NSERC Collaborative Research and Training Experience (CREATE) Program – Letter of Intent (LOI)

Please send the internal LOI package to joanne.hui@ontariotechu.ca by March 6, 2023, if you intend on applying; this step is mandatory so that we can determine if an internal selection process is required.

Please see below for more information on this year’s NSERC Collaborative Research and Training Experience (CREATE) Program. NSERC has a quota system at the LOI stage of this program; Ontario Tech has a (tentative) quota of two (2) LOIs that can be submitted to this year’s competition (to be confirmed). Similar to previous years, an internal competition will be held to determine the LOIs to be submitted to NSERC if internal applications exceed our quota. A multidisciplinary internal selection committee will be created by the VPRI based on the recommendations of the Deans to determine which applications will move to the NSERC competition to fulfill our quota. For those selected to apply to NSERC, A letter of support from the VPRI is required confirming that the application has been endorsed by the university as part of our quota. The application is submitted by the applicant through the NSERC online system, and a letter from the VPRI must be included with the submission.

Objective:

To create a value-added training program for graduate (master’s and doctoral) students beyond that of normal graduate programming. The CREATE program is designed to improve the mentoring and training environment for the Canadian researchers of tomorrow by improving training in areas associated with Canada’s research priorities through an innovative training program that provides training in professional skills, communication, and collaboration, as well as providing experience relevant to both academic and non-academic research environments. It should provide improved job readiness and professional skills and soft skills training is a “core required element” of any CREATE project. Explicit training (courses, workshops) is required. The committee expects to see innovative pedagogy or interestingly different methods of training (e.g., immersive experiences).

These innovative programs must foster the acquisition and development of important professional skills among students and postdoctoral fellows that complement their qualifications and technical skills and should encourage the following as appropriate:

- Student mobility, nationally or internationally, between individual universities and between universities and other sectors
- Interdisciplinary research within the natural sciences and engineering (NSE), or at the interface between the NSE and health or between the NSE and the social sciences and humanities—however, the main focus of the training must still lie within the NSE
- Increased collaboration between industry and academia
- For the Industrial stream – an additional objective is to support improved job readiness within the industrial sector by exposing participants to the specific challenges of this sector and training people with the skills identified by industry

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Value</th>
<th>$1.65M over 6 years ($100K-200K in the first year and $250K-350K per year for up to five subsequent years). At least 80% of the CREATE grant must be used for trainees’ stipends.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Duration</td>
<td>Up to six years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Timeline | **Monday, March 6:** Mandatory Submission of internal LOI package and RGA to ORS  
  - More information below in the “Application Procedures and Timeline” section  
  - **Note:** If you do not submit your internal LOI package by March 6, there is no guarantee that your application will be considered by the internal selection committee  
**Week of April 3:** Ontario Tech committee decision, if required  
  - Feedback from the committee and ORS  
**Wednesday, April 26:** Mandatory ORS LOI review (for selected applicants)  
**Monday, May 1:** NSERC Deadline at 8:00 pm (ET). Please submit LOI to [NSERC Online Portal](#) by 9 am to avoid delays.  
**Friday, September 22:** NSERC Full Application deadline, if invited |
| Webinar | English session: **February 9, 2023, 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. (ET)**  
French session: **February 10, 2023, 1:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. (ET)**  
Please verify that Webex works on your computer prior to February 9. Registration is not necessary – anyone can connect using [this link](#).  
More ways to join:  
Join the meeting with the [webinar link](#). |
Join by meeting number

Meeting number (access code): 171 539 5408
Tap to join from a mobile device (attendees only)
1-844-426-4405,1715395408## Canada Toll Free
+1-613-714-9906,1715395408## Canada Toll (Ottawa)

Join by phone

1-844-426-4405 Canada Toll Free
+1-613-714-9906 Canada Toll (Ottawa)

The webinar will be recorded and the slides and audio recording will be available following the presentation.

Streams

1. Regular stream:
   • Can involve Canadian/international academic/government/industry/NGO collaborators
2. Industrial Stream:
   • Requires participation of industrial collaborators on the program committee
   • Requires industrial internships for trainees of at least 20% of their students
   • Up to 50% of the CREATE grants will be dedicated to the industrial stream

Apply

Refer to the “Application Procedures and Timeline” section below and the attached internal LOI form and CREATE LOI Tip Sheet.

Eligibility Conditions:

- The lead applicant (PI) must be from an NSERC-supported field at an NSERC-eligible university and must fulfil NSERC’s eligibility criteria.
- A researcher may only be the lead applicant on one CREATE initiative annually
- Researchers can participate in a maximum of two CREATE grants and/or LOIs at the same time as either an applicant or co-applicant (active or applied for)
- At least one co-applicant is required in the proposal from each involved university. All co-applicants must fulfil NSERC’s eligibility criteria.
  - Note: at least 70% of the team must be from NSE fields, but co-applicants at the interdisciplinary frontier between NSE and the areas covered under the umbrella of SSHRC and CIHR may be incorporated into proposals.
Additional Requirements:

- Researchers who currently hold or participate in an active CREATE grant must clearly describe their distinct contribution to and justification for their participation in the proposed training program
- Researchers who are applying in a research area already supported by other active CREATE grants must clearly describe how this application differs from those already funded
- Previous CREATE grantees and co-grantees must clearly describe how this application differs from those already funded

Application Procedures and Timeline:

1. **MANDATORY**: Submit internal LOI package to ORS by **March 6, 2023** which includes:
   1. Internal CREATE LOI form (attached)
   2. Outline of training program (2 pages maximum)
   3. Excellence of proposed team of researchers (3 pages maximum)
   4. Lead Applicant’s Form 100
   5. Signed Research Grant Authorization form
   6. A Letter from industry (if applying to Industrial Stream). A letter or email from the industrial collaborator must confirm a commitment to: 1) host internships for at least 20% of the duration of the training, and 2) have a representative on the Program Committee.  
      For the purposes of the internal LOI, an email indicating commitment will be sufficient. A letter outlining the details of the commitment will be required for NSERC LOI submission.

2. Notification of internal selection, if required* (week of April 3, 2023); feedback provided by internal selection committee and ORS review.

3. ORS will prepare letter of support from VPRI (selected applications only)

4. Submit LOI to NSERC by May 1, 2023. Please submit your LOI to the NSERC portal by **9 am**.

Contact:

Joanne Hui, Grants Officer
joanne.hui@ontariotechu.ca