

**Memo**

## Office of the Vice-President, research & Innovation

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To**:** Deans

Cc: Associate Deans of Research

From**:** Rebecca Pillai Riddell, Acting Vice-President Research &

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Date**:** December 19, 2017

Subject**:** York University Internal Process for the NSERC Strategic Partnership Grant for Networks

In response to the 2018 [NSERC Strategic Partnership Grants for Networks](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/RPP-PP/SPG-SPS_eng.asp) (SPG-N) competition, which funds large-scale, multidisciplinary research projects in targeted research areas that require a network approach and that involve collaboration between academic researchers and Canadian-based organizations, the Office of the Vice-President Research and Innovation (VPRI) is launching an internal call to select proposals for submission.

Please review the following program details and the internal selection process for the NSERC SPG-Networks competition and share the information with your respective Research Directors, Research Officers, Departments, and Faculty members.

The anticipated budget for the 2018 SPG-N competition is expected to result in up to two new awards.

**NSERC STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP GRANTS FOR NETWORKS**

The goal of the Strategic Partnership Grants for Networks is to increase research and training in targeted areas that could strongly enhance Canada's economy, society and/or environment within the next 10 years. Research and training under these grants **must** be conducted through a partnership between academic researchers **and** industry or government organizations.

**Target Areas**

Proposals must address one or more of the following target areas:

* [Advanced Manufacturing](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/RPP-PP/SPGTargetAreas-SPSDomainesCibles_eng.asp#0)
* [Environment and Agriculture](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/RPP-PP/SPGTargetAreas-SPSDomainesCibles_eng.asp#1)
* [Information and Communications Technologies](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/RPP-PP/SPGTargetAreas-SPSDomainesCibles_eng.asp#2)
* [Natural Resources and Energy](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/RPP-PP/SPGTargetAreas-SPSDomainesCibles_eng.asp#3)

Applications are encouraged in clean technologies across all four target areas and with a focus on the impacts of climate change, including climate change mitigation and adaptation (if appropriate).

Applicants should be an established researcher with a solid track record in collaborative research, student training and grant management, and who demonstrated the leadership and other skills necessary for managing a complex, interdisciplinary, multi-institutional project.

Strategic Networks may be national, regional, or under exceptional circumstances, local. NSERC encourages applicants to incorporate international collaborations into their proposals and Network proposals are **required** to have an international engagement strategy.

**Network Categories**

NSERC has two application categories – A and B:

1. The proposed network will investigate a new collection of research objectives that do not build on previous network-scale activities and that **have never been funded** through an NSERC network grant, a Networks of Centres of Excellence (NCE) grant, or other federal or provincial network-scale granting programs. The network applies for SPG-N funds between $500,000 and $1 million in Year 1, and $500,000 and $1.125 million per year in Years 2 through 5, **for a maximum request of $5.5 million**.
2. The proposed network will build upon a collection of research objectives that **have been previously funded** through an NSERC network grant, an NCE grant, or other federal or provincial network-scale granting programs. The network partners must collectively assume more responsibility for funding the network compared to the previously funded network. For every dollar contributed to the network by eligible industry and government partners, up to three dollars can be requested from NSERC. Other contributions to the network are encouraged (e.g., other funding agencies, university support), but are not included in the leveraging of NSERC funds. The network can request NSERC funding between $500,000 and $1 million in Year 1, and between $500,000 and $1.125 million per year in Years 2 through 5, **for a maximum request of $5.5 million**.

**Funding Criteria**

To be funded, a SPG-N proposal must meet the following requirements:

* The network must support the SPG-N objectives and fall within the identified target areas. A minimum of 80 percent of the research will investigate one or more of the topics listed under the target areas.
* The objectives and scope of the network must be well-defined and the research results achievable within a 5 year time frame.
* The network must involve a minimum of 5 academic researchers who are eligible to receive NSERC funding, from at least 3 separate departments, faculties or institutions.
* The network must have the strong commitment and active involvement of Canadian-based partners from relevant sectors (industrial, government), as appropriate for the research area. These organizations must be involved in all stages of the network, from development of the proposal to exploitation of the research results for the benefit of Canada.
* Networks applicants must outline the measures that will be implemented to advance diversity, gender equity, and inclusion within the structure of the proposed network and its activities.
* The network must offer opportunities for enhanced training of highly qualified personnel that takes advantage of the multidisciplinary and multi-sectoral environment of a network.
* The network must have an appropriate management structure to direct, manage and integrate its activities.
* The network must have a strategy for knowledge and technology transfer to all stakeholders and the general public, as appropriate, that conforms with NSERC’s policy on intellectual property.

**Gender Equity and Diversity**

Network applicants **must** outline the measures that will be implemented to advance gender equity within the structure of the proposed network and its activities. Examples include strategies for any of the following:

* Increasing gender equity in the composition of the research team and group of trainees;
* Ensuring equitable mentorship of all trainees;
* Initiatives aimed at ensuring an equitable and inclusive research and work environment;
* The implementation of networking and leadership training events within the network that highlight gender equity.

**INTERNAL NOMINATION AND REVIEW PROCESS**

Interested Faculties are invited to submit an internal Notice of Intent (iNOI), which will be reviewed by the Strategic Projects and Opportunities Review Team (SPORT) in order to help inform selection decisions by VPRI. The deadline for iNOIs is **February 27, 2018**; however, Faculties are asked to notify Maheen Hasan by email (mhasan@yorku.ca) by January 29, 2018 of their intent to submit.

The iNOI consists of the following components:

1. iNOI Form – see attached Word document.
2. Memo from the Dean that explains the alignment of the proposed network with the strategic objectives of the Faculty, and indicates financial and/or other resource commitments. The memo must provide rationale for why and/or how:
	* The network is an important investment for the Faculty and links to future plans for the Faculty (areas of strategic development, key hires, etc.).
	* The network complements or builds on existing partnerships in the Faculty.
3. A description of the proposed Network (Category A – 12 pages max, Category B – 16 pages max) that includes the following:
	* Name of the network (“NSERC” must be included in the name of the network, and the name should be meaningful and descriptive of the proposed research);
	* Proposed research and fit with the target area(s);
	* Need for a network approach to the proposed research;
	* Strengths and track record of the applicant to lead a large multi-institutional team of researchers;
	* Expertise, involvement and role of the key researchers in the network;
	* Extent of involvement of partners in all stages of the network;
	* Potential for international collaborations that could contribute to attaining network objectives;
	* Management structure;
	* Plans for training highly qualified personnel;
	* Benefits to Canada and the partners;
	* Estimated annual budget, including funds requested from NSERC and estimated in-kind and cash (if applicable) contributions from the partners;
	* **For Category B networks only** – details about previous network activities and a justification for additional network funding.

Please note that Associate Deans Research need to ensure that submitted iNOI documents have all necessary requirements outlined above. Any iNOI with missing components will be deemed incomplete and will not be reviewed by SPORT. The iNOI must be submitted by no later than **February 27, 2018** to Maheen Hasan, Strategic and Institutional Research Specialist in the Office of Research Services.

**COMPETITION TIMELINE:**

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| Preliminary Notification of Interest to Submit | January 29, 2018 |
| iNOI submission deadline | February 27, 2018 |
| SPORT Feedback | Mid-March |
| ORS deadline for draft of completed Preliminary Application | March 24, 2018 |
| ORS deadline for technical review of completed Preliminary Application | March 29, 2018 |
| NSERC deadline for Preliminary Application | April 2, 2018 |
| NSERC “Invitation to Apply” results | May 2018 |