



UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN
College of Medicine
OFFICE OF THE VICE-DEAN RESEARCH
MEDICINE.USASK.CA/RESEARCH.PHP



Mingling Minds

PROMOTING AND FACILITATING
INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATIONS

2021 RAPID RESPONSE COVID-19 RESEARCH FUNDING GUIDELINES

AN OVDR AND MINGLING MINDS FUNDING OPPORTUNITY



CALL FOR APPLICATIONS: JANUARY 2021

APPLICATION DEADLINE: 4:00 PM FEBRUARY 1, 2021

SUBMIT APPLICATION TO OVDR.FUNDING@USASK.CA

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NOTE: Guidelines and requirements contained in this package are specific to this rapid call, and not generalizable to OVDR's regular CoMRAD program call.

Contacts

For questions about eligibility, program guidelines or review process:

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For general inquiries and application submission: ovdr.funding@usask.ca or mingling.minds@usask.ca

Purpose

Provide funding to catalyze small-scale, **time-sensitive research projects** focused on the **COVID-19 vaccine roll-out, delivery, and impact in Saskatchewan.**

This Mingling Minds COVID-19 funding opportunity will support short-term, small scale research projects that:

- provide evidence to inform the clinical and public health response
- provide evidence to inform decision-making and planning at the provincial, national and international levels
- are highly feasible and produce timely and concrete deliverables
- involves interdisciplinary collaboration with a minimum of two disciplines represented

Important Dates

Competition Launch	January, 2021
Application Deadline	February 1, 2021, 4:00 PM
Funding Decision	March 1, 2021
Funding Start Date	April 30, 2021

Funding Available

The Office of the Vice Dean Research (OVDR) and Mingling Minds will provide up to a maximum of \$10,000 in seed funding for eligible projects that are approved by the College(s) to proceed under the University of Saskatchewan [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Updates for research continuity, scale back, and shut down issued on March 22nd, 2020.](#)

There is no minimum for funding requested. All applications, no matter the amount, will be considered equally according to the evaluation criteria.

There is \$50,000 available to fund multiple grants in this call.

Duration

The grant provided is for up to **twelve months (1 year)** maximum. Work must be completed in that timeframe.

Time is of the essence. Proposed activities should be feasible to complete in a timely manner in order to have the intended impact.

At the end of the funding period all unused balances will be returned to the OVDR or Mingling Minds. No extensions will be available except in cases of institutionally-approved leaves (eg. family-related or medical leaves, etc.).

Eligibility

Collaborative Team

As this funding initiative is intended to promote interdisciplinary collaboration, at least two applicants representing at least two different disciplines is strongly recommended to be included as team members.

Multiple Applications

Only **one** application will be accepted from any eligible faculty member as the Principal Investigator (PI) or Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI). They may be a co-applicant on an unlimited number of other applications.

Funding Streams

- College of Medicine (CoM) faculty members - faculty members with a primary academic appointment in the College of Medicine.
- Mingling Minds members – Current Faculty members of Mingling Minds in good standing. Mingling Minds committee members are eligible to apply.

Adjudication Process

Applications will be assessed by 2 – 3 reviewers primarily drawn from faculty members within the College of Medicine with a range of expertise in the following research fields: Biomedical Sciences, Clinical Sciences and Social, Cultural, Environmental, and Population Health. As required, additional reviewers with pertinent expertise will participate from other colleges at the University of Saskatchewan.

All applicants must ensure they write their applications in a manner that can be understood and assessed by a non-expert in their field. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed.

Evaluation Criteria

The following evaluation criteria will be used:

1. Quality of project/applicants:
 - a. Extent to which the application responds to the program purpose;
 - b. Relevance of the proposed approach and timeliness;
 - c. Ability of the project team to carry out the proposed activities;
 - d. Ability of team to quickly mobilize necessary resources;
 - e. Appropriateness of the budget and justification for amount requested.
2. Impact of the Research: potential to contribute to the response to COVID-19 and enhance competitiveness for CoMRAD funding.

Applicants will be notified by email of the application outcome.

Sex and Gender Equity Inclusion

Applicants are encouraged to incorporate sex and gender considerations into their proposal and into the composition of their team.

Indigenous Health Research

Includes research in any field of discipline that is conducted by, grounded in, or engaged with First Nations, Inuit, Métis or other Indigenous nations, communities, societies or individuals, and their wisdom, cultures, experiences or knowledge systems, as expressed in their dynamic forms, past and present.

Patient Oriented Research

For Patient Oriented applications, please specify alignment with patient oriented research engagement strategy:

<https://www.scpor.ca/scpor-patientoriented-research-level-of-engagement-tool>.

Reporting Requirements

Written Report

The OVDR recognizes that achieving research results from a novel pilot project often takes time, and as such we have adjusted our reporting requirements to more effectively track and celebrate the success of our researchers.

All Mingling Minds COVID-19 Research Funding recipients will be contacted and provided with forms to complete and return following the end date of their research fund.

Failure to submit the report will exclude the applicant(s) from being eligible to apply for any future funding from the OVDR. A report template will be emailed to recipients.

Approvals

Principal Investigators are responsible for securing any approvals required for the project. Any research or study conducted at University facilities, or undertaken by persons connected to the University, involving human subjects, animals, or biohazardous materials must be reviewed and approved by the appropriate Research Ethics Board (REB) or Committee. In order to guarantee that this policy is adhered to, we require applicants send proof (e.g., Ethics Certificate of Approval number) to our office that the ethics application has been submitted within one month of receiving the award letter. If this is not possible, recipients must contact the OVDR with a detailed explanation of why the necessary paperwork will be delayed.

Research must also comply with the Occupational Health and Safety Act (and related federal, provincial, and municipal regulations), University policies on Occupational Health Safety and Environmental matters, and all University research-related policies. If this applies a copy of approvals must be forwarded to the Research Services and Ethics Office, before the grant account can be activated.

A research account CANNOT be opened until appropriate protocols have been approved. Successful applicants who do not secure the appropriate approvals by **August 31 2021**, will no longer be eligible for Mingling Minds COVID-19 Research Funding.

Publication Acknowledgement

All publications resulting from the research funded by the grant must acknowledge University of Saskatchewan, Mingling Minds COVID-19 Research Funding sponsored by the Office of the Vice-Dean Research, Medicine and Mingling Minds.

Application Instructions

The application will include four parts:

1. Research Proposal (two page maximum)
2. References (one page maximum)
3. Figures and Tables (one page maximum, if applicable)
4. Budget and Justification (one page maximum)

Formatting

All application attachments should adhere to the following formatting rules:

- **Header:** Include Applicant's last name and title/label (e.g., Smith, Project Title)
- **Footer:** Page X of X
- **Margins:** 1"
- **Page:** 8.5" x 11"
- **Font:** Arial, 11 point
- **Line Spacing:** single-spaced
- **References:** attach a separate page including references (one page maximum)

Research Proposal

Two page maximum, addressing the following sections:

- **Aim of the Research:**
In this section, please identify the aim(s) and objectives of the proposed research.
- **Relevance:**
In this section, please identify how the proposed research meets the Rapid Response COVID-19 Research Funding program purpose.
- **Activity Description:**
In this section, describe the methods of the proposed research and a description of the activity. Please provide a timeline of the project and the ability of the project team to carry out the proposed activities.
- **Impact of the Research:**
In this section, please identify the potential impact of the research (i.e. potential to contribute to the local or global response to COVID-19).

Figures and Tables

One page maximum of figures and tables, if applicable.

Budget and Justification

One page maximum detailed budget showing expenses and addressing the following:

- **Resources:** outline the ability of the team to quickly mobilize necessary resources,
- **Budget Description:** appropriateness of the budget
- **Justification:** justification for amount requested.

There is no minimum amount. Budget lines should be reflected and justified. List all amounts inclusive of taxes (provincial and federal).

Allowable Expenses

All expenses must be clearly justified in relation to this initiative and cover only the direct costs.

Eligible Expenses Include

- Salary support for research staff, postdocs, students, and other trainees
- University-based core and other support services
- Knowledge translation and mobilization activities
- Supplies

Ineligible Expenses

Due to the time-limited nature of this funding program, infrastructure and significant research equipment purchases are generally not considered eligible expenses unless well justified.