Proof-of-Principle 2024 Program
Frequently Asked Questions

This FAQ aims to address common inquiries related to the Proof-of-Principle (POP) 2024 program. However, we encourage you to refer to the Program Details document for more in-depth information. If you have any project specific questions (e.g., whether an idea is in-scope), please contact us directly via email.

Who is the Foundation's main contact for the program?

Applicants who have questions about the program or wish to discuss specific project details can reach out to Dr. John Chmiel at john.chmiel@westonfoundation.ca.

When will applicants be notified of awards?

Award notification is expected in October 2024, however, the Foundation may change the timeline of the application process should there be unforeseen circumstances or delays. The Foundation will make every effort to broadly communicate any timeline changes.

When should projects begin?

We suggest factoring at least 1 month for contracting of grant agreements after receiving the award notice. Therefore, a reasonable project start date is 4 – 6 weeks after the award notification.

Is matched funding (cash or in-kind) expected for this program?

No, matched funding is not expected for this program.

Can an applicant hold additional grants for their proposed project?

Yes, so long as the activities outlined in the application are distinct from those in other funded grants.

How will funds be administered for teams with applicants from more than one institution?

Funds of awarded projects will only be provided to the institution of the Principal Applicant who must be based at a Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) qualified donee institution. The Principal Applicant's institution is responsible for dispersing funds according to the project deliverables. *Please refer to the Program Details document for additional information.*

Will a percentage of funds be available at the start of the project for project start-up costs?

Yes, budget details are not required in the Letter of Intent (LOI). If invited to submit a full Proposal, applicants can request a small amount of funding to cover start-up costs (e.g., REB submissions, purchasing reagents) in the "Milestones" section of the application. Further details regarding the Proposal application will be provided to those who are successful following the LOI stage.

How many grants will the program fund?

The Foundation will fund approximately ~ 10 projects, each receiving up to ~ $300,000. However, the review committee may recommend funding more or less than 10 projects depending on the quality and suitability of applications received.

Which projects qualify for the up to $300,000 budget and which qualify for the up to $200,000 budget?

Projects that involve active patient engagement and testing are eligible for up to $300,000 of funding. Projects that do not work with patients (e.g. biobanked samples, animal studies, *in vitro/ex vivo* experiments) are eligible for up to $200,000 of funding. If you are unsure which funding stream is correct for your project, reach out to the Foundation's main contact for the program.

Can an applicant submit more than one application?

Applicants may submit a maximum of <u>one</u> application, when acting as a Principal Applicant, to the program. Applicants may appear as a Co-Applicant or Collaborator on any number of applications. Current or past Foundation grantees can also submit applications. *For more information about applicant eligibility, please refer to the "Eligibility of Applicants" section of the Program Details document.*

Can a Postdoctoral Fellow be a Principal Applicants?

Yes, Postdoctoral Fellows are eligible to apply as Principal Applicants, however, in such cases the project must include an Administrative Supervisor acting as a co-applicant, who has authorization to administer research accounts and is granted the relevant signing authorization.

Does the Principal Applicant need to be working at least 50% of time at a CRA qualified donee institution?

Yes. *For more information, about the eligibility of Applicants, Co-Applicants, and Collaborators, please refer to the "Eligibility of Applicants" section of the Program Details document.*

Can Collaborators be based outside of Canada?

Yes. However, it is expected that the majority of work be conducted at a CRA qualified donee institution located in Canada. *For more information, about the eligibility of Principal*

Applicants, Co-Applicants, and Collaborators, please refer to the "Eligibility of Applicants"
section of the Program Details document.

Can Collaborators be from industry?

Yes, but the Principal Applicant must be a researcher working in Canada at least 50% of
the time and hold a position at or above the level of Assistant Professor or equivalent at a
CRA qualified donee institution located in Canada. *For more information, please refer to the*
"Eligibility of Applicants" section of the Program Details document.

Do all clinical sites of a multi-site study need to be in Canada?

No. A proportion of the funds can be used for unique international resources (e.g., in-
licensing IP, costs associated with accessing a database). However, it is expected that the
majority of the funds will go towards work conducted in Canada. *For more information,*
please refer to the "Funding Specifications" and "Eligibility of Applicants" sections of the
Program Details document.

Are research ethics or trial approval required to be in place before the project start date?

Relevant research ethics and trial approvals must be in place no later than 6 months after
the start date of the project. *For more information, please refer to the "Regulatory and*
Ethics Approval" section of the Program Details document.

How do you define preliminary data?

As noted in the Program Details document, preliminary or pilot data is optional for this
program, and is any data (from the applicants' lab or the literature) that can support the
rationale, hypothesis, and feasibility of the proposed work. Preliminary data can be based
on results from human, animal, or *in vitro* studies.

Is the use of animal models permitted for the program?

The experimental design of projects using animal models or data derived from animal
models is within scope of the program. However, please note that the Foundation prefers
projects that involve human participants or human-derived samples where possible.

Are letters of support required at the Letter of Intent (LOI) phase?

Letters of support are only required at the Proposal phase.

Are partnerships required for submission of an application?

Partnerships are not mandatory. However, we encourage applicants to build collaborations
as necessary to ensure the project team has the expertise and resources needed to
successfully execute the proposed work. If a particular expertise is missing at the time of
the LOI submission, it can still be added at the Proposal phase, if the applicant is invited to
submit a full Proposal.

What expertise is on the review panel?

The review panel consists of an international group of experts covering a range of different areas of microbiome research, therapeutic development, and lifestyle research.