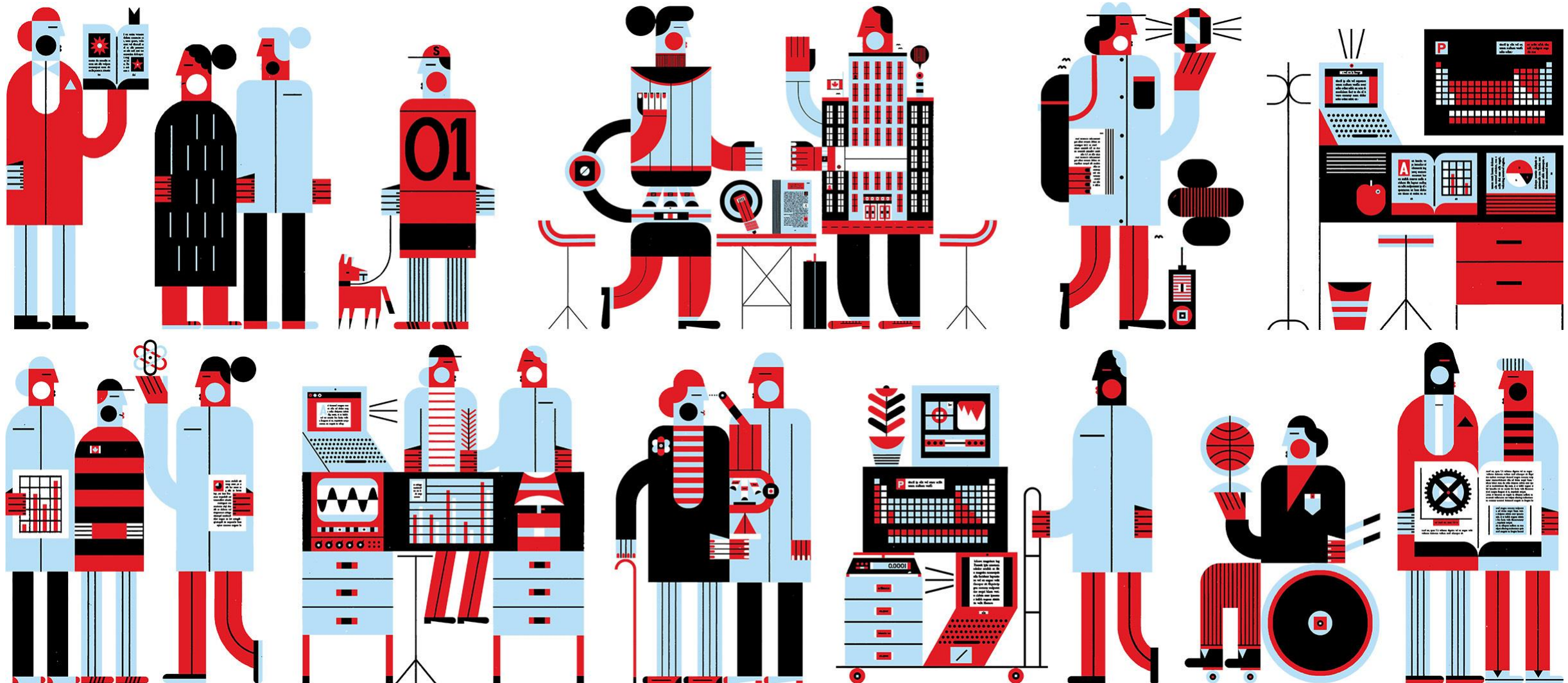






Alliance International Reopening 2026

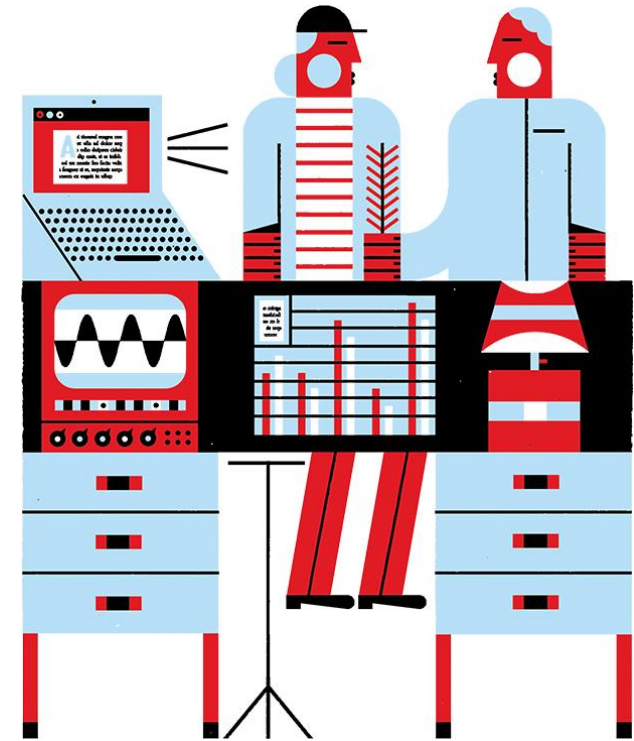
Presented by:

Patrick Suter, Deputy Director, Strategic Partnerships

Margaret McCarthy, Manager, Strategic Partnerships

Table of contents

1. History
2. Going Forward
3. Objectives
4. In practice...
5. Evaluation
6. Award decisions
7. Exception
8. In Summary



Alliance International

History

Alliance International Catalyst and Collaboration were launched in December 2021

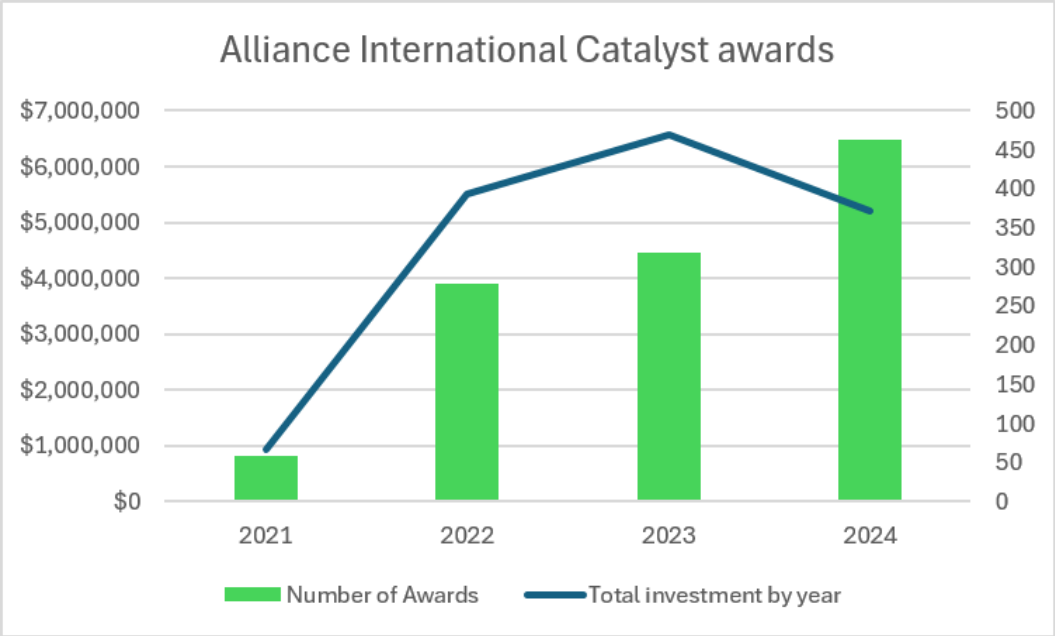
Goal: to support Canadian University researchers collaborating with international university researchers on joint projects in NSE.

This provided the opportunity for Canadian students and postdocs to enhance their training and gain valuable scientific and professional skills.

	Catalyst	Collaboration
Number of Awards	751	166
Total Investment	\$18.2 M	\$29.5 M
Number of countries	58	30
Pause effective	Fall 2024	Spring 2025

History

Distribution diagram



Going forward

Collaboration

- Budget and resources are focused on **Collaboration** to support larger scale collaborative projects
- **Collaboration** has reopened in September 2026
- Annual budget: \$3M

Catalyst

- Remains closed
- Catalyst may be used for targeted strategic calls in the future with dedicated budgets
(e.g. *Quantum call involving G7 and non G7 countries launched in late 2025*)

Alliance International Collaboration

Objectives

What remains from the original funding opportunity:

- Objective is to create and develop international links
- Support Canadian university research teams collaborating with their international peers
- Provide an enhanced training opportunity for Canadian students and postdocs.

Active student and postdoctoral participation and international exchanges are strongly encouraged

What has evolved:

- Strong focus on impact to Canada
- Balanced contributions between Canadian and international teams
- Competitive process with three deadlines a year
- Extension of time between the international award date and the submission to NSERC

Alliance International Collaboration

In practice

What has not changed:

- Academic to academic only – over the entire transnational project
All international collaborators must hold posts equivalent to Assistant, Associate, or Full professor at an internationally recognized university
- Canadian applicants and co-applicants must hold an active NSERC peer reviewed grant
- NSERC relies on the international peer review from a similar funder
- The assessment of the NSERC application is done internally
- NSERC funding remains at \$20,000 to \$100,000 per year for up to 3 years
- If funded, the NSERC and the international projects start date should be as close as possible
- The international project's duration cannot be shorter than the NSERC funded project
- One application per applicant per 12 month period

Alliance International Collaboration

In practice

What has evolved

Application:

- Time limit from the date of the international award to the application to NSERC: extended to 120 days
- Balanced participation : each team must contribute at least 25% of the cost of the overall project

E.g. if the combined Canadian and international budget is CAD \$200,000, the budget submitted to NSERC or to the international funding agency must be at least \$50,000.

- If the international award letter of application is not written in English or French: a translation of the award letter and at a minimum sections of the applications describing the Canadian team and its role in the project must be provided.

Alliance International Collaboration

In practice

What has evolved

- **Competitive process:**
 - Three submission deadlines annually – budget equally split
 - Next deadline to submit on **November 25, 2026**; results expected in January-February 2027
 - Funding decision based on overall merit until the period's budget is exhausted
 - Ties at the funding cutoff may be resolved by a random selection process
 - Applications not funded in each decision period cannot be resubmitted.
- **Two merit criteria for the NSERC application** – adjusted merit indicators
 - Impact and benefits to Canada
 - Training, including EDI
 - Assessed internally

Evaluation

We leverage:

- International award based on peer review:
 - Scientific merit
 - Appropriateness of the activities
 - Relevance of the international collaboration
 - Expertise and role of the international and Canadian team members

No duplication of peer review

Evaluation

We evaluate:

- Capacity of the Canadian team to manage a research project:
 - Active NSERC peer reviewed grant
- Impact and benefit to Canada (60%)
 - Appropriate complementarity of the partnership
 - Significance of the expected outcomes for Canada
 - Efficient plan to mobilize results
- Training (40%)
 - Involvement in the international collaboration
 - Enhanced opportunity to develop scientific and professional skills
 - Tangible commitment to foster Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in the training plan

Alliance International Collaboration

Award decisions

Administrative review:

- Completeness, eligibility

Merit review:

- Impact and Benefits to Canada
- Training (incl. EDI)

- ❖ Exceeds
- ❖ Meets
- ❖ Does not satisfy



Impact and benefits to Canada	Training	Priority funding
Exceeds	Exceeds	1
Exceeds	Meets	2
Meets	Exceeds	3
Meets	Meets	4

Alliance International Collaboration

Exception

Applications that were in preparation and were not submitted by the deadline of May 20, 2025 will be accepted, provided that:

- The international collaborator received an award from their granting agency, based on peer review
- The project was developed including the Canadian team and its role
- The collaboration remains viable
- The application is complete and submitted to NSERC by the November 25, 2026 deadline

Such applications where the 120 day timeline is exceeded will not be accepted for subsequent application deadlines.

Alliance International Collaboration

In summary

- International peer reviewed grant awarded by recognized national funding agency
- Clear description of the Canadian team and its role in the project
- Balanced participation in the project: 25% to 75% of the overall project budget (overlapping years)
- Expectation to start fairly simultaneously
- No duplication of peer review
- **Competitive:** Expectation for a strong benefit to Canada and an enhanced training opportunity

Check merit criteria and merit indicators

- 120 days from international award to submit to NSERC – with exceptions
- Three deadlines annually: next is **November 25, 2026**
 - Deadlines for 2027 will be disclosed by January

Advance questions

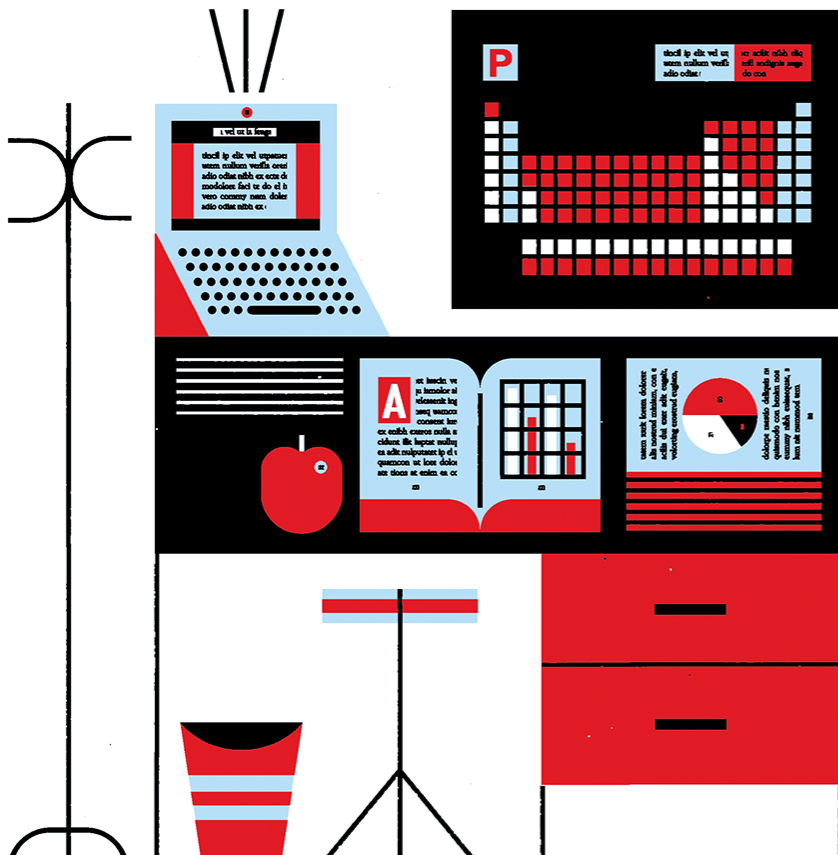


Answers to questions submitted in advance

- Who is eligible to be an international collaborator?
- Can Canadian researchers apply to the reopened Alliance International Collaboration program using an international partner's eligible funding award that was received while the program was paused, and will NSERC provide flexibility on the three-month application deadline in such cases?
- Does the topic of my active peer reviewed NSERC grant have to be aligned with the topic of the project with my international collaborator?
- What is meant by Canadian researcher?
- Which are the international agencies that are eligible or not eligible for the collaborator's funding?
- Can the international research team be R&D in a company or institutes other than universities?
- Can an international grant awarded during the pause, where the Canadian team and its role was not described in the proposal be accepted?
- How does the international applicant's grant budget be structured?
- Is the maximum NSERC request still based on maximum grant awarded to the international collaborator?

Answers to questions submitted in advance

- What happens if an application deemed fundable is not selected for funding in the November 25 cohort?
- What degree of pre-existing collaboration must exist in the new grant structure?
- If the collaboration project is part of another big initiative, can we list a portion of that bigger project which will directly be applied to collaboration with Canada.
- The international partner should submit a proposal and get accepted before preparing the Canadian alliance grant?
- Are there any particular research themes to be prioritized for this grant?
- Can NSERC issue a letter confirming that a Canadian team will apply for an Alliance international grant to the attention of an international funder having a similar program.



Questions?

Contacts:

Alliance@nserc-crsng.gc.ca

allianceinternational@nserc-crsng.gc.ca

Find who works on what:

[NSERC's Awards Database](#)

[Alliance funded projects](#)