



WE-SPARK Health Institute Igniting Discovery Grants Program 2024 Guidelines

IGNITING DISCOVERY GRANTS PROGRAM

The WE-SPARK Igniting Discovery Grants Program is an annual grant program to invest in emerging, innovative, and novel health research and education projects that are aligned with WE-SPARK Health Institute's mission and strategic priorities.

RESEARCH AREAS

The Igniting Discovery Grants will provide source funding to promote the development of early-stage, innovative health research and health education projects in Windsor-Essex. These projects may include studies related to emerging topics in health, addressing gaps in healthcare needs, igniting new health ideas, generating, and disseminating knowledge, and sparking collaborations. The intent is to:

1. Provide new research teams/ research programs with support to pursue quality projects.
2. Encourage exploratory and discovery-oriented projects.
3. Boost collaborations in the Windsor-Essex community and beyond.

These grants are intended to provide seed funding which could potentially be leveraged to generate interest and eagerness in the Windsor-Essex health research environment, result in practice changes and/or policy reform, create a wider and all-encompassing health research portfolio in Windsor-Essex, and obtain new funding from other sources.

PRIORITY AREAS

Priority announcements offer additional sources of funding for highly rated applications that are relevant to specific eligibility criteria or research areas.

Cancer Research

Funds Available: A total of 3-4 funded projects of up to \$30,000 each will be awarded.

Specific Requirements:

These grants are seeking to fund investigation into the following or similar research areas:

- Cancer prevention
- Cancer screening
- Cancer diagnosis
- Cancer treatments
- Psycho-social cancer research areas (ex. support systems, mental health, cancer disparities)
- Palliation

Hematopoietic Stem Cell Transplant Research

Funds available: \$15,000 available to fund 1 project.

Specific Requirements:

The grant is seeking to fund investigation into any of the following or similar research areas:

- Techniques to improve the success rate of hematopoietic stem cell transplants.
- Techniques to reduce or eliminate adverse side effects of hematopoietic stem cell transplants.
- Establishment of hematopoietic stem cell donor registries and recruitment of hematopoietic stem cell donors to increase the number of matching donors found.
- Education and awareness of hematopoietic stem cell donation and hematopoietic stem cell donor registries.
- Emotional, financial, or physical support for hematopoietic stem cell transplant recipients and their families.

The Tayfour and Emara Research Grant

Funds available: \$20,000 available to fund 1-2 projects.

Specific Requirements:

This grant is seeking to fund a project(s) to the most outstanding research application (regardless of the field of research) submitted by a Principal Investigator with primary affiliation at Windsor Regional Hospital.

Childhood Cancer Research

Funds available: \$25,000 available to fund 1 project.

Specific Requirements:

This grant is seeking to fund an investigation into an area that impacts the childhood cancer in the following or similar research areas:

- Prevention
- Screening
- Diagnosis
- Treatments
- Psycho-social cancer research areas (ex. Support systems, mental health, cancer disparities)
- Palliation

ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible to apply, you must:

1. Be a Principal Applicant (PA) that holds an MD or PhD, and/or must be a Core member of WE-SPARK. Eligibility for Partner Priority funding opportunities will depend on the Partner and their mandates.

- a. The term of affiliation must at least cover the proposed project period.
2. Not have secured funding for the research project you are proposing for this grant program.

Co-applicants must have either Core Membership or an Affiliate Membership with WE-SPARK.

Location of Project:

The research activity is expected to be primarily performed at 1 of the WE-SPARK Partner Institutions. If another location is proposed, strong justification must be provided.

Multiple Applications:

1. An individual cannot submit more than 1 application as PA per grant competition. This individual may however participate as a Co-applicant or Collaborator on other applications.

Subsequent Funding:

An eligible PA who has held or holds an Igniting Discovery Grant is permitted to be a PA on a subsequent Igniting Discovery Grant application only if:

1. The subsequent application is for a research project or program that was not, previously supported or is not currently supported by an Igniting Discovery Grant or other external funding.

FUNDING

One-year grant(s) will be awarded and are expected to be used for approved research-related expenditures. Automatic one (1) year no-cost extensions are applicable to all grants. If further extension is required, a request with valid justification will need to be made. This grant is intended to support research consumables and non-consumables, salaries for research personnel, small equipment (under 5K), costs of workshops/meetings, travel costs for research conferences, and publication costs of research conducted. Budgets will be evaluated for feasibility.

Non-eligible Expenses:

1. Faculty or Clinician salary
2. Tuition support
3. Office equipment

Management of Funds:

Funds will be administered either through: 1) Office of Research & Innovation Services (ORIS) at the University of Windsor (for PAs holding an appointment at the University of Windsor, Hotel-Dieu Grace Healthcare, Windsor Regional Hospital, or Erie Shores Healthcare); or 2) Applied Research & Development Office at St. Clair College (for PAs holding an appointment at St. Clair College).

Conditions of Funding:

1. Awardees are required to attend a public presentation to receive their awards.

2. Should the applications be approved for funding, any Research Ethics Board, Animal Care, or Biosafety certifications necessary for the research must be active before funds will be released.
3. It is the responsibility of the PA to maintain their eligibility throughout the term of the grant and to immediately notify the respective office at either the University of Windsor or St. Clair College of any changes that may affect their eligibility to continue to hold the grant.
4. Projects with funds not spent by the end of the automatic one-year no-cost extension may be extended for a reasonable period upon request. Unless otherwise arranged, funds not spent by the grant end date must be returned.
5. In publications and presentation to both academic and non-academic audiences, researchers must acknowledge WE-SPARK Health Institute’s support through the use of the WE-SPARK logo or a statement (i.e. “This study was supported by an Igniting Discovery Grant from the WE-SPARK Health Institute”).
6. Upon completion of the grant, the PA will be responsible for completing a final report provided by respective offices at either the University of Windsor or St. Clair College.

EVALUATION

Evaluation Criteria:

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| Merit/ Quality of Research Proposal | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Proposed research program is clear, innovative 2. Methodology is clearly defined and appropriate 3. Proposed research considers equity, diversity, and inclusion as well as sex/gender appropriately 4. Proposal distinguishes how funding is distinct from other funded programs 5. Proposed research is feasible with respect to team, timelines, proposed methods, budget, etc. |
| Excellence of Research Team | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Researcher/ research team is appropriate and complete 2. Role of research member(s) clearly defined 3. Potential for adding new health research capacity in a critical area |
| Impact of Research | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Potential of proposed research to capture new, larger grant funding in the future 2. Potential of proposed research in having ground-breaking advancements in health, clinical/health education practices, health-tech or health policy |

Other qualifiers that will be evaluated:

1. Has the proposed research been submitted to a priority research announcement?
2. Applicant’s institution and department (equal distribution of grants to partner institutions)

COMPETITION TIMELINES

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| February 26, 2024 | Grants programs launched. |
| April 1, 2024 | Letters of Intent (LOIs) to be submitted through Airtable. |

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| | LOIs are non-competitive, they are strictly to assign reviewers. If you submit an LOI, you are eligible to submit a full application. |
| May 3, 2024 | Final grant applications and packages to be submitted through Airtable. |
| July 2024 | Notices of decisions. |
| September 2024 | Funding start date. |

Contact Information

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