



Networks of Centres of Excellence

Letter of Intent Guide 2011 Competition for Knowledge Mobilization Initiative

The Networks of Centres of Excellence (NCE) Program is a federal initiative administered jointly through the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), in partnership with Industry Canada.

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NCE-Knowledge Mobilization Initiative

Background

The NCE-New Initiative (NI) pilot was established in 2005 with the mandate to support networking among well-established researchers or research teams to encourage them to develop new partnerships with receptor communities. In 2008, an evaluation of the NCE-NI initiative demonstrated that the program added value for multidisciplinary and collaborative research involving academics and community receptors in Canada. Consequently, the NCE Steering Committee approved a new initiative entitled NCE-Knowledge Mobilization (KM).

Goal

The NCE-KM initiative supports networking and collaboration among well-established research teams and receptor communities to further the application and mobilization of knowledge. The NCE-KM initiative is intended to support national multi-disciplinary, multi-sectoral networks in applying and mobilizing the results of world-class research.

Objectives

The objectives of the NCE-KM initiative are:

- to support national and international networks between knowledge users and producers from various disciplines, sectors and institutions, including industry, government and not-for-profit organizations for the benefit of Canadian social, health and/or economic development;
- to validate and apply knowledge by strengthening collaborations with receptor/user communities to ensure their greatest impact; and

- to enable knowledge mobilization activities that will bring together researchers from different disciplines to share and nurture ideas and methods that challenge research.

The NCE-KM initiative will fund networking activities (networking costs, network administration, etc.) and may not be used for the support of research itself. It is the objective of networking activities to provide a platform for coordination and intellectual exchange.

2011 NCE-Knowledge Mobilization Competition

Competition Process

The NCE Steering Committee invites potential applicants to submit a Letter of Intent for the 2011 NCE-KM initiative. Letters of Intent will be used for the initial screening of potential networks. The LOI submission must be received by the NCE Secretariat by **September 15, 2010, 4:30 p.m., Eastern Daylight Time (EDT)**.

Based on a review of all LOIs, selected applicants will be invited to submit a Full Application in **April 2011**. Where appropriate, the NCE Secretariat will provide written comments regarding the LOI to applicants.

Applicants whose LOIs pass the initial screening process may request funding of up to \$20,000 to assist them in preparing a Full Application. Full Application Preparation (FAP) funding can be used for application-related expenses such as communications and workshops, as well as for secretarial, clerical and co-ordination services.

To request FAP funding, applicants must submit a one-page letter outlining their required budget, including a brief rationale of proposed expenses.

Budget

Approximately \$1.2 million per year will be available to support NCE-KM networks. Successful networks will be awarded up to \$400,000 per year for four years, with a possible three-year extension.

The second (and final) funding cycle of up to three years is only available where a NCE-KM has developed and built on its partnerships to progressively transform itself into a receptor-centered network.

Timetable

Dates	Milestone
July 2010	Competition Announced
September 15, 2010	LOI Submission Deadline
October 2010	Selection Committee Review of LOIs
November 2010	Invitation to Submit Full Application
April 2011	Full Application Deadline (date to be confirmed)
April 2011	Selection Committee Review of Full Applications
May 2011	New NCE-KM Awards Announcement

Eligible Applicants

Applications must be submitted by researchers who are eligible to apply for funding under the policies and guidelines of at least one of the three federal granting agencies partnering in the program with the

support of the network host (academic institution or private sector consortium that houses the administrative centre of the network and signs the funding agreement.)

Where there is potential for perceived overlap between a proposed NCE-KM network and a current or previously funded NCE network, applicants must explain how the proposed network adds value or is significantly different from currently or previously funded NCE networks.

Competition Framework

Target Areas

The applicants must demonstrate that the knowledge being applied or mobilized addresses key problems, challenges and opportunities of high strategic importance to Canada.

Review Criteria

1) *Expected Impacts and Added Value*

- expected social, economic and/or health-related impacts of the proposed NCE-KM in relation to
 - a) one or more receptor communities, who are expected to use or benefit from the knowledge to be mobilized; and
 - b) Canadians in general and the international community where appropriate;
- anticipated added value of the NCE-KM;
- explanation of the strategic importance of the expected impacts, both during and beyond the life of the proposed NCE-KM network;
- well-defined performance and impact indicators;
- feasibility of achieving the expected impacts during and beyond the life of the network

2) Excellence and Composition of the Proposed Network Team

- potential and ability of the team members to achieve the goals of the NCE-KM network;
- team members identified and their roles made explicit;
- demonstrated world class capacity and track record of the team members to achieve the objectives of the NCE-KM network. The team will include researchers (knowledge producers) and receptors (knowledge users). In some cases, there may be an overlapping of roles. Individuals from receptor communities must have meaningful engagement in all aspects of the proposed network

3) Other Contributions to the Proposed Network

- the nature and extent of the confirmed financial and in-kind commitments to the proposed network by stakeholders. The latter are all individuals/groups (including receptors) who have an interest in the outcomes of the NCE-KM network;
- planning for future financial and in-kind commitments

4) Strategy for Knowledge Mobilization

A well-defined strategy for identifying and mobilizing knowledge across disciplines and sectors over four years should include approaches to:

- identifying the knowledge needs of the receptor community(ies);
- synthesizing existing knowledge to address those needs;
- developing processes to assist the receptor community(ies) to access, adapt and implement existing knowledge;
- identifying gaps in knowledge requiring further research (including a plan for

informing research funders and others of those knowledge gaps);

- planning for the engagement and capacity-building of future receptor communities; and
- increase for adaptation and innovation over the life of the network.

5) Management and Governance

Planning that includes workable management and governance structures.

The following are essential planning elements:

- effective accountability mechanisms, whether through incorporation as a not-for-profit organization or some other means;
- proven track record in leadership, management and/or governance of the individuals proposed for those roles;
- effective budgeting mechanisms together with a detailed budget and timeline;
- an appropriate communications plan; and
- integration of receptors into management and governance.

Review and Decision Process

NCE Steering Committee

The NCE Steering Committee is comprised of the presidents of the three federal granting agencies, the Deputy Ministers of Industry Canada and Health Canada and, the President and CEO of the Canada Foundation for Innovation as an observer. The Steering Committee will:

- appoint members of a selection committee;
- decide which applicants to invite to submit Full Applications for new networks based on recommendations by the Standing Selection Committee;

- decide which applicants will receive funding for new networks;
- establish funding levels; and
- prepare a report for publication at the end of the competition process.

Decisions of the NCE Steering Committee are final. There is no appeal process.

NCE Standing Selection Committee

The Steering Committee will appoint an NCE Standing Selection Committee as part of the peer-review process. This committee will be composed of high calibre international experts with broad expertise representing the domains of the three federal granting agencies across all sectors.

The NCE Standing Selection Committee will review the LOIs according to the NCE-KM review criteria and provide recommendations to the NCE Steering Committee on which proposals to invite for submission of full applications. The Standing Selection Committee will also review Full Applications and make recommendations to the Steering Committee regarding which applicants should receive funding for new networks.

The names and affiliations of the members of the Selection Committee will be included in the final report of the Steering Committee at the end of the competition.

Guidelines for Completing a Letter of Intent

The Letter of Intent provides information on the proposed network in relation to the goals and objectives of the NCE-KM initiative. It will be used in the screening process to determine which applicants will be invited to submit full applications. It will be evaluated according to the NCE-KM review criteria.

The LOI should be submitted on behalf of the proposed network by a researcher who

is eligible to receive funding from one of the three federal granting agencies, and by the proposed host institution.

The LOI must be developed in collaboration with key stakeholders. In this document, a stakeholder is defined as an individual, group or organization with an interest in a project, including members of a receptor community.

Deadline

The deadline for submission of the LOI for the 2011 NCE-KM initiative is **September 15, 2010**. LOIs must be received by the NCE Secretariat by **4:30 p.m., Eastern Daylight Time (EDT)**.

Number of Copies Required

One unbound original containing original signatures on all relevant documents, 25 paper copies and one electronic copy (USB) containing a single PDF file.

Mailing Address

Networks of Centres of Excellence
16th Floor, mailroom
350 Albert Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 1H5

The NCE Secretariat will confirm receipt of the application with the applicant within one week of receipt.

General Presentation

Print must be in black ink, of letter quality (minimum standard), with no more than six lines per inch. The type size for fonts measured in points (pts) must be no smaller than 12 pts. If measured in characters per inch (cpi), it must be no more than 10 cpi. Condensed type is unacceptable. **Note:** Ten pt. font is acceptable for text included in the Application Form pages.

Use white paper, 8½ x 11 inches (21.5 cm x 28 cm), with margins of ¾ of an inch

(1.905 cm) (minimum) all around. Enter the title of the network at the top of every page, and number the pages consecutively. Pages should be double sided.

Graphs and illustrations may be included, but will count as part of the page limits set out below. Either single or double column presentation of text, graphs or illustrations is acceptable. **Any extra material will be removed.**

What to Include in the LOI

1. Letter from Host Institution (Maximum one page)

A cover letter of one page must be signed by the proposed network director and the president or CEO of the institution that proposes to host the Network Administrative Centre. The signatures on the letter must match the signatures on the Summary Information page of the Application Form.

2. Application Form (Excel file)

Use the Excel spreadsheet entitled “*NCE-KM 2011 LOI Application Form*.” The application form must include: the summary information, the network director’s signature, an alphabetical list of key individuals and the anticipated expenses over the four years of the award. Please consult the *NCE Program Guide* for information on eligible expenditures and use of NCE-KM funds. **However, keep in mind that no research expenses are eligible under NCE-KM.**

3. Statement of Strategic Importance (Maximum one page)

Define the problem areas and the anticipated incremental economic and social benefits to Canada. Describe the potential impact and added value over a four-year time frame to Canada’s productivity, health and social systems and/or public policies.

4. Knowledge Mobilization Strategy (Maximum one page)

Present a vision of what the network proposes to achieve, including specific goals and objectives. Include, in your discussion, the network’s plans and strategy with respect to engaging the receptor communities and encouraging collaboration between knowledge producers and users.

5. Project Plan (Maximum three pages)

The NCE-KM program must be developed in collaboration with key stakeholders and must integrate receptor partners, academia and government priorities. Applicants must be able to demonstrate that the proposed network possesses world-class capacity to address any problems, challenges or opportunities being addressed by the research program.

The applicant must give an outline of the network’s proposed activities, addressing each of the review criteria listed. Include an overview of the expected results and outcome.

The project plan must describe the total funding being requested from the NCE-KM initiative for years 1 to 4 and the anticipated expenditures of NCE-KM funds for the administrative centre and proposed activities.

6. Letters of Support from non-academic Stakeholders (Maximum one page per letter)

Up to five letters of support from non-academic stakeholders listed in the LOI Application Form may be included. Letters should make explicit reference to the proposed network and should:

- come from a senior executive with influence over a research budget;

- indicate the level, duration and nature (cash and/or in-kind) of anticipated support for the proposed network;
- describe potential involvement and the added value of the proposed network to the stakeholder's current and future activities;
- indicate current and past associations with the applicant;
- not be template formatted by the applicant; and
- be dated and signed no earlier than six months prior to the LOI submission deadline.

Reminders

The deadline for the submission of the LOI is **September 15, 2010, 4:30 p.m., Eastern Daylight Time (EDT)**. Send the unbound original plus 25 individually copies and one electronic copy (USB) with a PDF version of the application to the NCE Secretariat:

Networks of Centres of Excellence
16th floor, mailroom
350 Albert Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 1H5

The NCE Secretariat will confirm receipt of the application with applicants within one week of receipt.

Tables, graphs and figures may be included within the page limits noted above. **Any extra material will be removed.**

The *LOI Guide - 2011 Competition for Knowledge Mobilization Initiative*, the *NCE LOI Application Form for the 2011 Competition* and details about the NCE Secretariat can be obtained at www.nce-rce.gc.ca.

For more information, please contact the NCE Program at:

Telephone: **613-995-6010**
Fax: **613-992-7356**
E-mail: info@nce-rce.gc.ca

On-line Resources

NCE Web site

<http://www.nce-rce.gc.ca>

Information Regarding the Meaning of Signatures

http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/OnlineServices-ServicesEnLigne/Approvals-Approbation_eng.asp

<http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/22630.html#1-B3>

Information Regarding In-kind Eligibility

www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/Policies-Politiques/orgpartners-orgpartenaires_eng.asp

<http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/3758.html>

Tri-Agency Financial Administration Guide

http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/FinancialAdminGuide-GuideAdminFinancier/FundsUse-UtilisationSubventions_eng.asp

2011 NCE-KM Letter of Intent Application Form

http://www.nce-rce.gc.ca/docs/competitions/NCEKM-2011-RCMC/LOIApplication_eng.xls

NCE Program Guide

http://www.nce-rce.gc.ca/docs/competitions/PreviousCompetitions-ConcoursAnterieurs/NCE-RCE-2009/network_Prog_reseaux-e.pdf

Checklist

Each LOI **must not exceed** nine pages, not including the letters of support, and each section must be submitted in the order shown below. The maximum number of pages permitted for each section is indicated below.

- Letter from Host Institution (one page)
- NCE-KM 2011 LOI Application Form (three pages)
- Statement of Strategic Importance (one page)
- KM Strategy (one page)
- Project Plan (three pages)
- Letters of Support (one page per letter, maximum five letters)