

Fonds de recherche du Québec

Nature et Technologies Santé Société et Culture



Common General Rules

Version of June 30, 2025

The French version of the Common General Rules is the official version. In the event of a discrepancy between the English and French versions of the Common General Rules, the French version prevails.

The Charter of the French Language and its regulations govern the [consultation of English-language content](#). By consulting this content, you certify in good faith that you are one of the following individuals:

- *Persons declared eligible to receive instruction in English;*
- *First Nations and Inuit persons;*
- *Immigrants during the first six months of their arrival in Quebec;*
- *Persons residing outside Quebec and requesting services from the FRQ.*

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PREFACE

On June 1, 2024, the *Act to amend mainly the Act respecting the Ministère de l'Économie et de l'Innovation with respect to research* (SQ 2024, c.16) came into force. As of this date, the Fonds de recherche du Québec – Nature et technologies, Fonds de recherche du Québec – Santé and Fonds de recherche du Québec – Société et culture were merged into a single state-owned enterprise: the Fonds de recherche du Québec (FRQ). The mandate of the FRQ is to promote and provide financial support for research, knowledge dissemination and training of students and postdoctoral fellows in Québec.

These rules aim to ensure consistency with the values put forward by the FRQ in its strategic plan. As such, they:

- respect academic freedom;
- promote the protection of intellectual property, for the benefit of the community;
- ensure the integrity of the evaluation processes so that funding decisions are made with rigor and fairness;
- emphasize the protection of personal and confidential information received by the FRQ in accordance with the *Act respecting access to documents held by public bodies and the protection of personal information* (CQLR, c. A-2.1) hereinafter the Act respecting Access;
- reaffirm the importance of ethics in research;
- present the terms under which the public funds are to be awarded and managed with the highest standards of rigor and transparency and in accordance with the laws and standards in force;
- specify the conditions allowing access, dissemination and valorization of the outcomes of research funded by the FRQ.

Scope and Interpretation

These revised rules are effective as of July 1, 2025, following their adoption by the Board of Directors of the FRQ. They apply to all programs offered during the 2025-2026 fiscal year and to the administration of funding already underway, with the exception of eligibility requirements (Section 2), which continue to be governed by the rules in force during the year the funding application was submitted. It is the responsibility of funding holders, managing institutions and higher education institutions (with regard to training awards) to take note of any changes that are made to the Common General Rules, and to adjust the management of their award accordingly.

Individual program rules provide further specifications and information that supplement the Common General Rules. Applicants must therefore read both documents. Should these specifications contradict or differ from the Common General Rules, the program rules prevail over the Common General Rules.

The Common General Rules are intended for researchers, students, postdoctoral fellows, research personnel and managing institutions. **However, specific conditions may apply to only one of these groups. In such cases, the following graphic symbols identify the group for which the section or passage is intended.**



Rules intended for researchers



Rules intended for students and postdoctoral fellows

In the event of a discrepancy between the French and English versions of the Common General Rules, the French version shall prevail.

DEFINITIONS

Applicant: A person who plans to submit or who has submitted a funding pre-application or funding application.

Career award: Excellence award in the form of a salary, designed to facilitate the recruitment and careers of qualified researchers and clinical researchers seeking to begin or continue a career in research.

Competition: The process whereby the FRQ invites members of a program's target group to submit a funding application and, in some cases, a pre-application. This process begins with the publication of program rules on the FRQ website. It ends with a decision on funding, after processing of the files and evaluation by a peer review committee. A competition is identified on the FRQ website by the fiscal year corresponding to the first year of funding and by its launch date.

Deferral: An extension of the period during which funding may be used. A deferral does not in itself imply any additional funding.

Excellence award: Funding awarded following a competition to support an individual in carrying out research activities. There are two types of excellence awards at the FRQ, namely training awards (including internship awards) and career awards.

Field: Field of research covered by the FRQ, within which applicants must situate their funding application. There are ten fields in the [Nature and Technologies sector](#), twelve fields in the [Health sector](#), and thirteen fields in the [Society and Culture sector](#).

FRQnet Electronic Portfolio: Portal allowing applicants and funding holders to carry out transactions with the FRQ.

Final report: A follow-up report in which, after the funding period, the funding holder reports on the activities and impacts associated with the funding award.

Financial report: A follow-up report in which the managing institution and the funding holder report on the expenses related to the funding award.

FRQnet: Computer platform offering secure restricted access to authorized individuals. This transactional system allows different categories of users to enter and access data relevant to the role they play throughout the funding application, application evaluation and funding management processes.

Funding: Funds awarded following a competition or as part of an initiative, governed by conditions of use. Funding can take the form of an excellence award or a grant.

Funding holder: A person who has obtained and accepted a funding offer. Depending on the type of funding in question, this person may also be referred to as an award holder or grant holder.

Funding offer: Formal offer from the FRQ to an applicant to support his/her funding application, subject to conditions of use.

Grant: Funding to support eligible costs associated with the conduct of research activities.

Higher education institution: A university or college-level institution that grants graduate diplomas in accordance with the legislation in force in Québec or, in the case of an institution outside Québec, in accordance with the legislation applicable to it.

Indirect costs of research: Operating costs incurred by institutions in connection with research projects. These include the costs of operating and maintaining facilities, managing and administering projects, and complying with the various regulations and standards in force. (Also known by the French acronym FIR.)

Internship award: Training award granted to support the development or mobilization of research knowledge.

Intersectorality: A research and collaboration process that brings together researchers from disciplines or research practices from at least two sectors to work on a research topic, problem, issue, method or question.

Managing institution: An institution in Québec that, after being recognized by the FRQ according to established criteria, may receive and administer funding from the FRQ and, in so doing, act as a trustee in managing the funds. A managing institution belongs to one or more of the following 4 categories according to the criteria established by the FRQ: university institution, college institution, health network institution, or government institution with a research mission.

Prize: Recognition given for an outstanding research achievement or research career.

Program: A measure providing funding—or recognition in the case of a prize—with defined objectives, which is managed in whole or in part by the FRQ or by one or more partners of the FRQ. The program rules are published at the launch of a competition that is open to all managing institutions in Québec, subject to specified eligibility conditions.

Program rules: Mandatory instructions that prevail for each program and are published on the FRQ website. They are made up of a set of terms and conditions, award conditions, eligibility requirements, evaluation criteria, and funding scales and limits. These rules may be set out in a call for proposals guide.

Progress report: A follow-up report in which, during the funding period, the funding holder reports on the progress of their work related to the funding award.

Québec organization: An organization carrying out activities in Québec related to the proposed funding and able to demonstrate, to the satisfaction of the FRQ, that it has the capacity to exploit the results of the research in Québec.

Research group: A structured grouping of expertise, services, facilities and equipment —also referred to as human infrastructure— supporting research activities around a research and knowledge mobilization program. Depending on its purpose, a

research group may take the form of a centre, strategic group, network, observatory, chair or platform.

Research program: A set of integrated scientific activities aimed at developing knowledge within a research theme. A research program involves carrying out research projects in complementary areas of research within the given theme.

Research project: Scientific activities designed to explore one or more hypotheses about a given research topic, using a methodology that is—or is in the process of becoming—recognized by peers.

Research report: A report in which, at the end of the funding period, the funding holder reports on the scientific results, impacts and possible actions associated with the funding for the purpose of dissemination to third parties (partners, potential users of the results, the public, etc.).

Sector: A set of disciplinary fields as defined in the *Act respecting the Ministère de l'Économie et de l'Innovation with respect to research* (CQLR c.M-14.1 s.22.8), namely natural sciences and engineering (Nature and Technologies sector), health sciences (Health sector), and social sciences and humanities, arts and literature (Society and Culture sector).

Status and roles: See the following section.

Supplement: Additional amount to that set out in the funding offer, with or without a deferral.

Training award: Excellence award intended to enable individuals to begin or continue research training sanctioned by a diploma or other academic recognition. In the case of an internship, the award is intended to allow the development or mobilization of research knowledge.

DEFINITIONS – STATUSES AND ROLES

The statuses and roles eligible for each program are specified in the program rules.

Research status

Status characterizing a person's professional situation and qualifications to determine their admissibility for an FRQ program. There are six possible research statuses:

➤ ***Statuses applicable to grants and career awards***

(1) University researcher

Person who:

- a) receives a salary:
 - i) as a regular professor or a contracted professor, in a university recognized by the FRQ to manage funding,

- ii) as a full-time researcher, with a PhD., in an institution recognized by the FRQ to manage funding that is a CIUSSS, a CISSS or a university-affiliated public institution within the health and social services network;

AND

- b) is affiliated with a Québec university in which he/she is qualified to act as the sole supervisor of graduate students¹ and independently lead research projects.

The following also qualify for university researcher status:

- Individuals at the beginning of their career who meet criterion a) and are awaiting qualification for criterion (b) from their institution;
- Individuals who are retired from a recognized institution who no longer meet criterion a) and who continue to pursue research or supervision activities in the institution, from which they have obtained a formal commitment.

(2) Clinical university researcher

Persons who:

- a) receive a salary for a full-time or part-time position at an institution recognized by the FRQ to manage funding; **AND**
- b) are affiliated with a Québec university in which they are qualified to act as the sole supervisor of graduate students¹ and independently lead research projects; **AND**
- c) hold a professional degree in human health, followed by at least two years (or the equivalent) of research training; **AND**
- d) hold a valid license to practice in Québec.

The following also qualify for clinical university researcher status:

- Individuals at the beginning of their career who meet criteria a) and c) and are awaiting qualification for criterion (b) from their institution;
- Individuals who are retired from a recognized institution who no longer meet criterion a) and who continue to pursue research or supervision activities in the institution, from which they have obtained a formal commitment.

(3) College researcher

Person who has a research or professional master's degree and who is employed in the equivalent of a full-time position in a college-level institution recognized by the FRQ to manage funding and/or in a Québec college centre for technology transfer (CCTT). Individual program rules may include more specific criteria.

College researchers must also possess the professional autonomy required to supervise research projects and hold:

¹ A person is qualified to act as sole supervisor when relevant authorities in the university with which he/she is affiliated authorize him/her to co-supervise graduate students and to provide sole supervision for the writing of a thesis or dissertation. This accreditation should be interpreted as recognition by the university of the person's autonomy in this regard.

- i) a position as a college-level institution professor, **OR**
- ii) a position as a CCTT researcher, **OR**
- iii) a position in a college-level institution in which at least 75% of their time is dedicated to research activities.

(4) Other research statuses

Persons who cannot claim statuses 1 to 3 defined in this section.

Status 4 includes the following five categories:

a) Researcher in a government institution recognized by the FRQ

Person who:

- i) receives a salary as a regular researcher in a government institution recognized by the FRQ to manage funding; **AND**
- ii) has a PhD.

b) Researcher in a government-sector organization not recognized by the FRQ or in the private sector

Person employed by a Québec organization other than a post-secondary institution who holds a full-time research position and whose contribution to the project or program lies in his/her research or research-creation expertise on the theme in question.

c) Practitioner

Person whose contribution to the project or program lies in his/her practical skills and knowledge rather than on research or research-creation expertise. A practitioner is employed by a Québec organization. The practitioner's skills and knowledge, other than artistic or literary, may be of various types, including professional, technical or practical.

d) Artist

Person whose contribution to the project lies in his/her skills in creating or interpreting works, which are recognized by the artist's peers and are used in a professional context. Artists are self-employed and reside in Québec, or work for a Québec organization.

e) Individual contributor

Person residing in Québec who is contributing to the project or program on an individual basis. Individual contributors' involvement must not relate to an organization from which they receive remuneration and in which they carry out activities related to the project or program. Their skills and knowledge, other than artistic or literary, may be of various types, including professional, technical, practical or personal.

➤ ***Statuses applicable to training awards***

(1) Student

Person in one of the following situations:

- is enrolled in a college-level or university undergraduate program; **OR**
- is enrolled in a university graduate program and seeking to earn a qualification that involves research activities supervised by a *university researcher*, a *clinical university researcher* or a researcher outside Québec who possesses equivalent qualifications, affiliation and autonomy.

(2) Postdoctoral fellow

Person who holds a PhD or equivalent and who is carrying out a research internship on a full-time basis and for a specific period of time under the supervision of a *university researcher*, *clinical university researcher* or individuals who possess equivalent qualifications and autonomy.

Roles in the application

Category defining the level of participation and the responsibilities of individuals involved in a grant application. There are four roles:

(1) Principal investigator

Person who acts as scientific director of the project or research program for which funding is requested. Principal investigators have administrative responsibility for the application, including correspondence with the FRQ, and financial responsibility for the grant or career award. The following individuals are eligible to act as principal investigators: *university researchers*, *clinical university researchers* and, when expressly authorized under specific program rules, *college researchers*. Individual program rules may include more stringent requirements.

Note that retired researchers are not eligible for the role of principal investigator, unless this is specifically permitted in the program rules.

(2) Co-investigator

Person who is part of a funding application and whose CV or elements thereof are required and considered in the scientific review process. Co-investigators make a significant contribution or provide specific expertise to the project or research program for which funding is requested.

Co-investigators may be delegated to manage part of the funds through an inter-institutional transfer in FRQnet if they have the status of (1) University researcher, (2) Clinical university researcher or (3) College researcher working in a managing institution. In all other cases, they can be reimbursed for expenses incurred for participation in the funded research on submission of invoices. Management of the project in whole or in part cannot be delegated to a Status 4 co-investigator or a sub-contractor.

(3) Collaborator

Person reported by the principal investigator to provide a specific expertise to the project or research program for which funding is requested. Collaborators do not provide their CV and may not be delegated to manage the project, nor to manage any part of the funds.

(4) Research infrastructure user

Person who uses the material or digital infrastructure of the research that is the subject of the funding application. Research infrastructure users do not contribute to the research project or program.

SECTION 1. GENERAL INFORMATION

1.1 The Fonds de recherche du Québec

Under the *Act respecting the Ministère de l'Enseignement supérieur, de la Recherche, de la Science et de la Technologie* (CQLR, c. M-15.1.0.1), the FRQ reports to the *Ministre de l'Économie, de l'Innovation et de l'Énergie*. The chief scientist is, by virtue of office, the president and chief executive officer of the FRQ. The scientific directors see to the proper operation of the research sector for which they have been appointed.

The functions of the FRQ are:

- To promote and provide financial support for:
 - investigator-initiated, basic or applied research in the Nature and Technologies, Health, and Society and Culture sectors within public research institutions and higher education institutions;
 - the dissemination of knowledge in all fields;
 - the training of researchers through excellence awards for college and university students and persons who engage in postdoctoral research, and through professional development grants for persons who wish to re-enter the research community;
 - intersectoral research activities.
- To support the coordination of research initiatives conducted within government departments and bodies and the management of calls for projects resulting from those initiatives;
- To create any necessary partnerships, in particular with the universities, colleges, industry, government departments and public and private bodies concerned, both nationally and internationally.

In exercising its functions, the FRQ must contribute to supporting and enhancing research and science in French.

The FRQ is administered by an independent Board of Directors. In accordance with the *Act respecting the Ministère de l'Économie et de l'Innovation* and the *Act respecting the governance of state-owned enterprises*, the Board of Directors is the superior authority of the FRQ and has full power to decide on all matters deemed relevant to fulfilling its mandate.

1.2 Support for Public Research

Funding awarded by the FRQ represents government investments for which the FRQ is accountable². As such, the FRQ has the duty and obligation to protect the public

² Section 22.9, *Act respecting the Ministère de l'Économie et de l'Innovation*, CQLR M-14.1

interest, especially regarding management and use of the funds it receives from the Government of Québec.

The FRQ does not provide direct funding for research in the private sector, whether basic or applied.

1.3 Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

The FRQ wishes to contribute to supporting a research ecosystem based on equity, diversity and inclusion. A strategy has been put in place for this purpose.

1.4 Complaints Procedure

Complaints relating to services rendered are received and treated in accordance with the FRQ's *Declaration of Services to the Public*. Complaints relating to responsible research conduct will be dealt with in accordance with the FRQ's [Policy for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#).

1.5 Confidentiality and Protection of Personal Information

In carrying out the activities related to the fulfilment of its mandate, the FRQ must collect personal and confidential information from applicants, funding holders, and all persons involved in the support and evaluation of funding applications and funding management.

The FRQ is subject to the *Act respecting access* and gives highest priority to protecting the privacy of personal and confidential information in its possession (for example, funding applications, evaluation reports), in whatever form (digital, paper, etc.). Any personal information obtained by the FRQ is treated in strictest confidence and is disclosed only in accordance with the *Act respecting access*, the *Statement Regarding the Protection of Personal and Confidential Information*, hereafter the Statement, or by court order. Funding application forms and other forms used to collect personal and confidential information provide details regarding the processing of such information.

FRQ staff or persons requiring access to this information within the framework of the activities of the FRQ, in particular those who are part of the evaluation process, are required to sign a written privacy agreement, as are all financial partners of any given FRQ program where appropriate.

All persons have the right to access their own personal information held by the FRQ and may request correction of any personal information that is inexact, incomplete or ambiguous or whose collection, communication or conservation is not authorized by the *Act respecting access*. Requests for information on access procedures, the protection of personal information and the rights of recourse stipulated in the *Act*

respecting access will be forwarded to the person responsible for access to information and the protection of personal information.

1.6 Liability of the FRQ

The FRQ makes all reasonable efforts to ensure optimal service. Subject to the provisions of the law, it cannot be held liable for damages arising from its handling of applications for funding or from the unauthorized disclosure of personal or confidential information by the FRQ. The FRQ is not liable for decisions and damages arising from false or misleading information provided by an applicant (see Section 3.5), a funding holder or an evaluation committee member. The FRQ is not liable for damages resulting from the research work or initiatives it funds.

SECTION 2. ELIGIBILITY FOR FUNDING

All applicants must meet the following general eligibility requirements in addition to the specific conditions mentioned in individual program rules.

2.1 Citizenship and Domicile

Funded by the government of Québec, the FRQ has a mandate to support individuals studying, working or living in Québec who are interested in contributing to the development of research. It is therefore important that applicants and funding holders hold certain characteristics and a legal status in order to meet the following requirements throughout the term of their funding.

RE

To be eligible to apply for a grant, the principal investigator must be employed by a managing institution at the time of submitting the application, unless otherwise indicated in the program rules. Every year of funding, the managing institution must confirm that it continues to employ the principal investigator on an ongoing basis (including the maintenance of appropriate visas, if applicable).

RE

For career awards, the eligibility requirements are described in the program rules.

ST

Applicants are eligible to apply for a **master's**, **doctoral** or **postdoctoral** training award if they:

- Are a Canadian citizen or Canadian permanent resident

AND

- Have a Régie de l'assurance maladie du Québec (RAMQ) card that is valid at the competition deadline, or proof of application for a RAMQ card and that the card will be valid at the competition deadline.

If either or both of the above conditions are not met, applicants must submit one of the following documents in order to be eligible:

- In the case of an application for a **master's** or **doctoral** training award:
 - proof of admission to a master's or doctoral program at a Québec university
- OR
- an acceptance of supervision form from the person directing the research at a Québec university.
- In the case of an application for a **postdoctoral** training award:

- an acceptance of supervision form from the fellowship supervisor at a Québec university.

ST

To use a training award **outside Québec**, the applicant must:

- Be a Canadian citizen or Canadian permanent resident

AND

- Have a RAMQ card that is valid at the competition deadline, or proof of application for a RAMQ card and that the card will be valid at the competition deadline.

ST

If either or both of the above conditions are not met, the applicant must pursue their studies in Québec. Their continuous physical presence in Québec is required throughout the duration of funding, apart from break periods listed in the university calendar, unless the institution of affiliation approves, in accordance with the terms of the program rules, travel outside Québec deemed necessary for the proper implementation of activities related to the program of study.

ST

In the event of funding, the conditions and privileges attached to the award in relation to citizenship status at the time of application will continue to apply for the duration of funding, even if citizenship status changes during the funding period.

ST

The university must provide confirmation of enrolment at the beginning of each semester in order for a master's or doctoral training award holder to be eligible for the payment. In the case of a postdoctoral award, the award holder's fellowship supervisor must provide an attendance certificate each year.

ST

Training award holders who are enrolled in a master's or doctoral program outside Québec must request official proof of enrolment from their university at the beginning of each semester and send it to the FRQ.

2.2 Status Conferring the Right to Apply for Funding

The different research statuses are presented in the Definitions section of this document.

RE

A person applying for a career award or grant as an investigator, or applying for a grant as a co-investigator, must have one of the statuses that confer eligibility under the program rules.

A person applying for funding cannot simultaneously hold a status eligible for training awards and a status eligible for grants and career awards.



Applicants to training award may not claim a status linked to grant or career awards at the time of application submission.

2.3 Other Conditions

Under the *Act respecting the Ministère de l'Économie et de l'Innovation* and in accordance with the *Policy for the Responsible Conduct of Research*, a person declared ineligible to apply for or hold funding from the FRQ or any other public funding agency for reasons of breach of responsible research conduct cannot apply for funding until his/her eligibility has been re-established.

SECTION 3. SUBMITTING AN APPLICATION

Only the points common to all FRQ programs are presented in this section. Please refer to the rules of individual programs for further details.

3.1 Program Selection

The FRQnet electronic platform offers a single gateway for all FRQ programs. It is the applicant's responsibility to select the appropriate funding program.

A researcher may hold multiple FRQ fundings, regardless of sector, provided that each funding is for a different research topic and objective.

RE

Researchers may be involved in more than one major funded research group. The program rules define the terms and conditions for belonging to more than one research group. For the purposes of this section, the following are considered to be major research groups:

- Research Centres and Institutes (Health sector);
- Strategic groups (Nature and Technologies and Society and Culture sectors);
- IU-CAU Infrastructures (Society and Culture sector).

ST

A person cannot concurrently hold more than one FRQ training award.

In the interest of ensuring sound management of public funds, the FRQ sectors share information among themselves concerning submitted applications, for example, to avoid double funding.

3.2 Instructions for Completing and Submitting an Application

All funding applications must be made using the appropriate application form, which is available in the FRQNet electronic Portfolio. Application forms must be completed and transmitted within the prescribed deadlines and in accordance with any specific program requirements. Any application that does not comply with these requirements will be deemed ineligible.

Some programs require the submission of additional documents with the funding application form. The documents to be submitted are identified in the program rules. All required documents must be attached to the application in the FRQnet electronic Portfolio. The complete application must be transmitted to the FRQ by the competition deadline date and time.

No document transmitted after the deadline date and time will be submitted to the evaluation committee.

All pages that exceed the maximum limit will be removed from the application submitted for evaluation. Any document not required by the program rules will also be removed from the application.

It is possible to attach a digital object identifier (DOI) to each bibliographic reference. Applicants may also include hyperlinks to web pages in the funding application, as bibliographic references, when appropriate. These web pages may also be listed in the bibliography. However, the funding application itself must not rely in whole or in part on external online content, even if it is available to evaluation committee members.

Some programs require that the funding application be approved by the managing institution. In such cases, applicants must submit the funding application to their institution before the competition deadline date and time, as set out in the program rules. The persons responsible for approving the funding application within the institution may then approve the application in the FRQnet Institutions Portal up to 24 hours after the competition deadline. Any application that does not comply with these requirements will be deemed ineligible.

3.3 Applicant's Responsibility

Applicants bear full responsibility for their funding application and must ensure that it is complete and meets all requirements of the desired program. An application that does not include all the documents required by the program rules will be ineligible.

Applicants need to be familiar with the program rules and their requirements. For more information, they should contact their institution or the program manager at the FRQ.

Applicants are advised to prepare their application well in advance to ensure that it is approved by the managing institution, where applicable, and submitted before the deadline, given the large number of applications and requests received by the FRQ at the end of the competition period.

Throughout the process, applicants are encouraged to check that no correspondence from the FRQ has ended up in the Spam folder of their email inbox.

3.4 Verification of Applications

Unless otherwise indicated, applications are submitted through the [FRQnet electronic Portfolio](#). The FRQ reserves the right to verify any documents submitted with the application. This may include asking for a certified copy or to see an original document to confirm its authenticity. In case of doubt, the FRQ may contact the authority that issued the document (for example, the university that awarded a diploma). Applicants must cooperate with all requests for verification without delay; failure to do so may result in the application being ineligible.

3.5 False or Misleading Information

The FRQ presumes the good faith of the declaration provided in funding applications or in any other document submitted at any time during the funding cycle, from the initial funding application to the final report. Applicants and funding holders must be transparent and provide accurate and precise information. They must be conscientious about advising the FRQ of any changes in their situation, where applicable.

Pursuant to the *Act respecting the Ministère de l'Économie et de l'Innovation*, any individual who submits an application containing false or misleading information to obtain or procure funding is committing an offence, is liable to a fine and could be barred from receiving funding for a period of up to five years. Where a legal person commits such an offence, every director or representative of that legal person who was aware of the offence may be liable to a fine. Furthermore, such a declaration constitutes a breach of responsible research conduct, as set forth in the FRQ's *Policy for the Responsible Conduct of Research*, and may be subject to sanctions in accordance with this policy.

The FRQ reserves the right to take immediate measures to stop the use of public funds obtained through false or misleading information, and to take legal action to recover fraudulently obtained funds and claim compensation for damages caused where appropriate.

3.6 Language of Application and Attachments

Funding pre-application and application forms must be written in French (although the attached documents may be written in French or English). The project title and summary must be in French and may be used by the FRQ for promotional and dissemination purposes.

3.7 Acknowledgement of Receipt

For funding applications submitted through the [FRQnet electronic Portfolio](#), acknowledgement of receipt takes the form not only of an automated email, but of an automatic message that appears on the applicant's screen confirming successful transmission of the application to the FRQ.

An acknowledgement of receipt will be sent for all non-electronic applications.

In a second step, all applicants will receive an email from the FRQ confirming the eligibility or ineligibility of their application.

3.8 Ineligible Application

An applicant whose application is ineligible will be informed of the reasons for this decision, which is final and cannot be appealed.

SECTION 4. EVALUATION PROCESS AND FUNDING DECISIONS

The FRQ receives funding applications, checks the eligibility of those applications and submits them for evaluation by committees established for this purpose. The evaluation committees recommend for funding the most deserving applications.

Certain programs require the presentation of a pre-application before submission of the funding application. The specific conditions relating to the evaluation of this pre-application are described in the program rules in question.

4.1 Composition and Role of Evaluation Committees

Funding applications undergo scientific evaluation by evaluation committees composed of members from relevant research fields. Evaluation committee members are known for their research skills and their knowledge of the research topics, methodologies and disciplinary basis of the applications under evaluation. They are aware of the potential influence of bias in the peer review process.

In some cases, an evaluation committee may need to consult outside experts. The evaluation committee members and outside experts may come from Québec, Canada or abroad.

The committee members examine applications in light of the evaluation criteria described in the program rules. They also consider whether the budget projections are appropriate for the proposed scientific activities and rank the applications in order of merit.

Committees may meet in person, by telephone conference call or by video conference. Committee members base their evaluation solely on the content of the submitted application and must not, under any circumstances, share any information not included in the application.

For further details concerning the composition and role of evaluation committees, refer to the internal rules for the application of the *Policy for the Responsible Conduct of Research to the research support activities* of each FRQ sector ([Nature and Technologies](#); [Health](#); [Society and Culture](#)). (Available only in French: *Règles internes pour l'application de la politique sur la conduite responsable en recherche aux activités en soutien à la recherche*).

4.2 Conflict of Interest Management

The FRQ requires its evaluation committee members to meet the highest standards of integrity, impartiality and confidentiality in carrying out their duties. All persons attending an evaluation session are subject to conflict of interest rules. Any breach of these standards constitutes a breach of responsible research conduct and may be subject to sanctions by the FRQ.

Committee members must show great transparency in disclosing any interests that may influence, or appear to influence, their decisions. Evaluation committee members sign a conflict of interest management agreement and must thereon exercise vigilance to identify any real, potential or apparent conflict of interest that may arise during the evaluation process.

A conflict of interest can emerge from the presence of a tension between the duties or responsibilities of a person taking part in the evaluation process and his/her personal, professional, institutional or financial interests. The impartiality of the members could be compromised if their judgement or decisions may be influenced by conflicting interests. For example, there may be a real, potential or apparent conflict of interest when a person taking part in the evaluation process is in one of the following situations:

- a) the person stands to gain a personal benefit (or suffer a personal disadvantage) of a professional, institutional, financial or other nature, resulting from the conduct of a research support activity undertaken by the FRQ³;
- b) an immediate family member (spouse, child or parent) or person of special interest stands to gain a personal benefit (or suffer a personal disadvantage) of a professional, institutional, financial or other nature, resulting from the conduct of a research support activity undertaken by the FRQ;
- c) a friend, extended family member or others with whom the person has a close relationship stands to gain a personal benefit (or suffer a personal disadvantage) of a professional, institutional, financial or other nature, resulting from the conduct of a research support activity undertaken by the FRQ;
- d) the person maintains a recent or significant professional relationship that could create a favorable or negative bias (conflictual relationship) with another person who stands to gain a personal benefit (or suffer a personal disadvantage) of a professional, institutional, financial or other nature, resulting from the conduct of a research support activity undertaken by the FRQ;
- e) the person has an institutional, organizational or business relationship, or a disciplinary affiliation, that could bias the conduct of a research support activity undertaken by the FRQ or its outcome;
- f) any other situation that suggests a real, potential or apparent conflict of interest.

Conflict of interest management measures are taken to ensure the integrity and impartiality of the evaluation process, as set forth in the *Internal rules for the application of the Policy for the Responsible Conduct of Research to research support activities* of each FRQ sector (Nature and Technologies; Health; Society and Culture).

³ Applicable to any person subject to the *Internal rules for the application of the Policy for the Responsible Conduct of Research to research support activities*: FRQ employees, evaluation committee members, scientific advisors, consultants and FRQ partners.

The FRQ makes every effort to avoid placing evaluation committee members in a conflict of interest situation. Any conflict of interest that comes to light during the funding application evaluation process must be disclosed by the committee member in question as quickly as possible. Despite this, if an evaluator declares a conflict of interest during the committee session, the committee chair asks the evaluator to leave the room where the application is being evaluated and to refrain from taking part in deliberations on that application when the funding applications are being ranked in order of merit. A committee chair who is in a conflict of interest is replaced by an interim chair during the evaluation of the application in question.

For further information concerning the conditions governing conflict of interest in the recruitment of evaluation committee members, please refer to the *internal rules for the application of the Policy for the Responsible Conduct of Research to research support activities* of each FRQ sector (Nature and Technologies; Health; Society and Culture).

4.3 Integrity of the Evaluation Process

Applicants or their institutional authorities must not communicate with evaluation committee members, and vice versa, regarding the evaluation, unless such communication is specified as part of this process. The identities of evaluation committee members are kept confidential to avoid any attempt at collusion. The FRQ reserves the right to withdraw a funding application from competition if there is any inappropriate intervention, lobby, undue influence or collusion during the evaluation process, as set forth in the *Policy for the Responsible Conduct of Research*.

4.4 Evaluation Committee Recommendations

The evaluation committee produces a final ranking of the funding applications in order of merit, according to the criteria defined in the program rules. FRQ staff and Board of Directors members do not intervene in the scientific evaluation process.

For some programs for which a mid-term evaluation or visit is required, the committees in charge of these operations may make recommendations regarding the continuation of funding.

The evaluation committee report is final and cannot be appealed. It cannot be modified by the FRQ, except to withdraw applications in the event of ineligibility or breach of responsible research conduct.

4.5 Funding Decisions

The Board of Directors allocates funding according to organizational priorities and available budgets. During this decision-making process, the Board of Directors does not know the ranking of the funding applications or the identities of the persons who could be funded. Furthermore, any member of the Board of Directors who is likely to

have a conflict of interest shall withdraw from the deliberations, as laid out in the *Règlement de régie interne* adopted by the Board of Directors.

Funding is awarded in accordance with the ranking determined by the evaluation committees, based on the envelopes allocated by the Board of Directors. The awarding of grants and excellence awards and the commitment to continue funding in subsequent years are subject to decisions made by the FRQ's Boards of Directors according to strategic priorities and the annual budgetary appropriations voted by the Québec National Assembly. If need be, the Board of Directors may review, modify or cancel funding without notice.

All funding decisions of the FRQ's Board of Directors are final and cannot be appealed.

SECTION 5. FUNDING AND CONDITIONS

5.1 Publication of Results

The FRQ informs every applicant of the acceptance or refusal of their funding application by means of a notice in their FRQnet electronic Portfolio or by email if the funding application was not submitted through FRQnet.

Information regarding funding offers, including funding holder names and their institutions, is published on the FRQ website.

The list of funding awarded is also published on the FRQ website.

Further information regarding protection and confidentiality of personal information can be found in Section 1.5 of these Rules.

5.2 Acceptance or Refusal of the Funding Offer

Applicants who are offered funding are required to indicate their acceptance or refusal within thirty (30) calendar days after the notice is posted to their FRQnet electronic Portfolio, or sent by email where specified in the program rules.

Any person who fails to meet this requirement within the prescribed time is deemed to have refused the funding offer.

5.3 Funding and Payments

The letter announcing the funding offer sets out the conditions that must be met in order to receive funding. Failure to meet these conditions may result in the cancellation of funding.

Furthermore, the FRQ reserves the right to suspend payments to anyone whose account is not in good standing, whatever their role in the funding application. For an account to be in good standing, all requested reports must have been provided and any sums due to the FRQ must have been returned or paid.

The determination of whether or not an account is in good standing is at the sole discretion of the FRQ. When an account is not in good standing, the FRQ will notify the person concerned.

An account that is not in good standing with one sector of the FRQ is considered not to be in good standing with the FRQ.

5.4 Responsible Conduct of Research

In accepting funding from the FRQ, funding holders and co-investigators, their research teams, their institutions, as well as their research personnel and fund managers, agree to adopt a responsible conduct of research. It is the responsibility of the managing institutions to develop a regulatory research framework allowing the implementation of the provisions laid out in the FRQ's *Policy for the Responsible Conduct of Research*, in complete compliance with the principles and requirements set forth therein.

In particular, institutions must be able to receive and manage allegations of breach of responsible conduct of research in accordance with at least the minimum requirements of the FRQ. This includes communicating nominative information to the FRQ for the purpose of verifying the existence of funding ties between the FRQ and the researcher or research activities in question. When such ties are established, information concerning an allegation and its review process, as well as the final report resulting from this process, must be communicated to the FRQ. Applicants, funding holders, their research teams as well as research staff accept that such information will be communicated to the FRQ.

The FRQ reserves the right to impose sanctions in the event of a substantiated breach of responsible research conduct or to take immediate measures in a situation requiring quick intervention (for example, to stop the inappropriate use of public funds). The same applies when a funding holder is declared ineligible to receive funding from a public research funding agency. Public funding of research is a privilege that can be suspended, withdrawn or rendered inaccessible in the event of breach of responsible conduct of research. The FRQ's *Policy for the Responsible Conduct of Research* describes the FRQ's requirements with regard to scientific integrity, and the procedure for addressing allegations of breach of responsible conduct.

5.5 Responsible Research

Funding holders and managing institutions must demonstrate the highest standards of research ethics and scientific integrity.

All research projects involving human beings, including biological material (body parts, products, tissues, cells or genetic material from a human body, of a living or dead person) or administrative, scientific or descriptive data from human beings, usually require the approval of the research ethics board of the institution under whose authority or auspices the project is conducted (or a research ethics board recognized by that institution).

In the case of **grants**, the managing institution is responsible for obtaining all necessary ethics approvals.

Since any managing institution administering a grant has signed a commitment to the FRQ regarding the obtaining of ethics approvals, the managing institution is responsible for ensuring that its research ethics board (or a research ethics board designated by it) has approved any research project before any activities requiring such approval take place. Managing institutions may disburse the amounts they deem appropriate for preliminary work that does not require ethics approval. However, they will need to put controls in place to ensure that no activities requiring ethics approval begin before obtaining research ethics board approval.

For auditing purposes, the managing institution must provide the FRQ, upon request, with all information necessary to ensure compliance with the requirements about obtaining ethics approvals.

Where the grant does not include the conduct of a research project that requires ethics approval (for example, certain "center", "network" or "cluster" grants), managing institutions may disburse the entire grant after ensuring that no ethics approval is required.

In the case of **excellence awards**, the FRQ does not ask for proof that ethics approvals have been obtained prior to disbursing funding. For monitoring purposes, excellence award recipients must provide, upon request by the FRQ, all information necessary to demonstrate compliance with the requirements about obtaining ethics approvals. Excellence award recipients must comply with applicable laws, policies, and standards regarding ethics review, including the requirements of the institutions under whose auspices the research project is conducted. In addition, all Health sector training award recipients whose activities include research involving humans must complete basic research ethics training.

For any research project involving human beings, applicants must consider the possibility of including gender- or sex-based comparative analysis or analysis relating to vulnerable populations (such as incapable adults or minors) in their studies. This consideration is intended to promote fairness and equity in research participation, both in its development and its implementation as well as in the analysis of the results. As a general rule, the FRQ expects every research project involving humans to provide inclusive analyses that take human diversity into account. Certain types of research require gender- or sex-based analysis, for example when participants are prospectively assigned to one or more interventions (therapeutic products). Applicants must indicate whether their project includes such analyses.

Likewise, every project involving animals or animal parts, products or tissues requires the approval of the animal care committee of the principal applicant's institution. The decisions of this committee must comply with the standards and guidelines of the Canadian Council on Animal Care (CCAC) and the institution where animal research is carried out must be certified by the CCAC. These projects may require sex-based analysis. Applicants must indicate whether their project includes such analyses.

Furthermore, in accordance with the FRQ's [*Action Plan for Environmental Responsibility in Research*](#), when preparing their funding application, applicants must indicate the level of environmental risk that the proposed research project may pose. When the environmental risk level of a project is greater than minimal, the mitigation measures envisaged to minimize this risk or the measures to be deployed to comply with legal environmental requirements must be declared to the FRQ, should funding be awarded. Payment of the first instalment will be conditional on the declaration of these measures. The funding holder and the host institution are responsible for ensuring that the project is carried out in a responsible manner and in accordance with environment standards in force. To do so, they must obtain any necessary permits, licences and authorizations before starting the project.

Funding holders are invited to consider the environmental impact of their expenditures.

5.6 Intellectual Property

The FRQ provides financial support through public funds, and any new knowledge, technology and services resulting from these investments are subject to Québec's *Action Plan for Managing Intellectual Property in Universities and Institutions of the Health and Social Service Network* (MRST, 2002⁴). FRQ funding holders must formally agree to this action plan. Consequently, the FRQ releases any claim to patents and royalties, turning them over to the public institutions where the research is carried out, in accordance with the agreements made between the institutions and their researchers where applicable. It is up to the institutions to claim on the public's behalf a share of the benefits of the research activities funded by the FRQ. Whatever arrangements are in place with other partners with regard to intellectual property, the institution and the funding holder must at least be able to use the knowledge acquired for research and teaching purposes.

Moreover, the FRQ does not fund research whose results must remain secret. Research funded in whole or in part by the FRQ cannot be subject to a confidentiality agreement that would preclude the dissemination of the results (subject to a reasonable delay to secure intellectual property rights, such as a patent). For example, intellectual property issues must not prevent or unduly delay the thesis defence. Funding holders must agree to publish the results of their research and to acknowledge the funding received from the FRQ.

5.7 Protection of Academic Freedom

The FRQ emphasizes the importance of protecting academic freedom in the conduct of all research funded through its programs.

⁴ Ministère de la Recherche, de la Science et de la Technologie (MESRST since 2011), 2002, Available in French only: Plan d'action en gestion de propriété intellectuelle dans les universités et les établissements du réseau de la santé et des services sociaux.
https://www.frq.gouv.qc.ca/app/uploads/2021/04/plan_action_gestion_pi_2002.pdf

Academic freedom is part of the rights and freedoms of researchers and implies the right to carry out research without undue influence aimed at directing the achievement of the research or the publication of results⁵. Indeed, UNESCO recognizes that “[...] open communication of the results, hypotheses and opinions —as suggested by the phrase ‘academic freedom’— lies at the very heart of the scientific process, and provides the strongest guarantee of accuracy and objectivity of scientific results”⁶, and recommends that scientific research be carried out in a spirit of intellectual freedom that protects researchers from undue influences on their independent judgement. Complete academic freedom requires that research be carried out in compliance with professional responsibilities and collegiality in addition to the principles of intellectual, scientific and ethic rigour that should apply.

Academic freedom includes “the right, without constriction by prescribed doctrine, to freedom of teaching and discussion, freedom in carrying out research and disseminating and publishing the results thereof, freedom to express freely their opinion about the institution or system in which they work, freedom from institutional censorship and freedom to participate in professional or representative academic bodies”⁷. All researchers must have the right to conduct research activities, within the framework of best research practices, without discrimination of any kind and without fear of repression by the state, the employer, or any other source. Institutions that host research activities funded by the FRQ must adhere to these fundamental research values.

5.8 Open Access to Research Output

The FRQ fosters the widest possible access to the outcomes of the research it funds.

To that end, it adopted an [Open Access Dissemination Policy](#), which applies to all FRQ funding. This Policy describes the requirements for immediate open access publication imposed on research funded by the FRQ.

5.9 Acknowledgement of Funding Received

Funding holders must, in all reports, articles, artistic works, peer-reviewed publications, master’s or doctoral theses, written communication or any other output arising from the funded research, acknowledge the funding received from the FRQ using the templates provided by the FRQ.

In addition to the above, in the case of a group grant, funding holders must acknowledge the FRQ funding during their other activities, communications, and on the research group’s website where applicable, using the templates provided by the

⁵ Inspired by UNESCO, 1997, Recommendation concerning the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel: http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13144&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

⁶ UNESCO, 2017, Recommendation on Science and Scientific Researchers, preamble: http://portal.unesco.org/en/ev.php-URL_ID=49455&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html.

⁷ UNESCO, 1997, *op. cit.*

FRQ. Where the funding is obtained under a funding agreement between the FRQ and one or more financial partners, the partners must also be mentioned, unless otherwise stipulated.

These acknowledgement requirements also apply to members of the research group, principal investigators and co-investigators.

Funding holders are solely responsible for the content of their work. Acknowledgement of funding received from the FRQ in a production arising from FRQ-funded research does not constitute an endorsement of the content on the part of the FRQ.

SECTION 6. ADMINISTRATION OF FUNDING AND ACCOUNTABILITY

6.1 Amount and Duration of Funding

The duration and amount of funding are specified in the letter announcing the funding offer.

The FRQ cannot provide funding over the amount requested in the funding application or indicated in the program rules.

ST

The conditions relating to the value of training awards, eligibility periods and the duration of funding are specified in the program rules for the year of the funding application. Funding may cover a maximum period of up to 18 semesters (6 at the master's level and 12 at the doctoral level), whether said funding is obtained from the FRQ, a recognized granting agency or a foundation that offers awards on a merit basis.

6.2 Funding Manager

RE

The FRQ entrusts the administration of grants, career awards and allocations for indirect costs of research (FIR) to managing institutions recognized by the FRQ, and a list of these institutions is made public. In accepting this responsibility, managing institutions agree to ensure compliance with the Common General Rules, individual program rules and any contractual agreements entered into with the FRQ. The managing institution must administer the funding as the property of others.

The managing institution is the employing institution of the funding holder, unless otherwise specified in the program rules. The managing institution must advise the FRQ of any change to its affiliation with the funding holder during the term of the grant.

The managing institution is responsible for disbursing to the funding holder the full amount allocated to research activities by the FRQ, while verifying the eligibility of all expenses claimed. The amount covering indirect costs of research (FIR) that accompanies the funding is kept by the managing institution and applies only to the funded research projects.

If the managing institution changes during the funding period, the new institution must be a recognized managing institution and must undertake to assume responsibility for administering the funding. The new institution becomes accountable for the grant as of the date on which the FRQ authorizes the transfer, or other date as determined by the FRQ and the new institution.

An equipment grant may not be transferred between institutions, including any unexpended funding remaining at the end of the funding term. However, any equipment thus acquired must remain at the disposal of the project for which the grant was awarded.

The managing institution disburses payments in accordance with expense rules set herein and produces annual financial reports. These must be sent to the FRQ within six months after the end of the FRQ's fiscal year of March 31, i.e. by September 30, or in accordance with the terms specified at the time of the funding. Financial reports must be submitted on the proper form, signed by the funding holder and the managing institution's designated administrator, using the FRQnet electronic Portfolio.

The FRQ provides the managing institution with a copy of all administrative correspondence with funding holders.

It is the responsibility of funding holders to ensure that their personal information, such as contact details, is up to date in the FRQnet electronic Portfolio.

ST

Training award holders are responsible for managing their award. Funding must be used for the purpose for which it was awarded and thereby contribute to the research training of the funding holder.

6.3 Funding Year

Funding is made on an annual basis, for the period April 1 to March 31. Fiscal years (or funding years) are specified in the letter announcing the funding offer.

6.4 Maintaining Eligibility and Subsequent Instalments

RE

Funding holders and the institutions involved must comply with all eligibility requirements in force at the time of submission of the funding application, for the entire period covered by the funding. The FRQ must be informed, as soon as possible, of any changes that could impact eligibility.

ST

Training award holders must claim their next instalment or request its deferral in accordance with the dates indicated in the program rules and provide, where applicable, information with regard to the maintenance of their enrollment status throughout the term of the award.

ST

If this is not done within the prescribed time, the FRQ may, after prior notice, cancel an instalment or terminate the training award.

6.5 Changes during Funding Period

RE

All requests for changes made during the funding period must be submitted in the *Manage my funding* section of the FRQnet electronic Portfolio. No documents sent by email will be accepted, unless prior authorization is given by the FRQ. Such changes may involve research orientation; the composition of a research group, network, team, centre or journal; a loss of expertise related to staff turnover; significant changes to the budget compared to the funding application evaluated by the peer committee; etc. The FRQ will analyze the changes and decide whether to continue funding or, in some

cases, reduce, suspend, terminate funding or request repayment of amounts already paid. The composition of a research group or team may be updated at any time, but the composition profile considered as the reference by the FRQ is that of March 31.

ST

To make any changes to the conditions of a training award or research project, the award holder must first send a request to the FRQ using the form provided for that purpose in the FRQnet electronic Portfolio. In the interest of fairness, prior to authorizing any change, the FRQ must ensure that such a change does not affect the result of the evaluation of the application or its eligibility for the training award program. The training award will be continued as long as the changes do not affect its eligibility requirements. For further details concerning payment deferral, suspension of awards and authorized changes, please refer to the program rules.

Individual funding, such as an excellence award or a grant that is not attributed to a team, is not transferable to anyone other than the person who applied for funding and received the funding offer.

6.6 Termination of Activities

Should activities cease during a grant or excellence award funding period, the funding holder must immediately notify the FRQ via email. The reasons for termination must be indicated and will be analyzed by the FRQ. Failure to promptly notify the FRQ may result in ineligibility to apply for future funding, and the FRQ may require repayment of amounts already paid.

ST

For training award holders, the specific conditions relating to project changes, end of a study program, suspension or discontinuation from studies are specified in the program rules.

RE

6.7 Departure of the Grant Holder

A grant holder who leaves their employing institution or Québec, for more than three months or permanently, must give prior notice to the FRQ, record it in the [FRQnet electronic Portfolio](#), and provide the FRQ with complete information on their replacement including confirmation of this information from the managing institution. If the FRQ considers that the information does not provide sufficient justification or judges that the departure jeopardizes the successful continuation of the research activities to be carried out under the grant, it will take appropriate measures based on the nature of the information provided. The FRQ may decide to continue payments or, in some cases, reduce, suspend or terminate funding. This section does not apply in the case of a sabbatical leave.

RE

6.8 Property Acquired using Public Funds

In relation to section 6.7, at the termination of a research project, the managing institution must put all research resources acquired using public funds at the disposal

of Québec's scientific community, taking into account the useful lifespan of such resources. Should it occur that the managing institution has entered into agreements with other institutions regarding the conduct of research activities, they must determine together the share of the property to be kept by each institution. The FRQ must be advised of any such agreements.

Upon departure of the person responsible for a data or biological material bank created through funding provided by the FRQ, the institution hosting the bank retains trusteeship of the bank on behalf of the research community, unless an arrangement to the contrary exists between the researchers and the Québec institution(s). The FRQ must be advised of any such agreement and the consent form signed by the participants must allow for this possibility.

Research tools such as books and small equipment purchased directly out of FRQ funding for the benefit of a group (research infrastructure or project) must remain at the disposal of the scientific community for which they were acquired, even in the event of the departure of the researcher who is in charge of them or a change of managing institution. The managing institution of these research groups must assume sound management of the resources for the benefit of Québec's scientific community.

Resources of great monetary or scientific heritage value that have been funded at one time or another by the FRQ may not be relocated outside Québec by the researcher, a group (research infrastructure or project) or an institution without consulting the FRQ.

RE

6.9 Transfer of Funds between Institutions, in the Case of a Grant

During a fiscal year, it is permitted to transfer funds—including indirect costs of research or FIR where applicable— between Québec institutions only in cases where the application includes co-investigators with Status 1, 2 or 3. In such cases, the funding holder remains jointly liable with the managing institution to the FRQ for the use of the funding. Specific details regarding the transfer of FIR are provided in section 8.2 of this document. A financial report must be produced by the recipient institution in accordance with the instructions in section 6.2, "Funding Manager". This report must be approved by the managing institution.

The signing of a transfer of funds agreement prior to the transfer is strongly recommended, to provide the managing institution and the funding holder with the necessary authority to demand proper financial reporting from the institutions and individuals to whom the funds are transferred. All parties who receive a portion of FRQ funding (via the managing institution) are required to fully cooperate with procedures to ensure scientific and financial accountability with regard to the use of the funds. All uses of the funds, both in and outside of the managing institution, must comply with the requirements of the Common General Rules and be for the benefit of the research proposal for which the funding was granted.

If a managing institution purchases goods or contracts the services of another institution, whether or not the latter is recognized by the FRQ as a managing institution, this does not constitute a transfer between institutions.

6.10 Funding Residual Balance, Unexpended Funds and Overpayments

RE

Balances remaining at the end of one funding year may be carried over to the next year for the duration of the funding. The balance remaining at the end of the funding period may also be carried over to complete research activities for which the funding was granted, for a maximum period of one year. In this event, justifications must be provided in the financial report submitted by September 30 following the end of funding. At the end of this additional period, any residual funds must be returned to the FRQ.

RE

At the end of the funding period and the additional year if applicable, no unexpended funds may be carried over if this funding is conditionally linked to another funding whose funding period has ended.

ST

A master's training award holder may use the unused balance of the award to begin a Doctoral program. For further details, see the program rules of the award.

If the funding holder no longer meets eligibility requirements, the FRQ will come to an agreement with the funding holder and the institution concerned as to the recovery of any overpayments made from the moment when the funding holder became ineligible.

Any disbursements made as a result of a technical error on the part of the FRQ are recovered following agreement between the funding holder and the managing institution, taking into account any harm caused where applicable. Similarly, the funding holder and the managing institution must advise the FRQ of any errors that occur.

The FRQ is not responsible for expenses or commitments by the institution that exceed grant funds applied to the account of the funding holder for current and prior fiscal periods. The managing institution is solely responsible of these commitments.

6.11 Audits

The FRQ may carry out an audit of managing institutions or career or training award holders at any time in order to ensure proper management of the funding and compliance of expenditures with the program rules. All must cooperate with any such audit process if requested to do so, in the interest of ensuring the appropriate use of funding.

RE

All grants must be recorded to the accounts held by the managing institution, which also keeps original supporting documents on file enabling their authentication (in the case of technology-based originals, in accordance with the *Act to establish a legal*

*framework for information technology, CQLR, c. 1.1), for a minimum of five years following the end of the funding period. Upon request by the FRQ, the managing institution must submit to the audit in compliance with the *Financial Administration Act* (CQLR, c. A-6.001) and must provide access to accounting records and supporting documents.*

Should the audit reveal non-compliance with the program rules or the Common General Rules, or should the institution fail to justify its expenses by providing the appropriate supporting documents, the FRQ may, after prior notice, suspend, reduce or terminate funding and recover any amounts already paid, when applicable.

6.12 Concurrent Funding

A funding holder may obtain only one grant or award within one program, unless otherwise indicated in the program rules, in any given fiscal year.

RE

Holding concurrent funding for the same activities within a single research project or program is not permitted, either for the funding holder or for co-investigators. Funding holders must inform the FRQ if this situation should arise. The FRQ may perform verifications in this regard.

RE

Where two separate research proposals are involved, but the project description gives reason to believe that there is some overlap, the applicant may accept funding, but must show that the research proposal submitted to the FRQ involves different activities.

RE

Applicants who have sought and obtained equal or greater funding from another organization for the same research proposal must decline the offer of funding from the FRQ as soon as it is offered. If the other offer of funding is of a lower value, the conditions governing concurrent funding are set out in the program rules.

ST

In the case of training awards, including internship awards, the conditions governing concurrent funding are stipulated in the program rules.

ST

Similarly, training award holders should refer to the program rules for the conditions governing the deferral of payments.

Furthermore, amounts that may be carried over for an additional year under Section 6.10, and eligible leave under Sections 6.13, 6.14, 6.15 and 6.16, do not constitute an extension of the funding period that may result in unauthorized concurrent funding as described in Section 6.12.

6.13 Deferral and Supplement during Parental Leave

RE

The holder of a grant for a research project without co-investigators (individual funding) who interrupts their research work to take maternity, paternity or parental leave for a birth or adoption may request a deferral, without additional funding, for

the leave period stipulated in the *Act respecting labour standards* (CQLR, c. N-1.1), as it applies to their situation, and as authorized by the managing institution. The deferral period cannot be divided. If the managing institution offers a longer leave, the deferral can, at the discretion of the FRQ, be as long as the leave granted by the institution in accordance with its current policies.

RE

To request a deferral, a grant holder must provide the FRQ with a document from the managing institution attesting to the authorized leave duration or a medical certificate confirming their situation. The FRQ reserves the right to verify the situation of the person concerned. At the end of the leave, the funding holder must inform the FRQ within the first week of resuming work.

RE

In the case of a grant for a team research project, the grant holder may request a deferral under the same conditions as those described in the preceding paragraphs, or arrange for an appropriate replacement by a co-investigator during their absence. In the event of a replacement, there is no deferral of the period during which the grant may be used, and the grant holder must provide the FRQ with complete information on their replacement, including confirmation from the managing institution.

RE

In the case of a research group, the grant holder must arrange for an appropriate replacement during their absence by a regular member of the research group. It is not possible to defer the period during which the grant may be used. The grant holder must also provide the FRQ with complete information on their replacement including confirmation from the managing institution.

RE

Career award holders may request, in writing, a deferral for a maximum of two years. The deferral period cannot be divided.

ST

Training award holders are entitled to a deferral of up to 12 months for the birth or adoption of a child. The deferral period cannot be divided. Award payments corresponding to each semester of the parental leave are deferred to the end of the funding period. The deferral does not apply to preventive withdrawal. It may begin during the semester the birth or adoption is expected and must end no later than one year after the birth or arrival of the child. If the deferral begins during a semester following the child's birth, it must still end no later than one year after the birth or arrival of the child.

ST

A training award holder must advise the FRQ of their intention to take a deferral and provide supporting documents in the form of a letter from the higher education institution confirming the suspension of the study project or program and the authorized suspension duration, or a medical certificate confirming the applicable situation (birth, adoption, interruption of pregnancy after 19 weeks). The FRQ reserves the right to verify the situation of the person concerned. Upon resuming their studies, the training award holder must provide the FRQ with proof of enrolment.

ST

Furthermore, during the authorized suspension of studies for the birth or adoption of a child, a training award holder may request an award supplement for a period of eight

consecutive months. Only students who have already begun at least one semester as a training award holder are eligible for this supplement.

ST

The FRQ reserves the right to refuse any deferral requests that contain insufficient justification or that do not comply with the conditions set out in these rules and individual program rules.

6.14 Deferral for Medical Leave and Other Types of Leave Provided under the Act Respecting Labour Standards

RE

A grant holder who interrupts their research work to take sick leave or other types of leave may request a deferral of the period during which the grant may be used, without any additional funding, for the leave period stipulated in the *Act respecting labour standards (CQLR c. N-1.1)* (applicable to their situation) and authorized by the managing institution. This deferral period cannot be divided. If the managing institution offers a longer leave, the deferral may, at the discretion of the FRQ, be as long as the leave granted by the institution in accordance with its current policies.

RE

To request a deferral, a grant holder must provide the FRQ with a medical certificate confirming their situation or a document from the grant managing institution attesting to the authorized leave duration. The FRQ reserves the right to verify the situation of the person concerned. At the end of the leave, the grant holder must inform the FRQ within the first week of resuming work.

RE

In the case of a research group, the grant holder must ensure that provisions are made for an adequate replacement during their absence by a regular member of the research group. It is not possible to defer the period during which the grant may be used. The grant holder must also provide the FRQ with complete information on their replacement including confirmation from the managing institution.

RE

A career award holder who interrupts their research work to take sick leave or other types of leave stipulated in the *Act Respecting Labour Standards* may request, in writing, a deferral of the period during which their award may be used. The deferral period cannot be divided.

ST

A training award holder who interrupts their research work to take sick leave or other types of leave stipulated in the *Act Respecting Labour Standards* can request a deferral for as long as the university authorizes the suspension or interruption of studies. The FRQ reserves the right to re-evaluate the file.

ST

To request a deferral, the funding holder must complete and transmit to the FRQ a request (indicating the duration and reason for leave) and provide supporting documents in the form of a medical certificate confirming the applicable situation or a letter from the higher education institution confirming the suspension of the study project or program and the authorized suspension duration. The FRQ reserves the right

to verify the situation of the person concerned. Upon resuming their studies, the training award holder must provide the FRQ with proof of enrolment.

RE

6.15 Deferral for Leave without Pay

A funding holder under a grant program without co-investigators (individual grant) may request a deferral of the period during which the grant may be used of up to one year for a leave of absence without pay. The funding holder must:

- demonstrate that the deferral will not jeopardize the success of the research project;
- provide supporting documentation indicating the nature and length of the planned deferral;
- transmit a supporting letter from their institution to the FRQ program manager, confirming continuation of the employment relationship.

This deferral is considered an exception. The FRQ reserves the right to refuse any request.

This deferral applies to research project funding holders. During the leave without pay, the FRQ could authorize expenses to “safeguard” the conduct of the research activities. These are incremental expenses that protect the ability to complete the work in progress upon return to work, such as the cost of secure cloud storage for the research data already collected at the time of the leave. Secondary expenses such as the purchase of books are excluded. The same applies to substantial expenses that would mean that, upon return to work, there would be no money left to carry out the research activity, unless the funding holder can conclusively demonstrate that he or she will pursue the research project without funding from the FRQ.

In the case of a research group, the persons responsible must provide the FRQ with complete information on their replacement including confirmation from the managing institution.

RE

6.16 Research Sabbatical Leave for Career Award Holders

Career award holders may take a research sabbatical leave to take part in a training program or in activities that will advance their research program. The conditions are specified in the program rules.

SECTION 7. REPORTS AND PUBLICATIONS

Funding holders must account for the financial, scientific and ethical use of appropriations made available to them within the deadlines prescribed by the FRQ.

RE

7.1 Financial Reports for Grants

Financial reports for grants, including indirect costs of research (FIR) where applicable, must be completed at the times prescribed by the FRQ, as indicated in Section 6.2.

Financial reports must be prepared using the appropriate form and must be signed by the funding holder. In the case of a group (research infrastructure or project), reports must be signed by the research director and the managing institution's designated administrator.

On request, institutions must be able to provide financial reports and all supporting documents including:

- a list of personnel remunerated using grant: name, category, amount of compensation and length of employment in each case;
- a list of social benefits provided;
- a list of equipment, materials, supplies and diverse items purchased and the price of each item;
- a list of travel and accommodation expenses, specifying the nature of each cost;
- a list of conventions, meetings and symposia for which expenses were paid, and proof of participation in each activity.

7.2 Follow-up Reports

In this section, "follow-up reports" refers to progress reports, final reports, and research reports.

All follow-up reports must be completed during the time in which the appropriate form is available in the FRQnet electronic Portfolio, in the "Follow up on my funding" section.

RE

Progress reports and scientific reports, when required in the program rules or the letter announcing the funding offer, must be submitted to the FRQ at the date set by the latter.

RE

A final report must be submitted to the FRQ for all excellence awards and grants. The final report for a research project or career award must be submitted no later than March 31 of the year following the last spending period.

RE

If a final report or research report, where applicable, is not submitted within the prescribed time, the funding holder's payments may be suspended or deferred, whether as principal investigator or co-investigator, until the situation has been

remedied. Furthermore, payment of future funding under a different program may be contingent upon receipt of the final report (see Section 5.3). Any specific conditions or requirements with regard to the production or submission of final reports or research reports, where applicable, are specified in the program rules or letter announcing the funding offer.

ST

Training award holders must submit their reports to the FRQ. The final report is due three months after the end of the period covered by the final instalment, in the *Follow up on my funding* section of the FRQnet electronic Portfolio. Payment of future funding under a different program is contingent upon receipt of the final report (see Section 5.3).

7.3 Research Benefits and Valorization

Funding for research provided by the FRQ comes from public funds. For that reason, research outcomes — whether in the form of knowledge, products or services — must be disseminated and new knowledge must be transferred for the benefit of Québec society as a whole. Subject to certain conditions (e.g. reasonable delays for obtaining patents), researchers must have the freedom to publish their outcomes. Institutions and funding holders have primary responsibility for the valorization of their research.

In keeping with its Knowledge Mobilization Strategy, the FRQ encourages funding recipients to carry out knowledge mobilization activities (transfer, sharing, valorization, dissemination, etc.) for the general public, whenever such activities are relevant in the context of their research.

SECTION 8. ELIGIBLE AND NON-ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

Obtaining public funds is a privilege given on the basis of excellence, and with this privilege comes the responsibility of properly managing the funds. It is the responsibility of grant holders and their managing institutions to ensure sound management of the funds they receive, in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and the rules set forth by the FRQ in this document and in all other documents referred to herein.

Any expenses that are not on the list of eligible expenses provided in these Common General Rules are considered non-eligible unless authorized in the program rules. For questions relating to eligibility of expenses, funding holders should contact their institution's research office or the program manager at the FRQ.

Any use of funding in a manner not in accordance with the Common General Rules or the program rules constitutes a breach of responsible research conduct (see the *Policy for the Responsible Conduct of Research* in the *Responsible conduct of research* section of the FRQ website). Sums used to pay non-eligible expenses must be reimbursed to the FRQ and the poor management of public funds may be subject to additional sanctions.

This section does not apply to training award holders.

RE

8.1 General Principles

The FRQ adheres to the principles of sound management of public funds in determining eligibility of expenses. It requires all expenses to be directly attributable to and necessary for the execution of the activities specified in the grant application and permitted under the program rules. The FRQ is committed to ensuring that no expense should serve to provide personal gain for funding holders or their family or be used for a purpose that is not directly related to the funded research activities. Public funds need to be tightly and wisely managed.

Even if the grant amount is lower than the need expressed in the funding application, funding holders must respect the framework set up for each program. Changes may be accepted by the FRQ provided that the person responsible for the grant requests prior authorization via email with appropriate supporting documentation.

Funding is delivered and must be used in Québec. Exceptionally, reimbursement for services that are not available in Québec may be eligible following prior authorization by the FRQ.

RE

8.2 Indirect Costs of Research

Indirect costs of research (known by the French acronym FIR, *frais indirects de la recherche*) are the indirect costs incurred by universities and colleges to support

research. They cover the institution's general expenditures that are indirectly related to the implementation of research projects. A managing institution that is not a university or a college must cover these general expenditures.

Since 2014-2015, the FRQ is provided with a budget for the funding of the FIR exclusively for projects it supports. In the case of research supported by a partnership between the FRQ and one or more partners, only the FRQ's share of project funding is taken into consideration in calculating the FIR paid by the FRQ. Each of the other partners assumes its share of the FIR, either through the FRQ or directly to the institution. When funds are transferred between institutions, for example under a grant, the managing institution is responsible for transferring the amounts associated to the FIR.

The amounts paid by the FRQ for FIR are used to cover expenses related to the management and administration of the institution's research activities, including expenditures that fall within the following categories:

- Research facilities
- Research resources
- Regulatory requirements and accreditation
- Intellectual property and institutional communications.



8.3 Funding for Training Award Holders

Null and void.



8.4 Compensation, Training and Professional Fees

FRQ funding must not be used to pay salaries or salary supplements to persons whose salaries are paid out of the regular budget of a government-funded institution such as a university, a college, a government department or its institutions, or any other government agency.

Eligible Expenses

- Compensation and social benefits, where applicable, of personnel (research professionals and associates, project coordinators, clinical research personnel, research technicians, clerical staff, researchers with no institutional affiliation, information professionals, research assistants), are allowed, as per the managing institution's pay scales. In this regard, the FRQ recommends that the length of contracts offered to employees correspond to the duration of the funding obtained.
- Awards, award supplements, and salary for college, undergraduate and graduate students and postdoctoral fellows.
- Fees for professional artists, consultants, invited speakers and expert advisors as per the financial guidelines used by the managing institution. In the case of a

consultant outside Québec, this cannot exceed 10% of the grant or the maximum amount specified in the program rules.

- Professional fees for website development and maintenance, provided they are justified and related to the grant or the award.
- Training and upgrading of personnel as necessary for carrying out the research activities.
- Sums or compensation paid to research participants that have been approved by the ethics committee.
- The cost of ethics review performed outside Québec, if the review performed in Québec is not recognized outside Québec (where research activities are taking place).

Non-Eligible Expenses

- Compensation of principal investigators, co-investigators or regular members, except in the case of Health sector research centre grants.
- Compensation of persons whose salaries are paid out of the regular budget of a government-funded institution such as a university, a college, a government department or its institutions, or any other government agency (unless authorized in the program rules).
- Tuition fees.
- Professional corporation and association dues and practice licence fees.
- Severance pay.
- Consulting fees between colleagues at a higher education institution or health network institution.
- Awards, award supplements and salary support for students and postdoctoral fellows enrolled in institutions outside Québec.
- Costs associated with releasing the funding holder from teaching or clinical activities to carry out research or coordination activities, unless authorized in the program rules.
- Any part of the salaries or social benefits of persons whose university status renders them eligible for FRQ funding.
- Administrative salaries, except when specified in the program rules.
- Staff bonuses and rewards.
- Paid union leave.
- Supplementary employment insurance benefits for maternity leave.
- Professional fees for researchers outside Québec.

8.5 Travel and Subsistence Costs (as per the Financial Guidelines of the Managing Institution)

Eligible Expenses

- Cost of land travel up to the equivalent of economy airfare at the lowest rate available and subsistence costs necessary for the execution of activities related to the grant or the award, which may include carbon offsetting. These costs are only covered for principal investigators, co-investigators, their research personnel, students and postdoctoral fellows under their direction, their collaborators, and research participants where applicable.
- Travel cancellation insurance, seat reservation fees, first checked bag fees.
- Travel health insurance premiums for research personnel who do not receive any such benefits from their organization and/or other sources.
- Entry visa fees (for grant holder or research personnel) if necessary for the research being undertaken.
- The amount for the employer compliance fee paid to Citizenship and Immigration Canada under the [International Mobility Program](#).
- Participation in seminars, science conferences, symposia or workshops, provided the objectives are in line with the grant research objectives, or that the person responsible for the grant or one of the researchers presents a paper or is otherwise actively involved in the event (e.g. chairperson, roundtable participant, facilitator). Proof of participation must be attached to the claim for expenses.
- Meal costs associated with holding seminars, science conferences, symposia or workshops related to the funded research or in the context of activities to facilitate the conduct of the research, subject to compliance with the per diem amount of the managing institution or the Government of Québec⁸.
- Care expenses for a dependent (as defined by the Québec tax system) incurred as a result of occasional travel to participate in scientific activities (e.g., conferences or field studies), for funding holders who are single parents, nursing mothers, who have an elderly or disabled dependent, etc. (maximum of \$1,000 per year per grant).
- Additional costs incurred for accommodations necessary due to a disability.

Non-Eligible Expenses

- Costs incurred by students, postdoctoral fellows or researchers for selection interviews.
- Researchers' travel and subsistence expenses during a sabbatical or unpaid leave.
- Meal costs that are a part of regular interactions with colleagues (e.g. staff meetings).

⁸ Government per diems are available in the Conseil du Trésor's *Directive sur les frais remboursables lors d'un déplacement et autres frais*

- Meal costs that exceed the per diem amount of the managing institution or the Government of Québec⁹.
- Commuting between home and workplace or between two workplaces.
- Moving expenses, laboratory relocation and transport of personal goods.
- Airline fare for travel in first class or business class.
- Costs associated with passports and immigration, vaccines and medications, insurance and visas.
- Costs unrelated to project safety and security for work in the field or the laboratory (purchase or rental of protective equipment, routine vaccinations and medications).

RE

8.6 Material, Equipment and Resources

Eligible Expenses

- Materials and supplies directly related to research activities, and transportation expenses where applicable.
- Purchase of animals for research purposes.
- Purchase or leasing of research equipment directly related to research activities. Note that researchers must ensure that any equipment purchased is the most energy-efficient on the market.
- Works necessary for carrying out the research activities.
- Research equipment maintenance, transportation and repair, and extended equipment warranties.
- Project safety and security for work in the field or laboratory (purchase or rental of protective equipment, essential vaccinations and medications).
- Secure disposal of waste.
- Computers, tablets, modems, routers, emerging technology and other hardware and/or specialized software required for the research being undertaken and not normally provided by the institution, with adequate justification.
- Data banks (access or purchase).
- Monthly plan fees for electronic devices when being used for research purposes (e.g. data collection) and/or for personnel safety reasons only.

The FRQ supports sustainable development. The reuse of equipment and the purchase of used material are therefore permitted, where appropriate.

Non-Eligible Expenses

- Indirect research costs (see the list in Section 8.2), except where permitted by the program rules.
- Acquisitions for an institution library.
- Purchase, leasing, repair or maintenance of office furniture, furnishings and equipment, e.g. fax machines, filing cabinets and shelves.

⁹ Id.

- Insurance premiums for equipment and vehicles used for the research.

RE

8.7 Common Research Platforms or Infrastructures

The Canadian Foundation for Innovation (CFI) and a number of other funding organizations have contributed to the installation of common research platforms, some of which are in the research centres and laboratories of researchers funded by the FRQ.

These common research infrastructures are a favoured means of supporting cutting-edge research that contributes significantly to enhancing the competitiveness of Québec researchers. However, these platforms, often consisting of specialized equipment or a specific combination of equipment and resources, not only mean high purchase costs but also hefty operating and maintenance costs.

RE

8.8 Telecommunication Costs

Eligible Expenses

- Monthly charges for the use of the Internet at the institution, only when this service is required for the purpose of the research being undertaken and not normally provided by the institution free of charge, subject to appropriate justification.
- Cellular phones, smartphones or other electronic devices when they are necessary for the research being undertaken (e.g. for data collection) and/or for personnel safety reasons with adequate justification.
- Video conferencing costs.

Non-Eligible Expenses

- Monthly connection or rental costs of telephones.
- Connection or installation of lines (telephone or other links).
- Voice mail services fees.
- Computer and other information services provided to all members of an institution.

RE

8.9 Dissemination and Knowledge Transfer Costs

Eligible Expenses

- Website development and maintenance related to the grant or the award.
- Activities for knowledge transfer (e.g. organization of seminars, study days, symposia or training sessions) and dissemination to the general public (media relations, video production, social media, general public activities, production of popularized content).
- Translation of research articles and reports.

- Processing and dissemination costs for peer-reviewed publications that are made openly available in accordance with the requirements set out in the FRQ's [Open Access Dissemination Policy](#), according to the version of this policy applicable to the grant (2019 or 2022 version). Funding not subject to the Open Access Dissemination Policy may voluntarily comply with the requirements set out in the 2022 version and thus benefit from the eligibility of this expense. For funding subject to the 2022 version of the Open Access Dissemination Policy, the expense is eligible if these publications are made openly available immediately and published under an open license and, furthermore, the costs are paid to a scholarly journal in one of the following 3 situations:
 - (i) the journal does not charge a subscription fee;
 - (ii) the journal charges a subscription fee but is recognized as a "transformative journal" by cOAlition S, provided that the manuscript was submitted to the journal before July 1, 2025; OR
 - (iii) the journal charges a subscription fee under a "transformative agreement" documented by cOAlition S, provided that the manuscript was submitted to the journal before July 1, 2025.
- Reproduction and dissemination of funded research (however, processing and dissemination costs for peer-reviewed publications published in scholarly journals are eligible only in accordance with the rules set out above).

Non-Eligible Expenses

- Costs associated with the protection of intellectual property (patents or licences).
- Costs associated with technology transfer activities for commercial purposes.
- Costs associated with commercial development.
- Printing or reproduction of books.

RE

8.10 Other Non-Eligible Expenses

- Financial contributions that are not directly related to the execution of funded research activities.
- The transfer of funds to any other account not related to the grant or the award.
- Costs associated with the submission of a grant renewal application.
- Hospitality-related expenses (e.g. benefit evenings).
- Entertainment and gifts.
- Alcoholic beverages.
- Education-related costs such as thesis preparation, tuition and course fees.
- Professional training or development, such as computer or language courses.
- Preparation of teaching materials.
- Costs associated with regulatory compliance, including ethics review carried out in Québec, biohazard or radiation safety, environmental assessments and provincial or municipal regulations or by-laws (covered by the indirect research costs or FIR).
- Monthly parking fees for vehicles, unless specifically required for work in the field.
- Exempted or refundable sales tax.
- Costs of regular clothing.

- Banking fees.

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