**APPLICATION GUIDELINES - QEII Foundation & IWK Foundation TRIC Program**

PURPOSE

The purpose of the QEII Foundation *Translating Research Into Care* (TRIC) Healthcare Improvement Research Program at the QEII Health Sciences Centre, Nova Scotia Health (NSH) and the IWK Health Centre is to support research, at the point of care, that will yield strong evidence and facilitate the translation of clinical science into improved healthcare policy, service delivery and patient care. Priority will be given to applications that do one or more of the following:

* improve patient reported outcomes
* improve the safety of healthcare
* improve wait times for healthcare
* reduce the need for healthcare
* improve access for under-served populations
* identify and reduce unnecessary healthcare costs
* reduce unnecessary interventions. We strongly encourage applicants to consider a focus on de-adoption of unnecessary tests, interventions or clinical practices that are of low value.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Any study design proposed—qualitative or quantitative—is acceptable as long as it is robust and appropriate for the purposes of the research. The evidence from the research needs to be convincing and inform a feasible plan for healthcare improvement that can be successfully implemented and supported by the healthcare centre(s). Research designs may include, but are not limited to, Randomized Controlled Trials (RCT), systematic reviews, surveys and observational studies.

ELIGIBILITY

* All applications must be submitted by a Scientific Co-Principal Investigator and an Administrative Co-Principal Investigator.
* The Scientific Co-Principal Investigator must be an NSH or IWK employee, medical staff member, or have an affiliate scientist or medical appointment at the institution where the research will take place, where the funds will be held if the application is successful, and for the duration of the proposed project
* Researchers may hold a maximum of two TRIC grants at any one time as the Lead Scientific Co-Principal Investigator.
* Trainees cannot apply as the Scientific Co-Principal Investigator; however, they may be included as co/sub investigators.
* Administrative Co-Principal Investigators must be employed at either NSH or the IWK. They must possess signing authority for the relevant departmental/unit budget that will be impacted by the research; have the authority to approve and support the implementation of a healthcare improvement plan, and the authority to sustain a successfully implemented plan over the long term.
* Please note: all operational (unit/departmental) costs associated with the project must be absorbed by the healthcare system.
* Administrative Co-PI Letter of Commitment: this letter must provide details about the commitment and funding support to be provided from the healthcare system/operational budget. The letter should describe the proposed practice change, why it is important, how this will improve patient care at the health centre now, and a willingness to sustain the system change at the end of the TRIC project, if the change is successful.
* IT: All healthcare improvement projects that will impact IM/IT resources must be approved by the IM/IT Department prior to grant submission. This written approval should be included with the application as a letter of support.

Level 1 grants are “planning grants”; levels 2 and 3 funding applications focus on implementation. Applicants considering a level 2 or 3 application should be able to answer yes to the following questions:

1. *Will this research change practice?*
2. *Will this practice change have an impact on the health system and/or patient care?*
3. *Is there rationale for this practice change evident in the literature?*
4. *Is this practice change supported by the appropriate Administrative Co-PI?*
5. *Is the impact of this project likely to be sustainable over the long term?*

Applications that do not meet the above criteria or are not considered implementation science**\*** research projects will not be considered for funding.

***\*Implementation science****is the study of methods to promote the integration of research findings and evidence into healthcare policy and practice. For more information, attend a TRIC Workshop:*

<https://www.cdha.nshealth.ca/discovery-innovation/qeii-fdn-tric-grants>*or visit*

*National Institutes of Health:* [*http://www.fic.nih.gov/News/Events/implementation-science/Pages/faqs.aspx*](http://www.fic.nih.gov/News/Events/implementation-science/Pages/faqs.aspx)

FUNDING LEVELS:

Three levels of funding support are available:

* Level 1: up to $ 3,000 over one year
* Level 2: up to $ 30,000 over one or two years
* Level 3: up to $ 60,000 over two years

Funding support for the TRIC program comes from the QEII Foundation and the IWK Foundation.

**SUPPORT FOR APPLICATION DEVELOPMENT**

Workshops are offered for teams preparing TRIC applications. It is recommended that at least one team member attend a TRIC workshop and/or review the TRIC PowerPoint presentations on the website prior to submitting their applications. See: <https://www.cdha.nshealth.ca/qeii-tric>

Research Development NS Health Researchdevelopment@nshealth.ca

Research Methods Unit (RMU) <http://www.cdha.nshealth.ca/discovery-innovation/research-methods-unit>

Maritime SPOR Support Unit <http://www.spor-maritime-srap.ca/research-support>

IWK Consulting Scientist <http://www.iwk.nshealth.ca/research/about-us>

**APPLICATION FORMS**

The TRIC application form is a protected (locked) document to ensure that everyone submits an application that is formatted consistently. If you need to make changes to the format of the application documents, please contact ResearchDevelopment@nshealth.ca.

**APPLICATION SUBMISSION**

* Submit the application as one PDF document with signatures on page 1.
* Send the PDF document by email or use the institution’s secure file transfer system and send to: Sandra.Crowell@nshealth.ca (NSH applications) or Sandy.Berry@iwk.nshealth.ca (IWK applications)
* Applications should not be sent from a Gmail or Hotmail account as firewalls may prevent them from being delivered.
* Receipt of your application will be confirmed by email.
* Incomplete applications will not be considered.

APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS

Applications will be reviewed by the Program Review Committee. This committee is made up of scientists/clinicians/administrators from NSH and IWK, representatives from the health centre Foundations, patients, and industry representatives. Applications will be reviewed on the following criteria:

* scientific merit and administrative merit
* budget
* impact on healthcare
* implementation procedure
* feasibility
* likelihood of sustainability
* inclusion of the patient voice.

Scientific peer reviews will be conducted by scientists/researchers knowledgeable in research design and methodology. The science must be rigorous and convincing and may use the full range of health research methods. Administrators will assess the administrative merit with specific attention to the implementation and impact of the proposed research on the health system. Projects must achieve acceptable scores for both scientific and administrative merit in order to be considered for funding. Reviewer comments will be provided to the Co-PIs following the peer review process.

TRIC funding recipients may be invited to serve as a member of the Program Peer Review Committee for a future funding competition.

AWARD TERMS

* TRIC awards must be held in a research account at either NSH or IWK.
* The research account will be held by the Lead Scientific Co-PI.
* Research must begin within six months of the date of the award.
* Publications arising from the research must be acknowledged in the funding disclosure section of the manuscript and should state the following:  *This research was supported by the QEII Foundation (or the IWK Foundation) Translating Research into Care Healthcare Improvement Research Funding Program* [followed by the grant number and year of funding awards in square brackets].
* Reports: Final reports are required for Level One awards. Interim and final reports are required for Level Two and Three awards. Report templates are available on the webpage: NSH: <http://www.cdha.nshealth.ca/discovery-innovation/qeii-fdn-tric-grants> or IWK: <http://www.iwk.nshealth.ca/research/translating-research-care-tric-healthcare-improvement-research-program>

**BUDGET GUIDELINES**

Eligible expenses

* research assistant wages and benefits (outline details of hourly wage, work hours per week, number of weeks of work for each personnel position. Ensure CPP, EI and other related deductions/benefits are included, if required). Institutional salary scales must be used.
* consulting fees, technician costs (provide details of any professional or technical contracts or arrangements, cost, justification of why a particular vendor was selected)
* honoraria paid to research participants, such as modest incentives, as approved by an ethics committee.
* IT costs (provide details e.g. who will set up, monitor and maintain websites/online surveys, who will collect data, data storage plans)
* purchase or lease of research equipment and supplies as related to the research project, if not already supplied by the institution administering the funds.
* travel costs associated with team development, workshops, seminars (please justify)
* costs associated with holding a workshop or seminar, the activities of which relate directly to the funded research
* meeting room rental fees and catering costs for the purposes of data collection, partnership development and research dissemination.

Ineligible expenses

* compensation to PI or Co-investigators for salary purposes
* administrative or management charges or fees
* release time allowance for clinicians
* discretionary severance and separation packages
* membership fees to professional associations or societies
* professional training or education tuition or course fees
* conference travel expenses
* conference registration fees
* entertainment expenses
* alcoholic beverages
* gifts
* insurance costs for equipment and research vehicles
* costs associated with construction, renovation or rental of laboratories or facilities
* costs associated with ethical review, biohazard or radiation safety, environmental assessments, and bylaws
* costs related to intellectual property or obtaining a patent
* open access publication fees\*

\*Note: Once you receive acceptance of a manuscript from an open access journal, please contact the TRIC program representative for information about funding support to offset the open access publication fees.

Unspent funds

All unspent funds must be returned to the TRIC program at the end of the funding period or if the project is terminated before completion**.**

**TRIC AWARD CATEGORIES**

Level One TRIC Grant (up to $3,000 over one year)

Level 1 “planning-type” grants are expected to gain evidence that will help to support the preparation of a future Level Two or Level Three grant application. Activities supported include team development, literature review, retrieval of data, and development of a research protocol.

Applications must include:

* Application Title Page
* TRIC Checklist
* Lay Summary
* Project Description: Three pages maximum including background, implementation plan and expected impact, development plan, patient engagement, team members and roles.
* **Budget Template**: One page maximum detailing all aspects of the budget including research costs and operational costs. Research costs are covered by the TRIC grant funding. Operational costs, in-kind or other, are to be absorbed by the healthcare system. Current health centre pay scales must be used for personnel.
* **Budget Justification**: Provide a detailed budget justification (no page limit). Refer to the Budget Guidelines in the application forms for eligible expenses.
* **Appendix**: One page maximum (e.g., figure, chart, table, questionnaire, etc.)
* **References**: One page maximum
* **Administrative Co-PI Letter of Commitment**: this letter must provide details about the commitment and funding support to be provided from the healthcare system/operational budget. The letter should describe the proposed practice change, why it is important, how this will improve patient care at the health centre now, and a willingness to sustain the system change at the end of the TRIC project, if the change is successful.
* **Letters of Support**: Unlimited letters of support may be included. These are not considered part of the allowable number of appendices.
* **CV**: Team CV’s of no more than five pages each must be included for the Scientific Co-Principal Investigator, Administrative Co-Principal Investigator and each co/sub investigator.

Level Two TRIC grant (up to $30,000 over one or two years)

Level Two TRIC applications are expected to be comprehensive research projects that focus on the implementation of a healthcare improvement plan.

The Co-Principal Investigator and Administrative Co-Principal Investigator must submit an application that includes:

* Application Title Page
* Lay Summary
* Project Description: Five pages maximum including background and evidence, implementation procedure, sustainability plan, methods and procedures, and patient engagement plan.
* Budget Template: One page maximum detailing all aspects of the budget including research costs and operational costs. Research costs are covered by the TRIC grant funding. Operational costs, in-kind or other, are to be absorbed by the healthcare system. Current health centre pay scales must be used for personnel.
* Budget Justification: A detailed budget justification (no page limit). Refer to the Budget Guidelines in the application forms for eligible expenses.
* **Appendices**: Two pages maximum (e.g., figure, chart, table, questionnaire, etc.)
* **References**: Two pages maximum
* **Administrative Co-PI Letter of Commitment**: this letter must provide details about the commitment and funding support to be provided from the healthcare system/operational budget. The letter should describe the proposed practice change, why it is important, how this will improve patient care at the health centre now, and a willingness to sustain the system change at the end of the TRIC project, if the change is successful.
* **Letters of Support**: Additional letters may be included and are not considered as part of the allowable number of appendices.
* **CV**: Team CV’s of no more than five pages each must be included for the Scientific Co-Principal Investigator, Administrative Co-Principal Investigator and each co/sub investigator.

Level Three TRIC Grant (up to $60,000 over two years)

Level Three TRIC applications are expected to be comprehensive research projects that focus on the implementation of a healthcare improvement plan. The project and change strategies will be broader in scope and complexity than a Level Two TRIC project and require more time and funding to implement.

The Co-Principal Investigator and Administrative Co-Principal Investigator must submit an application that includes:

* Application Title Page
* Lay Summary
* Project Description: Eight pages maximum including background and evidence, implementation procedure, sustainability plan, methods and procedures, and patient engagement.
* Budget Template: One page maximum detailing all aspects of the budget including research costs and operational costs. Research costs are covered by the TRIC grant funding. Operational costs, in-kind or other, are to be absorbed by the healthcare system. Current health centre pay scales must be used for personnel.
* **Budget Justification**: provide a detailed budget justification. There is no page limit for the justification and the additional pages are not considered part of the appendices. Refer to the Budget Guidelines in the application forms for eligible expenses
* **Appendices**: Three pages maximum (e.g., figure, chart, table, questionnaire, etc.)
* **References**: Two pages maximum
* **Administrative Co-PI Letter of Commitment**: this letter must provide details about the commitment and funding support to be provided from the healthcare system/operational budget. The letter should describe the proposed practice change, why it is important, how this will improve patient care at the health centre now, and a willingness to sustain the system change at the end of the TRIC project, if the change is successful.
* **Letters of Support**: Additional letters may be included and are not considered as part of the allowable number of appendices.
* **CV**: Team CV’s of no more than five pages each must be included for the Scientific Co-Principal Investigator, Administrative Co-Principal Investigator and each co/sub investigator.

**CONTACTS**

For additional information about the funding program:

Nova Scotia Health

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NSH: <https://www.cdha.nshealth.ca/qeii-tric>

IWK Health Center

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Sandy.Berry@iwk.nshealth.ca

IWK: <https://www.iwk.nshealth.ca/research/translating-research-care-tric-healthcare-improvement-research-program>