



FIGHTING BLINDNESS CANADA - 2019 GRANT APPLICATION

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Eligibility: The 2019 Grant Competition will support independent investigators and/or research teams with a principal investigator from a Canadian institution. Fighting Blindness Canada (FBC) will prioritize funding projects that have the greatest potential to advance FBC's mission.

Fighting Blindness Canada's Mission Statement: To lead the fight against blindness by raising and directing funds to accelerate the development and availability of treatments and cures.

Award Categories: Applicants can choose to apply to the following research categories

- Discovery research
- Translational research
- Clinical research
- Public health and vision rehabilitation research

Award Value:

- Applicants may apply for up to \$150,000/year for a duration of two years.
- Please note that although applicants may apply for a maximum of \$150,000/year for two years, FBC encourages applicants to ask for the appropriate amount of money required to complete the proposed work. Budget requests will be carefully examined by the scientific advisory board (SAB) and will be cut if it is viewed as overestimated.
- FBC recognizes that some categories of research are more costly. If your proposed project exceeds \$150,000/year, please include additional details in the budget justification.
- Institutional partnerships are strongly encouraged, but not required.

Application and Review Schedule

Deadlines	Activity
May 15, 2019	Deadline to submit Letter of Intent through the fbc.ca portal
June 4, 2019	Applicants informed of eligibility to submit full proposal
August 15, 2019	Deadline to submit Full Proposal through online portal on www.fightingblindness.ca/research/for-researchers/
November, 2019	Competition results communicated to all applicants
December, 2019	Funding begins



FULL APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

IMPORTANT FORMATTING REQUIREMENTS: Failure to comply with formatting requirements will lead to proposal rejection.

- To facilitate peer-review, we ask applicants to submit their full proposal in English.
- Proposals must use:
 - Letter-size pages with margins of at least 2 cm on all sides
 - 12-point font (no condensed typing or spacing)
 - Black ink
- Compile the following sections of the application in the following order and submit as a single PDF with the file name: Lastname_2019_Proposal.pdf

Order	Page Count	Proposal Section
1	Form	Fighting Blindness Canada Grant Application Cover Form Electronic or scanned signatures are acceptable to complete the signature page
2	Free text 7 pages including Figures, but excluding references (no page limit for references)	Research Proposal - Provide a clear, concise description of the proposal including descriptions of methods and a discussion of anticipated results. Applicants are strongly encouraged to provide preliminary data to illustrate the feasibility of the proposed experiments, and their ability to undertake these.
3	1 page	Project Timeline - Identify key activities within each aim of your proposal, and when you expect to complete those activities within the life cycle of the grant. May be presented as a narrative or in the form of a table.
4	Form	Budget Module – provided for download
5	1 page	Budget Justification - Detail necessary to explain the staffing and resources requested in the previous section
6	5 pages	CV – Biosketch – A maximum 5-page CV that showcases key accomplishments. We recommend using the NIH Biosketch format, but this is not mandatory.
7	5 pages	Letters of support



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EVALUATION PROCESS

Fighting Blindness Canada (FBC) relies on its expert Scientific Advisory Board (SAB) to peer review all grant applications. The peer-review process incorporates best-practices from biomedical research-funding institutions and organizations internationally and involves a face-to-face meeting.

Prior to the in-person meeting, each proposal is assigned a primary reviewer, a secondary reviewer, and a reader. Both the primary and secondary reviewers compose concise written reviews of the proposals, addressing the key criteria outlined below. These reviews are collated and circulated to the full review committee. The reader does not write reviews, but commits special attention to assigned grants so he/she is prepared to participate in a substantive discussion of the proposal during the in-person meeting.

During the in-person meeting, the first reviewer begins by providing a verbal overview and assessment of the proposal. Next, the second reviewer and reader provide additional comments before the proposal is discussed by the full review committee. The full review committee then agrees on a consensus score, which is used to rank all the proposals received.

The Scientific Officer records detailed notes throughout the in-person meeting. These notes are used to provide constructive feedback to all applicants and to communicate details of each proposal to the FBC's Board of Directors. The recommendations from the SAB review meeting are shared with the FBC's Mission Investment Steering Committee (MISC). The MISC is a standing committee of the FBC's Board of Directors, which also includes the chair of the SAB and non-Board members, who bring exceptional expertise that is uniquely relevant to the FBC's mission. The mandate of the MISC is to advise the Board of Directors regarding the alignment of mission funding and the FBC's strategic priorities. The FBC's Board of Directors is responsible for determining the final funding allocation.



REVIEW CRITERIA

Reviewers will evaluate specific criteria to determine each proposal's alignment with mission of Fighting Blindness Canada (FBC). The mission of Fighting Blindness Canada is to lead the fight against blindness by a raising and directing funds to accelerate the development and availability of treatments and cures.

Funding partnerships with other foundations, institutions, health charities or industry are not mandatory, but are welcomed and encouraged.

Reviewers will provide an overall score to each proposal using the 10-point scale, outlined below. In addition, reviewers will provide written comments about each of the following criteria.

1. **Scientific Excellence** – the extent to which the proposed research is based on a strong rationale, introduces innovative ideas, and solid hypotheses. Is the proposed research competitive on the international scale? Is the proposed research more likely to succeed than other similar research being carried out by other groups, and if so, why? What is unique about the project? What unmet need does it address in the potential therapeutic landscape?
2. **Approach and methodology** – the extent to which the proposed research uses the most appropriate approaches to reach the stated objectives of the project. Are the research methods to be used appropriate and sufficiently robust to ensure that high quality results will be generated?
3. **Excellence of the team** – the extent to which the principal applicant and team of co-applicants/collaborators have the relevant expertise and proven track record; extent to which the team has identified a plan to promote and foster collaborations and grow its funding network to achieve its intended disease impact. (e.g., identifying potential industry sponsors).
4. **Deliverables and potential impact**– extent to which the team demonstrates a logical research plan with specific deliverables identified within each year to ensure the project's success; the extent to which the deliverables can be completed in the proposed timeframe.



SCORING

Proposals that receive a consensus score of less than 7 will be identified as not fundable. All written reviews will be sent to the applicant(s), therefore please include comments to help the investigator on presenting or conducting their research more effectively. External reviewers may be sought for proposals that fall outside of the SAB's expertise.

FUNDABLE		
Exceptional - exceptionally strong with essentially no weaknesses	10	<input type="checkbox"/>
Outstanding - extremely strong with negligible weaknesses	9	<input type="checkbox"/>
Excellent - very strong with only some minor weaknesses	8	<input type="checkbox"/>
Very good – very strong but with numerous minor weaknesses	7	<input type="checkbox"/>
NOT FUNDABLE		
Good - strong but at least one moderate weakness	6	<input type="checkbox"/>
Satisfactory - some strengths but also some moderate weaknesses	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fair - some strengths but with at least one major weakness	4	<input type="checkbox"/>
Marginal - a few strengths and a few major weaknesses	3	<input type="checkbox"/>
Poor - very few strengths and numerous major weaknesses	2	<input type="checkbox"/>
Very poor - no strengths and numerous major weaknesses	1	<input type="checkbox"/>