HIV ENDGAME PROGRAM

Community Based Project and Participatory Evaluation Program Application Guidelines

Application Deadline: **January 18, 2027** (11:59 AM EST)

Table of Contents

Grant Description 3
Objectives 3
Funds Available 4
Eligibility Criteria 4
How to Apply If you are proposing a Community-Based Project 4
Financial Administrator Information 5
Nominated Principal Applicant 5
Co-Principal Applicant(s) 5
Co-Applicant(s) 6
Collaborator(s) 6
Relevance of Community-Based Project 6
Community-Based Principles Summary 6
Project Description 6
Timeline 7
Budget & Budget Justification 7
Nominated Principal Applicant CV 8
Additional CVs (optional) 8
Ethics Approval and Consent Forms 9
Support and Collaborator Letters (max. 2 letters) 9
Appendices 9
How to Apply if you are proposing a Participatory Program Evaluation 9
Financial Administrator Information 10
Nominated Principal Applicant 10
Co-Principal Applicant(s) 10
Co-Applicant(s) 10
Collaborator(s) 10
Participatory Program Evaluation Activities 10
Relevance of Participatory Program Evaluation 11
Project Description 11
Timeline 12
Budget & Budget Justification 12
Nominated Principal Applicant CV 13
Additional CVs 13

Ethics Approval and Consent Forms 13
Support and Collaborator Letters (max. 2 letters) 14
Appendices 14
Submitting the Proposal 14
Plain Language Summary 14
Signature Page 15
Advice to Applicants 15
Evaluation Criteria & Review Process 15
OHTN Engagement Accord 15
Reporting Requirements 15
Communication Requirements 16
Contact Information 16

Grant Description

The **OHTN Community-Based Project and Participatory Evaluation Program (CBPPEP)** 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 the use of data and evidence to drive change. The CBPPEP will assist communities by supporting both the production and discovery of knowledge through community-based inquiry and the use of evidence to drive programming through participatory program evaluation.

The OHTN is committed to funding rigorous, community-relevant data and evidence-sharing projects that will improve front-line services targeting those most affected by HIV in Ontario:

- People living with HIV
- Men who have sex with men
- People who use drugs
- African, Caribbean, and Black communities
- Indigenous communities
- Women* *(cis and trans women, including African, Caribbean and Black women, women who use drugs, Indigenous women, and other women who face systemic and social inequities, are more likely to be exposed to HIV through a sexual or drug using partner.)*

The CBPPEP will provide financial support to eligible community-initiated HIV projects, needs assessments, quality improvement programs, and participatory evaluations that explore issues of importance to community-based organizations, and will have a meaningful impact on those most affected by HIV in Ontario.

Objectives

The objectives of the Community-Based Project and Participatory Evaluation Program are to:

- Promote projects that will: reduce new HIV infections; increase access to testing; enhance linkage to treatment and care; and reduce HIV stigma, discrimination or any other barriers to

optimal health of people living with HIV

- Enhance the capacity of Community-Based HIV/AIDS Organizations (CBAOs), their staff, and those living with HIV to meaningfully participate in the implementation of HIV projects, needs assessments, quality improvement programs, and program evaluation activities
- Support projects that will have a meaningful impact in the short- to medium-term (2-3 years) for those most affected by HIV, such as: developing and modifying effective programs and services, creating new policies and practices, and generating preliminary data to inform programs and services
- Enhance opportunities for partnership development with a broad range of interest holders (formerly referred to as stakeholders), including researchers, policy and decision makers, community-based organizations, and people living with and at risk of HIV
- Support effective evidence-sharing activities

Funds Available

Duration: up to 18 months
Annual funding: between $25,000 - $50,000 in one-time funding. This grant is non-renewable.

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for a CBPPEP grant, the following criteria must be fulfilled:

- The Nominated Principal Applicant (NPA) must contact program staff ***prior*** to completing an application to confirm eligibility and discuss potential opportunities for in-kind support from the OHTN
- The NPA must be employed by a CBAO based in Ontario
- The proposed project, needs assessment, quality improvement, or participatory evaluation must demonstrate that a CBAO based in Ontario has both identified the question or issue to be addressed and will be actively and meaningfully involved throughout the process
- The proposed project must have a meaningful impact on one or more of the populations most affected by HIV in Ontario (see above)
- The team must demonstrate that they collectively possess the necessary skills and experience to conduct the proposed activities
- The proposal must demonstrate how the project, needs assessment, quality improvement, or participatory evaluation will have short to medium-term impacts (within 2-3 years) on those most affected by HIV in Ontario

As a condition of OHTN funding, all members of the project team are expected to adhere to the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for the Research Involving Humans if applicable.

How to Apply If you are proposing a Community-Based Project

The application deadline is **January 18, 2027, at 11:59 AM (EST).** The required steps are described below.

1. Create or log in to your OHTN grants portal account.
   Please Note: Incomplete applications may be saved and returned to at a later date
2. Complete the eligibility questionnaire
3. Complete the Grant Information: amount requested (see: Funds Available) and duration of grant

(maximum of 18 months)

4. Provide Financial Administrator Information
5. Complete Community-Based Project Application Form:
    - Nominated Principal Applicant contact information
    - Co-Principal Applicant(s) contact information
    - Co-Applicant(s) contact information
    - Collaborator(s) contact information
    - Complete the Relevance of the Community-Based Project
    - Complete the Community-Based Principles Summary
6. Upload Project Description
7. Upload Timeline
8. Upload Budget & Budget Justification
9. Upload Nominated Principal Applicant CV
10. Upload Additional CVs (optional)
11. Upload Ethics Approval and Consent Forms
12. Upload Support and Collaborator Letters
13. Upload Appendices
14. Upload Disclosure Statement
15. 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 the NPA's institution. The financial administrator is the person responsible for the financial management and reporting at the institution with which the NPA is 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.

Nominated Principal Applicant

The NPA must be employed at a CBAO and will be responsible for the overall conduct of the project, including the budget. Where there are multiple Co-PAs, the NPA retains overall responsibility for successful completion of the project and management of funds according to the OHTN.

Co-Principal Applicant(s)

Co-PAs have primary responsibility for implementing the activities outlined in the proposal while adhering to financial and administrative requirements. This includes obtaining ethics approvals and completing progress reports as required by the funder and others.

Co-Applicant(s)

Co-As are involved in the development and execution of a project and typically devote a specified percentage of time or have a specific role in the project. They are not usually as involved in the overall execution of the project as a Co-PA but may be involved in decision-making.

Collaborator(s)

Collaborators may be beneficiaries of project results or may be contributing specific expertise to a project – such as training or equipment – but are not usually involved in decision-making.

Relevance of Community-Based Project

Describe the relevance of the proposed project to the objectives of the CBPPEP, the CBAO leading the project, and the HIV community in Ontario, specifically those populations most affected by HIV. What gaps in existing knowledge will the proposed project fill, and what is its intended impact? How might the proposed activities improve the lives of those living with and at risk of HIV in Ontario? *(maximum 300 words, entered directly into application form)*

Community-Based Principles Summary

Community-based 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 community-based inquiry. Outline how the current project will operationalize the principles listed above to ensure meaningful involvement of people living with HIV throughout this process. *(maximum 500 words, entered directly into application form)*

Project Description

(max. 5 pages, excluding references)

The project description should contain the following information:

a) *Project Description (3 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 project objectives
   - Describe the proposed activities, methods, and analyses to be performed. If not yet known, describe the process by which these will be determined
   - Describe anticipated challenges, limitations, and proposed solutions, 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

b) *Capacity Building Activities (max. 0.5 page)*
- Describe the capacity building activities to be undertaken with the project team
- Include a rationale for each activity, identify the participants' roles, and detail expected outcomes
- Demonstrate the connection between the capacity building activities and the objectives of the proposed project

c) *Impacts and Sustainability (max. 0.5 page)*
- Describe the anticipated impact(s) of the proposed project in the following categories: advancing knowledge, building capacity, informing decision-making (at the individual, program, organizational, government, or system level), and impacts on the health and well-being of people living with and at risk of HIV in Ontario
- Include a brief sustainability plan. How will the project engage interest holders to support future activities and leverage additional funds or sustainable funding? What are the opportunities and threats?

d) *Evidence-Sharing Plan (max. 0.5 page)*
- Describe how, when, and with whom information, processes, and results from the current proposal will be shared. Both informal and formal methods are encouraged

e) *Evaluation Plan (max. 0.5 page)*
- Describe how the project and capacity building activities will be evaluated

f) *Project Team (max. 0.5 page)*
- Provide a description of the relevant experience and education of all team members (NPA, Co-PAs, and Co-As), as well as Collaborators where they play an integral role in the operationalization of the project
- Describe how project partners will contribute to the various aspects of the project, such as (but not limited to): making decisions about design, methods, and enrolment; collecting, analyzing, or interpreting data; and 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 5 pages, single-spaced, minimum 11-point font, with 1" margins. Proposals, including references, must be converted to PDF prior to upload.

Timeline

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

Budget & Budget Justification

Complete the budget template, following the guidelines below. Maximum funds are listed under Funds Available.

a. *Personnel*: The rate of remuneration (including hourly rate and total number of estimated hours)

requested should be those commonly 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 Co-Principal Applicants or Co-Applicants of projects, exceptions may be made under special circumstances for needs assessment projects where the team member plays an integral role on the project and requires backfilling of their current position in order to participate.

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 requested costs 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, general office equipment, or infrastructure related to service delivery. Other project-specific supply costs should be justified using current actual costs.
f. *Evidence-Sharing*: Please itemize all requests for evidence-sharing activities. Please note that the cost associated with ensuring open access to the findings is limited to one publication per project.

Requests for CBPPEP may be made for a maximum of $50,000. The OHTN may approve a grant for a lesser amount than what has been requested. In this situation, the applicant(s) may be required to submit a revised budget for the approved amount.

Nominated Principal Applicant CV

The NPA should include a completed Common CV using the CIHR biosketch, Tri-agency CV, or any other common format (max 3 pages).

Please include: academic credentials, work history, awards, publications, grants, presentations, and a statement highlighting your most significant contributions to the HIV field in Ontario and their relation to the application. Contributions can take the form of:

- Publications and presentations
- Awards, degrees, credentials, etc.
- Innovations in service, care, leadership, etc.
- Knowledge translation, policy development, etc.
- Specialized training, strategic employment positions, etc.

Additional CVs (optional)

Only the Nominated Principal Applicant is required to submit a completed CV. Other Principal Applicant and Co-Applicant CVs may be submitted as appropriate. The onus is on the team to convince reviewers of the team's ability to complete the proposed work, with respect to the necessary skills and experience. For Collaborators who will play a significant role in the project (for example, who provide specialized training or knowledge), it may be helpful to provide a CV.

Ethics Approval and Consent Forms

Submit a copy of related REBs approvals (if applicable), a copy of the consent form to be signed by prospective participants, and additional explanatory materials for distribution. Draft versions are encouraged if final approved version is not available. Please collate before uploading.

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

Support and Collaborator Letters (max. 2 letters)

If your project involves collaboration with external organizations or individuals, please include letters of collaboration indicating their affirmation of, role in, contribution to, or benefit from your proposed project.

If your project involves the support of external organizations or individuals, please include letters of support for your proposed project. Letters of support from decision-makers and those who will use the results of your project or evaluation are particularly significant. Letters of support and collaboration should be collated prior to upload.

Appendices

1. Questionnaires, surveys, or other tools related to the current proposal should be submitted.
2. Applicants may submit up to three (3) manuscripts (submitted, accepted for publication, or published) and/or products (e.g., presentations, summaries) that that are relevant to the proposal and demonstrate the ability to fulfill the project activities described. These documents should be compressed to ensure easy upload.

All appendices should be collated prior to upload.

How to Apply if you are proposing a Participatory Program Evaluation

The application deadline is **September 21, 2026 at 12:00pm (EST).** The required steps are described below. Create or log in to your OHTN grants portal account. (Incomplete applications may be saved and returned to at a later date)

2. Complete the eligibility questionnaire
3. Complete the Grant Information: amount requested (see: Funds Available) and duration of grant (maximum of 18 months)
4. Provide Financial Administrator Information
5. Complete OHTN Participatory Program Evaluation Application Form:
    - Nominated Principal Applicant contact information
    - Co-Principal Applicant(s) contact information
    - Co-Applicant(s) contact information
    - Collaborator(s) contact information
    - Complete Participatory Program Evaluation Activities
    - Complete Relevance of Participatory Program Evaluation
6. Upload Project Description
7. Upload Timeline
8. Upload Budget & Budget Justification

9. Upload Nominated Principal Applicant CV
10. Upload Additional CVs
11. Upload Ethics Approval and Consent Forms
12. Upload Support and Collaborator Letters
13. Upload Appendices
14. Upload Disclosure Statement
15. 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 the NPA's institution. The financial administrator is the person responsible for the financial management and reporting at the institution with which the NPA is 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.

Nominated Principal Applicant

The NPA must be employed at a CBAO 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 they will be ineligible for compensation through the grant. Where there are multiple Co-PAs, the NPA retains overall responsibility for successful completion of the project and management of funds according to the OHTN.

Co-Principal Applicant(s)

Co-PAs have primary responsibility for achieving the activities outlined in the proposal while adhering to financial and administrative requirements. This includes obtaining ethics approvals and completing progress reports as required by the funder and others.

Co-Applicant(s)

Co-As are involved in the development and execution of a project and typically devote a specified percentage of time or have a specific role in the project. They are not usually as involved in the overall execution of the project as a Co-PA, but may be involved in decision-making.

Collaborator(s)

Collaborators may be beneficiaries of project results or may be contributing specific expertise to a project – such as training or equipment – but are not usually involved in decision-making.

Participatory Program Evaluation Activities

A participatory approach to program evaluation (PPE) 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 interest holders in all phases of the evaluation: defining evaluation objectives, developing methodology, collection and interpretation of data, and development of conclusions and recommendations
- Results that reflect both the subjective perceptions of interest holders and the more objective perspective of an outside evaluator
- Capacity building for all interest holders, such as enhanced program evaluation skills or awareness of program strategy

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. *(maximum 500 words, entered directly into application form)*

Relevance of Participatory Program Evaluation

Describe the relevance of the proposed participatory program evaluation to the objectives of the CBPPEP, the CBAO whose program is being evaluated, and more broadly 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 interest holders, including its clients? *(maximum 250 words, entered directly into application form)*

Project Description

(max. 5 pages, excluding references)

The project description should reflect the PPE activities described and contain the following information:

a) *Program Description (max. 1 page)*
   - Describe the program to be evaluated, including a brief history of its development, funding source(s), purpose and objectives, number of clients per year, any known outcomes, and any previous evaluations

b) *Evaluation Plan (max. 3 pages)*
   - Describe the need for the proposed evaluation
   - Describe the overall goal of the evaluation and specify what type of evaluation is planned (e.g. 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, limitations, and proposed solutions, 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

c) *Capacity Building Activities (max. 0.5 page)*
   - 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 role and expected outcomes
- Demonstrate the connection between the capacity building activities and the objectives of the proposed project (i.e. new skills and knowledge should be utilized during the evaluation process)

d) *Impacts (max. 0.5 page)*
- Describe the anticipated impacts of the proposed evaluation, not only for the program being evaluated, but within the following categories: advancing evidence, building capacity, informing decision-making (at the individual, program, organizational, government, or system level), and impacts on the health and well-being of people living with and at risk of HIV in Ontario

e) *Evidence-Sharing Plan (max. 0.5 page)*
- Describe how, when, and with whom information, processes, and results from the current proposal will be shared. Both informal and formal methods are encouraged

f) *PPE Team (max. 0.5 page)*
- Provide a description of the project-related roles, relevant experience, and education of all team members (NPA, Co-PAs, and Co-As), including the evaluation coordinator, and Collaborators where they play an integral part in the operationalization of the evaluation

Proposals (not including references) should be no more than 5 pages, single spaced, minimum 11-point font, with 1" margins. Proposals, including references, must be converted to PDF prior to upload.

Timeline

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

Budget & Budget Justification

Complete the budget template, following the guidelines below. Maximum funds are listed under Funds Available.

a. *Personnel*: The rate of remuneration (including hourly and total estimated number of hours) 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 Co-Principal Applicants or Co-Applicants of projects, exceptions may be made under special circumstances for PPE Projects where the evaluation coordinator (cannot be the NPA) or another 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, where applicable (include estimated costs based on current actual costs for flights, train travel, hotels, etc.).

d. *Equipment:* The need for equipment should be explained and all requested costs estimated based on current actual costs. Preference for one type of computer over another must be adequately justified.
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Please include: academic credentials, work history, awards, publications, grants, presentations, and a statement highlighting your most significant contributions to the HIV field in Ontario and their relation to the application. Contributions can take the form of:

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If your project involves the support of external organizations or individuals, please include letters of support for your proposed project. Letters of support from decision-makers and those who will use the results of your HIV project or evaluation are particularly significant.
Letters of support and collaboration should be collated prior to upload.

Appendices

1. Questionnaires, surveys, or other tools related to the current proposal should be submitted.
2. Applicants may submit up to three (3) manuscripts (submitted, accepted for publication, or published), and/or products (e.g., presentations, summaries) that that are relevant to the proposal and demonstrate the ability to fulfill the project activities described. These documents should be compressed to ensure easy upload.

All appendices should be collated prior to upload.

Submitting the Proposal

Applications for the OHTN CBPPEP must be submitted electronically by **September 21, 2026 at 12:00pm (EST).**

No changes can be made to an application after the submission deadline. Applicants may update the OHTN about developments that arise after the submission deadline that may affect the reviewers' assessments but cannot in any way alter the proposal submitted.

Documents of the same nature should be collated together before uploading and submitting. For example, please submit all support letters in one electronic document.

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 OHTN Review Committee and external 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 program staff if you have any questions.

If your application is approved, you will be asked to submit the additional information below:

Plain Language Summary

If the project is awarded funding, you will be asked to provide a concise summary of the proposed project's activities and the anticipated impact on the CBAO, HIV community, and HIV epidemic in Ontario more broadly. Describe the evidence-sharing approaches that will be used to facilitate the desired outcomes. Note: This summary will be posted on the OHTN website.

Signature Page

Download and complete the signature page form. The signature page certifies that the signatory supports the application and will assume the role and responsibilities described in the proposal. All members of the research team are expected to sign this document. Please collate prior to submission.

Advice to Applicants

In writing their proposal, applicants 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 available at the OHTN:

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 interest holders. If you are looking for HIV epidemiologic data specific to Ontario, please visit the OHESI website.

The OHTN Knowledge Synthesis Team

The OHTN Knowledge Synthesis Team provides access to evidence in response to questions from various interest holders and to help support evidence-informed programs, services, and policies. For more information about the Knowledge Synthesis Team, please visit the OHTN website. To request a Rapid Response Service, please contact rapidresponse@ohtn.on.ca or complete the online intake form.

Please consult with program 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 to the OHTN Review Committee. Proposals are assessed based on their relevance, potential impact, efficiency, evidence of community involvement, sustainability, and feasibility.

OHTN Engagement Accord

Successful applicants involved in projects supported by the OHTN commit to meet the expectation of the OHTN Engagement Accord. They work in a highly collaborative way to actively engage the communities most affected by HIV, ensure rigorous data and inquiry activities, build partnerships that will drive change, engage in collaborative knowledge-sharing processes, and demonstrate accountability for the use of grant funds.

Reporting Requirements

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

In addition to engaging in the activities related to their proposal, funded teams will be expected to:

- Actively participate in meetings that bring together project leaders and others to share learning
- Participate in activities aimed at sharing evidence and informing practice

The following reporting requirements help demonstrate progress and success of the CBPPEP. Report template are accessible via the online grants portal.

- Annual narrative progress reports (max. 2 pages)
- Annual financial reports detailing how funds were spent
- A final narrative report (max. 3 pages)

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

Communication Requirements

1. Any deviations from the original proposed objectives, methodologies, budget, or other major 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.
2. The OHTN expects investigators to publish their work in peer-reviewed publications and/or other formats. The OHTN expects to be notified when OHTN-supported projects are published, and requests copies of all publications arising from work supported through this grant to assist the OHTN in its evaluation of this program.
3. 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 grantees to ensure that its own dissemination efforts do not conflict with the teams' publication plans.
4. Successful grantees 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.

Contact Information

For questions regarding these application guidelines, please contact:
The OHTN HIV Endgame Program Staff
funding@ohtn.on.ca