

ONCOPOLE *EMC*²: Équipes multi-institutionnelles contre le cancer (Multi-institutional teams against cancer)

Program category: Research grants

DEADLINES:

Notice of intent:

November 24, 2017

Complete application:

~~February 19, 2018~~

NEW DATE: March 12, 2018 4:30 p.m.

FRQS can modify the program schedule according to the number of projects submitted.

FRQS:

Program Manager

Manon Pelletier

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For any questions related to Oncopole:

Project Manager Oncopole

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CONTEXT

The Oncopole is a public-private partnership between Merck Canada Inc. and the Fonds de recherche du Québec-Santé (FRQS) launched in February 2017 with a \$15 million investment from Merck. Its mission is to act as a catalyst by mobilizing the best research teams around a common vision, focused on projects prioritized on patients' needs. This first call for proposals is one of the measures of the 2017-2019 action plan allowing to invest strategically in order to exploit the full potential of Québec's cancer research and innovation ecosystem and ensure its growth and its impact worldwide. Oncopole's approach is based on collaborations between research institutions to create a virtual research network that will enable the development and implementation of a coherent process to accelerate oncology research throughout the continuum, from discovery to the integration of innovation for the benefits of patients.

(<https://oncopole.ca/?lang=en>)

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

Program's objective

In accordance to the Oncopole's mission, and with a budget of \$6M, this first call for proposals aims to finance cooperative and structuring research projects that will capitalize on Québec's networks, platforms, resources, and existing strengths and expertise. The funded projects will have to potentiate these assets and thus increase Québec's competitiveness at national and international levels. The program can fund existing teams or support the creation of new teams around promising research areas. Ultimately, Oncopole aims to reduce the incidence of cancer, optimize care, and improve treatment performance as well as cancer patients' survival and quality of life.

Projects must focus on interdisciplinarity to:

- Bring researchers from various research environments, disciplines and areas of expertise to work together using a wide range of approaches and cutting-edge technologies
- Be structured in such a way as to bring an original added value that researchers, funded individually, could not reach by themselves

Interdisciplinary research projects may focus on prevention, diagnosis or treatment, and be at the stage of discovery, translational or preclinical research, early clinical research or evaluative research. Clinical trials that would normally only be funded by the industry are not eligible.

The program is open to all types of cancer. Projects must meet a clearly identified clinical need and will have to demonstrate the complementarity between the research team members and the added value of the collaboration. A clear and well-defined plan for sharing resources, data and platforms will also be required.

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

Conditions

All persons associated with the project as Principal Investigator and Co-Investigator must meet the definition of one of the following Research Statuses (see the Definitions section of the [Common General Rules](#)):

- University Researcher
- Clinical University Researcher

Research team structure

The research team must be interdisciplinary and composed of researchers from at least three (3) institutions, research centers and institutes, or departments affiliated to a minimum of two (2) different Québec universities.

The research team must be composed of:

- **Up to three (3) Principal Investigators; they will represent the project, will assume the scientific, internal and management direction**, according to the administrative conditions/requirements of the FRQS. The managing institution of the grant will be the employing institution of one of the Principal Investigators (Project leader)
- A **minimum** of four (4) Co-Investigators
- No maximum for collaborators participating in the project. However

	<p>collaborators will not have access to funds</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Researchers affiliated with federal, provincial or private laboratories are eligible as collaborators only • Including early career researchers (Junior 1 and Junior 2) among the team is strongly encouraged • A Principal Investigator must demonstrate that he or she will be adequately involved to ensure the project success. In addition, all team members must demonstrate how they collaborate or intend to collaborate on the proposed research project and must specify the time allocated to the project or the level of involvement <p>Postdoctoral trainees cannot apply to this program as Principal Investigators or Co-Investigators.</p>
Professional associations/orders	<p>Clinical researchers must prove that they are members in good standing of the professional order governing them in Québec, have a valid license to practice in Québec and have professional liability insurance.</p>
Multiple applications	<p>Researchers may only submit one (1) application to this program as a Principal Investigator.</p> <p>Researchers may participate in a maximum of two (2) projects as a Co-Investigator.</p> <p>Therefore, a researcher may participate in a maximum of three (3) projects within this program.</p>
Employment and domicile	<p>The Principal Investigator(s) and the Co-Investigators must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be employed by a managing institution and be domiciled in Québec at the time the application is submitted (see section 2.1 of the Common General Rules). <p>Collaborators may be from outside Québec. However, no funds will be transferred outside the province.</p>
Ethics	<p>Principal Investigator(s) and Co-Investigators must comply with the ethical regulations as defined in sections 5.3 and 5.4 of the Common General Rules).</p>

Basic training in research ethics

Basic training in research ethics is mandatory for all FRQS awardees when their research project or program involves human subjects.

The term "research project involving human subjects" applies when the research project involves:

- Living human subjects
- Cadavers, human remains, tissues, biological fluids, gametes, embryos or fetuses, cells or genetic materials
- Personal information on file. Personal information is any information concerning a person which allows the person to be identified

Awardees must successfully complete levels 1 and 3 of the [Online Tutorial in Research Ethics](#) set out by the *Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux* (MSSS).

Principal Investigators and Co-Investigators must complete the training **before receiving the first payment of their grant.**

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS – NOTICE OF INTENT

Transmission of documents:

Incomplete applications and applications that do not meet the eligibility criteria outlined in this document will be withdrawn from the competition.

No extensions will be permitted. After the application deadline, forms that are not already submitted will be automatically rejected.

FRQS is managing this program on behalf of Oncopole. All documents described below should be sent by e-mail to Manon Pelletier, Program Manager at FRQS (manon.pelletier@frq.gouv.qc.ca). Documents should be sent as one (1) PDF document. CVs of the Principal Investigator (s) (including detailed contributions) should be inserted one after the other in this PDF document.

The date and time of the transmission of the e-mail is proof of the date and time of the documents' filing.

Principal investigator(s) **NOTE: Notice of intent should be submitted to FRQS by the Principal Investigator (acting as the Project Leader) from the managing institution and include:**

- **Notice of intent form**
- **Canadian Common CV , Funding CV version** for the FRQS (updated since June 2015) for all Principal Investigator (s)
- Detailed contributions updated since June 2015 for all Principal Investigator (s). Consult the [Guidelines for the CV attachment](#) available in the toolbox for detailed contributions content. Detailed contributions must be attached to the email with the form and CVs for the submission of the notice of intent

Only researchers whose notice of intent will be eligible will be invited to submit a full application (see the **Evaluation** section).

The FRQS will send an e-mail confirming the acceptance or rejection of the notice of intent to each Principal Investigator.

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS – COMPLETE APPLICATION

Transmission of documents:

Incomplete applications and applications that do not meet the eligibility criteria outlined in this document will be withdrawn from the competition.

No extensions will be permitted. After the application deadline, forms that are not already submitted will be automatically rejected.

All documents described below should be sent by e-mail to Manon Pelletier, Program Manager at FRQS (manon.pelletier@frq.gouv.qc.ca). Documents should be sent as one (1) PDF document. CVs of all researchers (including detailed contributions) should be inserted one after the other in this PDF document.

Principal Investigator(s) NOTE: The complete application should be submitted to FRQS by the Principal Investigator (acting as the Project Leader) from the managing institution and include:

- [Application form](#)
- [Canadian Common CV](#) , *Funding CV version* for the FRQS (updated since June 2015) for all Principal Investigator (s)
- Detailed contributions updated since June 2015 for all Principal Investigator (s). Consult the [Guidelines for the CV attachment](#) available in the toolbox for detailed contributions content. Detailed contributions must be attached to the email with the form and CVs for the submission of the complete application
- Letter of support from the administrators of the institution or university department in which the research will be carried out (for all Principal Investigators)
- Letter of support from a collaborator or a partner, if applicable
- Clinician: a letter from the director of the clinical department or the dean of the faculty specifying the number of hours for which the applicant will be released from his/her clinical obligations to carry out the research project (only for clinicians who are not recipients of an FRQS career award)
- A copy of the work visa, if applicable

Co-Investigators

- [Canadian Common CV](#) , *Funding CV version* for the FRQS (updated since June 2015)
- Detailed contributions updated since June 2015. Consult the [Guidelines for the CV attachment](#) available in the toolbox for detailed contributions content. Detailed contributions must be attached to the email with the form and CVs for the submission of the complete application
- Clinician: a letter from the director of the clinical department or the dean of the faculty specifying the number of hours for which the applicant will be released from his/her clinical obligations to carry out the research project (only for clinicians who are not recipients of an FRQS career award)
- A copy of the work visa, if applicable

RESEARCH LOCATION

Choice of research location	An FRQS centre or institute, an institution administered by the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux (MSSS) or a Québec university.
Change of research location	<p>The FRQS expects that the grantee will conduct his/her project at the same institution or university that initially endorsed the application throughout the entire grant period.</p> <p>The grantees who wish to change their research location must submit by e-mail an official request to the FRQS. The request must detail the reason(s) for the change and describe all possible consequences on the research project.</p> <p>University or institutional authorities must notify the FRQS in writing once they have approved the change of location.</p> <p>Authorities of the new university or institution must notify the FRQS in writing that they accept to host the grantee.</p>

TERM OF THE GRANT

Term	Maximum of 3 years non-renewable
Funding start date	April May 2018

AMOUNT OF THE GRANT

Amount	Up to is \$1.5M per project for three (3) years, with a maximum of \$500,000 per project per year. Co-funding is not mandatory.
Management	<p>The list of institutions that can administer funding from the FRQ is limited to the managing institutions recognized by the FRQ, including universities, CIUSSS, CISSS, some institutions of the healthcare network and colleges.</p> <p>The managing institution is the employing institution of the funding recipient (see section 6.2 of the Common General Rules).</p>
Indirect research costs	This program does not benefit from the amount paid out by FRQS and its partners to cover indirect costs of research of the institutions.

ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURES

Eligible	<p>In addition to the list of eligible and non-eligible expenses detailed in section 8 of the FRQ Common General Rules, the following expenses are eligible:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Master's and doctoral awards or scholarships, postdoctoral fellowships and supplements, and, where applicable, salary for graduate students and postdoctoral fellows • Salaries for research assistants • Fees and reimbursements of travel expenses for research human subjects • Travel and accommodation costs (reasonable expenses)
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- Participation in conferences (up to 3% of the grant amount)
- Research material (including purchasing and housing for animals) and all other expenses required to carry out the research project, conditional upon adequate justification in the proposal
- Reasonable and justified expenses (up to 10% of the total budget) related to purchasing equipment
- Reasonable and justified expenses (up to 5% of the total budget) related to the acquisition of biological material from biobanks meeting the following requirements:
 - all retrospective (existing) bio-samples used for research funded under this program must originate from biological tissue banks registered or certified by the Canadian Tissue Repository Network (**CTRNet**) or Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments Act (**CLIA**)
 - all prospective (new) bio-samples financed under this program must be part of certified biological tissue banks or registered with **CTRNet** or **CLIA**

Description of the CTRNet program for registration and certification of biobanks can be found [here](#).

- Expenditures related to the use of external specialized services
- Equipment or platform usage fees
- Costs related to scientific and ethical reviews of clinical research projects (provided that the projects for which these fees are charged are not subject to dual scientific evaluation)
- Costs related to knowledge translation and transfer to users (including other researchers, the general public, practitioners, decision makers and industry representatives) as appropriate for the research project

Non eligible

- Remuneration of the Principal Investigator(s), Co-Investigators and collaborators
- All indirect expenditures related to layout organization or reorganization, facilities leasing and maintenance or the indirect costs covered by the host institution
- Funds cannot not be transferred outside of Québec

EVALUATION

Notice of intent

The notice of intent is used to:

- Determine the Principal Investigators' eligibility
- Assess the relevance of the application based on the program's objectives
- Establish a peer review committee with relevant expertise

Only applicants with eligible notices of intent will be invited, by e-mail from the FRQS, to submit a complete application.

The list of Principal Investigators invited to submit a full application, including their respective affiliation, project title and keywords, will be posted publicly on the FRQS and Oncopole websites with the aim of encouraging the consolidation of teams that have submitted notices of intent on similar themes.

In case of project consolidation following the publication of the projects invited to submit a complete application:

A Co-Investigator of a project will not be allowed to become the Principal Investigator of the consolidated team. However, a Principal Investigator may participate in the consolidated project as a Principal Investigator or a Co-Investigator. The scientific themes of the consolidated project must be the same as those of the initial projects.

The research team composition and the scientific themes of the consolidated project must be validated with the FRQS before submitting the complete application to ensure that the merged project remains eligible.

For other full applications without team consolidation:

Modifications, including adding or removing names, to the list of Co-Investigators will be allowed. Principal Investigators, as well as the managing institution, must remain the same as those of the notice of intent.

Please ensure that research statuses of researchers added to a complete application meet the definitions provided in the [Common General Rules](#).

Complete application

The applications will be evaluated by a plenary peer review committee composed of experts from clinical and scientific communities selected by the FRQS according to the rules in effect for the constitution of review committees.

Evaluation criteria

Research project

- Compliance with the program’s objectives
- Coherence of the research strategy, based on innovation and scientific excellence
- Unifying and structuring potential of the project for Québec
- Multi-institutional team composition
- Development, harmonization and pooling of the platforms and resources of the different partners
- Quality of proposed data and knowledge sharing mechanisms
- Clarity of scientific objectives
- Relevance of project interdisciplinarity
- Identification of the clinical need to which the project will respond, leading to cancer prevention, early detection, diagnosis, therapies or patients follow-up

Alignment with more than one of the Oncopole axes (Research, Valorisation, Integration of Innovation, and Training and Awareness) will be considered an asset. (<https://oncopole.ca/?lang=en>)

Research team

- Achievements and scientific level of the research team (publications, outreach at the Canadian and / or international level, etc.)
- Added value and synergy of collaborations, complementarity of expertise and interdisciplinarity
- Presence and level of involvement of early career researchers (Junior 1 and Junior 2)
- Role in training young scientists and in increasing research capacity in oncology
- Quality of partnerships external to the research team: added value and potential

leverage

Integration of patient(s) into the research strategy, if relevant, is an asset (committees or other appropriate mechanisms).

Feasibility

- Scientific and technical feasibility of the project, choice of methods
- Accuracy, importance and rigor in defining the project's structure, expected results and milestones
- Realistic timeline and relevance of monitoring indicators
- Effective use of existing resources from the different research institutions

Knowledge transfer

- Proposed strategies to ensure that research results are used in the development and/or implementation of:
 - Better treatments
 - Better tools for diagnostic and prevention
 - New healthcare policies or practices for patients

Impacts

- Importance (quantitative when applicable) of the problem addressed and potential impact of the proposed approach to solve this problem. Proposals should address these issues explicitly and provide as much evidence or solutions as possible
- Relevance of impact in the context of a long-term vision
- Development of new concepts, methodologies, practices, tools and resources that could be transferable to the community or industry
- Potential to attract subsequent funding, form new major partnerships and improve the competitiveness of Québec's ecosystem

Budget

- Adequate budget justification in the proposal
- Leverage (if applicable)

RESEARCH OUTCOMES AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

Submission of reports

In accepting the grant, the grantees agree to submit:

- Annual financial reports and a final financial report at the deadlines indicated by the FRQS
- An annual scientific report and a final report not more than 3 months after the end of the grant

The funded team is committed to participating in mobilization activities of Oncopole such as annual events or specific workshops.

Use and dissemination

The grantees authorize the partners to use reports and published research outputs

of the results by partners (scientific publications, conferences, symposia, conventions or e-publication) for reproduction, translation, execution or public extension purposes through whatever means or for any other non-commercial purposes, provided there is no infringement of copyright law.

Knowledge mobilization The FRQS encourages awardees to conduct and participate in knowledge mobilization activities (transfer, sharing, development, enhancement and dissemination) with practice settings and the general public, where such activities are relevant. Please read the document [Knowledge Mobilization](#) in the toolbox.

APPLICANT'S AGREEMENT

In submitting a notice of intent or an application, the applicant must:

- Comply with the obligations outlined in the [Common General Rules](#), the [Policy Regarding Open Access to Published Research Outputs](#) of the FRQS as well as the terms and conditions stipulated in the electronic form and the program rules
- Submit additional files linked to the grant, if requested by the FRQS or Oncopole
- Comply with the ethics and integrity standards outlined in the FRQS document [Standards en éthique de la recherche et d'intégrité scientifique](#) and in the [Policy for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#) of the Fonds de recherche du Québec
- Authorize the FRQS and the Oncopole Executive Management Team to retain and use all personal and scientific information contained in the application documents, in keeping with the terms and conditions outlined in the document entitled [Protection of personal and scientific information](#) (as set out in the Appendix to these Program Rules) and provided that individuals who are granted access to the information respect its confidentiality

RESEARCH INSTITUTIONS AGREEMENT

The research institutions will provide:

- Functional laboratories and research facilities as well as basic equipment required to carry out the research project
- An environment respectful of the ethics and integrity standards outlined in the FRQS document [Standards en éthique de la recherche et d'intégrité scientifique](#) and in the [Policy for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#) of the Fonds de recherche du Québec

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

The intellectual property of projects funded through the Oncopole will be managed according to the FRQ Common General Rules (section 5.5), which give a prominent role to Quebec institutions that receive FRQ grants. The FRQS and Oncopole acknowledge that the awardees and their employing institutions possess the intellectual property rights according to the internal rules of these institutions.

In addition, since Oncopole's mission is to mobilize Québec's oncology key players, and given the federative vision of Oncopole, it is hoped that the intellectual property holders arising from the project, including all institutions involved in this project, undertake a sustained dialogue with Oncopole to ensure that the results of each project will serve the Québec community.

PARTNERS

Oncopole

APPENDIX

Protection of personal and scientific information

The forms completed under this program are intended to collect personal and scientific information about you. This information will be used and kept by the Fonds de recherche du Québec – Santé (FRQS). FRQS will confidentially share this information and evaluation reports with the Oncopole Executive Management Team (whose offices are located at Université de Montréal). The FRQS is subject to the *Act respecting Access to documents held by public bodies and the Protection of personal information* (CQLR, c. A-2.1) (Access Act).

In the context of FRQS' activities, it is important to note that:

- The required personal and scientific information is used for the evaluation of grant applications, for the management of the program and allocated funds, and for the internal and external evaluation of the program. They are also used, aggregated with data from other candidates to generate statistics, inventories, evaluations and analyses related to the FRQS' mandate to promote and financially support health research.
- The information provided in these forms is mandatory for the analysis and evaluation of the grant applications. Failing to provide all the information required by the forms, the FRQS will not be able to review the application.
- Individuals who have access to the information collected by the FRQS are members of the evaluation committees (including external experts), consultants, and authorized FRQS staff. Individuals who have access to this information commit to respect its confidentiality.
- The content of grant applications, both personal and research information, is confidential and is only communicated with the consent of the person concerned or the person signing the application or in accordance with the provisions of the Access Act.
- Each individual has the right to access his/her personal information held by FRQS. He or she may require that any inaccurate, incomplete or equivocal personal information be modified. For further information on procedures for access, rectification or protection of personal information and access rights under the Access Act, the person responsible for Access Act to information at FRQS should be contacted.
- The three Fonds de recherche du Québec (Fonds de recherche du Québec – Nature et technologies, Fonds de recherche du Québec – Santé et Fonds de recherche du Québec – Société et culture) share their administrative services in accordance with the Act respecting the *Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur, de la Recherche, de la Science et de la Technologie* (RLRQ, c. M-15.1.0.1). As a result, the FRQS may share the personal and scientific information provided on the forms with FRQNT and FRQSC staff whose collaboration is required to ensure optimal administration of funding programs and sound management of public funds.