1. Applicant Researcher

Enter your name, title (e.g. “Assistant Professor”), and contact information.

2. Applicant Institution

Indicate your institution as “The University of Western Ontario” instead of “Western University”.

3. Title of Proposal

Enter the title of your research proposal. As much as possible, avoid using overly technical terms so that your title conveys the goal of your proposed research to non-experts as well as experts in your field.

4. Alignment by Category

Select the category that best fits your proposed research; the categories listed are aligned with the review panels who will assess your application.

If your research is interdisciplinary and could fall under more than one category, you may select multiple categories. The Ministry will then consult with the Chairs of each selected review panel to determine which panel is best suited to review your application.

Note that each review panel has the same funding rate (typically ~30%), although the number of proposals submitted to each panel, and therefore the number funded, will vary.

Using the lists provided on Western’s ERA page or on the MRIS ERA page, select the Research Discipline Codes and Area of Application Codes which best fit your research.

5. Key words

Select key words that specifically describe your research area. Try to pick key words that are specific to your research (e.g. “cardiac arrhythmia” vs. “health”).

6. Institution Contact

The application form available on the Western ERA page has this section pre-populated. If you are using a blank form from MRIS, you can leave this section blank and Research Development will complete it for you.

7. Research Summary

Limit: 150 words

Clearly summarize your proposed research, including (i) the major problem/challenge to be addressed, (ii) how you will address the problem, and (iii) how the research could benefit Ontario.

**It is very important that this section be clear and convincing.** Your primary reviewer needs to be engaged early as they will “pitch” your application to the rest of the review panel; a well-written summary is a step in the right direction. The research summary may also be the only section read by reviewers who are not assigned to your application and will be their only window into your proposed research.

Updated April 2018
8. Description of Researcher

a. Summary Profile

Limit: 150 words

Use this section to pitch yourself and your major accomplishments. Include relevant and impressive accomplishments, particularly those achieved since beginning your independent research career. This section should convey why you are an outstanding candidate for this award.

b. – c. First Degree(s) Earned, First Academic Appointment

Enter the Institution and Date of Convocation for your degrees. If your first PhD, MD, or DVM was awarded more than 10 years ago as of July 1, 2018, or if your First Academic Appointment began more than 5 years ago as of July 1, 2018, an explanation must be provided in section 8.d.

The first independent academic research appointment is defined by the Ministry as a position where a researcher is capable of independently publishing, supervising, and applying for funding. Decisions on eligibility will be made by the ERA review panels.

If you have questions regarding degrees, appointments, or eligibility, please contact Antoinette Martin (amartin3@uwo.ca).

d. Interruptions or Delays

This section must be completed if:

- Your terminal degree (MD, DVM, or PhD) was awarded more than 10 years ago as of July 1, 2018; or
- Your first academic appointment began more than five years ago as of July 1, 2018

This section may also be completed if your research productivity has been interrupted or delayed during either of the above periods but does not impact your eligibility based on date of degree(s) awarded or first appointments.

For all interruptions, provide specific start and end dates and explain the nature of/reason for the interruption and, if applicable, its impact on your research productivity. Common eligible interruptions include parental leave or required training (e.g. residencies following an MD). Postdoctoral fellowships are not considered an eligible interruption.

Only include interruptions or delays if they impact your eligibility (e.g. time frame since PhD awarded) or had significant impact on your research productivity (e.g. unable to pursue research for a defined period). Do not include minor delays or interruptions which did not significantly impact your research productivity as evidenced in your CV.

9. Researcher’s Background – Research Supervisors

Complete the chart provided with the requested information on your previous PhD, PDF, or other relevant supervisors.
10. Researcher’s Background in Training

a. Highly Qualified Personnel (HQP)

In the table provided, summarize the number of HQP you have supervised currently and within the past 10 years (excluding the current year). Only indicate HQP where you were a co-supervisor of record; unofficial HQP supervision or training (e.g. as a PDF) should not be captured here.

For HQP which you co-supervised, indicate the number of students followed by an approximation of the percentage of your co-supervision. For example, three doctoral students for which you provided approximately 50% supervision should be indicated as “3 (50%)”. Four undergraduate students for which you provided 90% supervision should be indicated as “4 (90%)”.

b. HQP Training Details

Limit: 150 words

Describe the training experience provided to HQP in your group. This should focus on the skills gained and experience of past HQP, not what is proposed within the application. Demonstrate that HQP trained in your lab have gained valuable skills (technical and/or soft skills), been given opportunities for publication (e.g. co-authoring peer-reviewed papers, conference attendance, presentations) that will assist them in their future careers, and have been well positioned for future careers (where are they now?). Focus on tangible skills and outcomes rather than general approaches or training philosophies. This section helps sell your supervisory experience and positions you to provide a valuable training experience for the HQP to be supported through the ERA.

c. Co-supervised HQP

Limit: 150 words

If you indicated any co-supervised HQP in 10.a., describe the nature of the co-supervision. What were your roles and responsibilities for the co-supervised HQP and what was the extent of your involvement in their training? This information is important to help reviewers assess the extent of your HQP training experience in instances where you were not the sole supervisor.

d. Policy Exemption

Limit: 150 words

If departmental/institutional policies have affected your HQP training history – for example, if you were unable to begin supervising PhD students until graduating a certain number of Masters’ students – briefly describe the policy and its impact on your HQP training record (e.g. when you were able to accept doctoral students). This will provide context for reviewers to assess your HQP track record.

11. Training Plans for Research Team

Limit: 300 words

Describe the training plans for the HQP in your ERA proposal. This section should align with the research objectives and HQP activities described in the research proposal.

Briefly describe your HQP team (number of HQP and level, e.g. two M.Sc. students and two PhD students). Make sure that this description aligns with (a) the HQP described in the research proposal and (b) the funding for HQP described in the budget.
Some questions to consider:

- What valuable skills or techniques will your HQP learn?
- How will they be involved in the research? Tie this to specific research projects/objectives described in the research proposal.
- What opportunities will they be given for professional development?
- What sectors or industries might they be employable in after their training?
- How is the training unique or leading edge compared to other opportunities or research groups in the field?

This section is an opportunity to make the training experience your HQP will gain stand out. Avoid discussing general approaches to HQP training, such as regular meetings or open-door policies, as these could apply to any HQP training. What specifically makes your research program and training stand apart? This could include aspects such as the collaborative research environment at Western (e.g. the opportunity for your HQP to interact with other leading researchers, for example through membership in a Centre or Institute), the facilities available to HQP, or involvement in collaborative projects with partners or industry.

12. Strategic Value to Ontario

Limit: 200 words

Describe how the proposed research and/or the HQP trained will benefit Ontario. Examples of various types of benefits are listed in the application form instructions. The list provided is extensive, however it is advisable to choose one or two benefits to focus on rather than trying to describe a wide range of benefits. Be as specific as possible, for example describing who the end-users of your research are, how you will engage with them in knowledge transfer, and how and why they will use the outputs of your research.

If your research is not easily linked to economic, social, or health benefits to Ontario, consider focusing on how the transferrable skills your HQP gain could be important and applicable to industries or government sectors in Ontario. If your HQP have skills which would make them employable in an Ontario industry or sector, that is a benefit of your proposed ERA program.

You can also, if applicable, discuss how the proposed research will enhance Ontario’s reputation in this area as that is considered a benefit to the province.

While the Benefit to Ontario criterion is only weighted at 10% of the overall application, in a competitive field a high rating on this criterion can make the difference between an application that is funded and one that is not.

13. Youth Outreach Plan

Limit: 200 words

As a condition of the award, you must undertake youth outreach activities in each year of the award. As part of the annual post-award reporting process, you will have to detail the activities undertaken, the members of your research team who participated, and the number of youth engaged. It is therefore important that your Youth Outreach plan be realistic. Ensure that what is described in this section aligns with the milestones for Youth Outreach listed in section 14.

You do not have to develop Youth Outreach activities from scratch – you can participate in existing Youth Outreach programs as long as they are free to participants. A list of some existing Youth Outreach programs is updated each year by Research Development and is available on our ERA website.

Updated April 2018
Describe the activities you will undertake in each year of the ERA program. Your trainees can also participate in the Youth Outreach. You can have a variety of youth outreach activities if you choose, as long as there are activities in each year of the grant.

14. Milestones and Deliverables

You must list major milestones and deliverables for your recruitment of HQP, your training of HQP, your proposed research, and your proposed Youth Outreach Plan.

The Milestones and Deliverables listed in your application form the basis of the award agreement, and annual reporting on the progress and completion of these milestones is required by the Ministry. It is therefore important to have clear, realistic, achievable milestones. While it is possible to make some adjustments to milestones during the project, extensions are extremely difficult to obtain, so you must be confident you will be able to achieve your milestones within the set 5-year period.

The ERAs are generally awarded in February or March, with an April 1 start date. Each fiscal year would therefore run from April 1 of each year to March 31 of the next year. For Round 14, the award would begin April 1, 2019 and end March 31, 2024.

Under Recruitment Milestones, indicate in what fiscal year you anticipate having each member of your research team recruited. Ensure that all HQP listed in the budget are listed in this section.

Under Training Milestones, indicate major deliverables in the training of HQP. This could include significant technical skills or training that need to be acquired, program milestones such as completing course requirements, and completion of all degree requirements. Choose the most significant milestones only, as most appropriate to your training plan and project.

Under Research Milestones, list the major deliverables and milestones for your proposed research. These should be clear, objective measures of progress and success, and should be relatively distributed throughout the 5-year project. Avoid having all deliverables in the last year(s) of the project.

Under Youth Outreach Milestones, list the Youth Outreach Activities you will undertake in each year of the project. If the same activity will be undertaken in each year, you can enter it once, indicating in the description that it will be every year.

15. Funding Received by Researcher

In the table provided, list grants you have received as a PI or Co-PI. Since the ERA only provides funding for HQP and cannot be used for operating expenses, having operating funding in place that will support and overlap with the ERA research is important for the feasibility of what you propose.

Note that while the table in the application form is for funding received, you can list funding applied for in your CV and, if applicable, state how it will support the ERA if awarded.

Role: Indicate “Principal Investigator” or “Co-Investigator” as appropriate.

Source: Indicate the funding agency (e.g. CIHR). Spell out acronyms, particularly for less common funding agencies. You should also indicate the specific program, e.g. “NSERC Discovery Grant” or “SSHRC Insight Development Grant”.

Amount: Indicate the full amount of the awarded grant. (For CFI grants, you can list the full project cost in spite of the 40/40/20 split of the total award.)

Share: For grants on which you were a co-investigator, indicate the share of the total grant which you received. For grants on which you were the PI, you can indicate the full amount of the award or leave this column blank.

Updated April 2018
Term: Indicate the years for which the grant was awarded, e.g. 2015-2020. For one-time awards such as equipment grants, indicate the year in which the grant was awarded.

Type of Funding: For operating or equipment grants, indicate “G” (grant). For awards which were received based on your personal merit, such as young investigator awards, indicate “A” (personal award). Generally, if an award required a research proposal it should be listed as a grant; if it was based on your CV and/or achievements it is likely an award. Funds which were from industry contract research can be listed as “C” (contract).

Title: Indicate the title of the awarded grant.

Relationship to ERA: For each grant, indicate whether it will supplement the ERA research and, if so, how. For example, existing operating grants such as an NSERC Discovery Grant may provide funds for materials or experiments proposed in the ERA and this can be indicated. Since the ERA provides funding for HQP only, this type of overlap is not only acceptable but can in fact be an asset since it shows you have the means to support the research proposed.

16. Government Awards Received by Researcher

Indicate whether you have previously held an ERA or a Tier 1 Canada Research Chair. Recipients of an ERA or a Tier 1 CRC are not eligible to apply.

17. Reference Letters

List the individuals who are providing reference letters for your application along with a short biography. Referees who are noted experts in their field are a strength.

It is important that the two arm’s length referees be sufficiently arm’s length. Using referees who are affiliated with one of your previous institutions, even if they have not directly supervised or published with you, would be an example of an insufficiently arm’s length referee. If you are questioning whether or not a referee is considered sufficiently arm’s length, they likely are not sufficiently arm’s length.

If do not know of arm’s length referees that could provide a letter, we recommend asking colleagues who are not arm’s length if they could suggest referees or put you in touch with potential referees.

Reference letters should be sent directly to Research Development. We strongly recommend that you send your referees the Guide for Reference Letters document available on the Western ERA page, and that you provide them with a draft copy or summary of your research proposal so they can comment specifically on the proposed work. If you would like assistance in reaching out to referees and/or assisting them in drafting their letters, contact Julaine Hall (julaine.hall@uwo.ca) in Research Development.

Appendix A: Total Expenditures

All budgets should use the full $150,000 in direct costs ($100,000 from ERA, $50,000 match from institution/partner) as well as $40,000 in indirect costs and should be for 5 years. Consult with your Faculty when developing your budget since they will be required to provide the necessary matching funds. Typically, matching funds are provided through Western Graduate Research Scholarships to Masters’ and PhD students.

Indicate expenditures for each team member’s salary/stipend, benefits (if applicable, e.g. for postdocs or technicians), or travel. Including travel expenses for conferences is recommended, although it can be partial funding with reliance on other sources of support. Necessary travel for research is an eligible expense (e.g. for fieldwork).

Updated April 2018
Once the expenses have been entered – including up to $1,000 total for Youth Outreach activities, the total amount per year (calculated automatically by the form) should be split 2:1 between the ERA Amount and the Matching Amount. For example, if your total expenses for Year 1 are $12,300, enter $8,200 as the ERA Amount and $4,100 as the Matching Amount.

For Indirect Costs, enter 40% of the ERA Amount for that year.

The total ERA Amount should be $100,000, the total Matching Amount should be $50,000, and the total Indirect Costs should be $40,000.

**Budget Justification (Maximum 100 words)**

Provide a brief justification of the various budget items. For HQP stipends, you can simply indicate that the amounts listed will go towards the total stipend for the HQP; if partial support will come from ERA and partial support will come from other sources, you can indicate the other source(s) if known.

For travel expenses, indicate the nature of travel (e.g. for the HQP to travel to one national or international conference per year, or required travel for research such as field work).

For Youth Outreach activities, indicate how the funds will be spent. Consult the [ERA Program Guidelines](#) for eligible expenses for Youth Outreach activities.

### Appendix B: Proposed Research

**Attachment: Maximum 5 pages, plus references.**

**Format:** Arial 12-point font, 1" margins.

This attachment provides a description of your proposed research program and the role of HQP in carrying out the research. It is important that what is described in this research plan clearly links to the number and level of trainees listed in the budget, to the training plan in section 11, and to all the milestones identified in section 14.

The research proposal – as well as the other sections of the application form – can be written in either first person (“We propose to...”) or third person (“Dr. Smith and her team will...”) but be consistent throughout the full application package and avoid switching back and forth between first and third person.

When describing the research proposed, clearly identify the HQP involved and the training/skills they will gain.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instead of...</th>
<th>Say...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>“We will test whether...”</td>
<td>“MSc #1 will test whether...”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“This objective will examine...”</td>
<td>“This objective, led by PhD #1, will examine...”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Using [technique], we will analyze...”</td>
<td>“Using [technique], MSc #2 will analyze...”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Participants will complete a survey...”</td>
<td>“MSc #1 will administer a survey to participants...”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>“Results will be analyzed using [method]...”</td>
<td>“MSc #2 will analyze results using [method]...”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Updated April 2018
This approach will make it clear how your trainees are integrated in the proposed research, what skills your trainees are gaining, and closely connect the proposed research to the other sections of the application such as the proposed training plan.

Organizing the research proposal under a few themes/objectives – typically 2-3 – will help provide structure.

ERA applications are evaluated by a multi-disciplinary panel. Use technical language where necessary but ensure that sufficient context is provided for an educated non-expert to understand the proposal. For example:

- Have you explained what problem or challenge in your field of research and/or in society that this research will address? If you have identified something “unknown” in the field, have you indicated how this unknown is negatively impacting the research field, and/or how solving this unknown would positively impact the research field?
- Have you provided context for the problem? Where possible, provide quantitative or qualitative information to help reviewers understand the importance of what you are trying to do. For example, how many people in Ontario, Canada, or globally are impacted by a disease you are studying? Why is a flaw in a methodology a problem for the research field? What are the qualitative impacts of the problem? Who is negatively impacted by the current state of things (e.g. researchers in your field, an industry sector, a specific population) and why? Give the reviewer a reason to care about the problem proposed and the solution (even if it is a partial solution) you will then offer.
- Have you explained your choice of methodology? For example, was it chosen because it was the gold standard in your field? Because it is the most efficient method? Because it provides the most reliable and/or relevant data for the specific research question?
- Have you explained the importance of the expected results? How will the expected data contribute to answering the research questions raised?
- How will the results be analyzed? Are there clear measures of success?

Appendix C: Curriculum Vitae

Use the headings and formatting outlined in the instructions: https://www.ontario.ca/page/early-researcher-awards-program-guidelines#section-7

The CV headings used align with headings used in the Canadian Common CV; for direction, consult CIHR’s guide to completing a CCV: http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/47567.html

While there is no page limit for the CV, it is strongly recommended that only the most relevant information which speaks to your excellence as an emerging researcher be included. Recognitions which are not notable or impressive (e.g. travel awards you received as a graduate student) can be excluded.

You can also provide context where needed, such as describing why a particular recognition is notable, the nature of an award, a statement preceding the publication list outlining author conventions in your field (e.g. first author led the research), or a description of your contribution to a publication where your role may be unclear (e.g. not first or last author). This type of information will help reviewers put your CV in context.
Examples:

2016  Western Petro-Canada Young Innovator Award
      This award, valued at $12,000, is awarded annually on a competitive basis to one new researcher at Western in recognition of particularly innovative work which has the potential to be of significance to society at large.

      In this study, I collaborated with Dr. Smith to examine X. I provided critical analysis of the data collected using [method], which was then used to...

### Confirmation of Matching Funds

A form confirming that the institution will provide matching funds must be included with the application. This form will be sent to the applicant’s faculty and/or research hospital by Research Development, returned to our office, and appended to the completed application.

If your matching funds are coming from an external source (e.g. industry partner), please contact Research Development.

### Contacts

Questions regarding the ERA program can be directed to:

Carolyn Paterson  
Senior Research Development Officer  
carolyn.paterson@uwo.ca  
ext. 82262

Julaine Hall  
Research Development Officer (Awards & Prizes)  
julaine.hall@uwo.ca  
ext. 87970

Antoinette Martin  
Programs Administrator  
amartin3@uwo.ca  
ext. 84620