



**TARGETED REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS – 2012 –  
FULL APPLICATION GUIDELINES**

*The Ontario HIV Treatment Network:*

*Funding Research with Real-Life Impact*

Launch Date: October 10, 2012

Letter of Interest Application Deadline: November 20, 2012 (11:59pm)

LOI Results: December 4, 2012

**Full Application Deadline: February 5, 2013 (11:59pm)**

**Results and Fund Start Date: March 15, 2013**

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## Description

In November, 2011, the OHTN adopted a new research policy '[Funding Research with Real-Life Impact](#)', designed to help us achieve our mission to improve the health and well-being of people living with and at risk of HIV in Ontario. The **OHTN Targeted Request for Applications – 2012** ('the RFA') creates a strategic opportunity to address urgent HIV-related issues for populations most affected by HIV in Ontario. We have allocated a total of \$480,000 in one-time funding -- \$80,000 for each population most affected by HIV -- to support community-engaged, multi-disciplinary and cross-sectoral research teams to undertake projects that have the potential to address the priorities listed below and jump start new programs and interventions.

The priorities for our 2012 RFA, identified by priority-setting working groups established by the OHTN, were chosen because they reflect urgent, unmet needs that can be addressed through a short-term initiative. We recognize that research priorities will evolve and change over time, and we now have in place a mechanism – our priority-setting working groups -- to ensure we keep our research funding programs focused on current and emerging needs in Ontario.

**This RFA consists of two steps: 1) Letter of Interest, and 2) Full Application. These guidelines are for applicants who have been invited to submit a Full Application.**

## Objectives

The OHTN will fund activities that:

- are solution-focused -- that is, research activities that seek to develop and implement new and innovative or existing pilot programs, services (community-based, social, health), or strategies to address the priorities for this RFA (listed below)
- engage the affected communities in meaningful and appropriate ways throughout the research process as key members of the research team -- that is, community-based organizations, community members (people living with and at-risk of HIV), clinicians and others as appropriate will be: principal and co-investigator members of the research team; involved in decision-making;

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and contribute their expertise and knowledge throughout the research process and implementation of results

- have a 1 to 2 year life cycle -- that is, pilot work or research where the results can be applied within 1 to 2 years to solve a problem or to lay the groundwork for a larger grant to the OHTN or CIHR. For example, an eligible 1-2 year project could focus on collecting pilot data that could be used to evaluate or scale up an intervention or to develop a new program or policy that would address an important issue in HIV/AIDS.

### Research Priorities

The following 2012 RFA priorities, identified by our priority working groups, were chosen because they reflect urgent, unmet needs that can be addressed through a short-term initiative. Although the priorities are listed as being distinct, the OHTN anticipates and welcomes proposals that address several cross-cutting issues or priorities in one project.

#### I. **Gay Men and Other MSM, including gay, bi, and queer trans men, youth and newcomers:**

This Targeted Request for Applications will accept proposals that seek to:

1. assemble informed and expert voices to create, disseminate, and evaluate guides or other tools for program managers;
2. develop/adapt, implement and evaluate **pilot** interventions or programs targeted to
  - vulnerable sub-populations of gay men and other men who have sex with men
  - other contexts (e.g. urban to rural); or
3. evaluate and/or answer questions related to current services, programs, or interventions for gay men/youth
  - May involve development of future research projects that will seek to address identified gaps

#### II. **African, Caribbean and Black (ACB) Women and Men, including Youth:**

This Targeted Request for Applications will accept proposals that seek to:

1. assess and evaluate existing HIV-related interventions for their relevance, impact, and potential for adaptation and scale-up;
2. utilize census data for Ontario – such as demographics, population distribution, income – to demonstrate ACB population trends and assess distribution of HIV-related services, and to inform research and programming in Ontario; or
3. examine health service access, utilization and determinants of health related to ACB communities with the purpose of developing future research projects and/or interventions

#### III. **Aboriginal men and women, including youth:**

This Targeted Request for Applications will accept proposals that seek to:

1. adapt or develop, implement and evaluate **pilot** interventions or programs aimed at providing improved, culturally appropriate services for Positive Aboriginal Women, especially for women with families; or

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2. establish a network to address access to appropriate outreach, treatment, support, and prevention services for injection drug users, especially in Northern Ontario

### IV. Men and Women who use Drugs:

This Targeted Request for Applications will accept proposals that seek to:

1. evaluate and/or compare 2 or more:
  - peer-based models of HIV-related outreach, treatment, support, or prevention
  - interventions or programs aimed at youth, women, sex-workers, prisoners and/or older people who use drugs
  - interventions targeted to access and/or adherence to HIV and/or HCV treatment for drug users;
2. adapt or develop, implement and evaluate **pilot** interventions or programs aimed at:
  - access and adherence to HIV and/or HCV treatment for drug users
  - reducing stigma (and enhancing knowledge) of service and healthcare providers for people who use drugs and may be infected with HIV and/or HCV
  - enhancing access to and education on harm reduction materials (including HIV/HCV risk), and/or access to services (health-related and/or social) for youth, women, sex-workers, prisoners and/or older people who use drugs; or
3. address gaps and barriers related to harm reduction in Ontario

### V. Women, including trans women, who are at risk (e.g., have unprotected sex or share drug equipment with people from the populations listed above):

This Targeted Request for Applications will accept proposals that seek to:

1. develop, implement and evaluate public and targeted education campaigns for women focusing on:
  - testing for HIV
  - communicating risks
  - providing accurate information, and directing women to reputable sources of information
  - reducing stigma; or
2. adapt or develop, implement and evaluate **pilot** interventions or programs aimed at:
  - providing women with access to appropriate healthcare services, especially in rural settings
  - providing women with access to resources and harm reduction supplies (such as condoms) in rural settings
  - delivering innovative strategies for education and support

### VI. People Living with HIV/AIDS:

There is also an overarching category that addresses the broad health and social needs of people living with HIV/AIDS. For this Targeted Request for Applications, we will accept only those proposals that: a) clearly demonstrate that people with HIV were involved in identifying the need/issue; b) will have an impact defined by people living with HIV that enhances their well-being or conditions to support their well-being over the next 1 to 2 years; and c) meet the objectives and eligibility criteria of this call.

## Grant Opportunities and Funds Available

This Request for Applications provides a variety of grant options, including but not limited to:

- implementation science research – such as identifying strategies and approaches to enhance effective services, promote the integration of evidence into policy and programs, scale-up effective interventions, and improve healthcare delivery <sup>[1]</sup>
- systematic and scoping reviews
- pilot and feasibility projects involving one or more sites (e.g. community-based organizations, clinics)
- intervention research (including comparisons of multiple evidence-based interventions, adaptations of interventions to a different population/setting, and impact evaluations of existing interventions)

Approximately \$480,000 total is available from the OHTN to support eligible, scientifically rigorous, and impactful proposals of up to \$80,000 each. Funding is one-time only, and grants are non-renewable. Teams are encouraged to apply for grants of less than \$80,000 – so that a larger number of grants may be awarded.

## Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for the OHTN Targeted Request for Applications – 2012, the team must:

- Have a nominated principal investigator who is based in Ontario
- Demonstrate excellence in research methodology and approach
- Demonstrate relevance and ability to address a priority identified by the population
- Display meaningful stakeholder involvement (e.g., community, front line service providers, researchers, policy makers)
- Describe an integrated KTE plan (i.e., knowledge users involved throughout the process)
- Display clear and actionable outcomes
- Describe how the project will achieve short-term (1-2 years) impact

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 \(Version 2\)](#)

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<sup>[1]</sup> see <http://www.fic.nih.gov/News/Events/implementation-science/Pages/faqs.aspx>

## How to Apply – Full Application

Applicants will complete and submit their Full Application using the OHTN's web-based Grants Application Manager. The steps required for a complete Full Application are described below.

**\*\*IMPORTANT\*\***

1. OHTN RFA - 2012 applicants invited to move forward to the Full Application stage must access by the submitting investigator using [https://www.GrantRequest.com/SID\\_920?SA=SNA&FID=35050](https://www.GrantRequest.com/SID_920?SA=SNA&FID=35050) and entering the user-unique ID and password that was created to apply to the Letter of Interest.
2. To re-access the application form, sign into your profile at [https://www.grantrequest.com/SID\\_920/](https://www.grantrequest.com/SID_920/)
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

### Application Instructions

1. Follow the link to the submitting investigator's profile [here](#)
2. Log-in to your account
3. Verify the (Nominated) Principal Investigator (NPI) Contact Information
  - *Note: this individual will be responsible for the overall conduct of the project, including the budget.*
4. Complete the Project Team information page – adding any team members that have been added since submission of the Letter of Interest:
  - Co-Principal Investigators (PIs): have primary responsibility for achieving the activities described in the proposal, while adhering to financial and administrative requirements, including obtaining the appropriate ethical approvals and reporting on progress as required by the funder and others. Where there are multiple Principal Investigators, the main or 'nominated' PI retains overall responsibility for the project's successful completion and for fund management according to the Sponsor (in this case, the OHTN).
  - Co-Investigators (Co-Is): are involved in the development and execution of a project, typically devote a specified percentage of time to the project, and may have a specific role in the project. They are usually not as involved in the overall execution of the project as a principal investigator, but may be involved in decision-making.
  - Collaborators: may be beneficiaries of project results, and/or may be contributing specific expertise to a project – such as training or equipment – but are not usually involved in decision-making on a project.
  - Space has been allocated for up to 3 PIs, 10 Co-Is, and 10 Collaborators. Please contact [OHTN Funding Staff](#) if you have additional team members to add.
5. Verify the Title of your proposed project (max 15 words)
6. Verify the duration of funding you are requesting (up to 12 months)
7. Verify the Type of Grant that best suits your proposal:

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- Implementation Science Research<sup>1</sup>
  - Intervention Research
  - Pilot Project – Single Site
  - Pilot Project – Multiple Sites
  - Scoping Review
  - Systematic Review
  - Other
8. Confirm the exact amount of funding you are requesting (up to \$80, 000)
  9. Complete the Administration of Funds information, including Financial Administrator contact information
  10. Review and update the [Relevance of Research](#)
  11. Review and update the [Plain Language Summary](#)
  12. Complete and upload the [Description of Research](#) in PDF
  13. Complete and upload the [Team Members](#) in PDF
  14. Complete and upload the [Timeline](#) in PDF
  15. Complete the [Impact](#) section directly into the application form
  16. Upload relevant [Appendices](#) in reduced-size PDF
  17. Collate and upload any [REB approvals](#) or [Consent Forms](#) in PDF
  18. Collate and upload [Letters of Collaboration](#) in PDF
  19. Collate and upload [Letters of Support](#) in PDF
  20. Complete and upload Principal and Co-Investigator [Common CVs](#)
  21. Complete and upload all [Signature Sheets](#) in PDF
  22. Complete and upload the [Budget & Budget Justification](#) in PDF
  23. Review, print a copy of, and submit your application by the deadline

### **Relevance of Research**

Describe the relevance of the proposed project to the priorities identified. What gaps in existing knowledge will the proposed research fill, and what is the intended impact of the research? How will the proposed research involve, and how might it improve the lives of those living with and at risk of HIV in Ontario? *(maximum 250 words, entered directly into application form)*

### **Plain Language Summary**

Provide a lay language summary of the proposed research and the anticipated impact it will have on the HIV epidemic in Ontario. Describe the knowledge translation and exchange approaches to be utilized to facilitate the desired outcomes. If approved, this summary will be posted on the OHTN webpage. *(maximum 500 words, entered directly into application form)*

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<sup>1</sup> E.g. Identification of strategies to encourage provision and use of effective health services, Identification of strategies to promote the integration of evidence into policy and program decisions, Identification of approaches to scale-up effective interventions, Development of innovative approaches to improve healthcare delivery, Setting up an impact evaluation for a population based intervention (from <http://www.fic.nih.gov/News/Events/implementation-science/Pages/faqs.aspx>)

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### Description of Research

The proposal (up to 12 pages) should illustrate a clear rationale for the support being requested:

#### Research Plan (5-6 pages):

- relevance of the proposed research to the priority areas identified above
- background and rationale for the proposed research, including how the community was involved in its development
- objectives of the proposed research to be undertaken, including any objectives related to building capacity
- a description of the proposed research project (approach, methods, analyses)
- a description of complementary or conflicting research being pursued by others, and how that research is positioned within this work
- anticipated challenges and proposed solutions and limitations
- a discussion of the ethical implications of the research proposed, including risks to individuals and communities, and how those risks are/will be mitigated

#### Capacity Building Activities (1-2 pages):

- describe the capacity building activities to be undertaken with members of the research team

#### Impacts (2-3 pages):

- description of the intended outcomes and impacts, how the research is positioned, and how the team will ensure the stated impacts are achieved

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

- evidence of previous success in moving research results into action at the practice, program or policy levels
- knowledge translation and exchange methods, approaches, and activities for the current proposal

#### 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



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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 at least impacts 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 12 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.*

### **Team Members** (up to 3 pages)

- provide a description of the relevant expertise and role in the current proposal of all team members
- describe past and current collaborations between investigators, and indicate where new partnerships are being forged
- include a clear description of how the affected communities have and will be involved as meaningful members of the research team

### **Timeline** (maximum 1 page)

A plan for the proposed activities, including proposed/anticipated impacts, 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 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)*

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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

### **Ethics Approval and Consent Forms**

Upload a copy of related research ethics board approvals (if applicable), as well as a copy of the consent form (draft form is encouraged if final approved version is not available) to be signed by prospective participants or other explanatory material (draft is acceptable) to be given out.

Note: For funded projects, copies of all ethics approval letters must be forwarded to the OHTN annually.

### **Letters of Collaboration**

If your research involves the collaboration of external organizations or individuals please include letters of collaboration indicating their affirmation of, role in, and benefit from, your proposed research project. (*collate prior to uploading*)

### **Letters of Support** (maximum of 4 letters)

If your research involves the support of external organizations or individuals please include letters of support for your proposed research project. Letters of support from decision-makers (i.e. people who have or will use the results of your research) are particularly significant. (*collate prior to uploading*)

### **Applicants CVs**

All Principal and Co-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. For collaborators who will play a significant role in the research (for example, who provide specialized training or knowledge, such as motivational interviewing), a CV (does not need to be a Common CV) should also be included.

### **Budget & Budget Justification**

Include both a table indicating funds requested and provided in-kind, and a separate narrative detailing the justification for the requested budget items. Please use the following headings and guidelines:

- a. **Personnel/Salaries** – the rate(s) of remuneration (including \$/hr and total number of hours estimated) requested should be those normally paid by the host organization for similar categories of staff, including fringe benefits where applicable. The OHTN will allow a portion of salary support for principal or co-investigators who are independent community researchers who are not undertaking the work as part of a paid position, or where community-based team members require backfilling of their current position to participate in research-related activities.
- b. **Project-Related Activities** – include capacity building and other project-related activities such as honoraria and local travel expenses for participants, and meeting costs for the project team
- c. **Equipment** – the need for any equipment should be explained and all amounts estimated based on current actual costs. Requests for more costly equipment (i.e. computers) must be justified.

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Where a piece of equipment is approved, title to it will be vested with the sponsoring organization.

- d. **Supplies** – Funds for the purchase of supplies are not intended for the purchase of furniture, office equipment or supplies normally supplied by the institution. Other project-specific supply costs should be justified using current actual costs.
- e. **Knowledge Transfer & Exchange** – Please itemize all requests for KTE, including publication costs in open access journals.
- f. **Travel to Scientific Meetings/Conferences** – travel funds may be requested to attend scientific meetings and conferences. Except in exceptional circumstances, the maximum amount that may be granted for travel will be \$2000.
- g. **Administrative Costs (Community-Based Organizations only)** – Up to 10% of the total budget may be requested to cover host organization administrative costs. This amount is intended to offset a portion of the costs associated with taking on the responsibility of administering and housing a research grant in a community-based organization that does not have a formal research program.

### 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.

**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.

### Evaluation Criteria & Review Process

All proposals submitted to the OHTN's Impact Focused Research Program for research grants or awards are evaluated for their eligibility, 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

***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, funded teams 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 Research Operating Grant program:

- Quarterly progress conversations with principal investigators via teleconference (15-20 minutes in most cases)
- A Financial Report detailing how funds were spent
- A Final Report that includes a clear assessment of the anticipated and actual impacts of the research (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 teams 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 (such as mentees) 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 when 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.

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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 Applications, and for technical support using the electronic Grants Application Manager, please contact:

#### **Stephanie Lemelin Bazinet**

Coordinator, Research Development

[sbazinet@ohntn.on.ca](mailto:sbazinet@ohntn.on.ca)

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