



OHTN

FUNDING GUIDELINES:

OHTN COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH & EVALUATION FUND

The Ontario HIV Treatment Network:

Funding Research with Real-Life Impact

Launch Date: October 16, 2012

Application Deadlines: Quarterly – 1st Friday of December, March, June, September

Fund Start Date: 8-12 weeks post-deadline

[Description](#)

[Objectives](#)

[Funds Available](#)

[Eligibility Criteria](#)

[How to Apply](#)

[Submitting the Proposal](#)

[Evaluation Criteria & Review Process](#)

[Reporting Requirements](#)

[Communication Requirements](#)

[Contact Information](#)

Description

The **OHTN Community-Based Research & Evaluation Fund** (CBR & E Fund) is designed to help achieve 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. The CBR & E Fund will assist communities by supporting both the production and discovery of knowledge through community-based research, and the use of evidence to drive programming through participatory program evaluation.

The OHTN's policy, [Funding Research for Real-Life Impact](#), emphasizes the OHTN's commitment to funding scientifically rigorous, community relevant research that will have a short- to medium-term impact on those most affected by HIV in Ontario:

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

The CBR & E fund will provide grant support to eligible community-initiated HIV research and evaluation projects that explore questions of importance to community-based organizations and have the potential to have a meaningful impact on those most affected by HIV in Ontario in the next 2-5 years.

Objectives

The objectives of the Community-Based Research & Evaluation Fund are to:

- Enhance the capacity of Community-Based HIV/AIDS Organizations (CBAOs), their staff, and people living with HIV/AIDS to meaningfully participate in community-based research and/or participatory program evaluation activities;
- Support CBAOs, their staff, and people living with HIV/AIDS to undertake CBR and evaluation activities that will have a meaningful impact (i.e. create action) in the short- to medium-term on

OHTN COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH AND EVALUATION FUND

those most affected by HIV, such as: developing and modifying effective programs and services, developing new policies and practices, and generating preliminary data to make the case for additional research;

- Enhance opportunities for partnership development with a broad range of stakeholders, including researchers, policy/decision makers, community-based organizations, and people living with HIV/AIDS, and;
- Support effective knowledge translation and exchange activities.

Funds Available

Up to \$150,000 is available annually from the OHTN to support at least six (6) OHTN CBR & E grants up to \$25,000 in one-time funding. This award is non-renewable.

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for an OHTN CBR & E grant, the following criteria must be fulfilled:

- The nominated (main) principal applicant must contact [OHTN Funding Staff](#) *prior* to completing an application, to confirm eligibility and discuss potential opportunities for in-kind support from the OHTN (from the Evidence-Based Practice Unit, for example)
- The nominated principal applicant must be employed by a Community-Based HIV/AIDS Organization based in Ontario
- The proposed research/evaluation proposal must demonstrate that a Community-Based HIV/AIDS Organization based in Ontario has both identified the question or issue to be addressed, and will be actively and meaningfully involved throughout the research/evaluation process
- The team must be proposing to conduct a project that will have a meaningful impact on one or more of the populations most affected by HIV in Ontario (see above)
- The team must demonstrate that, collectively, they possess the necessary skills and experience to conduct the proposed activities
- The proposal must demonstrate how the research or evaluation proposed will have short- to midterm impacts (within 2-5 years) on those most affected by HIV in Ontario

As a condition of OHTN funding all members of the research team are expected to adhere to the [Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for the Research Involving Humans \(Version 2\)](#).

How to Apply

Applicants will complete and submit their application electronically.

OHTN COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH AND EVALUATION FUND

Application Instructions

1. Contact [OHTN Funding Staff](#) to confirm eligibility and discuss potential opportunities for in-kind support from the OHTN
2. Select the Type of Grant you are applying for ‘**Community-Based Research Project**’ or ‘**Participatory Program Evaluation Project**’
3. Contact [OHTN Funding Staff](#) to obtain instructions on how to submit an application.
4. Complete the (Nominated) Principal Investigator (NPI) Contact Information page
 - *Note: this individual must be employed at a community-based HIV/AIDS organization, and will be responsible for the overall conduct of the project, including the budget. For evaluation projects, if this role is assigned to the Evaluation Coordinator, then they will be ineligible for compensation through the grant.*
5. Complete the Project Team information page:
 - 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 5 Collaborators. Please contact [OHTN Funding Staff](#) if you have additional team members to add.
6. Complete the Administration of Funds Information page
 - *Note: this must be the financial administrator or equivalent at the nominated principal investigator’s organization – must not be the nominated Principal Investigator*
7. Complete the Proposal Information:

For CBR Projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project Title• Amount Requested• Duration of Funding• Relevance of Research• Plain Language Summary• CBR Principles Summary	For Program Evaluation Projects: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project Title• Amount Requested• Duration of Funding• Relevance of Participatory Program Evaluation• Plain Language Summary• Participatory Evaluation Activities
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OHTN COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH AND EVALUATION FUND

8. Submit the following documents – collated and in PDF – as applicable (*mandatory):

- Signature Page*
- Response to Previous Reviews (if applicable)
- Project Description*
- Timeline*
- Detailed Budget and Justification*
- Nominated Principal Investigator’s CV*
- Co-Principal Investigator’s CV(s)
- Co-Investigator’s CV(s)
- Collaborator’s CV(s)
- Consent Form
- Collaborator Letters
- Support Letters
- Appendices

Relevance of Research (for CBR Projects)

Describe the relevance of the proposed **research project** to the objectives of the CBR & E Fund, the community-based organization leading the project, and the HIV community in Ontario, specifically those populations most affected by HIV. What gaps in existing knowledge will the proposed research fill, and what is the intended impact of the research? How might the proposed research improve the lives of those living with and at risk of HIV in Ontario? (*maximum 250 words, entered directly into application form*)

Relevance of Participatory Program Evaluation (for PPE Projects)

Describe the relevance of the proposed **participatory program evaluation** (PPE) to the objectives of the CBR & E Fund, to the community-based organization whose program is being evaluated, and more broadly to the HIV community in Ontario. What questions will the evaluation answer (in broad terms), and what impact will the process have on the organization and its stakeholders, including its clients? (*maximum 250 words, entered directly into application form*)

Plain Language Summary

Provide a concise summary of the CBR or participatory program evaluation project’s activities and the anticipated impact on the community-based organization, the HIV community, and the HIV epidemic in Ontario more broadly. Describe the knowledge translation and exchange approaches to be utilized to facilitate the desired outcomes. Note: This summary will be posted on the OHTN website if the project is awarded funding. (*maximum 500 words, entered directly into application form*)

CBR Principles Summary (for CBR Projects)

Community-based research projects should adhere to the following principles:

- Community Driven
- Community Relevant
- Equitable Partnerships and Collaboration
- Capacity Building
- Anti-Oppression Framework
- Attending to Process
- Multiple Forms of Knowledge
- Action Outcomes

Briefly summarize the team’s previous experience with and approach to CBR. Outline how the current project will operationalize the principles listed above to ensure meaningful involvement of people living with HIV throughout the research process. See [‘Advice to Applicants’](#) below for CBR resources that the team may wish to consult. *(maximum 500 words, entered directly into application form)*

Participatory Program Evaluation Activities (for PPE Projects)

A participatory approach to program evaluation should have the following characteristics:

- An evaluation coordinator – often from outside the program or organization – to structure and facilitate the participatory evaluation process, and to contribute as a member of the team
- Equitable Partnerships and Collaboration with stakeholders in all phases of the evaluation (defining evaluation objectives, developing methodology, collection and interpretation of information, development of conclusions and recommendations)
- Results reflective of both the subjective perceptions of stakeholders, and the more objective perspective of an outside evaluator
- Capacity building – such as enhanced program evaluation skills and awareness of program strategy – for all stakeholders

Briefly summarize the team’s approach to PPE for this project. Outline how the proposed activities will fulfill the intentions of a participatory evaluation approach. See [‘Advice to Applicants’](#) below for evaluation resources that the team may wish to consult. *(maximum 500 words, entered directly into application form)*

Project Description (for CBR Projects)

The project description (up to 8 pages) for Community-Based Research projects should integrate the CBR approach to be used, and contain the following information:

Research Plan (3-5 pages):

- Describe the origin of the project – what is currently known about the issue from both published and unpublished sources – and the rationale for the current application
- Describe the objectives or research question
- Describe the proposed activities, methods and analyses to be performed – if not yet known, describe the process by which these will be determined

OHTN COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH AND EVALUATION FUND

- Describe anticipated challenges and proposed solutions and limitations – including how decisions will be made, and how conflicts will be resolved
- Consider the potential ethical risks and implications for individuals and communities, and address how these risks will be minimized

Capacity Building Activities (1-2 pages):

- Describe the capacity building activities to be undertaken with members of the research team
- Include a rationale for each activity and identify the participant's roles and expected outcomes
- Demonstrate the connection between the capacity building activities proposed and the objectives of the proposed project (i.e. new skills and knowledge should be utilized during the research process)

Impacts (1/2-2 pages):

- Describe the anticipated impact(s) of the proposed project – for advancing knowledge, building capacity, informing decision-making (at the individual, program, organizational, and/or government level), and having an impact on the health and well-being of people living with and at risk of HIV in Ontario

Knowledge Translation & Exchange Plan (1/2-1.5 pages):

- Describe how information, process, and results from the current proposal will be shared, when, and with whom
- Informal and formal methods are encouraged

Evaluation Plan (1/2-1 page):

- Describe how the project and capacity building activities will be evaluated

Research Team (1-2 pages):

- Provide a description of the relevant experience and education of all team members (principal and co-investigators), as well as collaborators where they play in integral part in the operationalization of the research
- Describe how the various project partners will contribute to the various aspects of the research, such as but not limited to: making decisions about design, methods and enrolment; collecting, analysing or interpreting data; disseminating and implementing findings. (This may be woven into the individual descriptions above rather than be its own section)

Proposals (not including references) should be no more than 8 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.

OHTN COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH AND EVALUATION FUND

Project Description (for PPE Projects)

The Project Description (up to 8 pages) for Participatory Program Evaluation Projects should reflect the PPE Activities described, and contain the following information:

Program Description (1/2-1.5 pages):

- Describe the program to be evaluated, including a brief history of its development, funding source(s), purpose (objectives), the number of clients per year, any known outcomes, and any previous evaluations conducted

Evaluation Plan (3-5 pages):

- Describe the need (rationale) for the proposed evaluation
- Describe the overall goal of the evaluation – specify what type of evaluation is planned (formative, process, outcome, etc.)
- Describe the process associated with each phase of the evaluation plan, and who will be involved
Describe any unique considerations to be given to this particular evaluation
- Describe anticipated challenges and proposed solutions and limitations – including how decisions will be made, and how conflicts will be resolved
- Consider the potential ethical risks and risks to confidentiality (especially for clients) that can arise and address how these risks will be minimized. Include a discussion of the potential challenges for maintaining an appropriate level of objectivity throughout the evaluation process.

Capacity Building Activities (1-2 pages):

- Describe the capacity building activities to be undertaken with members of the evaluation team
- Include a rationale for each activity and identify the participant's roles and expected outcomes
- Demonstrate the connection between the capacity building activities proposed and the objectives of the proposed project (i.e. new skills and knowledge should be utilized during the evaluation process)

Impacts (1/2-2 pages):

- Describe the anticipated impacts of the proposed evaluation – not only for the program being evaluated, but also for advancing knowledge, building capacity, informing decision-making (at the individual, program, organizational, and/or government level), and having an impact on the health and well-being of people living with and at risk of HIV in Ontario

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

- Describe how information, process, and results from the current proposal will be shared, when, and with whom
- Informal and formal methods are encouraged

OHTN COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH AND EVALUATION FUND

Participatory Program Evaluation Team (1-2 pages):

- Provide a description of the project-related roles and relevant experience and education of all team members (principal and co-investigators), including the Evaluation Coordinator, and collaborators where they play in integral part in the operationalization of the evaluation

Proposals (not including references) should be no more than 8 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

Include a detailed timeline for the proposed activities, including KTE activities and anticipated impacts. *(maximum 1 page)*

Appendices

1. Applicants may submit 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 submit up to three (3) products (presentations, testimonials, summaries) that demonstrate the ability to fulfill the project activities described
3. Questionnaires, surveys, or other tools related to the current proposal should be submitted

Ethics Approval and Consent Forms

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

Letters of Support

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. *(maximum 4 letters – collate prior to uploading)*

Applicant CVs

Only the Nominated Principal Applicant is required to submit a completed [Common CV](#) finalized for the

OHTN COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH AND EVALUATION FUND

OHTN. There are two types of CV templates available – Academic and Community. Other Principal and CoApplicant CVs may be submitted as appropriate. The onus is on the team to convince reviewers of the team's ability – with respect to the necessary skills and experience – to complete the work proposed. For collaborators who will play a significant role in the research (for example, who provide specialized training or knowledge, such as motivational interviewing), it may be helpful to provide a CV.

Budget

Provide a detailed budget with justification/rationale for each cost, following the guidelines below:

- 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 to similar categories of staff, including fringe benefits where applicable. Please note that while OHTN does not usually pay the salary of Principal Investigators or Co-Investigators of projects, exceptions may be made under exceptional circumstances for the CBR & E Fund, where:
 - For CBR Projects: the team member plays an integral role on the research team, and requires backfilling of their current position in order to participate
 - For PPE Projects: the evaluation coordinator (not also acting as the NPI) or other team member is external to the program or organization conducting the evaluation and requires backfilling of their role to participate. Evaluation team members who are employees of the organization where the program is delivered are not eligible for financial support as evaluation is a normal part of an organization's activities
- b. **Project Activities** – Fees associated with capacity building and other project-related activities
- c. **Travel** – Costs associated with transportation (include estimated costs based on current actual costs for flights, train travel, hotels, etc.) where applicable.
- d. **Equipment** – The need for equipment should be explained and all amounts (for computers, etc.) estimated based on current actual costs. Preference for one type of computer over another must be adequately justified.
- e. **Supplies** – Please note that funds for supplies are not intended for the purchase of furniture or general office equipment, or for infrastructure related to service delivery. Other project-specific supply costs should be justified using current actual costs.
- f. **Administrative Costs** – Up to 10% of the total budget may be requested to cover administrative costs such as telephone and fax, photocopying, and budget/financial management.
- g. **Knowledge Translation & Exchange** – Please itemize all requests for KTE activities

Submitting the Proposal

Applications for the OHTN CBR & E Fund 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.

OHTN COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH AND EVALUATION FUND

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.

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 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 Review Committee or external reviewers. Contact [Sonia Gaudry](#) 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.

Address hard copy documents (if applicable) to:

Ontario HIV Treatment Network
c/o Sonia Gaudry, Impact Focused Research
1300 Yonge Street, Suite 600
Toronto ON M4T 1X3

Advice to Applicants

In writing their proposal, authors should bear the following points in mind:

- Keep the language clear, concise and simple
- Limit the use of appendices to materials that are essential for evaluating the application
- The request should be in a format that is easy to read. Characters must be no less than 11 point font. Use letter-sized sheets (8 1/2" x 11"), number each page and leave margins of 1" on all sides.

Applicants may find it useful to consult the following resources:

- [Developing and Sustaining Community-Based Participatory Research Partnerships: A Skill-Building Curriculum](#)
- [Sample Terms of Reference Contract](#)
- [Community Campus Partnerships for Health – Community-Based Participatory Research](#)
- [Working Together: The Paloma- Wellesley Guide to Participatory Program Evaluation](#) (Wellesley Institute, Paloma Foundation)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention – Program Evaluation](#)
- International Development Research Centre's [Participatory Program Evaluation Manual](#)
- [CBR – Peer Research in Action](#) (Wellesley Institute)
- Canadian Institutes of Health Research's "[A Guide to Researcher and Knowledge-User Collaboration in Health Research](#)"

Please consult with [OHTN staff](#) for any questions prior to submission.

Evaluation Criteria & Review Process

All proposals submitted to the OHTN for funding go through an initial administrative review process to confirm eligibility prior to being assigned for review to 2 scientific and 2 community members of the Community-Based Research Review Committee. Proposals are assessed based on their relevance and potential impact, as well as their scientific merit.

Budget Limitation

Requests for CBR & E Funds may be made for a maximum of \$25,000. The OHTN 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.

Reporting Requirements

The OHTN expects the timely submission of satisfactory progress, final 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, 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

OHTN COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH AND EVALUATION FUND

The following reporting requirements will be implemented to help demonstrate progress and success of the CBR & E Fund:

- Semi-annual Progress Reports (2-3 pages)
- Annual Financial Report
- Final Report (5-6 pages)
- 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.

Detailed 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 team members) 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 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. 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, 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.

Contact Information

For questions regarding these funding guidelines, please contact:

Sonia Gaudry, Manager, Impact Focused Research

sgaudry@ohrn.on.ca

416.642.6486 x2214