**COVID-19 Research Development & Catalyst Fund Objectives**

* Provide seed funding for the rapid development of interdisciplinary or individual research grant applications to future, potential funding programs focused on contributing to the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and/or its negative consequences on people and communities; **or**
* Provide seed funding to catalyze small-scale, time-sensitive research projects focused on contributing to the global response to the COVID-19 pandemic to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 and/or its negative consequences on people and communities.

**Funding Available**

* The Office of Research will provide up to a maximum of $10,000 in seed funding for eligible projects that are approved by the College(s) to proceed under the University of Guelph [Guidance note for research continuity, scale back, and shut down](https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/article/2019-novel-coronavirus-information).
* Matching funds from the College(s) are required.
* Approvals are subject to the availability of Office of Research funds.
* Funding must be used by August 31, 2020.

**Deadlines & Important Dates**

* **Monday, May 4, 2020:** proposal deadline
* **Monday, May 11, 2020:** decisions released
* **Monday, August 31, 2020:** project spending deadline

**Eligibility of Applicants**

* Eligible to hold research funding at the University of Guelph.

**Eligible Expenses Include**

* Salary support for research staff, postdocs, students, and other trainees
* University-based core and other support services
* Knowledge translation and mobilization activities
* Supplies

**Ineligible Expenses**

Due to the time-limited nature of this funding program, infrastructure and significant research equipment purchases are generally not considered eligible expenses unless well justified, nor is teaching release.

**Evaluation Criteria**

All complete applications will be reviewed by the Office of Research and College representatives. Incomplete applications will not be reviewed.

The following evaluation criteria will be used:

1. Quality of project:
   1. Extent to which the application responds to the **program** **objectives**;
   2. Appropriateness of the proposed approach and timeliness; and
   3. Appropriateness of the budget and justification for amount requested.
2. Quality of Applicants:
   1. Track record of team members in fields related of proposed research;
   2. Ability of the project team to carry out the proposed activities; and
   3. Ability of team to quickly mobilize necessary resources.
3. Impact of the Research: potential to contribute to the global response to COVID-19 and elevate University of Guelph’s external research reputation (e.g., acquisition of Tri-Agency funding).

Considerations will be given to gender and equity inclusion in the research team and/or the research topic, as well as to disciplinary diversity of the research programs to be funded.

Sex and/or gender issues exist in most COVID-19 research areas and, therefore, sex and/or gender issues will be a component of this research initiative. Applicants are to consider sex as a biological variable and gender as a socio-cultural factor in their research.

**APPENDIX: Potential Research Areas\***

* Epidemiology of COVID-19 outbreaks and virus spread
  + Surveillance of animals (including wildlife)
  + Disease modelling
  + Disease and surveillance data gathering and use
  + Development of AI-empowered digital surveillance systems and decision support systems
* Biological Interventions for control of COVID-19
  + Pathogenicity, transmission, and zoonotic source of COVID-19
  + Development of diagnostic tools
  + Development of candidate vaccines
  + Development of candidate therapeutics
* Public health, social, economic and policy angles of COVID-19 pandemic
  + Cultural dimensions of the pandemic
  + Development of effective public health communication strategies
  + Development of strategies to combat misinformation, stigma, and fear
  + Economic impacts of the pandemic, e.g., hospitality and tourism
  + Studying international relations, global coordination, response systems and crisis management
  + Understanding the social dynamics of transmission and vulnerability
  + Understanding impact on food production and safety, food distribution and food security
  + Understanding public behavior in response to the pandemic and potential future countermeasures, e.g. vaccination
  + Studying gender-specific and indigenous angles of the COVID-19 pandemic

\*Note: this is not an exhaustive list of research themes