



2014 FOCUS COMPETITION

CALL FOR PROPOSALS

PRELIMINARY APPLICATIONS (LETTERS OF INTENT)

DEADLINE: NOVEMBER 14TH, 2013

SCOPE OF THE PROGRAM

This CQDM funding program aims to promote the development of novel and innovative technologies that address current and critical challenges faced by the pharmaceutical industry, most particularly in the drug discovery and development process.

This program is **not intended to fund research on new drugs** for specific therapeutic segments. Instead, it is meant to finance the development of **cutting-edge technologies** with strong and immediate impact on the drug discovery and/or development process across several therapeutic fields.

ELIGIBILITY

This program seeks to support creativity, and innovation, and is focused on multi-disciplinary and collaborative efforts between academic institutions and private organizations. To be eligible for funding, research must be performed in Quebec within one of the following organizations:

- Universities or affiliated research institutions, hospitals or academic research institutions;
- Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) from the private sector (including SMEs in the field of life sciences, biotechnologies, biopharmaceuticals, medical devices, diagnostics, engineering, imaging or contract research organizations (CROs)). Please note that multinational pharmaceutical companies are not eligible and cannot be considered as private collaborators in this program;
- Not-for-profit organizations with a mandate for and experience in research.

Although not mandatory, projects involving collaborations between academic and private sector organizations are of great importance for this program. Therefore, public/private partnerships will be prioritized in the selection process.

Each research proposal must generate clear deliverables with immediate applications to the drug discovery and/or development process and be highly innovative with a strong and wide potential impact on biopharmaceutical research.

RESEARCH AGENDA

The research agenda extends to **all scientific and technical fields** related to biopharmaceutical R&D and **all disciplines** that could provide new cutting-edge technologies, computational tools and devices for biopharmaceutical research. The scope includes (without limitation): biological and health sciences, chemistry, engineering, nanotechnologies, computational sciences, medical devices, imaging, biosensors, *in silico* and *in vitro* screening systems, and improved disease-relevant animal models.

This program is **not** meant to fund **fundamental research projects**. *Only projects with a well-defined near-term application deemed to significantly impact biopharmaceutical research will be funded under this program.*

FUNDING SPECIFICS

Duration

Maximum 3 years

Total amount

\$1M to \$2M/project over a three-year period. The amount requested must be justified and will be taken into account in the final selection of the projects.

Eligible costs

- Salary of research personnel necessary for the project (students, post-doctoral fellows, and technical/professional assistants);
- Material and laboratory supplies including services provided by third party suppliers necessary for the realisation of the project;
- Travel expenses (field work and collaborations);
- Intellectual property costs (patent application and maintenance fees during the funding period);
- Administrative costs (overhead), up to 15% of the eligible research expenses.

Non eligible costs

- Equipment or facilities (purchase or rental);
- Salary of the principal investigator and co-investigators.

REVIEW AND DECISION PROCESS

Funding will be awarded following a competitive process in 2 stages.

1- Letter of intent

Applicants must submit a letter of intent (using the form available on CQDM's Web site at www.cqdm.org) describing the project by **November 14th, 2013, at 5 PM**. The selection of the letters of intent will be overseen by the CQDM's Strategic Orientation Committee. This committee will select projects based mainly on their potential immediate impact on biopharmaceutical research. The letters of intent will also be evaluated for the soundness of the scientific approach from a global perspective. Only applicants whose letter of intent is aligned with the evaluation criteria will be invited to submit a full project proposal.

2- Full proposal

Full proposals will undergo a 3 step evaluation process: a scientific evaluation, a risk analysis and an evaluation for potential impact on biopharmaceutical research.

The scientific evaluation of the full proposals will be performed by an international committee under the responsibility of the FRQS (Fonds de la Recherche du Québec – Santé). The following criteria will be used for the evaluation:

- Scientific excellence
- Creativity and innovation
- Competitiveness in the scientific field of the proposal
- Feasibility to execute the project within time and budget allocated
- Clear well-defined deliverables and milestones
- Potential of applications in drug research:
 - immediate impact on drug discovery or development
 - capacity to address important unmet needs
- Track record of the participants (principal investigator and co-investigators)
- Multidisciplinary and multi-organizational aspects of the research candidates
- Complementarity between partners

In parallel, CQDM will evaluate aspects linked to intellectual property, potential ethical problems, corporate information (for private companies) as well as any potential risks that could jeopardize the successful achievement of the research project. Furthermore, given that this funding program implies large scale projects oriented towards applicable results that will require significant multidisciplinary resources, the project management aspect will also be an important criteria in the evaluation.

The results of both assessments will be presented to the Strategic Orientation Committee, which will evaluate the impact on biopharmaceutical research and thereafter will recommend proposals for funding. The CQDM Board of Directors will make the final selection of the research projects to be funded.

LICENSING POLICY

IP generated under this funding program will belong to the inventors and their affiliated research entities. A non-exclusive license option (royalty-free) will be granted to the CQDM industrial sponsors for the use of the results for R&D purposes only. If background IP is needed to use the results, a non-exclusive license option to use the background IP will also be granted to the CQDM industrial sponsors. In this case, a financial consideration for the use of the background IP could be negotiated between the parties. The CQDM industrial sponsors will have no right to commercialize the results or the background IP.

A research agreement must be signed between CQDM and all the research entities involved in the project within 3 months following the final confirmation of funding. The research agreement will include, without limitations, the following aspects:

- A clear description of the project including main steps, milestones, deliverables and the role of each investigator;
- A detailed budget and payment schedule (quarterly) including the portion that will be allocated to each research entity;
- A commitment from all the research entities and the investigators involved in the project to perform the research;
- The main terms and conditions of the licence option in favour of the CQDM industrial sponsors for the use of the results generated by the project (and background IP, if necessary) for research and development purposes;
- Basic representations and warranties by the research entities including the required rights, consents and/or approval to perform the research project;
- Disclosure and publication requirements;
- Confidentiality obligations.

MONITORING OF FUNDED PROJECTS

For all funded projects, a project manager must be identified by successful applicants. This person will be responsible for co-ordination of financial reports (quarterly) and scientific reports (semi-annually). CQDM will monitor the progress of the project, and continuation of funding will be dependent on satisfactory progress against agreed milestones and budget.

This program is designed for researchers who are interested in establishing closer links with the pharmaceutical industry. In that respect, all funded projects will be assigned mentors from the pharmaceutical sector with experience in the drug discovery and development process. Mentors are senior scientists from CQDM's industry sponsors who provide expertise and access to useful resources. Their role is to ensure that the project is progressing well and that it remains aligned with the industry's requirements in the drug R&D process.

TIMETABLE

Program launch	October 3 rd , 2013
Information session	Date to be confirmed
Deadline for submission of the letters of intent	November 14 th , 2013
Announcement of the selected letters of intent	December 19 th , 2013
Deadline to submit full proposals	March 13 th , 2014
Final selection announcement	July 24 th , 2014
Signature of a research agreement	November 27 th , 2014
Funding release and beginning of the projects	December 2 nd , 2014

In order to help the applicants in the preparation of the letters of intent, CQDM will organize an information session (details to follow). Furthermore, specific meetings with CQDM representatives could be organized on a per request basis.

SUBMISSION PROCEDURE

An electronic version must be submitted on CQDM's secure site **by November 14th, 2013, at 5:00 PM** (<https://cqdm.firmex.com>). Applicants must contact Eugénie Bergeron-Côté at ebergeron@cqdm.org before **November 7th, 2013** to obtain their username and password.

The electronic PDF version must include:

- The signed application form in PDF format. The file must be identified as follow: *Last name of PI_application*.
- Updated and complete common Canadian CV of the principal investigator (PI) and all the co-investigators. The file must be identified as follow: *Last name of PI_Last name of co-investigator_CV*. Investigators working in a private company may provide a standard CV.

Please remove all the security features on the PDF version of the documents.

The application form is available on our Web site at www.cqdm.org.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Judith Caron Director of Programs (514) 766-6661 ext. 2195 jcaron@cqdm.org	Helen Loughrey Senior Director, Scientific Affairs (514) 766-6661 ext. 2197 hloughrey@cqdm.org
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