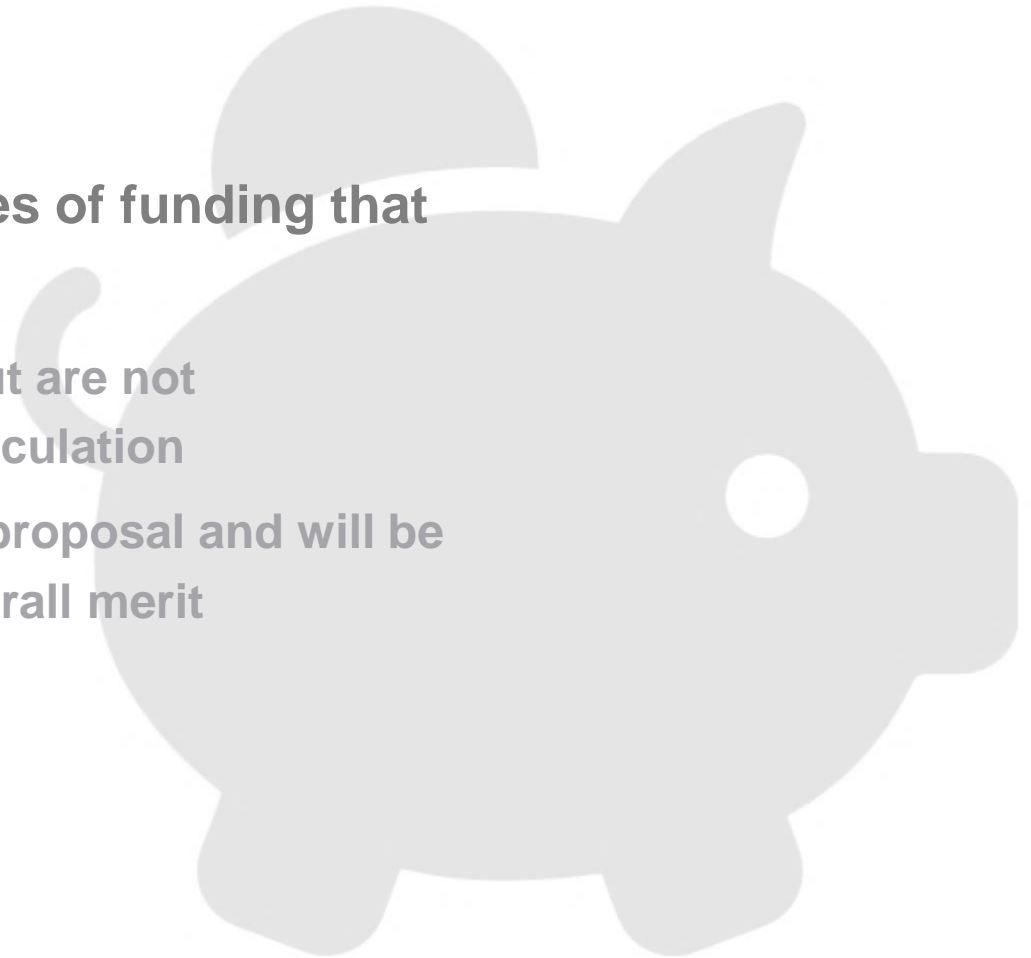
*if NSERC cost-sharing requirements are met



Project Budget

Projects can be supported by additional sources of funding that are not recognized for cost sharing

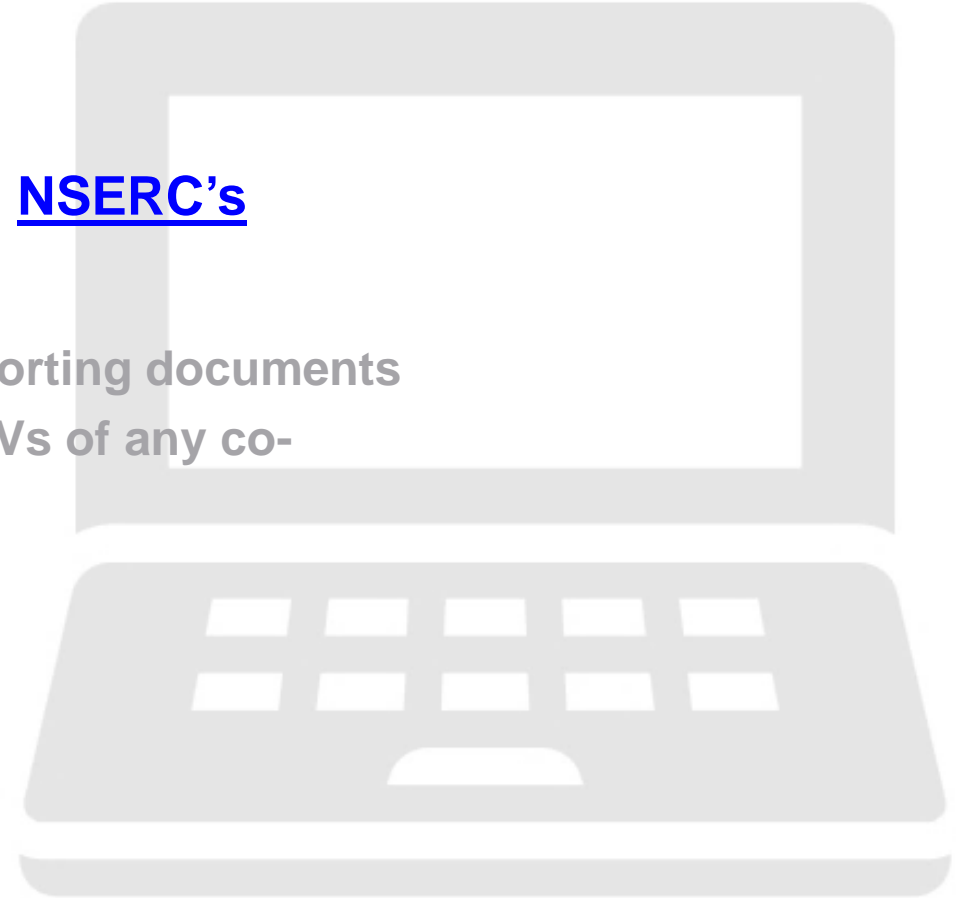
- Such funds can be listed in the project budget, but are not considered as part of the NSERC cost-sharing calculation
- These additional funds must be described in the proposal and will be considered in the assessment of a proposal's overall merit



How to apply

Alliance Grant applications are submitted using [NSERC's online system](#)

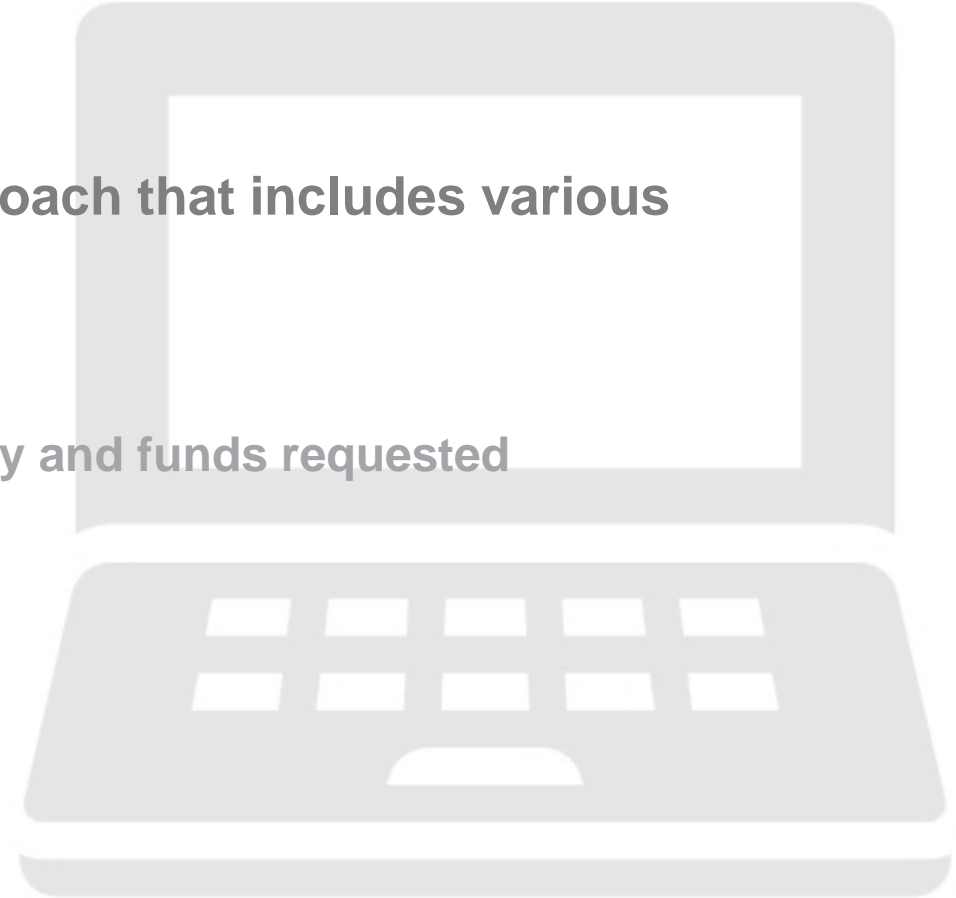
- Applicants fill out the proposal template and supporting documents and include their Common CV and the Common CVs of any co-applicants
- See the instructions for NSERC's online system



How applications are reviewed

N SERC has adopted a financial risk-based approach that includes various assessment tools

- Reduces burden and delays
- Recognizes risk as a function of project complexity and funds requested



Review of the application

Project Size	Small	Medium	Large
Approximate thresholds	Average annual request of \$20,000 to \$30,000 for 1-5 years	Average annual request of more than \$30,000 up to \$300,000 for 1-5 years	Average annual request of more than \$300,000 up to \$1,000,000 for 1-5 years
Review mechanism	<p>NSERC File Managers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluation supported by existing NSERC peer review (i.e. Discovery Grant rating, active Canada Research Chair holders, prior Partnership grants) If no existing NSERC peer review evidence is available, external reviewers will be used 	<p>External Referees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> With expertise directly related to the proposal Provide review based on all evaluation criteria 	<p>Ad hoc committee members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> With expertise directly related to the proposal Provide review based on all evaluation criteria
Funding decisions	NSERC assigns merit indicators to determine priority for funding		
Expected decision time*	4 weeks	8-12 weeks	12-16 weeks



Evaluation criteria

Applications are evaluated using the following criteria:

- Relevance and outcomes
- Partnership
- Quality of the proposal
- Training



Evaluation Criteria

Relevance and Outcomes

- **Significance of the intended outcomes and of the economic, social and/or environmental benefits for Canada**
- **Need for original research to address the topic and the potential for generating new scientific knowledge**
- **Extent to which the strategy to apply the research results is likely to achieve the intended outcomes**



Evaluation Criteria

Partnership

- Appropriateness of the partnership to achieve the intended outcomes; leveraging of different types of partner organizations and the integration of their unique perspectives and knowledge in the project, as appropriate
- Clarity of each partner organization's role in the collaboration with respect to defining the challenge, co-designing and implementing the research, and using the results to achieve the desired outcomes
- Appropriateness of the level of cash and in-kind contribution from each partner organization



Evaluation Criteria

Quality of the Proposal

- **Clarity of the objectives and deliverables; appropriateness of the scope and size of planned activities to achieve the expected outcomes; justification for the planned expenditures**
- **Appropriateness of the identified indicators and methods for monitoring progress during the project and for assessing outcomes afterwards**
- **Appropriateness of academic researchers' expertise, and that found within the partner organizations, both for carrying out the planned research activities and in mentoring trainees**



Evaluation Criteria

Training

- Opportunities for enriched training experiences for research trainees (undergraduates, graduates, postdoctoral fellows) to develop relevant skills as well as professional skills such as leadership, communication, collaboration and entrepreneurship
- Consideration of diversity and gender equity in the training plan



Equity, diversity and inclusion

NSERC is committed to excellence in research and research training for the benefit of Canadians.

Achieving a more equitable, diverse and inclusive Canadian research enterprise is also essential to creating the excellent, innovative and impactful research necessary to seize opportunities and respond to global challenges.



Equity, diversity and inclusion

You are asked to consider sex, gender and diversity in the project's research design and to consider how to promote and support a variety of forms of mentoring to ensure trainees' equitable participation and growth.

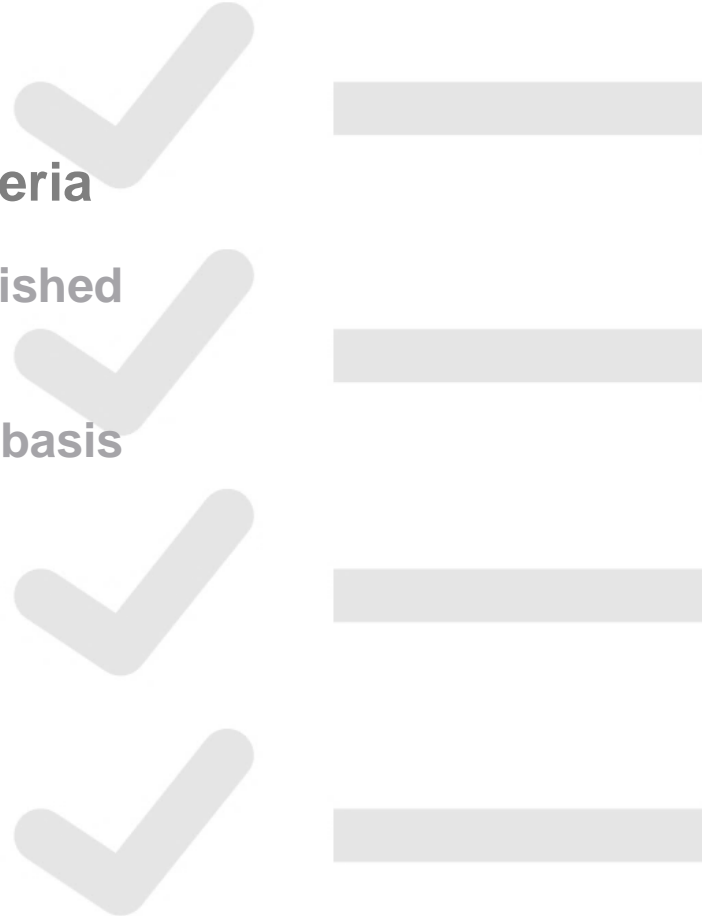
- In large proposals, you must strive for equity, diversity and inclusion when developing your group of co-applicants, partners and trainees
- See *Guide for Applicants: Considering equity, diversity, and inclusion in your application*



Funding Decisions

Applications will be assessed using the evaluation criteria

- Priority for funding will be determined according to established merit indicators
- NSERC will select proposals for funding on a competitive basis



Scaling-up successful research collaborations

NSERC will support the growth of a project as the partnership progresses by providing options to expand successful projects

- Additional funds can be awarded within the original timeframe or during additional years of the project
- Maximum project duration (including any time extension) is five years
- Procedure for expanding projects will be detailed at a later date



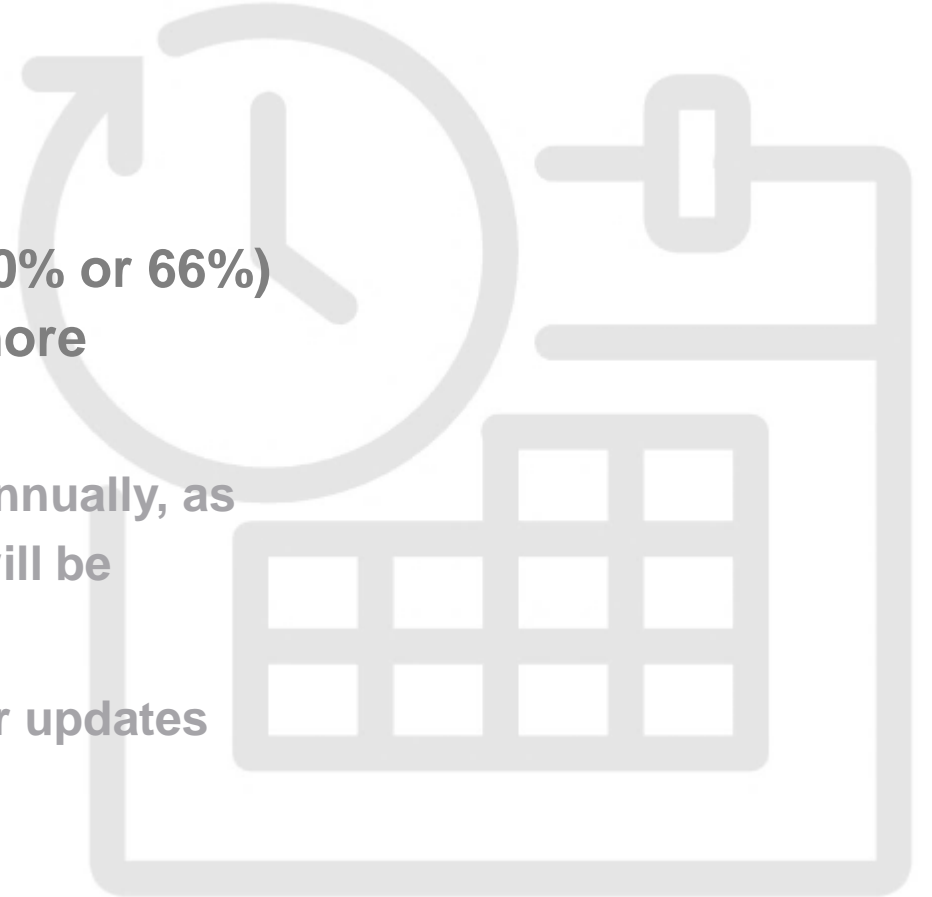
Alliance Grants timeline...



Alliance Grants will be launched in a phased approach

On May 21st, 2019, Option 1 (NSERC cost-sharing of 50% or 66%) was opened for applications requesting \$150,000 or more annually from NSERC

- Option 1 for applications requesting less than \$150,000 annually, as well as Option 2 (NSERC cost-sharing of 90% or 100%), will be phased in gradually
- Consult the Alliance Grants Program Description page for updates



Useful Links

- [Alliance Grants Website](#)
- [Instructions for completing an Alliance Grant application](#)
- [Role of partner organizations](#)
- [Evaluation Criteria](#)
- [Merit Indicators](#)
- [Use of Grant Funds](#)
- [FAQ](#)





Thank you!

Visit nserc.ca/alliance
to learn more about the
new Alliance grants.

NSERC Head Office

613-995-1111

alliance@nserc-crsng.gc.ca

NSERC Regional Offices

Toll-free

1-877-767-1767

nserc-atlantic@nserc-crsng.gc.ca

nserc-ontario@nserc-crsng.gc.ca

nserc-pacific@nserc-crsng.gc.ca

nserc-prairies@nserc-crsng.gc.ca

nserc-quebec@nserc-crsng.gc.ca



