



## Board Directed Funds Guidelines

<b>Important Dates</b>	
Request for Applications	<b>Open Call</b>
Application Submission Deadline	<b>2-6 weeks prior to an OHTN Board of Directors Meeting</b>
Anticipated notification of Decision	<b>2 weeks after OHTN Board of Directors Meeting</b>
Grant Start Date	<b>2 weeks after OHTN Board of Directors Meeting</b>
<b>Summary</b>	
<p>Each year, the OHTN Board of Directors sets aside funds that it may use to support initiatives related to urgent or emerging HIV-related issues in Ontario. Requests for support may originate from any of the OHTN's stakeholder groups. At its discretion, the Board will determine the amount(s) and conditions of funding on a case-by-case basis.</p> <p>Submissions must come to the Board through a Board member (see OHTN website for list). The designated Board member must support the request, agree to present the request to the Board at a scheduled Board meeting and be prepared to answer questions regarding the request.</p> <p>Before initiating a request for Board Directed Funds, applicants are urged to read the guidelines for submission and consult with the Scientific and Executive Director of the OHTN, to ensure that the request fits within the scope of this funding mechanism, is not already being addressed, and that funds are still available within the fiscal year.</p>	

## **How to Apply**<sup>1</sup>

A complete OHTN **Board Directed Funds** request consists of the following:

**1. A completed Request for OHTN Board Directed Funds cover sheet**

**2. A covering letter addressing the following points:**

- A detailed description of the urgent or emergent issue;
- A compelling explanation of how the issue is relevant to the stated aims of the OHTN;
- Reason(s) for accessing Board-Directed Funds rather than other mechanisms for funding;
- Other funding avenues explored, including within the OHTN;
- Suggested mechanisms for addressing the issue; this may include the development of a research protocol, the funding of an established research protocol, the hiring of a consultant to prepare a policy paper on an issue, preparation of a “Request for Proposal” to address the issue, etc. Whichever mechanism is put forth, it is important that full documents be provided to support the request.

**3. A budget with justification:**

Provide an outline of the expenses requested and a justification for budget items including:

- a. **Personnel/Salaries** – The rate(s) of remuneration requested for professional and nonprofessional staff should normally be those payable by the sponsoring institution to similar categories of staff, including fringe benefits where applicable. The OHTN does not pay the salary of a principal investigator or co-investigators of projects from academic institutions; exceptions may be made for community-based research projects.
- b. **Equipment** – The need for equipment should be explained in the “Budget Justification.”
- c. **Supplies** – Please note that funds for the purchase of supplies are not intended for the purpose of laboratory furniture, office equipment and supplies, i.e., items normally supplied by the institution. They are not intended to equip new laboratories with general equipment or to provide tools for teaching, diagnosis or care of patients.
- d. **Other Expenses** – The OHTN will consider requests for computing costs, local travel for data collection, transportation of subjects, etc., but the applicant must explicitly justify the need for these items.

**4. Project Description** (limit is **four** (4) single-spaced pages, excluding references and appendices)

Please note: If a fully developed research protocol is being submitted, it should be included as an appendix to the application along with any previous scientific reviews available.

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<sup>1</sup> Please note: In the event that a member of the HIV community in Ontario does not have the expertise, resources or capacity to develop and submit a research proposal for Board-directed funds, the OHTN will assist the individual or group to connect with an established researcher in the area of interest to partner and assist with the protocol and submission.

Describe the proposed project in plain language using the following (suggested) headings:

- a. **Background** – Summarize the state of knowledge relevant to the proposal or project;
  - b. **Issue/Hypotheses/Research Questions** – State these clearly and concisely;
  - c. **Approach/Methods** – Give essential details of the approach that will be used;
  - d. **Relevance/Impact** – State how the project will advance knowledge and/or impact policy and practice if it is completed as planned.
  - e. **Knowledge transfer and exchange (KTE) strategy** – Provide a description of your dissemination plan for the research or work completed. Include, as appropriate, considerations for disseminating results in both academic and community environments.
5. **References** – Compile these separately; they are not included in the four-page limit of the Project Description.
  6. **Ethics Approval and Consent Forms (if applicable)** – Include copies of any consent forms to be signed by prospective participants or other explanatory material to be given out. If your application is awarded funding (and an ethics approval is required), the OHTN must receive a copy of all required ethical approvals prior to the release of any funds.
  7. **Curricula Vitae / Resume for Principal Investigator and for each Co-investigator** - A short CV (not exceeding five pages) for each applicant, including complete address, e-mail and telephone number. The CV should contain relevant information such as experience, publications, grants held, etc.
  8. **Consultant and Collaborator Letters** – Include letters from essential consultants and collaborators, as required. Letters of support from the affected communities or stakeholder group(s) may assist the Board in evaluating the project. Applicants should document the extent of community and/or stakeholder consultations.

### **Submitting the Proposal**

Requests for **Board Directed Funds** must be received at the OHTN office at least three (3) weeks in advance of scheduled Board meetings. The request must be submitted to the OHTN through a Board member who is identified on the cover sheet of the application. If the proposal includes a research protocol, the request must be received at least six (6) weeks in advance of a scheduled Board meeting to allow for an appropriate scientific review.

Please submit five (5) copies of the completed application and send all documentation electronically via e-mail to [jmajor@ohrn.on.ca](mailto:jmajor@ohrn.on.ca) or via fax to 416-640-4245 c/o Jennifer Major.

### ***Advice to applicants:***

In writing a proposal the author(s) should bear the following points in mind:

- A clear, concise and simple exposition is best
- Limit the use of appendices to materials that are essential for evaluating the application. If you have a few recent manuscripts or reprints that will help to evaluate the new work you are proposing, please include them.
- **Consultation with community stakeholders is an essential component of the OHTN process for funding.**

- The request should be in a format that allows comfortable reading. A minimum of 11-point font should be used. Use single-sided sheets (8 1/2" x 11"), number each page and leave margins of 1" on all sides.

## **Review of Submission, Terms and Conditions of Funding**

Each submission will be presented by the Board sponsor of the application at a scheduled meeting of the Board of Directors.

The OHTN Board of Directors has a number of options with respect to distribution of Board Directed funds. The first deliberation will be regarding the relative importance of the issue identified in the request and the nature of the urgency. The Board may agree that the issue is an OHTN priority, but postpone financial commitment until later in the fiscal year to ensure that it does not preclude funding other priorities that may be more urgent in nature.

The Board may also, at its discretion, determine the mechanism that is most likely to lead to a successful outcome or resolution of the emerging or urgent issue identified. This may include OHTN initiated activities to establish working groups or develop collaborative research programs to address the issue; posting an RFP for protocols, letters of intent, or consultants to carry out a review or develop a policy paper, or other approach to resolving the issue identified.

If the submission includes a research protocol for consideration, a scientific review of the proposal must be carried out prior to the Board meeting. The Manager, Ethics & Research Development, will secure an appropriate set of reviews according to the nature of the project. This would normally entail two (2) independent reviews by a respective expert in the area or field and a review by a community member.

If the protocol has scientific merit, potential impact and is recommended for funding by the reviewers, the proposal will then proceed to the Board of Directors for a full discussion of the priority issue or emerging need and the potential for funding consideration. In the event that the project is not recommended for funding by the reviewers because it lacks scientific rigour or potential impact (i.e., it requires additions or revisions), the Executive Committee will then instruct the applicants to revise and resubmit in advance of a subsequent Board meeting.

Funding for projects approved by the Board will be made available within 2 weeks of Board approval pending receipt of any revisions or necessary documentation (e.g., ethics approval).

### ***Budget Limitation***

The OHTN Board has committed approximately \$100,000 annually for addressing urgent and emerging HIV issues. Normally, requests for Board Directed funds are expected to be less than \$50,000. The OHTN Board may make an award for an amount less than that requested; when this happens, the applicant(s) may be required to submit a revised budget within the amount approved.

- It is not usually necessary to seek approval from The OHTN for minor changes in the budget. However, if expenditures in any category vary from the approved budget by 20 per cent or more, the principal investigator must obtain prior approval from The OHTN.
- Total expenditures in any year must not exceed the approved budget or the funds available in that year. The OHTN will not assume responsibility for budget deficits.

## **Reporting Requirements**

### ***Narrative Reporting Requirements***

A progress report (maximum three (3) pages) outlining the progress of the project to date must be submitted to The OHTN on a regular basis (frequency to be negotiated depending on the project).

A full final report describing the work completed and major accomplishments of the project, including the impact of the project in advancing knowledge or providing recommendations to resolve the issue must be submitted to the Manager, Ethics & Research Development, for review by the OHTN Board of Directors within six (6) months of the termination of the project. In addition, the OHTN requires a plain language summary (500 words maximum) of final reports suitable for posting on the OHTN website. The summary may include links to full papers or other websites that describe the research results or policy information in more detail.

As The OHTN may wish to disseminate the results of the work it supports in a variety of ways, all reports should be written in a form that is easily accessible to a reader with scientific training and expertise but who may not be an expert in the subject matter of the report.

### ***Financial Reporting Requirements***

The sponsoring institution's accounting office must submit an annual statement of expenditures on the form provided by The OHTN. If a project is funded for more than one year, unspent funds may be carried forward for use in the following grant year.

At the end of the grant period, the institution must return unspent funds to The OHTN.

### ***No-Cost Extensions***

If the applicant(s) makes a request before the end of the project, the OHTN may give authority to use unspent funds to complete the project. A request for a no-cost extension must clearly explain how the unspent balance of the award will be used; and include a new completion date. This form can be obtained from the Manager, Ethics & Research Development ([jmajor@ohtn.on.ca](mailto:jmajor@ohtn.on.ca)).

### ***Acknowledgement***

In all publications resulting from research supported by The OHTN, the following acknowledgement should be included: "This study was supported by a grant from The Ontario HIV Treatment Network (OHTN)." Please contact the OHTN to obtain a logo for any presentations to be given.

### ***Dissemination***

As a condition of funding, researchers are required to submit abstracts of OHTN-funded projects for presentation at OHTN's Annual Research Conference.

The OHTN expects investigators to publish their work in peer-reviewed publications and other appropriate formats and will consider publication/dissemination as the evidence of work successfully completed.

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. It is expected, however, that grant recipients will provide the OHTN with copies of all publications arising from work supported with this grant to assist the OHTN in its evaluation of this program. OHTN staff will work with grant recipients upon request to ensure that its own dissemination efforts do not conflict with the teams' publication plans.

Funding recipients are also expected to contribute to the OHTN's monitoring and evaluation activities, including but not limited to: participating in evaluation activities (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.

### ***Notifications***

When an applicant has been successful in obtaining funds from another agency, she or he must inform The OHTN without delay. A successful applicant must consult the OHTN immediately if she or he finds it necessary at any time during the tenure of the grant to change the line of work and/or alter the proposal arrangements.

### **Contact Information**

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