NSERC Research Partnership Programs

- Expanding know-how
- Creating opportunities
- Finding solutions
NSERC Engage Grants 101

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Grant Overview

Engage Grant (EG)

“The project has been a key enabler for us, and the results have already increased our efficiency by 30-35%.”

Ken Hanasyk, President, MagWall

- Problem specific to the company
- 6 month project
- Up to $25K from NSERC
- No company cash required
- Company owns the IP
- Apply at any time
- Decision within 6 weeks
- Approval rate: 88%
Key Evaluation Criteria

1. Applicant
2. Company
3. Project
Applicant – Peer Reviewed?

Form 100:

Prior Natural Sciences & Engineering (NSE) peer-reviewed support awarded in past 6 years
- Prior NSERC grants (DG or RPP(CRD, SPG, I2I, IRC)
- Other NSE peer-reviewed support (i.e. OCE) from Fed/Prov. granting agency
- No DG award? If ranked as ‘Strong’ for Researcher Excellence in most recent DG competition – will count as peer-review for Engage
Applicant – Status?

Form 100:

• Professor in eligible Canadian university
• Assistant, associate, full (tenure-track)
• Adjunct only if permanently at the university
• Permanent or term sufficient for the duration of project

***Collaborator must meet same eligibility criteria as Applicant (no co-applicants permitted for Engage)***
Applicant – Prior Relationship?

Form 101:

**No Prior Collaboration:** between University Researcher(s) and Company

- Includes: consulting; joint project; publication; founder/partner; employee/executive; board member, etc. (= any work performed for the company)
- Supervision of students on industrial internships (e.g. IPS/Mitacs) counts as a prior relationship
Applicant Eligibility Checklist

• Creation of a new relationship? Y/N
• Does the applicant demonstrate evidence of peer reviewed support in NSE domain within past 6 years? Y/N
• Is the applicant eligible to receive grants funds? Y/N
• Does the collaborator meet the same eligibility as applicant? Y/N
• Does the research team (including participating company personnel) have the necessary expertise? Y/N
Company – Canadian-based?

Form 183A:

- Must be at arm’s length from Applicant
- Suitable receptor for developed technology/knowledge
- Capacity to valorize/commercialize
- Some public utilities (e.g. Hydro, municipal water services; service for a fee to the general public basis and no government mandate)

***Start-up: Min. one year in operation (under 12 months, must provide business plan and financial details – Vetted on a case-by-case basis)***
Company – Foreign-owned?

Form 183A:

• Established in Canada – relevant R&D or manufacturing facilities?
• Results of Engage project show a clear ‘Benefit to Canada’
Company – Industry Association?

Form 183A:

- Financed through industrial subscriptions/membership fees (no gov’t funds or gov’t mandate)
- Must disseminate the project results to the industrial partners or to the industry at large
Company – Letter of Support

Does the Company’s description of project and their involvement correspond to the Applicant’s proposal?

**Company support:** key aspects to consider:

- Commercial Benefits expected
- Company cash – if any?
- In-kind: a measure of the collaboration
  - Who is involved and does what?
  - How do they interact; how frequently?
  - What is supplied?
Company Eligibility Checklist

- Letter states a Company-specific problem to solve?  Y/N
- Letter states why particular academic research expertise is required?  Y/N
- Letter details cash/in-kind contribution (salaries, equipment, etc.)?  Y/N
- In-kind salaries below max. $80/hr?  Y/N
- In-kind contribution amount matches in proposal budget, letter and Form 183A?  Y/N
- Form 183A is complete?  Y/N
3. Project – Actual Collaboration

• Clear identification of Company-specific problem in proposal and company letter; what commercial benefits expected
• Is the project innovative? Is it research? (No routine data collection/validation testing.)
• Is it Natural Sciences & Engineering (NSE)?*
• Rationale for the proposed research & deliverables
• Work plan (milestones, Gantt Chart)
• Resources needed: HQP; material; equipment; etc.
Project – Technology Transfer

Extent of company participation in the project

- Regular meetings? (biweekly/monthly)
- Participation of technical/scientific staff?
- Actual work being done by company? (tests; analysis; machining; productions runs, etc.)
- Knowledge transfer? (Final report, presentation, etc.)
- IP generated during project? = Company owned

*** If IP is an issue => use other program (e.g. CRD)***
Project – NSE vs. Other?

Does the project fall under NSERC or SSHRC or CIHR’s mandate?

Visit: Science.gc.ca – ‘Selecting the Appropriate Federal Granting Agency’ to determine if project is eligible
Budget – Appropriate Costs?

- **Salaries:** Faculty = None; Company Staff = None; Consultant = Max. <10% grant
  - PDFs, Grads, Undergrads, Technicians = as per University policy

- **Materials/Equipment:** No major piece of equipment (<50% of the grant)
  - Max. $250 for various stationary/printing costs/article reprints

- **Dissemination costs:** none
  - No publication costs/conference costs
  - No patent costs

- **Travel:** work-related only
  - No conferences
  - No foreign travel
Project Evaluation Checklist #1

- Company-specific problem clearly identified? Y/N
- Clear research challenge? Y/N
- Innovative? (vs. application of known technology to gather data without understanding the underlying scientific problem)? Y/N
- Within the reach of NSE? Y/N
- Clear plan to address the problem? Y/N
Project Evaluation Checklist #2

• Is the budget reasonable and was each item justified? Y/N
• Does the proposal identify how the results will be transferred to the company? Y/N
• Will the company see economic or other benefits within a reasonable timeframe? Y/N
• Are there other Benefits to Canada? Y/N
Grant Overview

Engage Plus Grant (EG)

• Allow to build on results of EG
• 6 month duration
• Up to $12.5K from NSERC* with equal amount coming from company
• Company owns the IP
• Apply in last month of EG and up to six months after end date
• Rapid decision

* Overhead and in-kind not matched
Contacts

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