OHTN Impact Focused Research Program - Annual Competition (2013)

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS:

OHTN RESEARCHER-IN-RESIDENCE (COMMUNITY STREAM)

The Ontario HIV Treatment Network:

Funding Research with Real-Life Impact

Launch Date: November 7, 2012
List of Priority Areas Posted: December 17, 2012
Letters of Interest Due: February 1, 2013 (11:59pm)
Results of LOI: March 2, 2013
Full Applications Due: May 24, 2013 (11:59pm)
Fund Start Date: September 1, 2013

Description

The **OHTN Researcher-in-Residence (RiR) (Community Stream)** award supports exceptional HIV researchers (from within or outside of Ontario) to provide direct, personal support to an ASO or community-based health centre to utilize research evidence to develop and adapt programs and services to meet the needs of their clients, and conversely, to provide information on persistent research gaps that must be addressed.

The OHTN's research funding policy '**Funding Research with Real-Life Impact**' sets out a new vision for the investment of OHTN's research funding dollars – to focus on answering questions and solving problems that are of greatest importance to those living with and most at-risk of HIV in Ontario.

The OHTN RiR (Community Stream) provides support for the part-time salary of the awardee, as well as a research allowance to support the research, capacity building, and knowledge translation and exchange activities associated with the award.

The OHTN Researcher-in-Residence (Community Stream) award in not intended to be a long-term research salary award. The OHTN Community Scholar Award (view Available Funding) is a 3-year award for full-time salary support of community-based researchers.

OHTN Researcher-in-Residence (Community Stream) Awards consists of two steps: 1) Letter of Interest, and 2) Full Application.

Funds Available

Up to $75,000 is available from the OHTN to support one (1) OHTN Researcher-in-Residence (Community Stream) for up to one year. This award is not renewable.

The award amount is allocated as follows:

- Up to $50,000 towards the part-time (up to 75%) salary and benefits of the Researcher-in-Residence (pro-rated annually)
- Up to $25,000 towards direct research, capacity building, and knowledge translation and exchange costs (i.e. Research Allowance) (pro-rated annually)

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

Eligibility Criteria

The OHTN seeks proposals for OHTN Researcher-in-Residence (Community Stream) applicants who:
- Hold a PhD, MD, or relevant research-related degree at the time of the start of the award;
- Conduct research in an area that is congruent with the needs and interests of the host organization, and is relevant to one or more of the populations in Ontario most affected by HIV:
  - People living with HIV/AIDS
  - Gay men and other men who have sex with men, including gay, bi, and queer trans men, youth, and newcomers
  - African, Caribbean and Black men and women, including youth
  - Aboriginal men and women, including youth
  - Men and women who use drugs, including youth
  - Women, including trans women, who are at risk (e.g. have unprotected sex or share drug equipment with people from the populations listed above)
- Are able to commit up to 75% of their time for 3 to 12 months to the Residency award;
- Are not currently employed by or a paid consultant of the host organization;
- Will conduct research that is consistent with and promotes our values;
- Will meaningfully engage affected communities - involving people with and at-risk of HIV throughout the research process, including capacity building, decision-making, knowledge translation, and implementation of results;
- Will conduct research that is solution-focused – that is, research that seeks to develop, implement, and evaluate interventions, programs, services, treatments or policies to address the issues that are relevant to the populations most affected by HIV in Ontario.
- Demonstrate how the residency will have a measureable impact in the short- to medium-term (2 to 5 years) – in other words, research that has the potential to lead to an effective new or improved intervention, program, service, treatment or policy on the HIV epidemic in Ontario

As a condition of OHTN funding researchers and all members of their research team are expected to adhere to the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for the Research Involving Humans (Version 2)

To be eligible for the OHTN Researcher-in-Residence (Community Stream) award, the host organization must:

- Be an AIDS Service Organization or community-based health centre located in Ontario;
- Not be affiliated with an academic institution (such as a teaching hospital, for example);
- Have a demonstrable record of providing quality care/service;
- Express a commitment to making practice/ program improvements;
- Declare a willingness to expend the time and financial resources necessary to make such a change.

Research Priorities

The OHTN encourages proposals from individuals whose research is relevant to one or more of the populations in Ontario most affect by HIV. The OHTN will also seek, and will give preference to, proposals that address the priority areas identified. The priorities are currently under development, but will be posted here by December 17, 2012.

Priorities are being developed in the following five areas:

1. **Prevention** - Our goal is to identify effective, appropriate strategies to reduce HIV transmission and prevent new infections.
2. **Health, Social & Related Services** - Our goal is to ensure that people living with or at risk of HIV have access to appropriate services to support their health and wellbeing at the appropriate time in an appropriate way.
3. **Social Determinants of Health** - Our goal is minimize the negative impact of the broader social determinants on the health and well-being of people living with HIV and those most at risk.
4. **Policy & Decision-Making** - Our goal is to ensure that policy and other decisions affecting people living with and at highest risk of HIV are informed by the best evidence available.
5. **Knowledge Translation/Capacity Building** - Our goal is to ensure all our stakeholders -- people living with and at risk of HIV, community-based HIV/AIDS organizations, healthcare providers, researchers, and decision makers – have access to the best evidence and the skills to apply that evidence in their work.

How to Apply

Letter of Interest

Applicants will complete and submit both their Letter of Interest and, where applicable, Full Application using the OHTN's web-based Grants Application Manager. The steps required for a Letter of Interest application are described below.

IMPORTANT

1. **OHTN Researcher-in-Residence (Community Stream) Award applications must be accessed for the first time at https://www.GrantRequest.com/SID_920?SA=SNA&FID=35064**

> 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 (if desired) *prior* to electronic submission**

Letter of Interest Application Instructions

1. Follow the link to the OHTN Researcher-in-Residence (Community Stream) - Letter of Interest application form
2. Create and/or log-in to your account
3. Complete the Principal Investigator Contact Information
4. Insert the Title of your proposal (max 15 words)
5. Indicate the duration of funding you are requesting (up to 1 year (12 months))
6. Indicate the total amount of funding you are requesting (up to $75, 000)
7. Complete the Relevance of Research
8. Complete the Plain Language Summary
9. Complete the Community Engagement Plan
10. Upload the Brief Description of Research document in PDF
11. Upload the Applicant Registration CV in PDF
12. Review, print a copy of, and submit your application by the deadline

Relevance of Research
Describe the relevance of the proposal to the HIV community in Ontario, specifically those populations most affected by HIV. How will the residency utilize research results to develop and adapt programs and services to meet the needs of one or more of the populations in Ontario most affected by HIV, and, conversely, to inform researchers of persistent research gaps (in these populations) that must be addressed? What are the intended impacts of the residency? *(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 community-based organizations, and ultimately, on the epidemic in Ontario. 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 any steps taken to date. This plan should be developed in consultation with the host organization. *(maximum 500 words, entered directly into application form)*

Brief Description of Research
The proposal (up to 5 pages) should contain the following information:
- Brief background and rationale for the proposed research – including a description of the host organization's needs with respect to programs and services
- The objectives of the proposal, including any objectives related to building capacity
- The relevance of the proposal to the research priorities identified, and a description of the intended outcomes and impacts
- A brief description of the knowledge translation plan to be employed throughout the project and beyond

Applicant Registration CV
Include a completed Common CV finalized for the OHTN. For the LOI, complete the OHTN Registration CV template. Once completed, download the PDF version of your Registration CV from the 'History' section of your Common CV account.

Full Application
Full Application Instructions

1. Follow the link to your in-progress application here: Researcher-in-Residence (Community Stream) – Full Application
2. Create and/or log-in to your account
3. Ensure all previously entered information is correct, and make edits where necessary
4. Complete the Host Organization contact information
5. Complete the Home Organization contact information
6. Complete the Host Organization Administration of Funds information, including Financial Administrator, and Executive Director contact information
7. Complete the Referee Contact information section
8. If applicable, complete and upload the Resubmission requirements in PDF
9. Complete and upload the full Proposal in PDF
10. Complete and upload the Timeline in PDF
11. Complete and upload the Research Allowance Proposal in PDF
12. Complete the Impact section directly into the application form
13. Complete and upload the Principal Applicant's Common CV
14. Upload any relevant Appendices in reduced-size PDF
15. Upload the Host Organization Letter in PDF
16. Upload the Home Institution/Organization Letter in PDF

17. Ensure Letters of Reference have been submitted to sbazinet@ohtn.on.ca by the deadline
18. Complete and upload the Budget and Budget Justification in PDF
19. Review, print a copy of, and submit your application by the deadline

Resubmissions

If you are **resubmitting** a previously unsuccessful proposal, you must include a two-page letter addressing both the reviewer's comments, and any changes made to the application as a result.

> **Note for resubmissions:** Copies of the previous reviews must be included with the application. Please contact OHTN Research Development staff to obtain a copy of your reviews if you have not retained them.

Proposal

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

Research Plan (3-4 pages):
- a description of the host organization's needs, with respect to program and service improvement or development, and how the applicant is positioned to respond to those needs
- the relevance of the proposal to the research priorities identified
- how programs or services have / will be identified for improvement or development
- what research evidence will be used to inform the improvement or development of programs
- anticipated challenges and proposed solutions

Impacts (2-3 pages):
- what impacts the program or service improvement or development will have, in the short- and mid-term, on the organization, and on the epidemic in Ontario

Knowledge Translation & Exchange Plan (3-4 pages):
- evidence of previous success in moving research results into action (at the practice, program or policy levels)
- a description of the knowledge translation and exchange activities proposed – throughout the award and beyond
- how gaps in current research will be identified, and how the applicant will disseminate these to a wider audience, or utilize these gaps to inform their own research

More on Impact

The OHTN has adapted the logic model and 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 categories, ranging the spectrum of research impacts:

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, prevention and health system performance)
5. **Broad Economic and Social Impacts** - commercialization of discoveries, direct cost savings, and human capital gains

The goal is for research funded by the OHTN to achieve impacts in at least categories 1 through 3, but ideally 4 and/or 5 as well. 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), and building capacity (Research Capacity-Building) are important, but do not generate sufficient impacts on their own to qualify for funding. Proposals must also demonstrate impact in at least one of the other 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 plan detailing the timeline for the proposed activities, including proposed/anticipated impacts, should be included.

Research Allowance Proposal
A brief overview (maximum 2 pages) of the plan and activities to be conducted using the annual 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)*

Applicants' CVs

Applicants should include a completed Common CV finalized for the OHTN. There are 2 possible templates that can be used – 1) Academic or 2) Community/Knowledge User. PDF versions of your CCV can be accessed in your CCV's 'History' section online.

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 evidence of success in moving research into action
3. Questionnaires, surveys, or other tools related to the current proposal should be uploaded
4. Host organizations may submit up to two (2) documents describing the gaps in programming or services (needs assessments, evaluations)

Please note that any attachments exceeding the limits stated above will be removed from the application prior to review at the OHTN's discretion.

Host Organization Letter

The Host Organization must submit a letter testifying to the host-organization eligibility criteria, and describing the applicant's suitability for the Researcher-in-Residence (Community Stream) award. The letter should describe how the award will benefit the organization and its clients, and impact the HIV epidemic in Ontario. The letter should also articulate how the amount of time being requested is sufficient to achieve the desired outcomes.

Home Institution/Organization Letter

The applicant's home institution/organization should submit a letter supporting the applicant's part-time secondment to the host organization, and describing the reduced teaching, clinical, service or other workload at the home institution for the duration of the award. The reduction in home institution duties must be commensurate with the time allotted for residence at the host organization.

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 (Community Stream). These letters should be submitted by the deadline date electronically to the OHTN (sbazinet@ohtn.on.ca) by the referee, or by mail in separate envelopes, signed over the seal by the individuals providing the testimonials.

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 $50,000 annually): Indicate the proportion of (up to 75% FTE) 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 $25,000 annually): 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

Complete applications must be submitted electronically by the application deadline. No changes can be made to a grant application after the submission 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.

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 Stephanie Lemelin Bazinet 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 24 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 Stephanie Lemelin Bazinet, Coordinator, Research Development
1300 Yonge Street, Suite 600
Toronto ON M4T 1X3

Evaluation Criteria & Review Process

Letter of Interest

Letters of Interest will be screened for their relevance to the policy and research priorities by appropriate OHTN staff in consultation with the Chair of the OHTN's Scientific Review Committee. Applications will also be assessed for their eligibility, with particular attention paid to:
- Excellence in methodology and approach
- Relevance and ability to address a priority identified by the population/community-based organization
- Calibre and expertise of the applicant

- Meaningful stakeholder involvement (e.g., community, front line service providers, researchers, policy makers)
- Integrated KTE plan (i.e., knowledge users involved throughout the process)
- Clear and actionable outcomes

Applicants will receive a brief letter outlining the decision with respect to their Letter of Interest by February 15th, 2013.

The names, project titles, and plain language summaries of successful LOIs will be posted on the OHTN website here.

Full Application

All proposals submitted to the OHTN's Impact Focused Research Program for research grants or awards are evaluated for their relevance and potential impact, as well as their scientific and technical merit, by the Scientific Review Committee.

For more information regarding the review process, criteria, and scoring chart, please visit the OHTN website.

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 (Community 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 and other activities aimed at research knowledge translation and exchange

The following reporting requirements will be implemented to help demonstrate progress and success of the OHTN Researcher-in-Residence (Community 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 work conducted (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. As a condition of funding, researchers are required to submit abstracts of OHTN-supported research 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. Plain Language Summaries will be published on the OHTN website.

5. 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.

6. 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.

7. The following acknowledgement must be included in all publications resulting from research supported by the OHTN: *This research was supported by an award from the Ontario HIV Treatment Network (OHTN).*

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

Contact Information

For questions regarding this Request for Proposals, please contact:

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