



# NSERC Alliance Grants

Canada's research partnership program

**Robert Déziel**

Deputy director, Québec regional office

Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada

**One**  
**New**  
**Flexible**  
**Simplified**  
**Enhanced**  
**Responsive**  
**Partnerships**  
**Program**

Alliance grants encourage university researchers to collaborate with partner organizations, which can be from the private, public or not-for-profit sectors. These grants support research projects led by strong, complementary, collaborative teams that will generate new knowledge and accelerate the application of research results for the benefit of all Canadians.



# Alliance Grants...

were designed in consultation with the community and create an enabling platform for starting and growing research partnerships, while building on the strengths of our previous Research Partnerships Programs.

## Previous Programs

- Engage Grants
- Collaborative Research & Development Grants
- Strategic Grants
- Industrial Research Chairs

## Alliance Grants

- more flexible
- more eligible partners
- no restriction on research topic
- no application deadlines
- simpler process
- faster decision times



# Projects

ONE PROGRAM

1 to 5 years

\$20,000 to  
\$1,000,000  
per year

Single researcher  
and partner to  
multiple  
participants and  
multisectorial

Focus on NSE  
based research  
activity



## Research topics

Alliance Grants can support any R&D project that responds to a research challenge in the natural sciences or engineering

- See: *Selecting the Appropriate Federal Granting Agency*

Applicants may collaborate with academic researchers in fields other than the natural sciences or engineering

- Costs for these collaborations must be identified in the project budget
- Up to a maximum of 30% of the shared project costs



# Cost-sharing

**Alliance Grants are calculated based on cost-sharing with the partner organizations**

- The portion that can be cost-shared with NSERC includes only the cash contributions from partner organizations recognized for cost sharing

**In-kind contributions are important for the success of the project**

- In-kind contributions are considered as part of the proposal evaluation
- In-kind should not be considered when determining NSERC's contribution to the project costs



# Examples of partner organizations

with contributions recognized in cost-sharing calculations

Private Sector	Public Sector	Not-for-profit Sector
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Canadian private companies</li><li>• Multinationals with presence in Canada</li><li>• Foreign companies (not as sole partner)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Municipalities, local/regional governments</li><li>• Federal/provincial/territorial government departments (not funding agencies)</li><li>• Public utilities</li><li>• Crown corporations</li><li>• Indigenous governments</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Producer groups</li><li>• Industrial associations</li><li>• Registered charities with a research mandate</li><li>• Museums/libraries</li><li>• Indigenous groups</li><li>• Community groups</li></ul>



# Role of partner organizations

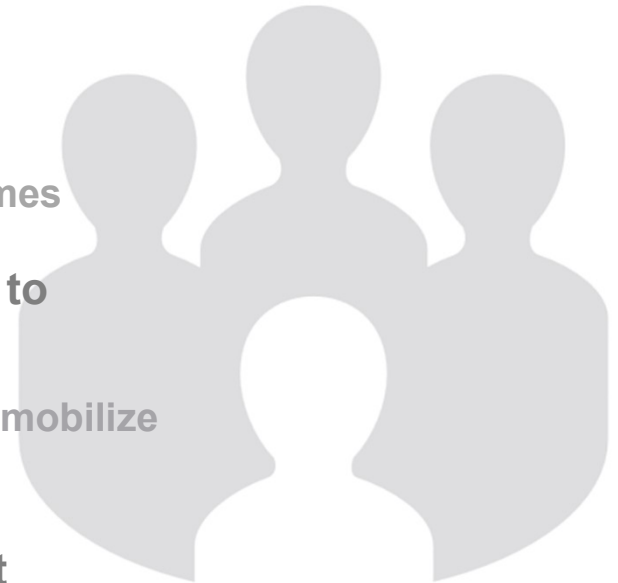
**Every partner organization must do at least one of:**

- Play an active role in research activities
- Utilize the research results and achieve desired outcomes
- Play an active role in mobilizing knowledge to generate outcomes

**At least one partner organization must demonstrate ability to exploit research results**

- Other partners may be chosen for their ability to generate and mobilize knowledge

**Partner organizations must collectively support the project through cash and/or in-kind contributions**





# Cost-sharing options

Alliance Grants incorporate a three-tiered cost-sharing structure

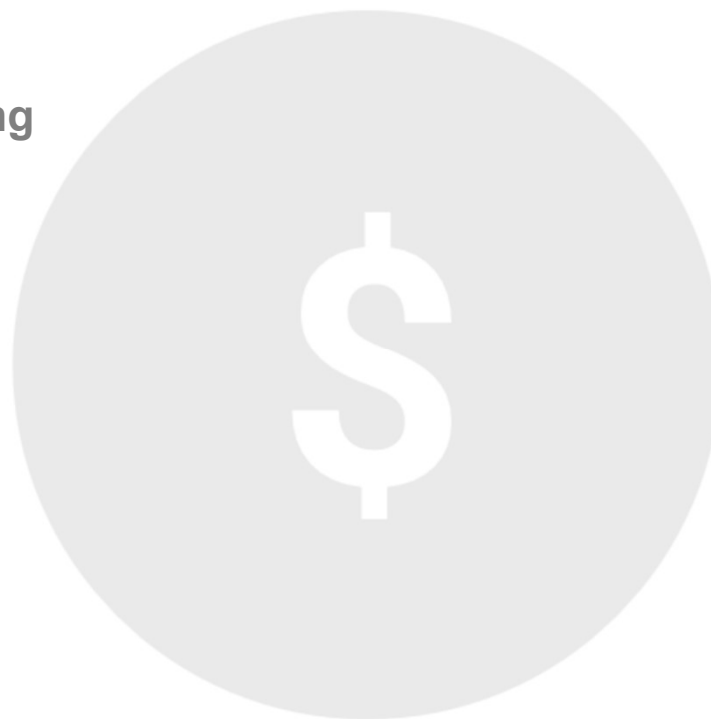
NSERC will provide:

## OPTION 1

- 1 **50%** (a 1:1 leverage ratio),
- 2 **66%** (a 2:1 leverage ratio), or

## OPTION 2

- 3 **90% to 100%** of the shareable costs, depending on the size of the partner organizations and the type of partnership



# Cost-sharing options

## Option 1

Size of partner organization	Type of partnership	NSERC Contribution to Project costs	Parameters
<b>Large organizations*</b> 500+ employees globally	Sole partner organization or in partnership exclusively with other large organizations	50% (1:1 leverage)	<b>Applications per year:</b> no limits  <b>Grant size:</b> \$20,000 to \$1 million per year  <b>Duration:</b> 1 to 5 years
	As a partner with small and medium-sized enterprises such as in value- or supply-chain relationship, or with other sectors*	66% (2:1 leverage)	
<b>Small and medium organizations*</b> Less than 500 employees globally	Sole partner organization or in partnership with other sectors*	66% (2:1 leverage)	

\*including private, public and not-for-profit



# Cost-sharing options

## Option 2

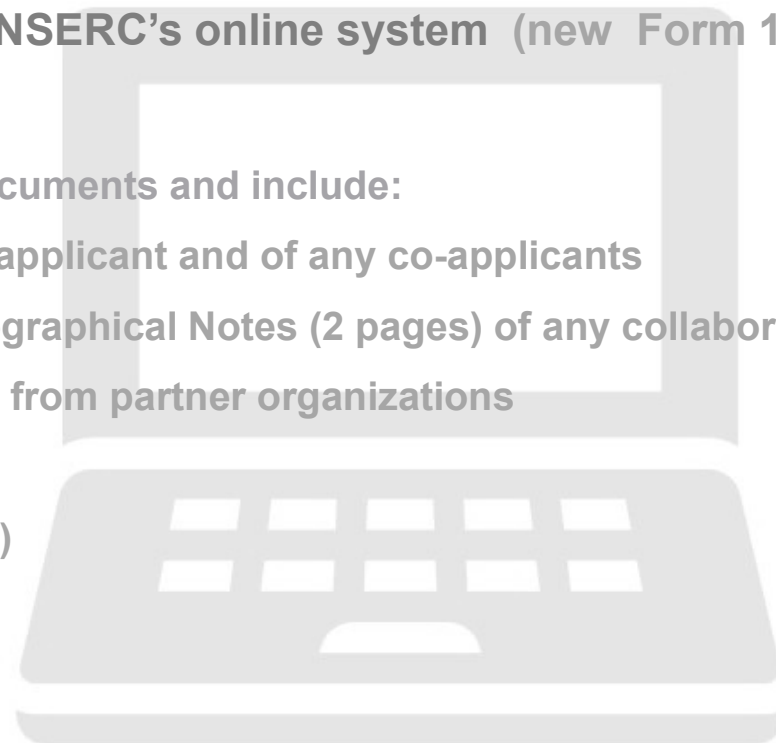
Size of partner organization	Type of partnership	NSERC Contribution to Project costs	Parameters
<b>All partner sizes</b> Partnership must include one organization that is recognized for NSERC cost-sharing	<b>Exclusively not-for-profit and public partner organizations</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>Applications within a 12-month period:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Two for non-academic partners</li> <li>• Two for applicants (one as the principal investigator, one as co-applicant)</li> </ul> <b>Grant size: \$20,000 to \$200,000 per year</b>  <b>Duration: 1 to 5 years</b>
	<b>Any private-sector partner organization</b> Requires a 10% cash contribution from the combined partner organizations	<b>90%</b>	



## How to apply

Alliance Grant applications are submitted using NSERC's online system (new Form 101)

- Fill in the sections of the electronic form
- Complete the proposal template and supporting documents and include:
  - Form 100A (including the Common CV) of the applicant and of any co-applicants
  - Complete the Template for the Short CV or Biographical Notes (2 pages) of any collaborators
  - Rationale for budget and in-kind contributions from partner organizations
  - The Partner Organization Form
  - Any other relevant document (cover page, etc.)
- See the instructions for NSERC's online system



# Review of the application

Project Size	Small	Medium	Large
Approximate thresholds	Average annual request of \$20,000 to \$30,000 for 1-5 years	Average annual request of more than \$30,000 up to \$300,000 for 1-5 years	Average annual request of more than \$300,000 up to \$1,000,000 for 1-5 years
Review mechanism	<p><b>NSERC File Managers</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Evaluation supported by existing NSERC peer review (i.e. Discovery Grant rating, active Canada Research Chair holders, prior Partnership grants)</li> <li>If no existing NSERC peer review evidence is available, external reviewers will be used</li> </ul>	<p><b>External Referees</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With expertise directly related to the proposal</li> <li>Provide review based on all evaluation criteria</li> </ul>	<p><b>Ad hoc committee members</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>With expertise directly related to the proposal</li> <li>Provide review based on all evaluation criteria</li> </ul>
Funding decisions	NSERC assigns merit indicators to determine priority for funding		
Expected decision time	4 weeks	8-12 weeks	12-16 weeks



# Evaluation criteria

## Relevance and outcomes

25%

- Significance of the intended outcomes and of the economic, social and/or environmental benefits for Canada
- Originality of research and production of new scientific knowledge
- Strategy to apply the results

## Partnership

25%

- Relevance to achieve the expected results; leveraging of different types of partner organizations and the integration of their unique perspectives and knowledge in the project, as appropriate
- Role in defining the challenge, co-designing and implementing the research, and using the results to achieve the desired outcomes
- Appropriateness of the level of cash and in-kind contributions from each partner organization



# Evaluation criteria

## Quality of the proposal

25%

- Clarity of the objectives and deliverables; appropriateness of the scope and size of planned activities to achieve the expected outcomes; justification for the planned expenditures
- Appropriateness of the identified indicators and methods for monitoring progress during the project and for assessing outcomes afterwards
- Appropriateness of academic researchers' expertise, and that found within the partner organizations, both for carrying out the planned research activities and in mentoring trainees

## Training

25%

- Opportunities for enriched training experiences for research trainees (undergraduates, graduates, postdoctoral fellows) to develop relevant research skills as well as professional skills such as leadership, communication, collaboration and entrepreneurship.
- Consideration of diversity and gender equity in the training plan

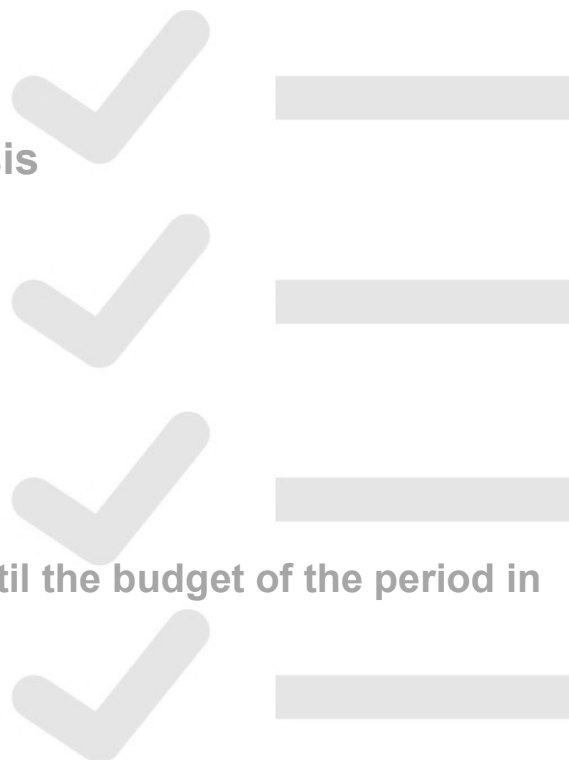


# Funding Decisions

Financing decisions will be made on a competitive basis

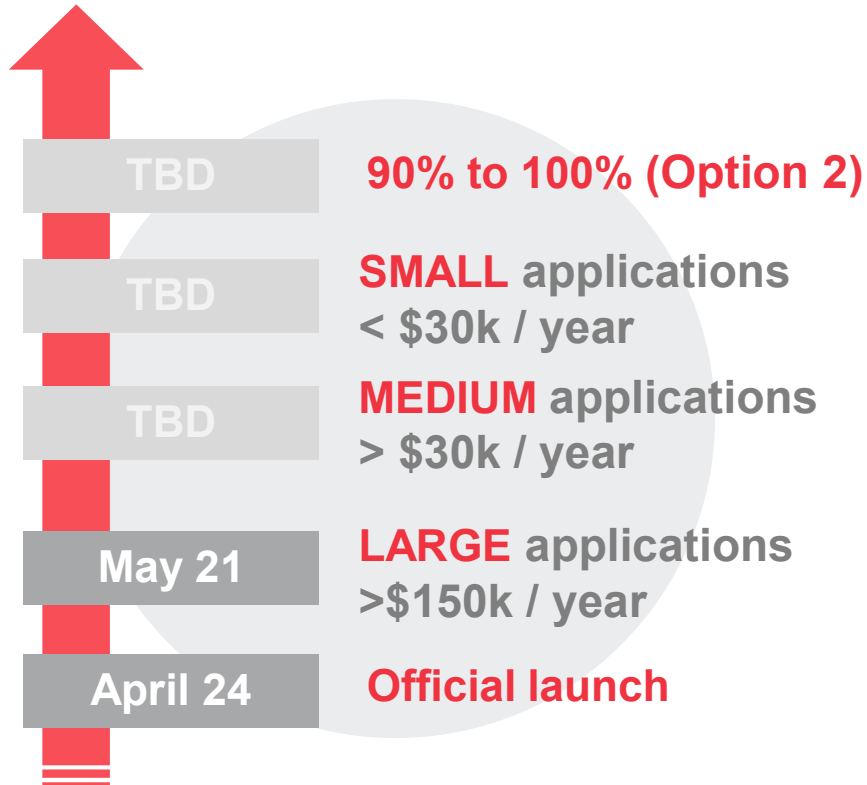
Definition of given budget periods

- Assessment using the evaluation criteria
- [Merit indicators](#)
- Ranking according to overall merit
- Applications with the highest merit will be funded until the budget of the period in question is exhausted





# Transition



## Alliance Grants



## Alliance... in summary

- Single point of entry for university research partnerships
- Opening up to multisectoral partnerships
- Several levels of cost sharing
- Simplified processes
- Flexible
- Competitive
- Focus on project outcomes





# Thank you!

Visit [nserc.ca/alliance](https://nserc.ca/alliance)  
to learn more about the  
new Alliance grants.

**NSERC Head Office**

613-995-1111

[alliance@nserc-crsng.gc.ca](mailto:alliance@nserc-crsng.gc.ca)

**NSERC Regional Offices**

Toll-free

1-877-767-1767

[nserc-atlantic@nserc-crsng.gc.ca](mailto:nserc-atlantic@nserc-crsng.gc.ca)

[nserc-ontario@nserc-crsng.gc.ca](mailto:nserc-ontario@nserc-crsng.gc.ca)

[nserc-pacific@nserc-crsng.gc.ca](mailto:nserc-pacific@nserc-crsng.gc.ca)

[nserc-prairies@nserc-crsng.gc.ca](mailto:nserc-prairies@nserc-crsng.gc.ca)

[nserc-quebec@nserc-crsng.gc.ca](mailto:nserc-quebec@nserc-crsng.gc.ca)



Natural Sciences and Engineering  
Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en sciences  
naturelles et en génie du Canada

Canada