



REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS:

OHTN RESEARCHER-IN-RESIDENCE (ACADEMIC STREAM)

The Ontario HIV Treatment Network:

Funding Research with Real-Life Impact

<p>Launch Date: November 1, 2011 Application Deadline: January 6, 2012 (11:59pm) Fund Start Date: April 1, 2012</p>

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Description

The **OHTN Researcher-in-Residence (Academic Stream)** was developed to help realize the mission of the OHTN – to improve the health and well-being of people living with and at risk of HIV in Ontario through a network that promotes research and evidence to drive change. This will be accomplished by funding people who are doing work that: a) is relevant to one or more of the populations most affected by HIV in Ontario (people living with HIV, gay men and other men who have sex with men, African, Caribbean and Black men and women, Aboriginal men and women, men and women who use drugs, and women who have unprotected sex or share drug equipment with people from these populations); b) has the potential to have a measurable impact in the short to medium term (i.e., in the next 2 to 5 years); and c) is scientifically rigorous.

The Researcher-in-Residence (Academic Stream) award will support academic researchers from outside of Ontario to bring expertise to Ontario, to:

- Teach and mentor other researchers and trainees in their field of expertise
- Engage in intellectual exchange, including knowledge translation and exchange activities with the OHTN and others to take advantage of the presence of a leading HIV researcher

Funds Available

Up to \$85,000 is available from the OHTN to support one (1) OHTN Researcher-in-Residence (Academic Stream) for up to one year. This award is not renewable.

The award amount is allocated as follows:

- Up to \$75,000 towards the salary and benefits of the Researcher-in-Residence (justified and prorated according to time spent)
- Up to \$10,000 towards direct research, capacity building, and knowledge translation and exchange costs (i.e. Research Allowance)

Funds will be available to support relocation and accommodation costs.

Payments will be made semi-annually based on satisfactory progress reporting (including quarterly teleconferences).

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Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for the OHTN Researcher-in-Residence (Academic Stream) award, the applicant must:

- Be at least 5 years post-PhD or MD, and be considered a leader¹ in their field of research
- Have an area of expertise significantly impacting one or more of the populations most affected by HIV in Ontario:
 - people living with HIV
 - gay men and other men who have sex with men
 - African, Caribbean and Black men and women
 - Aboriginal men and women
 - Men and women who use drugs
 - Women who have unprotected sex or share drug equipment with people from the populations listed above
- Be located outside of Ontario, and may be located outside of Canada
- Be willing to relocate to Ontario for the duration of the residency
- Be released from teaching, clinical, supervisory and/or service/administrative workload at the home institution for the duration of the residency
- Identify the researchers and trainees to be trained/mentored
- Demonstrate how the residency will have short- to mid-term impacts (within 2-5 years) on the HIV epidemic in Ontario
- Adhere to the [Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for the Research Involving Humans \(Version 2\)](#)

The OHTN will actively promote this funding opportunity to researchers working in HIV outside of Ontario who may not be aware of this new funding opportunity.

How to Apply

Applicants will complete and submit their application using the OHTN's web-based Grants Application Manager.

****NOTE****

1. OHTN Researcher-in-Residence (Academic Stream) award applications must be accessed for the first time at https://www.GrantRequest.com/SID_920?SA=SNA&FID=35029
2. Once created, applications must be re-accessed using https://www.grantrequest.com/SID_920/ and entering a user-unique ID and password
3. The application does not need to be completed in order, or all at once. Incomplete applications may be saved (click 'Save & Finish Later') and returned to at a later date
4. Print a copy of the application for your records *prior* to electronic submission

¹ Leaders may be considered to be those whose publications are generally cited in other's peer reviewed publications, who are principal investigators for a substantial number of research projects, who are consulted by government officials, the media, community-based organizations and/or academic peers on a regular basis, who participate regularly in federal level peer review panels, and/or who have been called upon to present testimony at trials

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Eligibility Questionnaire

Upon entering the application form, applicants will be prompted by a series of questions intended to ensure the applicant's eligibility for this funding opportunity and with respect to the **Funding Research with Real-Life Impact Policy**. If applicants are uncertain about their eligibility they should consult with the [Manager, Research Funding & Development](#).

Relevance of Research

Describe the relevance of the proposed plan to the research and HIV communities in Ontario, specifically those populations most affected by HIV. What gaps in existing knowledge will the proposed residency fill, and what is the intended impact? How might the proposed plan improve the lives of those living with and at risk of HIV in Ontario? *(maximum 200 words, entered directly into application form)*

Plain Language Summary

Provide a lay language summary of the proposed plan and the anticipated impact it will have on Ontario's capacity to address priority issues within the HIV research sector. Describe the knowledge translation and exchange approaches to be utilized to facilitate the desired outcomes. *(maximum 500 words, entered directly into application form)*

Community Engagement Plan

Community engagement in HIV research is viewed by the OHTN as an essential mechanism to ensuring that research is relevant to community needs. The funding policy **Funding Research with Real-Life Impact** reinvigorates the OHTN's commitment to meaningfully engage community members throughout the research process.

Describe how the community has previously been engaged in research conducted by the applicant, including decision-making processes, advisory roles, capacity-building, dissemination, uptake and other activities as appropriate. Describe the engagement process to be applied in the current proposal, and the steps taken to date to demonstrate progress. The OHTN requires investigators to meaningfully engage the HIV community in all stages of the research process beginning with conception and development through to dissemination and uptake of the research results. Applicants are strongly encouraged to partner with community-based organizations, people living with or at risk of HIV, and government decision-makers during development stages, to encourage maximal relevance and uptake of research results. *(maximum 500 words, entered directly into application form)*

Proposal

The proposal (up to 11 pages) should illustrate a clear rationale for the funding being requested:

Research and Training Plan (5-6 pages):

- a description of the gaps in Ontario's research expertise that the applicant wishes to address
- a succinct description of their current program of research (objectives, methods, analyses), including its potential for impact on one or more of the populations most affected by HIV in Ontario, and how the applicant is positioned to address the gaps in Ontario's research expertise

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- anticipated challenges and proposed solutions and limitations

Impacts (2-3 pages):

- a description of the anticipated impacts of the residency, and how these impacts will be assured

Knowledge Translation & Exchange Plan (1-2 pages):

- a description of any knowledge translation and exchange activities planned while the researcher is in Ontario

More on Impact

The OHTN is adopting the impact framework developed by the [Canadian Academy of Health Sciences](#) for the measurement of returns on investment in health research.

Applications are expected to fulfill those categories that are appropriate to the research being proposed.

There are 5 possible categories of impact:

- Advancing Knowledge - includes new discoveries and breakthroughs from health research, and contributions to the scientific literature
- Research Capacity-Building - includes the development and enhancement of research skills in individuals and teams (personnel, activity funding, infrastructure)
- Informing Decision-Making - includes the impacts of research in the areas of science, public, clinical, and managerial decision-making practice and policy
- Health-Impact - encompasses advances in prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and palliation when related to research (in groupings of health status, determinants of health, and health system performance)
- Broad Economic and Social Impacts - commercialization of discoveries, direct cost savings, and human capital gains

Applicants should refer to these categories and indicators when describing the impact of their proposal.

Note: Generating knowledge and contributing to the scientific literature (Advancing Knowledge) is important but it is not enough of an impact on its own to qualify for funding. Proposals must also demonstrate impact in at least one of the other four categories. Ideally, the OHTN will fund research that, taken with other evidence, will lead to a new or improved intervention, program, service, treatment or policy.

Proposals (not including references) should be no more than 11 pages, single spaced, minimum 11 point font, with 1" margins. Proposals, including references, must be converted to PDF prior to uploading into the application form.

Timeline

A separate year by year plan for the proposed activities, including proposed/anticipated impacts, should be included.

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Mentoring Plan

The (maximum 3 page) mentoring plan should include a description of the proposed training and mentoring plan:

- may include seminars, teaching, workshops, working one-on-one with an Ontario-based investigator, and/or other investigators, students, trainees, and community partners
- including a description of the proposed investigator(s), trainees, or mentees, and the amount of time to be committed to being trained/mentored

Research Allowance Proposal

A brief overview (maximum 2 pages) of the plan and activities to be conducted using the research allowance should be included.

Impact

Using bullet points, per the categories outlined above, list the top 2-3 impacts per (relevant) category anticipated from the successful achievement of the proposal. This information will be tracked to enhance our research funding accountability and reporting. (*maximum 100 words per category, entered directly into application form*)

Appendices

1. Applicants may upload up to three (3) manuscripts (submitted, accepted for publication, or published) that are relevant to the proposal (*manuscripts should be compressed to ensure easy upload*)
2. Applicants may upload up to three (3) products (presentations, testimonials, summaries) that demonstrate the dissemination and uptake of their research results
3. Questionnaires, surveys, or other tools related to the current proposal should be uploaded.

Host Institution Verification

The [Host Institution Verification form](#) should be downloaded and completed per the instructions. The verification form certifies the host institution's support of the application and attests to the research-related salary support to be provided to the applicant if successful. The verification form articulates the proportion and duration of time to be committed to the residency, and describes the equipment, office space, library access, and other amenities to be provided for the duration of the residency.

Home Institution Letter of Support

The applicant's home institution should submit a letter supporting the applicant's secondment to the host institution, and verifying the release from teaching, clinical, supervisory, or service/administrative workload at the home institution for the duration of the award. The relation of this release to the salary support being provided by the OHTN should be clearly articulated. Any ongoing research-related workload should also be clearly articulated.

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Letters of Reference

Letters are required from **three** individuals with whom the applicant has worked, and who are in a position to give an assessment of the applicant's suitability for the OHTN Researcher-in-Residence (Academic Stream). These letters should be submitted by the deadline date electronically to the OHTN (jmajor@ohrn.on.ca) by the referee, or by mail in separate envelopes, signed over the seal by the individuals providing the testimonials.

Applicant CV

Applicants should include a completed [Common CV](#) finalized for CIHR. The OHTN intends to become a member of the Common CV network in the future, and will personalize the Common CV for its purposes for subsequent funding calls. All relevant attachments (Most Significant Contributions, Activities & Contributions, and Publications) should be included.

Investigator/Mentee CVs

A CV (Common CV preferred) should be included for each proposed investigator/mentee to be trained by the applicant in a one-on-one format. CVs for seminar or workshop participants are not required.

Budget

Download and complete the [detailed budget template](#).

In a separate document, include a justification for the requested budget using the following guidelines:

- Researcher salary (up to \$75,000 annually): Indicate the proportion of (up to 100%²) and duration of (3-12 months) time to be dedicated to the residency award, and whether this includes pro-rated benefits for the proportion of time being requested.
- Research Allowance (up to \$10,000): Describe the research, capacity building, and knowledge translation and exchange activities to be undertaken during the period of the award, and the costs of each.

Submitting the Proposal

Applications for the OHTN Researcher-in-Residence (Academic Stream) award must be submitted electronically by the application deadline. Where electronic copies (including scans, which are acceptable) of documents are not available, applicants may submit in unstapled hard copy only, via trackable courier; however these documents must be received by the deadline.

Documents of the same nature should be collated together before uploading and submitting. For example, please submit all support letters in one electronic document.

² The time to be committed to the residency may not be 100% due to the investigator's ongoing research-related commitments at the home institution

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No changes can be made to a grant application after the submission deadline. Applicants may update the OHTN about developments that arise after the submission deadline which may impact on the reviewer judgments, but cannot in any way alter the proposal submitted. For instance, applicants may alert the OHTN about manuscript submissions/acceptances and successes in obtaining grant funds, but cannot alter any aspect of the proposal submitted.

Please be advised that all application materials and information provided to the OHTN, including personal information such as sexual orientation or HIV status is kept strictly confidential and only forwarded to the members of the Scientific Review Committee and external grant reviewers. It may also be referenced in the review of your application. Please omit any personal information from your application that you do not want shared with members of the Scientific Review Committee or external reviewers. Contact Jennifer Major if you have any questions.

Note: Allow a sufficient amount of time to ensure successful electronic submission. File limits have been imposed to ensure your application is accessible to reviewers. If you experience any difficulty with the online process, please notify Research Development staff at least 48 hours prior to the deadline so that any issues may be resolved.

Address hard copy documents (if applicable) to:

Ontario HIV Treatment Network
c/o Jennifer Major, Manager, Research Funding & Development
1300 Yonge Street, Suite 600
Toronto ON M4T 1X3

Evaluation Criteria & Review Process

If applicants are uncertain about their eligibility they should consult with the [Manager, Research Funding & Development](#) before submitting a proposal.

All proposals submitted to the OHTN for research grants or awards are evaluated for their relevance and potential impact, as well as their scientific and technical merit. All submissions will go through the following two-stage review process.

Stage 1: Administrative Review

All submitted proposals will be subject to an administrative review by the Manager, Research Funding & Development, and the Chair, Scientific Review Committee to ensure that only proposals that meet the eligibility criteria for both the award and are consistent with the Funding Research with Real-Life Impact Policy, are considered for funding. If applicants are uncertain about their eligibility they should consult with the Manager, Research Funding & Development before submitting a proposal.

Stage 2: Scientific and Community Review

Eligible proposals will then be assigned to scientific and community or research/knowledge user reviewers with appropriate expertise in the areas in the proposal. Each application will be independently

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reviewed by: (a) two scientific reviewers (primary / secondary) to evaluate the scientific and methodological aspects of the proposal (see scientific review criteria below), and (b) two community or research/knowledge user reviewers (primary / secondary) who will evaluate the relevance and impact to the community (see overall impact criteria below). Each reviewer will rate five key elements (see below) and then provide an overall scientific or impact score.

At the scientific review meeting, the review will begin with each of the four reviewers announcing their preliminary overall scores. The scientific review will then proceed, with the primary reviewer presenting the proposal and his/her overall scientific assessment (strengths and weaknesses) followed by the 2nd scientific review. The community or research/knowledge user reviewers will then present their assessment of impact, with the primary reviewer presenting his/her overall assessment of the impact of the proposal (strengths and weaknesses) followed by the 2nd community or research/knowledge user review. After both the scientific and impact reviews have been presented, the Chair will lead an open discussion with the larger committee about the relative merits of the team and the overall proposal. Following this discussion, the Chair will then re-poll the reviewers to see if they want to make any final adjustments to their scores. The scientific reviewers will come to consensus about the range of scores for the overall scientific review within which the other committee members will vote. The community or research/knowledge user reviewers will go through the same process.

Once the assigned reviewers have reached the range of scores for the overall science and impact, each member of the review committee will then vote within this range. In the event that a committee member feels that he/she must vote outside of the agreed-upon range, he/she should make this known to the Chair and committee. Each proposal will receive final scientific and impact scores based on the average of all scores cast by the committee.

For funding decisions, the final two scientific and impact scores for each proposal will be summed and averaged, and then the scores for all proposals will be ranked from highest to lowest. Only proposals scoring less than or equal to 3 for their final score will be considered for funding.

Scientific Review Criteria: Scientific Reviewers will assess assigned proposals based on each of the five review criteria below to determine scientific and health / technical merit, and give a separate score for each (using the scoring chart below).

1. **Significance/Relevance:** Does the proposal address an *important* and *relevant* problem or critical barrier to progress in the HIV research field in Ontario? Is the proposal relevant to the priority population(s)? How will the successful completion of the project/program of research improve treatments, services, or prevention interventions for those infected and at risk of HIV? Will the knowledge exchange approaches put research evidence into the hands of people who will use it? (Score out of 9)
2. **Investigator(s):** Are the investigators and collaborators (if applicable) well suited to the proposal? If new investigators, do they have appropriate experience and training? If established investigators, do they have an ongoing record of accomplishments that have had a tangible

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- impact? Have the applicants demonstrated and described a clear commitment to mentor, be mentored, work collaboratively and build capacity in the Ontario HIV sector? *(Score out of 9)*
3. **Innovation:** Does the proposal challenge and seek to shift current research, clinical practice, or service paradigms by exploring novel theoretical concepts, approaches, methodologies, or interventions? Is a refinement, improvement, or new application of theoretical concepts, approaches, methodologies, or interventions warranted? *(Score out of 9)*
 4. **Approach:** Are the overall strategy, methodology, and analyses well-reasoned and appropriate to accomplish the specific aims of the proposal? Does the proposal present potential problems, alternative strategies, and benchmarks for success presented? Does the proposal discuss and address any ethical risks and strategies to mitigate those risks? Has the investigator sought community input to develop the proposal, and will community feedback be an integral component of the research as it unfolds? Is capacity building an essential element of the proposal? Are the KTE methods and approaches proposed appropriate? *(Score out of 9)*
 5. **Environment:** Will the research environment in which the work will be conducted contribute to the probability of success? Are the organizational support, equipment and other physical resources available to the investigators adequate for the proposed activities? *(Score out of 9)*

Overall Impact Criteria: Community or Research/Knowledge User Reviewers will briefly describe and provide an *overall impact score (Score out of 9)* to reflect their assessment of:

1. **Relevance and Potential Impact to Priority Population:** Rate the relevance of the proposed research proposal to address key issues in one or more of the populations most affected by HIV in Ontario *(Score out of 9)*
2. **What is the Potential Need for Change and Influence:** What is the relative need for achieving the desired impact (i.e. will the proposed research have a substantial impact on a population that has unmet needs)? *(Score out of 9)*
3. **Timing for Potential Influence and Impact:** What is the likelihood of the proposal having a short or medium term (i.e. in 2-5 years), sustained, tangible impact on the health and well-being of people living with and at risk of HIV in Ontario? *(Score out of 9)*
4. **How will the Potential Influence and Impact be Achieved:** Are the proposed pathways to impact, the role of the proposed research in achieving impact and the proposed KTE methods clear and feasible? Are they likely to realize the expected impact and get research into the hands of those who need it most? *(Score out of 9)*
5. **How will the Potential Influence and Impact be Measured and Evaluated:** Does the project team clearly describe how they will measure the potential for change and influence? How will they know it had the planned impact? How will they measure whether the information got into the hands of the targeted users and was used? *(Score out of 9)*

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More on Impact

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Applications are expected to fulfill those categories that are appropriate to the research being proposed:

1. Advancing Knowledge - includes new discoveries and breakthroughs from health research, and contributions to the scientific literature
2. Research Capacity-Building - includes the development and enhancement of research skills in individuals and teams (personnel, activity funding, infrastructure)
3. Informing Decision-Making - includes the impacts of research in the areas of science, public, clinical, and managerial decision-making practice and policy
4. Health-Impact - encompasses advances in prevention, diagnosis, treatment, and palliation when related to research (in groupings of health status, determinants of health, and health system performance)
5. Broad Economic and Social Impacts - commercialization of discoveries, direct cost savings, and human capital gains

Note: *Generating knowledge and contributing to the scientific literature is important but it is not enough of an impact on its own to qualify for funding. Proposals must also demonstrate impact in at least one of the other four categories. Ideally, the OHTN will fund research that, taken with other evidence, will lead to a new or improved intervention, program, service, treatment or policy.*

Scoring Chart

Impact	Score	Descriptor	Additional Guidance on Strengths/Weaknesses
High	1	Exceptional	Exceptionally strong with essentially no weaknesses
	2	Outstanding	Extremely strong with negligible weaknesses
	3	Excellent	Very strong with only some minor weaknesses
Medium	4	Very Good	Strong but with numerous minor weaknesses
	5	Good	Strong but with at least one moderate weakness
	6	Satisfactory	Some strengths but also some moderate weaknesses
Low	7	Fair	Some strengths but with at least one major weakness
	8	Marginal	A few strengths and a few major weaknesses
	9	Poor	Very few strengths and numerous major weaknesses
Additional Information for Scoring Guidance Table			
Non-numeric score options: NR = Not Recommended for Further Consideration, DF = Deferred, AB = Abstention, CF = Conflict, NP = Not Present, ND = Not Discussed			
Minor Weakness: An easily addressable weakness that does not substantially lessen impact			
Moderate Weakness: A weakness that lessens impact			
Major Weakness: A weakness that severely limits impact			

Adapted from the U.S. National Institutes of Health [Enhanced Review Criteria](#) (NOT-OD-09-025)

Additional Review Criteria. All reviewers will pay special attention to **the following additional items when assessing a proposal and its overall impact:**

- a) **Protections for Human Participants:** For research that involves human participants, the committee will evaluate the proposal in accordance with the [Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans – Version 2](#). In particular, the committee should highlight any issues relating to: 1) vulnerability of participants, 2) potential risks to participants, 3) adequacy of protection against risks, 4) potential benefits to the participants and others, 5) importance of the knowledge to be gained, and 6) data and safety monitoring for clinical trials.
- b) **Inclusion of participants of all genders, ages and ethno-racial backgrounds:** The committee will evaluate the proposed research with respect to the appropriate inclusion of participants from groups that have historically been under-represented, such as racialized people, women, transgender people and children.
- c) **Research involving the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples of Canada:** For proposals involving the First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples of Canada, the committee will evaluate the proposal in terms of its adherence to Tri-Council Policy Statement Version 2, [Chapter 9](#), and to the [Ownership, Control, Access and Possession \(OCAP\) Principles](#), which have been developed as an expression of self-determination in research. The key notions of those principles relate to the collective ownership of group information, control over research and information, management of access to their data, and physical possession of the data.
- d) **Resubmissions:** When reviewing a resubmitted proposal, the committee will evaluate the proposal as now presented, taking into consideration the responses to comments from the previous scientific review group and the resulting changes to the project.
- e) **Renewals:** When reviewing a proposal to renew funding, the committee will consider the progress made in the last funding period, and the short- and medium-term impacts achieved.
- f) **Biohazards:** Reviewers will assess whether materials or procedures proposed are potentially hazardous to research personnel and/or the environment, and if needed, determine whether adequate protection is proposed.

Reporting Requirements

Continued release of funds is contingent upon timely receipt of satisfactory progress and financial reports. Failure to submit a report of any kind will preclude the awardee from receiving further financial support from the OHTN.

In addition to engaging in the activities related to their proposal, OHTN Researcher-in-Residence (Academic Stream) awardees will be expected to:

- Actively participate in meeting(s) that bring researchers and others together to share learning
- Participate in the OHTN Annual Research Conference (when it overlaps with the residency) and other activities aimed at research knowledge translation and exchange

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The following reporting requirements will be implemented to help demonstrate progress and success of the OHTN Researcher-in-Residence (Academic Stream) program:

- Quarterly progress conversations via teleconference (15-20 minutes in most cases)
- A Final Financial Report detailing how funds were spent
- A Final Report that includes a clear assessment of the anticipated and actual impacts of the research, including an update on the training/mentoring plan and outcomes (5-6 pages)
- Dissemination of knowledge through publications in peer-reviewed and grey literature
- Knowledge translation and exchange activities (as outlined in funding proposal)
- A Report 1 year past the end date of the award that describes successes and challenges with respect to actual and anticipated impacts

OHTN staff will work closely with funded researchers to: understand the context for their work; assist with managing challenges; help them meet their objectives; and understand and help disseminate their findings.

Instructions for reporting will be provided to successful grant recipients.

Communication Requirements

1. Researchers-in-Residence are strongly encouraged to submit abstracts for presentation at the OHTN's Annual Research Conference.
2. Significant deviations from the original objectives of the proposal, methodologies, budget or other significant changes must receive written authorization from the OHTN prior to implementation. Failure to notify the OHTN in a timely manner may result in termination of funding.
3. The OHTN expects investigators to publish their work in peer-reviewed publications and other appropriate formats. The OHTN expects to be notified before OHTN-supported research is published, and requests copies of all publications arising from work supported through this award to assist the OHTN in its evaluation of this program.
4. The OHTN assumes responsibility for disseminating the information contained within submitted reports via the OHTN website. However, OHTN affirms that the results are the intellectual property of the grant recipient and recognizes the need for teams to pursue publication in peer-reviewed publications or other appropriate formats. OHTN staff will work with grant recipients to ensure that its own dissemination efforts do not conflict with the teams' publication plans.
5. Funding recipients are also expected to contribute to the OHTN's monitoring and evaluation activities, including but not limited to: participating in evaluation activities (quarterly progress teleconferences, progress and final written reports, surveys, interviews, etc.), workshops, and providing data or reports as required for the purpose of assessing progress and results.

Dissemination of results through these methods ensures the OHTN is able to demonstrate accountability and impact to its various stakeholders.

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Contact Information

For questions regarding this Request for Proposals, please contact:

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Manager, Research Funding & Development
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416.642.6486 x2249

For technical support using the electronic Grants Application Manager, please contact:

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