



## **HIV ENDGAME PROGRAM**

### **Winston Husbands Leadership Award in Strengthening the Response to HIV among Black Communities**

#### **Application Guidelines**

Full Application Deadline: **January 15, 2024** (12:00 pm EST)

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### The OHTN HIV Endgame Program

Ontario is at a tipping point in our efforts to stop HIV. In chess, the endgame is a critical stage where the tactics selected determine the outcome. The OHTN HIV Endgame Program draws on Ontario's expertise to improve our tactical response to HIV. This requires a strategic approach to data and evidence use; innovative and rapid generation of evidence; and flexibility to change course when a new approach is ineffective or unsuccessful. The ultimate goal is to enhance HIV programming and service delivery, design effective integrated HIV health and social services, improve the health and well-being of people living with HIV, and eradicate HIV infections.

The OHTN HIV Endgame Program funds groundwork to support the design, implementation, improvement, and scale-up of programs and services that move Ontario closer to reaching the HIV endgame. The program will support data, evidence-sharing, and impact activities that will:

- Meet the needs of [populations in Ontario most affected by HIV](#)
- Drive changes in policy and practice across the HIV prevention, engagement, and care cascade
- Lead to more integrated health and social services
- Identify effective ways to address the social determinants of health for communities most affected by HIV
- Contribute to a [rapid learning HIV health and social system](#)

The OHTN will actively support applicants with a demonstrated program of data, evidence-sharing, and impact that explicitly advances a rapidly evolving health and social system for HIV and adheres to the following steps of rapid learning:

- Identifies where we most need to “move the dial” through a rigorous and systematic process of inquiry
- Gathers timely data and informs the design of practice innovations, generates new approaches, and measures outcomes
- Implements evidence-informed approaches and interventions, monitors their implementation, evaluates their impact, and adjusts as required
- Sustains effective local approaches and supports their scale up across the system
- Creates a rapid learning and improvement culture (competencies and capacity) within our sector that fosters training, evaluation, and innovation

Through its strategic planning process and consultations with its stakeholders, OHTN has identified seven areas of rapid learning and improvement. The OHTN HIV Endgame Program will support data, evidence-sharing, and impact initiatives that will drive change in one or more of these areas of learning.

### **Seven areas of Rapid Learning**

- Effective PrEP scale-up in Ontario
- Population-focused prevention and health promotion
- HIV testing
- Linkage, adherence, and retention in care
- Clinical care standards and capacity
- Integration of services
- Mental health and well-being of people living with and at risk of HIV (including stigma reduction)

### **Award Description**

The Winston Husbands Leadership Award in Strengthening the Response to HIV among Black Communities provides salary support for emergent leaders who are interested in working closely and collaboratively with the OHTN to drive change, contribute to rapid learning and improvement in our sector, and build HIV innovation capacity in Ontario.

This award is established in recognition of Winston Husbands' leadership in supporting African, Caribbean, and Black (ACB) stakeholders in Ontario build their capacity for community-based knowledge development in HIV. Dr. Husbands was a Senior Scientist at the OHTN with a program of knowledge development focused on HIV prevention within ACB communities. He worked closely with Devica Hintzen, Shamara Baidoobonso, Lori Chambers, and many other colleagues to mobilize ACB stakeholders and assert their leadership in research, as well as program and service development that addresses HIV within ACB communities. He has also supported community members, students, and emerging scholars in their quest to understand the impact of HIV on ACB communities and develop community-engaged initiatives that contribute to the HIV response in Ontario. This award will ensure that the efforts started by Winston Husbands and others continue on past his retirement from OHTN.

This award will foster community-engaged leadership among emerging Black scholars, knowledge users, and service providers who work collaboratively with community stakeholders to:

- enhance the knowledge base on HIV within Black communities;
- develop impactful projects and share evidence that will strengthen the community-based response to HIV;
- strengthen the capacity for community-engaged knowledge development among researchers, clinicians, policy makers, and community stakeholders; and
- address any existing gaps in HIV prevention, treatment, and care within ACB communities.

The successful candidate will work closely with OHTN (e.g. attend quarterly meetings, advise OHTN when needed, etc.) and be part of the collective impact groups that drive learning and improvement in our sector. They will have strategic, collaborative, and innovative programs, and develop dynamic partnerships with those affected by HIV in order to build Ontario's capacity for HIV innovation. They will identify practical challenges and needs within the ACB community and work with other stakeholders

from relevant sectors (e.g. mental health, substance use and addictions, health services, etc.) to implement and scale up interventions that address these needs.

### Expected Commitments

During the grant period, the successful candidate is expected to:

- Work to improve the HIV prevention, treatment, care and awareness among Black communities in Ontario, and strengthen the health system to address their needs
- Participate in rapid learning and improvement initiatives that emerge from OHTN's collective impact work, when these initiatives intersect with the funded program
- Participate in OHTN initiatives, including policy exchanges, roundtables, collective impact groups, and stakeholder consultations;
- Act as a source of expertise for strengthening the response to HIV in Ontario, especially in relation to issues identified in the proposal;
- Collaborate with, share information with, and seek feedback from other OHTN-funded teams and the broader network, especially those communities affected by the proposed work; and
- Remain involved in community-based initiatives to address HIV, health, and wellbeing among Black communities in Ontario.

### Funds Available

Duration: up to two years

Maximum annual funding: up to \$75,000

Payments will be made annually based on the submission of satisfactory progress narrative and financial reports (see [reporting requirements](#)).

### Eligibility Criteria

Eligible applicants include scholars, researchers, physicians, service providers, knowledge users, or policy makers who:

- Are (a) affiliated with a university or research institution in Ontario as postdoctoral fellows or junior faculty with a tenure stream appointment at the time of application and duration of the award, or (b) a university graduate employed in research, program, or policy development at a health organization with at least three years of experience in their field
- Are working on initiatives to mobilize and share knowledge about HIV among Black communities as part of their duties within a community-based health organization, university, or hospital in Ontario
- Self-identify as Black, African, or Caribbean and have a demonstrated track record of scholarship or service for Black Canadian communities
- Have a mentor with a track record of scholarship or service for Black Canadian communities
- Demonstrate substantive interest in evidence-based responses to HIV in Ontario
- Are developing or undertaking projects that address the disproportionate burden of HIV among Black Canadian communities in Ontario

- Have primary employment and residence in Ontario

**In addition, applicants are expected to meet the criteria outlined below:**

- Emerging innovator (including current postdoctoral fellows) preparing to establish a program of HIV data, evidence-sharing, and impact;
- Devote at least 60% of time to HIV data, evidence-sharing and impact activities; and
- Commit to collaborate with other OHTN stakeholders and funded leaders.

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

This award may not be held concurrently with any other salary awards (e.g. CIHR New Investigator Awards). Applicants who currently hold a salary award may apply only if the current award will end by the start date of the Winston Husbands Leadership Award in strengthening the response to HIV among Black communities.

### Other Relevant Programs

The OHTN offers other services that might be of relevance or use to potential applicants before or during the implementation of their program of data, evidence-sharing, and impact activities. Please see the list of available services listed under [Additional Resources](#) to determine which one is best aligned with your interest and application.

### How to Apply

Interested applicants are encouraged to contact [OHTN Staff](#) as soon as possible to confirm eligibility and fit. Applicants must submit a Full Application for review by **January 15, 2024 at 12:00pm (EST)**.

### Full Application

Applicants will complete and submit a full application via the [OHTN grants portal](#). The required steps are described below:

1. Log in to your [OHTN grants portal](#) account. Please note: incomplete applications may be saved and returned to at a later date
2. Provide [Financial Administrator Information](#)
3. Provide [Host Institution Information](#)
4. Complete the Full Application Form:
  - Complete Principal Applicant contact information
  - Indicate relevant [areas of learning and improvement](#)
  - Complete Relevance of proposed data, evidence-sharing, and impact plan
  - Complete Stakeholder Engagement Plan
  - Complete [Plain Language Summary](#)
5. Provide [Referee Information](#)
6. Upload [Full Proposal](#)
7. Upload [Timeline](#)

8. Upload [Budget & Budget Justification](#)
9. Upload [Applicant CCV](#)
10. Upload [Host Institution Information](#)
11. Upload relevant [Appendices](#)
12. Upload [Ethics Documents](#)
13. Upload [Letters of Support](#)
14. Review and [submit](#) your application by the deadline

**Note:** All uploads should be in PDF format.

### **Financial Administrator Information**

Please provide the contact information of the financial administrator at your institution. The financial administrator is the person responsible for the financial management and reporting at the institution with which you are affiliated. Once the task is submitted, the financial administrator will receive an email asking them to log in to the grants portal and complete a short form.

**Note:** You will not be able to submit your application until the financial administrator has submitted this information. To ensure adequate time for their response, please complete this task no later than 2 weeks prior to the application deadline.

### **Plain Language Summary**

Please provide a concise summary of the proposed data and evidence-sharing activities, and the anticipated impacts on the ACB populations affected by HIV in Ontario. Describe the approaches used to facilitate the desired outcomes and impact. Note: This summary will be posted on the OHTN website if the project is awarded funding. *(maximum 500 words, entered directly into application form)*

### **Referee Information**

Please provide the contact information of **three** individuals with whom you have worked, and who are in a position to give an assessment of your suitability for the Winston Husbands Leadership Award in Strengthening the Response to HIV among Black Communities. Once the task is submitted, your referees will receive an email asking them to log in to the grants portal and upload a letter of reference.

**Note:** You will not be able to submit your application until your referees have submitted this information. To ensure adequate time for their response, please complete this task no later than 2 weeks prior to the application deadline.

### **Full Proposal** (max. 13 pages, excluding references)

The proposal should illustrate a clear rationale for the support being requested and address the following. The order and number of pages are provided as suggested guidelines only.

a) *Data, evidence-sharing and impact plan (approximately 7- 10 pages)*

- A description of the data, evidence-sharing, and impact plan, including objectives, methods, analyses, and outcomes
- A description of how the proposed work fulfills the [described core components](#) of the Winston Husbands Leadership Award in strengthening the response to HIV among Black communities
- A description of complementary or conflicting projects being pursued by others, how your work is positioned within this context, and how it avoids duplication
- Anticipated challenges and proposed solutions
- A discussion of the ethical implications of the proposed activities (including risks to individuals and communities) and how they will be mitigated
- Evidence of previous success in moving outcomes into action at the program, practice, or policy levels
- Evidence-sharing methods and impact approaches for the current proposal

*b) Areas of learning and improvement (approximately 1-2 pages)*

- A description of the [areas of learning and improvement](#) to be addressed by the proposed data, evidence-sharing, and impact plan
- Details about relevant partners and stakeholders needed to successfully meet the areas of learning and improvement

*c) Impacts (approximately 1-2 pages)*

- A description of the envisioned short-, medium-, and long-term outcomes of this work, how it will impact ACB communities in Ontario, and the steps required to achieve that impact
- An explanation of how this award will drive change in the stated time period
- A description of how the findings will contribute to a [rapid learning health and social system](#) for HIV in Ontario

*Proposals should be no more than 13 pages (not including references), single spaced, minimum 11-point font, with 1" margins. Proposals, including references, must be converted to PDF prior to upload.*

### Timeline

A year-by-year plan for the proposed activities, including proposed and anticipated impacts and relevance to areas of learning and improvement. A template is available in the [online grants portal](#).

### Budget & Budget Justification

Complete the [budget template](#) for each year of the award being requested. Maximum annual funds available and award duration are listed under [Funds Available](#).

Provide a separate narrative that justifies the requested budget using the following guidelines:

- ***Salary Amount:*** Indicate the proportion of time to be dedicated to data, evidence-sharing, impact and mentoring activities, and whether this includes pro-rated benefits for the proportion of time being requested. Describe how the additional salary support will reduce current



workload obligations (this must be consistent with information from the Host Institution). The salary amount is not intended to cover the full proportion of time committed to data, evidence-sharing, and impact activities – only the additional time and pro-rated benefits afforded by this award.

- ***Project Allowance:*** Indicate the amount to be allocated to data, evidence-sharing and impact activities associated with your program; describe those activities and any related costs. The requested amount is meant to support further development of data, evidence sharing, and impact activities; implementation of the proposed program; or applications to other funding organizations. The maximum amount that can be allocated in this manner is \$35,000. The project allowance and salary support requests combined cannot exceed the maximum funds available for each award.

### **Applicant CCV**

Applicants should include a completed [Common CV](#) using the OHTN template. There are two possible templates that can be used: Academic or Community/Knowledge User.

### **Host Institution Information**

Please upload the [Host Institution Verification Form](#) and a letter of support.

The Host Institution Verification Form certifies the institution’s support of the application; articulates the total salary support and benefits being requested; and describes the reduced teaching, clinical, or service workload in exchange for the expanded data, evidence-sharing, impact, and mentoring workload.

*Note: The salary amount allocated for the awardee is not intended to cover the full proportion of time committed to data, evidence sharing, and impact plan – only the additional time and pro-rated benefits afforded by this award (exception being for postdoctoral fellows).*

A Host Institution Letter of Support should also be provided, indicating the applicant’s suitability for the Winston Husbands Leadership Award in Strengthening the Response to HIV among Black Communities and the enhanced data, evidence-sharing, and impact capacity it will bring to the institution. The letter should also articulate how the applicant’s research fits into the overall goals of the institution.

### **Appendices**

1. Applicants should upload questionnaires, surveys, or other tools related to the current proposal.
2. 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.
3. Applicants may upload up to three (3) products (presentations, testimonials, summaries, etc.) that demonstrate evidence sharing and uptake from previous work.

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

### Ethics Documents

Upload collated copies of related ethics board approvals, copies of consent forms to be signed by prospective participants, or other explanatory materials for distribution. Draft versions are encouraged if final approved versions are not available. Final approved versions should be submitted when available, and annual renewal letters from the relevant REBs must be submitted to the OHTN in a timely manner.

### Letters of Support (max. 3 letters)

If your projects involve the support or collaboration of external organizations or individuals, please submit letters of support indicating their approval of, role in and commitment to your proposed data, evidence-sharing and impact plan. Letters of support from decision-makers are particularly significant. Please collate prior to uploading.

### Submitting the Proposal

A complete Full Application must be submitted electronically by **January 15, 2024 at 12:00pm (EST)**.

Please be advised that all application materials and information provided to the OHTN, including personal information such as sexual orientation or HIV status, are kept strictly confidential and only forwarded to the members of the OHTN Review Committee and external grant reviewers, as needed. Submitted information 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 these parties. Contact [Arju Nishimura](#) if you have any questions.

**Note:** Please allow a sufficient amount of time to ensure successful electronic submission. File limits have been imposed to ensure your application is accessible to reviewers. All forms and uploads from your Financial Administrator or Referees must also be complete and submitted by the deadline. If you experience any difficulty with the online process, please notify [program staff](#) at least 24 hours prior to the deadline so that any issues may be resolved.

### Additional Resources

#### ***The Ontario HIV Epidemiology and Surveillance Initiative (OHESI)***

OHESI provides access to timely, relevant, and comprehensive information about the epidemiology of HIV in Ontario, and disseminates this information more widely to different groups of stakeholders. If you are looking for HIV epidemiologic data specific to Ontario, please visit the [OHESI website](#).

#### ***The Ontario Cohort Study (OCS)***

OCS data can be used to support evidence production and development of evidence-sharing and impact activities. OCS is a rich source of clinical, socio-behavioural, and population health data.

Individuals interested in using OCS will have access to:

- Clinical data obtained through participants' clinic records
- Psychosocial and behavioural data collected through an interviewer-administered standardized questionnaire
- Serological and viral load test data collected by Public Health Ontario Laboratory

All of the data in the OCS is anonymized and cannot be linked back to the participant.

There are two ways to use OCS data:

- Linking with external databases
- Accessing the OHTN cohort study data

Should you decide to access the OCS data, please consider the information below:

- Before the LOI deadline, contact the [OCS Research Coordinator](#) to submit your request
- Your LOI application should outline your research objectives/questions related to the OCS and affirm that the OCS Principal Investigator has reviewed them
- Your full application must include a feasibility letter provided by the OCS Principal Investigator
- Please note that between the LOI stage and the full application stage, the OCS will ask you develop an OCS data analysis plan

For more information about the OCS, please visit the [OCS website](#).

### ***Grant Impact Planning***

- [Impact Strategy Assessment Checklist for Grant Applications](#): a checklist to help you assess the completeness of your Impact Strategy for research projects and grant applications
- [Impact in Research Grant Applications](#): a guidance and planning sheet that will help you plan how to complete the impact sections of grant applications
- [How to Write a Winning Impact Summary and Pathway to Impact](#): a blog and podcast with guidance about impact summaries
- [Supporting Research Impact in Grant Applications](#) : a webinar related to research and practice on research impact planning

### ***Knowledge Translation Resources***

- [CIHR's Guide to Knowledge Translation Planning](#): an overview of integrated and end-of-grant KT approaches, including worksheets and sample project proposals
- [Knowledge Translation in Health Care: Moving from Evidence to Practice](#): a compilation of chapters written by experts on a wide range of KT topics.
- [Knowledge Mobilization Planner](#): a user-friendly toolkit from The Ontario Centre of Excellence for Children and Youth Mental Health that connects to a number of other resources.
- [Knowledge Translation Planning Template](#): a comprehensive, step-by-step tool to address the essential components, developed and refined by The Hospital for Sick Kids and Melanie Barwick

### **General Advice on Grant Writing**

- [Guidebook for New Principal Investigators: Advice on Applying for a Grant, Writing Papers, Setting up a Research Team and Managing your Time](#) by Roderick McInnes, Brenda Andrews and Richard Rachubinski (CIHR)
- [A Guide for Proposal Writing](#) (National Science Foundation)
- [Research Funding: 10 Tips for Writing a Successful Application](#) (The Guardian)
- [Ten Ways to Write a Better Grant](#) (The Scientist)
- [Ten Simple Rules for Getting Funded](#) (PLOS Computational Biology)

### **Evaluation Criteria and Review Process**

Full applications will be reviewed independently by the OHTN Review Committee for relevance, impact, efficiency, context sensitivity, sustainability, feasibility, and approach. Based on the review, OHTN's Executive Director will recommend candidates to the OHTN Board for final funding consideration.

- **Relevance:** The proposal has the potential to drive improvements in Ontario's prevention, treatment and care cascade for ACB populations and contributes towards a rapid learning health and social system for HIV in Ontario.
- **Impact-Focus:** The evidence-sharing plan accompanying each program or initiative: (a) identifies one or more stakeholders (e.g. community based organizations, clinics, local health integrated networks, policymakers); (b) describes the outcomes of any evidence-sharing and educational activities (e.g. re-designed services or policies) and how they will contribute to achieving the Endgame strategy; and (c) establishes realistic pathways to achieve impact that are informed by what is known about effective evidence sharing (e.g. timely feedback of information to improve organizational performance). Ongoing monitoring and evaluation will be able to confirm that the plans achieved the desired impacts or that corrective action was taken to address identified concerns.
- **Efficiency:** The data or evidence used in the proposal is not available from another source. Any data collection or community engagement process places a minimal burden on participants (e.g. people living with HIV, ASOs, clinics). The resulting information and insights are available in as close to real time as possible, and participants receive regular updates about the use and impact of the collected information and insights.
- **Context Sensitivity:** The data, evidence-sharing, and impact activities will break new ground or result in findings specific to the Ontario HIV sector. Rapid learning activities will drive change that benefits Ontario. The applicant must have an interest in and the capacity to implement or scale up any programs or interventions being studied or promoted. The interventions themselves must be feasible in the Ontario context (e.g. do not require a level of investment, model of funding, or staffing structure the system cannot support).
- **Good Value for Money and Sustainability:** The benefit or impact of the program or intervention justifies its cost, and the program or intervention is sustainable over time within existing budgets.
- **Feasibility:** The staff, expertise, structures, and budget required to deliver the program or intervention are in place. No one else is better positioned to deliver the program or initiative.

- **Approach:** The methodology, measurement, analysis, and ethical considerations are thorough, methodologically rigorous, and will successfully lead to data, evidence-sharing, and impact.

### OHTN Engagement Accord

Successful candidates commit to meet the expectations of the [OHTN Engagement Accord](#). They work in a highly collaborative way to actively engage the communities most affected by HIV; ensure rigorous data, evidence-sharing, and impact activities; build partnerships that can drive change; engage in collaborative knowledge-sharing processes; and demonstrate accountability for the use of grant funds.

### Reporting Requirements

***Continued release of funds is contingent upon timely receipt and approval of progress and financial reports. Failure to submit a report of any kind (within three months of the due date) will preclude the grantee from receiving further financial support from the OHTN.***

The following reporting requirements help demonstrate the progress and success of the OHTN HIV Endgame Awards. Report templates are accessible via the [online grants portal](#).

- Annual narrative progress reports (3-5 pages), including questions about deliverables, challenges and successes, additional funding, community engagement, knowledge dissemination, and capacity building
- Annual impact plans
- Bi-annual impact progress meetings via teleconference (30 minutes)
- Annual financial reports detailing how funds were spent
- A final narrative report (5-6 pages)
- A post-final narrative report one year past the end date of the award to assess progress since the completion of the award term

The Winston Husbands Leadership Award in Strengthening the Response to HIV among Black Communities grantee is expected to be a leader in Ontario and an active part of the broader Ontario HIV community and OHTN network, as outlined in the [award description](#). This person will be a resource for scientific information and data for policy makers and media.

The grantee will be accountable to the OHTN and to the people living with HIV who are impacted by their work. The successful candidate is expected to work with a Community Advisory Committee (comprised of people living with HIV and their health care providers) to inform the development of data and evidence-sharing initiatives and future research priorities. As a condition of ongoing funding, the awardee will be expected to demonstrate collaborations with relevant ACB community stakeholders. The OHTN will verify these independently.

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

### Communication Requirements

1. Significant deviations from the original approved objectives, methodology, budget, or other major changes must receive written authorization from the OHTN prior to being implemented. Failure to notify the OHTN in a timely manner may result in termination of funding.
2. The OHTN expects applicants to publish their work in appropriate formats, including peer-reviewed publications, where appropriate. 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.
3. The OHTN expects the awardee to take a leadership role in developing strategies to meet the needs of the priority communities with whom they work. The awardee is expected to collaborate with the OHTN, other OHTN-funded leaders, and community stakeholders in developing such strategies.
4. Plain Language Summaries and other materials describing the program of research will be published on the OHTN website. The OHTN assumes responsibility for disseminating information about project findings 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 researchers 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 their 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 (progress teleconferences, progress and final narrative reports, surveys, interviews, etc.) and workshops, and providing data or reports as required for assessing progress and results.
6. The following acknowledgement must be included in all publications resulting from data, evidence-sharing and impact activities supported by the OHTN: *This project is supported by a grant from the Ontario HIV Treatment Network (OHTN).*

### Contact Information

For questions regarding this Request for Proposals, please contact:

**OHTN HIV Endgame Program Staff**

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