

Advancing New Treatments to Improve the Survival of Women with Ovarian Cancer (OvCAN): Priority 3 Competition Guidelines (Round 2)

A. Key Dates

Deadline for Expressions of Interest	Saturday May 8, 2021 @11:59 pm EST
Feedback sent by Governing Council	Late May/early June 2021
Deadline for Full Application	Friday Sept 3, 2021 @11:59 pm EST
Review of submitted applications	Sept - Oct 2021
Announcement of funded grants	Nov 2021
Funding start date	April 1, 2022

B. Ovarian Cancer Canada and OvCAN

Ovarian Cancer Canada (OCC) is the only national organization dedicated to championing the health and wellbeing of women with ovarian cancer and others at risk of this disease while advancing research to save lives. In consultation with communities of patients, clinicians and researchers, Ovarian Cancer Canada has created a three-pronged approach with a clear single aim over the next five years: ***to improve the outcomes of women diagnosed with ovarian cancer***. Following 4 years of dedicated and collective efforts by Ovarian Cancer Canada, women living with the disease, family members, and other advocates across the country, in 2019 the Government of Canada announced a first-ever commitment of \$10 million to fund this initiative, now called OvCAN.

OvCAN is divided into 3 main priorities:

- 1) Develop new research models to bridge the gap between discovery and validation of new treatments;
- 2) Identify and prioritize novel treatments to be tested in the best preclinical research models;
- 3) ***Advance clinical trials by stratifying ovarian cancer patients to experimental treatments based on the defining features of their tumour (i.e. using a personalized medicine approach).***

Through these activities, the OvCAN initiative will have a significant impact on the outcomes of those with ovarian cancer, helping Canadian women achieve better quality of life and longer survival. A pan-Canadian, multi-disciplinary Governing Council has been established to oversee the work in this initiative:

Dr. Brad Nelson, Victoria BC; Scientist
 Dr. Gavin Stuart, Vancouver BC; Oncologist
 Dr. David Huntsman, Vancouver BC; Pathologist
 Dr. Lynne-Marie Postovit, Edmonton AB; Scientist
 Dr. Laura Hopkins, Saskatoon SK; Oncologist
 Dr. Amit Oza, Toronto ON; Oncologist
 Dr. Helen MacKay, Toronto ON; Oncologist, GOC representative
 Ms. Donna Pepin, Toronto ON; Patient representative
 Ms. Elisabeth Baugh, Toronto ON; CEO, OCC
 Dr. Barbara Vanderhyden, Ottawa ON; Chair, Research Committee and Governing Council
 Dr. Anne-Marie Mes-Masson, Montréal QC; Scientist
 Ms. Theresa-Marie Underhill, Halifax NS; Chair, OCC Board of Directors
 Dr. Jeanette Boudreau, Halifax NS; Scientist

C. Project eligibility & evaluation criteria

This competition will fund clinical research projects aligned with Priority 3 of the OvCAN initiative. The overall goal is to identify the most promising new treatments for ovarian cancer, with an emphasis on a personalized medicine approach (e.g. stratifying patients in early phase clinical trials and longitudinal profiling of associated biospecimens).

The following criteria will be considered when evaluating applications:

- Correlative studies: ***clinical trials with embedded translational studies will be given priority***
 - Use of biobank samples for translational/biomarker studies will not be considered
 - Correlative studies using retrospective clinical trial specimens will not be considered, unless the trial outcomes warrant further investigation
- National scope: projects involving multiple sites across Canada will be favoured over local initiatives
- Pan-Canadian co-leadership is encouraged
- Canadian content: projects building on Canadian pre-clinical data or science will be prioritized
- Plan for meaningful patient engagement throughout study period
- Scientific merit
- Novelty
- Potential for impact
- Readiness
- Strength of supporting data
- Qualifications of research team/research environment
- Treatments which may benefit women diagnosed with less common types of ovarian cancer (e.g. endometrioid, clear cell, low-grade serous, non-epithelial) are encouraged

D. Applicant eligibility criteria

Study principal investigator/s must hold a research position at a Canadian institution and be able to hold research funds at their institution. Study co-applicants and collaborators may be affiliated with institutions outside of Canada; however, cross-Canada collaborations are preferred and all OvCAN funds must be spent in Canada.

E. Multiple applications

There are no limits on the number of applications submitted, as either a principal investigator or co-applicant.

F. Re-submissions

Projects originally submitted during Round 1 of this competition are eligible to resubmit. These applicants are encouraged to consider constructive feedback provided during the first round of competition.

G. Patient engagement in research

Ovarian Cancer Canada ***strongly*** encourages patient engagement in the planning and conduct of all clinical trials supported wholly or in part by OvCAN funds. At least one patient is expected to be embedded as a member of the research team for the duration of the study. OCC has developed a group of trained Patient Partners in Research who can bring their valuable insight and experiences to the table to enhance the quality

of research, and ultimately, the quality of care. Support for patient partnerships should be built into the study budget in the form of a modest honorarium (if your patient partner wishes to/can receive one) and coverage for any travel/ accommodation and expenses required to participate.

Ovarian Cancer Canada will provide training, guidance and support to members of the research team including patient partners, to assist with development of the patient engagement in research plan. At least one researcher from the research team is required to attend a **webinar on patient engagement in research** before the application due date. This webinar is intended to promote the development of meaningful patient engagement plans in the application by providing an opportunity to learn more about patient engagement in research terms, best practices, useful resources, etc. Additionally, the following may be helpful as you develop your patient engagement plan (provided here for guidance): [Patient and Public Engagement Planning Template](#) (developed by the Newfoundland and Labrador SUPPORT Unit), [Patient partner compensation in research and health care: the patient perspective on why and how](#), [RECOMMENDATIONS ON PATIENT ENGAGEMENT COMPENSATION](#) (Prepared by the SPOR Networks in Chronic Diseases and the PICHI Network) and Potential Roles of Patient Partners on Research Teams (see Appendix document in this Guideline). Successful applicants will be expected to present an update of their research progress annually to OvCAN Patient Partners in Research.

All patient partners on the research team are asked to attend webinars introducing them to research and patient engagement in research. Ovarian Cancer Canada encourages all patient partners to become part of the OvCAN Patient Partners in Research. The OvCAN Patient Partners in Research will be provided with ongoing learning opportunities and support.

H. Research ethics and institutional policies

Prior to commencing OvCAN-funded research activities, researchers shall ensure that the research protocol is consistent with the principles set out in the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* and is reviewed and approved by the Research Ethics Board at each participating institution. All Research Ethics Board approval letters shall be forwarded to the OvCAN project manager (OvCAN@ovariancanada.org).

It remains the responsibility of the Principal Investigator, co-applicants and collaborators to respect the rules and policies of their institutions.

I. Submission documents (final application stage)

To be considered a complete application, the following documents must be compiled into a single PDF document and emailed to OvCAN@ovariancanada.org by **September 3, 2021 @11:59pm EST**:

- Completed application form
- Abbreviated CV for Principal Investigator and all Co-Applicants
 - Academic degrees
 - Details of employment since graduation
 - List of publications (including manuscripts in preparation and submitted manuscripts) during the last **5-full time or equivalent** working years (highlight relevant publications to this submission, do not include non-peer reviewed publications)
 - Grant support received in the past 5 years

- List of current/pending funding for Principal Investigator and all Co-Applicants
- Letters of Support from collaborators
- Letter from lead institution to ensure that the necessary infrastructure support is available for the project

J. Independent review of applications

All applications will be reviewed by an international panel of experts with no involvement in OvCAN-funded activities. Applications will be assessed according to the criteria outlined in Section C. Scores will be provided to the OvCAN governing council, along with recommendations for which submitted applications should be funded.

K. Study term

Applicants can apply for 1 or 2 years of funding as appropriate for the planned research project. Funding start and end dates will be project-dependent and will be decided through communication between the Principal Investigator and the OvCAN Governing Council.

L. Funds available

The total funds available for the second round of the OvCAN Priority 3 competition is \$2.2M, to be spent between April 2022 and March 2024. Fund requests will be project dependent, with no specified limit.

M. Reporting

All award recipients will be expected to provide regular updates on progress. Reporting templates and deadlines will be provided to recipients upon notice of funding.

Questions? Please email OvCAN@ovariancanada.org