The Collaborative Research Consortium – An EaRTH Initiative

The EaRTH Initiative aims to develop collaborative projects with industry and government partners in the eastern GTA including Scarborough, Durham Region, and Peterborough. It will explore synergies that can strengthen and enhance the Canadian clean technology sector, and provide increased opportunities for economic development that will foster the creation of highly skilled jobs and support the transfer of knowledge to society. The Initiative includes shared research facilities, joint research projects, and collaborations on teaching and learning.

2021 Call for Joint Research Proposals

The University of Toronto Scarborough, Ontario Tech University, Centennial College and Trent University are contributing matching funds to support collaborative research initiatives through a joint call for proposals. The overall aim of the fund is to provide initial seed funding for the development of high-quality collaborative research projects in areas of mutual strength and shared interest that advance the EaRTH Initiative.

The theme for the 2021 year is Integrated Sustainable Energy Technologies.

This seed funding is available for faculty/staff at the participating institutions to undertake short-term visits to initiate, deepen and extend collaborative research links with the goal of enabling principal investigators to make joint proposals to external funding sources for the next phase of their research.

1. Project Parameters

i. To be eligible a proposal must include a team of participants from all four institutions.

ii. The funding envelope for the collaborative fund comprises CAD$50,000 per project.

iii. Each partner institution will disburse its funding for each project to the lead faculty/staff member from their institution.

iv. Up to three (3) joint projects will be selected for a funding period of one (1) year. Proposals with the potential for sustainability beyond the initial funding period are encouraged.
v. Proposals may include, but are not limited to, 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.

vi. Eligible costs include direct cost of research, such as student stipends, consumables, travel, and accommodation. However, participating colleges may provide up to $12,500 faculty course-release time, student research stipend, travel, etc.

vii. The following costs are ineligible: equipment, scholarships, conference attendance, tuition fees, capital costs, space and amenities.

viii. 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-Principals/Deans for Research and Innovation or their designate.

2. Eligibility

Members from all disciplines and at all career levels are welcome to apply. Some eligibility criteria may apply. Please contact your research office for details. The lead applicant(s) must be full-time faculty/staff member(s).

3. Value and Duration

Up to three (3) successful proposals will receive up to CAD$50,000 each for one (1) year to support collaborative research activities.

4. Timeline

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Call for proposals opens</td>
<td>February 1, 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deadline for submission of LOI</td>
<td>March 15, 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Deadline for submission of proposal</td>
<td>May 15, 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communication of results to applicants</td>
<td>Early July 2021</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project start date</td>
<td>From August 2021</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.

6. **Evaluation Criteria**

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:** How clearly presented and justified is the design and basis for the collaboration?

**Feasibility:** How likely is it that the project will have tangible outcomes and that the project can be accomplished within the 12-month timeline?

**Project impact:** How clearly linked are the scholarly/academic gains to the planned activities and performance indicators?

**Impact of collaboration:** How strong is the link being between the proposed collaboration and current research or teaching project(s)?

**Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI):** How does the application propose to address and advance EDI?

**Student involvement:** 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:** 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?

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 1, 2022. Participation at a joint research symposium is expected.
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 withdrawal 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.

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

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

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

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