

NSERC - ECCC Call for Proposals on Plastics Science and Innovation for a Cleaner and More Sustainable Future

Sponsor

Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) and Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC)

Program

[NSERC - ECCC Call for Proposals on Plastics Science and Innovation for a Cleaner and More Sustainable Future](#) [1]

Description

The Government of Canada has made reducing plastic pollution and its impacts a priority. Building on the [Oceans Plastics Charter](#) [2], the 2018 [Canada-wide Strategy on Zero Plastic Waste](#) [3] takes a circular economy and lifecycle approach to plastics and provides a framework for action in Canada.

In November 2018, governments at all levels across Canada adopted the [Canada-wide Action Plan on Zero Plastic Waste](#) [4] to implement the Strategy. The Action Plan consists of two phases and defines tangible actions and clear timelines to better mitigate plastic waste and pollution in Canada. [Phase 1 of the Action Plan](#) [5] (2019) identifies actions aimed at enhancing the circularity of plastics within the economy and instigating systemic changes necessary for reducing plastic waste. [Phase 2](#) [6] (2020) offers strategies to reduce plastic pollution, foster awareness, bolster science and take global action.

To support a role for science in achieving the goals of the Strategy, the federal government also developed [Canada's Plastics Science Agenda \(CaPSA\)](#) [7]. CaPSA identifies priority research areas to inform research investments for detecting plastics in the environment; understanding and mitigating potential impacts to wildlife, human health and the environment; and advancing sustainable plastic production, recycling and recovery.

Informed by CaPSA and the [Science assessment of plastic pollution](#) [8], Environment and Climate Change Canada (ECCC) and the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) are collaborating to support research that will increase scientific knowledge to achieve Canada's zero plastic waste targets (outlined in the Strategy and the [Ocean Plastics Charter](#) [2]) and inform the advancement of plastics science policy and regulatory measures.

This call focuses on research that advances the science around plastic designs and

alternatives, the sustainable use of plastics, and plastic waste diversion and recovery. This call will also build on previous research to detect and characterize plastics in the environment and the exposure and effects of plastics on wildlife and human health.

The proposed research project must address at least one of the following CaPSA themes (see [Program Call](#) [1] for more details):

- **Theme 1: Detection, Quantification and Characterization of Plastics in the Environment**
- **Theme 2: Impacts on Wildlife, Human Health and the Environment**
- **Theme 3: Plastic Design and Alternatives**
- **Theme 4: Sustainable Use of Plastics**
- **Theme 5: Waste Diversion and Recovery**

You are encouraged to collaborate with knowledge users (such as government policymakers, stewardship councils, Indigenous communities or organizations, etc.) to support knowledge mobilization. You are also strongly encouraged to bring together inter- or multi-disciplinary expertise within networked project teams (e.g., health researchers to investigate the impacts of plastics on humans, chemists to study plastic-food interactions, or economists to examine conventional versus alternative plastics, etc.).

Eligibility

Canadian university researchers who are [eligible](#) [9] to receive NSERC funds can apply on their own or as a team with co-applicants who are also eligible academic researchers. **Only one** application per researcher will be accepted under the call (as either applicant or co-applicant).

College faculty can participate as co-applicants.

Maximum Project Value

\$50,000 to \$200,000 per year for up to 3 years

Indirect Costs

There are no indirect costs on the funding provided directly by NSERC.

Any cash contributions that will flow to the University of Guelph from partner organizations will be subject to the [Full Cost of Research Policy](#) [10].

If you have questions about indirect costs, please see the [Full Cost of Research - Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#) [11].

Special Notes

Please note that funding recipients could be asked to participate in ECCC’s Plastics Science Symposium in Ottawa, ON, and should build travel costs into their proposal.

Review Process

NSERC will review the LOI and full application for eligibility and alignment with program requirements and objectives. NSERC will consider equity, diversity and inclusion in the training plan as a screening criterion, and only those applications that meet this criterion will be retained for assessment by the selection committee

LOIs will be reviewed by a selection panel comprising representatives from ECCC, and possibly other federal departments.

An evaluation committee composed of expert members from academia and non-academic organizations (such as industry, government or not-for-profit organizations) will review full applications. NSERC uses established [merit indicators](#) [12] to rate each evaluation sub-criterion/criterion. ECCC will select which projects it wishes to fund from the list of recommended projects.

Please see the [Program Call](#) [13] for information on specific evaluation criteria for this opportunity.

Deadlines

If College-level review is required, your College will communicate its earlier internal deadlines.

| Type | Date | Notes |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Internal Deadline | Thursday, May 8, 2025 - 4:30pm | Letter of Intent Applicants to submit a signed OR-5 and copy of the LOI (using the LOI template attached below) to research.services@uoguelph.ca [14]. Please also "Submit" in NSERC's online system [15]. |
| External Deadline | Thursday, May 15, 2025 - 8:00pm | The Research Services Office will submit the full application to NSERC directly, on behalf of the applicant. |

| Type | Date | Notes |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Internal Deadline | Thursday, September 11, 2025 - 4:30pm | <p>Full Application - By Invitation Only</p> <p>Applicants invited to submit a full application must submit their full application package to the Research Services Office (research.services@uoguelph.ca [14]) and "Submit" online.</p> <p>Please see the Program Call [13] for more details.</p> |
| External Deadline | Thursday, September 18, 2025 - 8:00pm | <p>The Research Services Office will submit the full application to NSERC directly, on behalf of the applicant.</p> |

Attachment(s)

| Attachment | Size |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------|
|  LOI Template [16] | 240.55 KB |
| For Questions, please contact RP-Initiatives-PR@nserc-crsng.gc.ca [17] | |

Office of Research

Rachel Lee, Senior Grants and Contracts Specialist
 Research Services Office
rachell@uoguelph.ca [18]
 Alert Classifications **Category:**
 Funding Opportunities and Sponsor News

Disciplines:

Health and Life Sciences
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Source

URL: <https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/alerts/content/nserc-eccc-call-proposals-plastics-science-and-innovation-cleaner-and-more-sustainable>

Links

- [1] https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Innovate-Innover/ECCC-ECCC/index_eng.asp#a4
- [2] <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/managing-reducing-waste/international-commitments/ocean-plastics-charter.html>
- [3] <https://ccme.ca/en/res/strategyonzeroplasticwaste.pdf>
- [4] <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/managing-reducing-waste/reduce-plastic-waste/canada-action.html#toc2>
- [5] https://ccme.ca/en/res/1589_ccmecanada-wideactionplanonzeroplasticwaste_en-secured.pdf
- [6] https://ccme.ca/en/res/ccmephase2actionplan_en-external-secured.pdf
- [7] <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/science-technology/canada-science-plastic-agenda.html>
- [8] <https://www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/evaluating-existing-substances/science-assessment-plastic-pollution.html>
- [9] https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/Eligibility-Admissibilite/faculty-corpsprof_eng.asp
- [10] <https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/for-researchers/funding/full-cost-of-research/policy>
- [11] <https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/for-researchers/funding/full-cost-of-research/faq>
- [12] https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Innovate-Innover/ECCC-ECCC/_docs/Merit-Indicators_e.pdf
- [13] https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Innovate-Innover/ECCC-ECCC/index_eng.asp#a14
- [14] <mailto:research.services@uoguelph.ca>
- [15] https://ebiz.nserc.ca/nserc_web/nserc_login_e.htm
- [16] <https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/alerts/sites/default/files/attachments/LOI-Template-INDEX-e.docx>
- [17] <mailto:RP-Initiatives-PR@nserc-crsng.gc.ca?subject=NSERC-ECCC:>
- [18] <mailto:rachell@uoguelph.ca>