



Networks of Centres of Excellence

2013 Business-Led Networks (BL-NCE) of Centres of Excellence Renewal Competition

Letter of Intent Guide

All BL-NCE Competitions must follow a two-stage application process. The Letter of Intent (LOI) stage of the 2013 BL-NCE Renewal competition will facilitate the identification of applicants to the renewal competition as well as identify suggested reviewers for the expert panel. Submission of the Letter of Intent is required step in the renewal competition process. The Letter of Intent is comprised of two parts.

Part 1: Letter from the Board of Directors

The Board of Directors must provide a letter to the NCE Secretariat identifying the Network's intention to apply to the Renewal Competition. Letters must be signed by the Chair of the Board and the lead applicant and presented on the letterhead of the Network.

Part 2: List of suggested reviewers

The BL-Network must provide a list of 10 potential Expert Panel Members who are not in conflict of interest for the review of their application. The NCE Secretariat will verify the conflicts of interest and may request the Network provide additional names should any of the members be in conflict. One or two members of the Expert Panel may be drawn from this list depending on the conflicts of interest and availability of the reviewers. The NCE Conflict of Interest Guidelines are attached as Appendix A. Networks should not contact the reviewers in advance of the competition results.

The list must provide the potential reviewers name, affiliation, contact information, relevant expertise and bio (if available).

Submission Procedures

Letters of Support must be submitted to the NCE Secretariat via e-mail by Wednesday August 1st, 2012 at 4:30 p.m. EDT. An electronic copy of a single PDF file containing the letter from the Board of Directors and the list of suggested reviewers should be e-mailed to info@nce-rce.gc.ca with a copy to the NCE Liaison. The NCE Secretariat will confirm receipt of the LOI within a week.

On-line Resources

NCE website

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

Information Regarding the Meaning of Signatures

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

Privacy Act

<http://laws.justice.gc.ca/PDF/Statute/P/P-21.pdf>

BL-NCE Program Guide

http://www.nce-rce.gc.ca/ReportsPublications-RapportsPublications/BLNCE-RCEE/ProgramGuide-GuideProgramme_eng.asp

2013 BL-NCE Renewal Competition Guide

http://www.nce-rce.gc.ca/Competitions-Competitions/Current-EnVigueur/BLNCE-RCEE-2013/CompetitionGuide-GuideConcours_eng.asp

2013 BL-NCE Renewal Competition Full Application Guide

http://www.nce-rce.gc.ca/Competitions-Competitions/Current-EnVigueur/BLNCE-RCEE-2013/FullApplicationGuide-GuideDemandeDetaillee_eng.asp

Appendix A: Conflict of Interest Guidelines

Members who are directly or indirectly associated with the application must disclose their interest and follow guidelines adopted by the NCE Secretariat regarding conflicts of interest. Members, who stand to gain or lose financially, either in their personal capacity or by virtue of being an officer of any legal entity affected by a financial decision of the NCE must disclose their interest.

These guidelines cannot foresee all possible situations and the NCE Secretariat must rely on the judgment of the members. Indeed, it is the responsibility of members to declare any conflict of interest. Examples of conflict of interests as adapted from NSERC, and CIHR state that:

Expert Panel Members should not:

- be from the same university as the applicant(s);
- have been a research supervisor or graduate student of the applicant(s) within the past six (6) years;
- be providing letters of support for the application;
- have collaborated with the applicant(s) within the past six (6) years or have plans to collaborate in the immediate future;
- be an employee of a non-academic organization with which the applicant has had collaboration within the past six (6) years;
- be in any other potential conflict of interest (e.g., personal, financial).

Committee members are in conflict if they:

- are from the same immediate institution or company as the applicant, and who interact with the applicant in the course of their duties at the institution or company;
- are a close personal friend or relative of the applicant;
- have had long-standing scientific or personal differences with the applicant;
- are in a position to gain or lose financially from the outcome of the application (e.g., hold stock in the company of an industry partner or a competitor), or for some other reason feel that they cannot provide an objective review of the application.

Members are asked to inform the NCE staff of potential conflict of interests as early as possible. At the beginning of a session, the Chair reads the list of identified conflicts and asks each member in turn to declare any other relationship to a proposal (positive or negative). If the Chair believes a member should not participate in the review, that member withdraws from discussion. Difficult cases should be brought to the NCE staff who have the responsibility to rule.