**EaRTH District Collaborative Research Grant**

The EaRTH District Collaborative Research Grant competition aims to develop collaborative projects with industry and government partners in the eastern GTA including Scarborough, Durham Region, and Peterborough. The grant program provides initial seed funding to leverage shared research facilities, joint research projects, and collaborations on teaching and learning, to pursue research activities that strengthen and enhance the Canadian green technology sector, and to provide increased opportunities for economic development that will foster the creation of highly skilled jobs and support the mobilization of knowledge to society. The funding will be provided over a period of up to 16 months for the development high-quality multi-year sustainable collaborative research projects in areas of mutual strength and shared interest that advance the EaRTH Initiative.

**2022 Call for Proposals**

Centennial College, Ontario Tech University, Trent University and the University of Toronto Scarborough are pleased to announce the 2022 call for research projects in the EaRTH District Collaborative Research Grant competition.

This year’s theme is **Water**.

Water and water resources are vital for the existence of all living organisms, having an all-important impact on societies and ecosystems in Canada and globally.

In recent decades, factors such as population increase, human migration and climate change have brought about a broad range of problems that are driving the need for high quality and innovative research to address the technological, economic, societal impacts of water availability, water use, water governance and sustainability.

The call will focus on water-related collaborative research in the pursuit of both social and technological innovations including but not limited to:

- Watershed sciences
- Aquatic ecosystems
- Aquatic toxicology
- Access to clean water
- Water quality and water purification
- Wastewater testing and public health
- Wastewater treatment, uses and renewal
- Water sustainability and Indigenous knowledges
- Community science and water monitoring
- Water policy and governance
- Great Lakes Basin research

This grant program is available for faculty members/staff at the participating institutions to undertake short-term visits to initiate, deepen and extend collaborative research links with the goal of developing successful joint proposals to external sponsors that will enable the continuation of the collaborative research efforts amongst the partner institutions.
1. Proposal Parameters

i. **Team Composition:** To be eligible a proposal must include a team of participants from all four institutions. The lead applicant for a proposal is responsible for identifying and recruiting relevant team members from the partner institutions.

ii. **Funding Envelop:** The funding envelope comprises CAD$50,000 of seed funding per project. Note: Each partner institution will disburse $12,500 in funding for each project to the lead faculty/staff member from its institution. Up to three (3) joint projects will be selected for a funding period of 16 months. Proposals should be framed as the initial stage of a multi-year sustainable project with deliverables.

iii. **Eligible Research Activities:** Proposals may include, but are not limited to, research projects, workshops, symposia, faculty/staff exchanges, research seminars/presentations and the formation or development of a collaborative network. Proposals with the potential for launching student exchanges between all partner institutions are particularly encouraged.

iv. **Eligible and Ineligible Use of Funds:** Eligible costs include direct costs of research, such as student and research personnel stipends, consumables, travel, and accommodation. However, participating colleges may provide up to $12,500 faculty course-release time, student research stipend, travel, etc. The following costs are ineligible: equipment, scholarships, conference attendance, tuition fees, capital costs, space and amenities.

v. **Adjudication Process:** The proposals will be assessed and recommended for selection by a committee composed of members from all participating institutions appointed by the Vice-Presidents/Vice-Principal/Deans for Research and Innovation or their designate.

2. Eligibility

The project team must include at least one representative from each of the four collaborating institutions. Faculty members/staff from all disciplines and at all stages of career are welcome to apply. The lead applicant(s) must be full-time faculty/staff member(s). Please note that eligibility criteria may differ at participating institutions, as such, please contact your research office for details.

3. Value and Duration

Up to three (3) successful proposals will receive up to CAD$50,000 each for a funding period of 16 months to support collaborative research activities.

4. Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<tr>
<td>Call for proposals opens</td>
<td>December 1, 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deadline for submission of LOI</td>
<td>February 1, 2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deadline for submission of proposal</td>
<td>March 7, 2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication of results to applicants</td>
<td>Spring 2022</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project start and end dates</td>
<td>May 1, 2022 to August 31, 2023</td>
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<td>Final report</td>
<td>September 30, 2023</td>
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5. Submission of Proposals

This is a joint call, and the lead faculty member from each institution should submit an application to their institution’s research office (please see section 9 below for institutional contacts).

A full proposal is comprised of the following elements:

i. A proposal cover sheet that identifies the lead faculty member and collaborators from each institution with contact details.

ii. Each faculty member involved in a project must provide a brief letter of support from their Department Chair/Dean indicating permission has been granted for said faculty member to participate.

iii. A project description of no more than 5 pages (12pt Times New Roman or 11pt Arial) that includes the following items (in alignment with the selection criteria listed below):
   - **Abstract**: A brief paragraph (maximum of 250 words) that describes the project.
   - **Description of the planned activities**: Detailed project plans for the year (for example, seminars, short courses, visits to other institutions that carry out research activities, etc.), including rationale and timeline.
   - **Project impact**: Description of the expected academic gains for the project as a result of the proposed cooperation, and the identification of corresponding performance indicators and outputs (e.g. a publication, blog, meeting report, etc).
   - **Impact of collaboration**: Anticipated benefits of the collaboration to the faculty member’s other active research and with regard to strengthening the overall partnership between the institutions.
   - **Student involvement**: Listing of opportunities for student(s) engagement, anticipated benefits to the project as well as the number of anticipated student(s) who will be directly involved in the project, as applicable.
   - **Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)**: How does the project advance equity, diversity, and inclusion within the theme of the call?
   - **Capacity for future collaboration**: A description of the potential future collaborations and outcomes that will be possible as a result of having undertaken the proposed collaboration. For example: joint publications; joint supervision of students; joint patent applications; joint reports to governments; and joint funding applications.
   - **Proposed budget**: A breakdown of the cost of the activities, research assistant costs, consumables, travel, accommodation, including anticipated hours for College faculty/staff and students.
   - **Abbreviated Curriculum Vitae (CV)**: The application must include a CV of no longer than 5 pages for each of the participating faculty/staff members, with a selected list of publications.
   - **Research Approvals**: In some cases, ethics or other approvals may need to be secured. Applicants are encouraged to seek approval concurrently.
iv. **COVID-19 Research Impact Statement:**

We recognize that COVID-19 may have adversely affected faculty member research activities (please refer to the [Ontario Council of University Research: COVID-19 Recovery Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Working Group report](#)), and accordingly invite applicants to provide a brief statement on the impact of the pandemic as well as possible mitigation strategies in relation to the proposal where applicable (no more than 150 words).

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6. **Evaluation Criteria and Weighting**

A joint review committee from all participating institutions will assess each full proposal according to the academic merit and compelling elements covered by the following criteria:

- **Project design and rationale (20%)**: How clearly presented and justified is the design and basis for the collaboration?
- **Feasibility (15%)**: How likely is it that the project will have tangible outcomes/and that the project can be accomplished within the 16-month timeline?
- **Project impact (15%)**: How clearly linked are the scholarly/academic gains to the planned activities and performance indicators?
- **Impact of collaboration (15%)**: How strong is the link being between the proposed collaboration and current research or teaching project(s)?
- **Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (10%)**: How does the application propose to address and advance EDI?
- **Student involvement (10%)**: Are opportunities provided for students to engage in the collaboration? What are the anticipated benefits of student engagement in the project and for the individuals themselves?
- **Capacity for future collaboration/funding (15%)**: What is the extent to which the potential for future collaborations is enhanced as a result of the proposed exchange activities? What is the ability of the proposal to leverage future external funding?

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7. **Reporting After Project Completion**

All project leads must, as a condition of receiving an award under this call, complete a narrative report (between 1 and 2 pages) that describes the outcomes, nature of collaboration, project impact, trainee involvement and opportunities for future collaboration that evolved from their project. This report must be submitted to the research office at each of the four partner institutions by September 30, 2023. Participation at a joint research symposium is expected.

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8. **Program Duration**

This program will operate for the period of 2021-2026, pending a subsequent agreement by all of the partner institutions to continue its operation. However, partner institutions can withdraw from the program should institutional circumstances necessitate that they do so, provided they notify all partners of their intent to do so prior to the announcement of the forthcoming Call for Proposals.
9. Institutional Contacts

Interested faculty with questions about this opportunity should contact their institutional representative, identified below.

**Centennial College:** Jonathan Hack, Executive Director, Applied Research, Innovation and Entrepreneurship Services (jhack@centennialcollege.ca / 416-289-5000: Ext. 8152)

**Ontario Tech University:** Jennifer Freeman, Executive Director, Office of Research Services (jennifer.freeman@ontariotechu.ca / 905-925-9966)

**Trent University:** Christopher Rooney, Director, Office of Research and Innovation (chrisrooney@trentu.ca / 1-855-698-7368: Ext. 7209)

**UTSC:** Suhail Asrar, Research Partnership and Business Development Officer (suhail.asrar@utoronto.ca / 416-208-8172)