



Government of Canada

**Networks of Centres
of Excellence**

Gouvernement du Canada

**Réseaux de centres
d'excellence**

**2017 NETWORKS OF CENTRES OF
EXCELLENCE INTERNATIONAL
KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION
PLATFORMS (NCE-IKTP)
INITIATIVE**

COMPETITION GUIDE

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How to use this Guide

This guide to the 2017 NCE International Knowledge Translation Platforms initiative (NCE-IKTP) competition provides an overview of the initiative as well as information regarding the competition structure and timeline, eligibility and evaluation criteria.

The competition guide is a stand-alone document that contains all relevant information about the 2017 NCE-IKTP competition. The NCE Secretariat will release application guides corresponding with the different stages of the competition. The application guides describe how to complete the respective applications and should always be used in conjunction with this competition guide.

The [NCE Program Guide](#) contains important background information on the NCE Program, the use of NCE funds, and other relevant program information. Applicants are strongly encouraged to consult the Guide before submitting an application.

Background

The NCE-IKTP is an initiative under the NCE suite of programs. The goal of the NCE-IKTP initiative is to support international collaborations between networks, centres, consortia and their partners to accelerate knowledge translation in areas of mutual strategic interest. Note that collaborations are expected to be beyond the individual (i.e. researcher-to-researcher) level.

For the purposes of the NCE-IKTP Initiative, **knowledge translation** comprises all activities that create socio-economic impact through the transformation or application of evidence-based knowledge and/or technologies generated from research. This includes the range of activities encompassed in commercialization (transformation of knowledge or technology into marketable goods, processes or services) to those encompassed in knowledge mobilization (activities and tools designed to put knowledge into active service, often through the establishment of new or modification of existing policies, processes, and standards). To be effective, knowledge translation endeavours require the involvement of knowledge users, which may include end-users, community groups, government partners, receptors, businesses, and other stakeholders.

The objectives of the NCE-IKTP initiative are:

- To enable multi-disciplinary and multisectoral networks of stakeholders to enhance and expand strategic international partnerships;
- To accelerate the exchange of research results between Canadian and international stakeholders;
- To create and foster relationships to support knowledge translation in order to maximize the impact of research and its implementation or utilization internationally;
- To reduce the barriers that limit international knowledge translation endeavours; and
- To identify key global knowledge gaps and co-develop strategies to address these through future international research collaborations.

For the purposes of the NCE-IKTP initiative, a “Platform” can be thought of as an administrative support structure dedicated to delivering tools and expertise to meet the objectives listed above.

Some example platform activities include, but are not limited to:

- Improving access to global knowledge, thereby increasing its uptake for the benefit of Canadian and international stakeholders;
- Improving delivery issues and exploring the challenges of generalizing research findings for its implementation/translation cross-culturally;
- Coordinating data capture, storage, analysis, and dissemination across international borders and the creation of the processes and prototypes to enable this;
- Coordinating the launch of, and data collection for, research studies (funded from other sources) in various locations internationally using standardized approaches;
- Enabling knowledge translation across borders through the development of tools, expertise and support to accelerate the achievements of researchers and the impact of their work;
- Accelerating commercialization activities across borders to enable national and international market access; and
- Catalyzing the sharing of knowledge between researchers, knowledge users, and partners internationally; and facilitating the translation of that knowledge in Canada and abroad.

The expected outcomes of the NCE-IKTP initiative are:

- To raise Canada's profile on the world stage and ensure that Canada is part of international knowledge translation initiatives;
- To stimulate or reinforce partnerships with international stakeholders to develop concerted efforts in high impact areas of socio-economic importance;
- To enhance knowledge translation and adoption of technologies in Canada and abroad; and
- To create lasting formal collaborations evidenced by agreements with organizations that represent strategic international partnerships.

The objectives and expected impact of a network's Platform must be congruent with the objectives and expected outcomes of the NCE-IKTP initiative. The specific activities undertaken may vary, but in all cases, the network's Platform activities must lead to tangible outcomes and impacts.

New Competition

The NCE Steering Committee invites potential applicants to the 2017 NCE-IKTP initiative competition to submit a Letter of Intent (LOI). This competition is open to all eligible applicants wishing to apply, including existing NCE networks and centres.

The LOI must describe the problem(s), challenge(s), or opportunity(ies) that the network's proposed Platform will address, as well as its vision, socioeconomic context, budget and key participants. An outline of the proposed Platform activities is also required. It should also summarize how the proposed Platform will address the five NCE-IKTP Criteria, as well as the goal and objectives of the NCE-IKTP initiative. Detailed information is available in the LOI guide.

Timetable

Dates	Milestone
February 2016	Competition Announcement
May 2, 2016	LOI Submission Deadline
May 24-26, 2016	Selection Committee Review
June 2016	Management Committee Review
July 4, 2016	Invitations for Full Applications
October 17, 2016	Full Application Deadline
December 6-8, 2016	Selection Committee Review
December 2016	Steering Committee Review
March 31, 2017	Release of Funds

Eligible Recipients

A. Eligible Applicants and Funding Recipients

Applications must be submitted by one or more researchers who are eligible to apply for funding under the policies and guidelines of at least one of the three federal granting councils (see eligibility criteria for [CIHR](#), [NSERC](#), and [SSHRC](#)) with the support of the Network Host (see below). Potential recipients must meet the general eligibility requirements of one or more of the three Granting Agencies partnering in the program.

B. Host Institution Eligibility

The Host Institution must sign and abide by the [Agreement on the Administration of Agency Grants and Awards by Research Institutions](#). This agreement, between at least one of the three granting agencies and the Host Institution, describes the basic requirements for obtaining and maintaining institutional eligibility to administer agency funds. The agreement also describes the roles and responsibilities of the Granting Agencies and the institution with regards to financial management and the management of Tri-Agency policies and guidelines (for example, research involving humans and animals, integrity in research and scholarship, environmental assessment).

Organizations eligible to receive NCE program grant funding are:

- Network Host: Eligible Canadian universities and post-secondary institutions with a mandate for research and their affiliated institutions (including hospitals, research institutes and other not-for-profit organizations), and associated researchers or a private-sector consortium that hosts a network.
- Private Sector Consortium: A not-for-profit corporation the majority of whose members consist of for-profit companies, that has defined goals and objectives as well as governance, financial and accounting structures that are completely distinct from those of its component companies and meet the requirements of the Agreement on the Administration of Agency Grants and Awards by Research Institutions.
- Network of Centres of Excellence: A not-for-profit corporation incorporated under the Canada Not-for-Profit Corporations Act, with an established Board of Directors responsible for the approval of its annual financial reports and audits, and its Network Members and associated researchers.

The Network Host must demonstrate evidence of an effective financial and accounting framework. Hosts that are academic institutions must also be part of the Agreement on the Administration of Agency Grants and Awards by Research Institutions. In the case of a private sector consortium, the proposed Host must meet the financial, accounting and other requirements set out in the same Agreement.

C. Application Eligibility

NCE–IKTP networks are expected to be multidisciplinary and to involve key individuals in a significant manner in areas that fall under the domains of two or more of the three federal granting agencies.

Successful NCE-IKTP networks must be incorporated federally as a not-for-profit corporation under the *Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act* before funds can be received.

Competition Process

The competition process involves two stages:

Letter of Intent (LOI) (Stage I) Mandatory

- The LOI will be reviewed by the NCE Secretariat for eligibility to the NCE-IKTP Initiative.
- The NCE Standing Selection Committee will review all eligible LOI applications and submit corresponding reports and recommendations as to which applicants should be invited to submit a Full Application to the NCE Steering Committee. The NCE Steering Committee will make the final decision. There is no appeal process.
- Applicants will be notified by the NCE Secretariat of the results of the LOI stage and will receive a copy of the evaluation report of the NCE Standing Selection Committee.

NB: Full Application Preparation (FAP) funding of up to \$15,000 may be requested by applicants who are invited to submit a full application to assist in its preparation. FAP funding can be used until the completion of the meeting of the applicants with the Standing Selection Committee and must be used for application-related expenses including communications and workshops; travel (including attending the Standing Selection Committee meeting in Ottawa); and secretarial, clerical and co-ordination services. To be considered for FAP funding, applicants must submit a one-page letter outlining their required budget, including a brief rationale of proposed expenses.

Full Application (Stage II)

- Submissions will only be accepted from applicants invited to submit a full application by the NCE Steering Committee.
- The NCE Standing Selection Committee will review all applications and submit corresponding reports and recommendations to the NCE Steering Committee.
- The Lead Applicant and proposed Chair of the Board of Directors will be required to attend part of the NCE Standing Selection Committee deliberations in order to provide clarification of, or elaborate on, aspects of the proposed platform. The face-to-face meeting with the Standing Selection Committee will be a half-day's commitment in Ottawa; further details will be provided to applicants in advance of the meeting. Applicants are reminded that the NCE Secretariat is the only contact point for any correspondence with the NCE Standing Selection Committee.

Budget

Successful applicants will be awarded up to \$400,000 per year for four years with a possible three-year renewal.

The second (and final) funding cycle of up to three years is only available to NCE-IKTP networks that have:

- been effective at translating knowledge for the benefit of partners and end users in Canada and abroad;
- demonstrated strong international partnerships that will ensure Canada's involvement in international cutting-edge initiatives in areas of socioeconomic importance;

- developed strong partnerships with foreign stakeholders to enable concerted efforts in high impact areas; and
- demonstrated a socio-economic benefit of its knowledge translation and/or technology adoption activities in Canada and abroad.

NCE-IKTP networks applying for a second funding cycle are expected to demonstrate that the collaborative platform model created in the first cycle has met or exceeded the goal and objectives of the initiative.

Competition Framework and Evaluation Criteria

Proposals are assessed against the five NCE-IKTP criteria, and the relevance to the NCE-IKTP goal and objectives. NCE-IKTP networks will also be evaluated on an ongoing basis during tenure of a grant against these same criteria.

Review Criteria:

In order to be successful, applications must meet the threshold of excellence in each of the five NCE-IKTP criteria. All criteria are weighted equally in the evaluation.

1. Expected Impacts and Added Value
2. Model for Collaboration
3. Strategic Plan
4. Proposed Team
5. Management and Governance

1. Expected Impacts and Added Value

This criterion addresses the question: what will the NCE-IKTP network achieve?

NCE-IKTP networks must be driven to address needs and problems of importance to Canada in an international context and are therefore expected to be multidisciplinary and multisectoral. NCE-IKTP networks are expected to benefit researchers, partners, stakeholders, as well as society in general in Canada and abroad.

Elements considered include:

- Clear identification of the issue(s) to be addressed and a description of the barriers to be overcome as they relate to (for example): the establishment of strong and fruitful collaborations (between networks, centres, consortia and their partners); the uptake and use of evidence-based knowledge; the adoption of technologies; and the identification of critical knowledge gaps;
- Demonstration of Canadian and international stakeholder engagement in identifying and addressing the problem(s), challenge(s), or opportunity(ies) and in co-creating and implementing the solutions;
- The quality and appropriateness of the proposed approach(es) to overcome the barriers to international engagement and impact;

- The expected socio-economic outcomes and impacts including social, economic, environmental, cultural, and/or wellness-related, of the proposed NCE-IKTP network and its relevance to stakeholders, as well as Canadians in general and the international community;
- The relationship and complementarity of the network's proposed activities to similar endeavours being carried out by other groups or being addressed through other opportunities in Canada and abroad;
- The expected outcomes with respect to Canada's international visibility and participation in international initiatives; and
- The expected impacts, beyond the period of NCE-IKTP funding.

Applications received from existing networks (including those currently or previously funded through the NCE suite of programs) must make a strong case for the incremental added value of the activities to be undertaken under the NCE-IKTP initiative, including how these differ from and complement the network's other activities.

2. Model for Collaboration

This criterion addresses the question: how will the NCE-IKTP network strengthen, expand and intensify meaningful international collaborations to achieve its objectives?

Elements considered include:

- The strategy for intensified engagement of current stakeholders and the plan to partner with additional stakeholders from Canada and abroad;
- Demonstrated links between national and international academic institutions, research networks, centres, institutions, consortia, federal and provincial agencies or equivalent (both Canadian and non-Canadian), non-governmental organizations, and private sector stakeholders;
- Demonstration that the most relevant stakeholders from Canada and abroad are actively involved from the outset as committed participants, with the intention of addressing the Platform goals (i.e. stakeholders who will maximize the desired outcomes and impacts of the NCE-IKTP network); stakeholders must include international partners;
- The history of proposed team members' partnerships with complementary groups and the plan to build on and extend these relationships to maximize the development of the proposed NCE-IKTP network;
- The commitment, nature and extent of contributions from the private, public and not-for-profit sectors (both Canadian and international) as well as the prospect for increasing commitments as the work progresses; and
- How the proposed collaborative model, including relevant policies (i.e. IP management), will ensure benefit to all parties.

3. Strategic Plan

This criterion addresses the question: how will the NCE-IKTP network achieve impact? A well-defined plan is critical for success.

Elements considered include:

- A defined strategic and operational plan, that reflects the NCE-IKTP network's goals, objectives, milestones and desired impacts, as it relates to knowledge translation;
- The feasibility of the NCE-IKTP network's plans (proposed platform activities) to deliver on its goals and objectives, which include (among others): establishing new and strengthening current collaborations as well as new and unique models of collaboration; and knowledge translation activities;
- The process that has been and will be used to identify internationally important knowledge gaps and needs, and the plan for informing research funders and others of the gaps;
- A Performance Measurement Strategy with defined metrics that assess:
 - the relevance, reach, accessibility, and use (uptake and application) of the technologies/tools/activities/programs/support provided by the platform in Canada and abroad; and
 - the degree to which there will be (and has been) impact on social, economic, environmental, cultural, and/or wellness-related outcomes in Canada and abroad;
- The plan for engaging and building collaboration and capacity among current and future stakeholders and beneficiaries in Canada and abroad; and
- The NCE-IKTP network's approach for adapting and innovating in response to new opportunities or unexpected challenges.

4. Proposed Team

This criterion addresses the question: who is going to drive the Strategic Plan and undertake the Platform activities in the NCE-IKTP network?

A network must demonstrate that it has identified the key individuals, roles and responsibilities necessary to establish, expand and intensify relationships with partners in Canada and abroad (including Canadian and international partners and other relevant experts, stakeholders, and beneficiaries) to create strong fruitful collaborations. NCE-IKTP networks must also demonstrate that these individuals have worked successfully in large, multidisciplinary projects or programs. It is expected that the Platform team will represent the international nature of the NCE-IKTP network and the plan to execute activities both in Canada and abroad.

Elements considered include:

- The appropriate expertise and experience of the proposed leaders, as evidenced by track record, to execute the platform's strategic plan, namely:
 - Experience in planning, coordinating, and implementing international agreements, partnerships and activities;
 - Multidisciplinary and multisectoral expertise;
 - Expertise and experience in engaging partners, creating and maintaining collaborations, partnerships, and networks;
 - Experience and expertise relevant to the planned activities;
- The time commitments and planned contributions of the leaders.

5. Management and Governance

This criterion addresses the structure and policies that will be put in place to oversee the NCE-IKTP network. **It is expected that the governance and management teams will reflect the international nature of the network's goals and activities.**

Each NCE-IKTP network must have an organizational structure appropriate for the management of a complex multidisciplinary, multi-institutional and multi-national program. A strong governance model with a sound management structure is essential to its success. **Note that all successful NCE-IKTP networks must be incorporated federally as a not-for-profit corporation under the *Canada Not-for-profit Corporations Act*.**

If an industry-led not-for-profit corporation is proposed as the Host Institution, it must be able to demonstrate that it has in place appropriate and robust policies, procedures and financial controls to administer funding to academic institutions.

Elements considered include:

- The presence of effective leadership with proven expertise in business management functions (including the administration of similar organizations); coordination and integration of Platform activities; building international partnerships; and evaluation of outputs, outcomes and impacts;
- Clarity of roles and responsibilities for management and staff;
- A defined and robust governance process;
- A board and committee structure to ensure appropriate decisions are made and implemented;
- Effective policies and controls to administer funding; sound planning and budgeting mechanisms; and
- Strong internal and external communications strategies.

Review and Decision Process

To ensure that only excellent proposals are funded and that all applications are treated fairly, the NCE Secretariat uses a comprehensive review process, in which proposals are assessed by impartial internationally-renowned experts in considering all five criteria of the NCE-IKTP initiative.

NCE Standing Selection Committee

The NCE Standing Selection Committee is composed of international-calibre, highly accomplished individuals with broad expertise representing the domains of the three federal granting agencies across all sectors. All Selection Committee recommendations are provided to the Steering Committee. The Selection Committee will:

- Review eligible LOIs according to the five NCE-IKTP criteria as well as the NCE-IKTP initiative goal and objectives;

- Make recommendations to the Steering Committee regarding which applicants should receive invitations to submit Full Applications;
- Review Full Applications according to the five NCE-IKTP criteria as well as the NCE-IKTP initiative goal and objectives; and
- Make recommendations to the Steering Committee regarding which applicants should receive funding and at which funding levels.

NCE Steering Committee

Programs administered by the NCE Secretariat are overseen by a tri-agency steering committee (NCE Steering Committee). The NCE Steering Committee comprises the Presidents of the three federal granting agencies, the Deputy Ministers of Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, and Health Canada and, as an observer, the President and CEO of Canada Foundation for Innovation. The Steering Committee will:

- Appoint members of the NCE Standing Selection Committee;
- Based on the recommendation of the review process:
 - Decide which applicants to invite to submit Full Applications for new networks;
 - Decide which applicants will receive funding for new networks; and
 - Establish funding levels.

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

Program Administration

The NCE-IKTP initiative falls under the Networks of Centres of Excellence (NCE) program, which is 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 Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada and Health Canada.

As an initiative of the NCE Program, the NCE-IKTP initiative builds upon the foundation of successful tri-agency collaboration. Day-to-day administration of the NCE-IKTP initiative is provided by the NCE Secretariat.

Environmental Review and Assessment

On July 6, 2012, the Canadian Environmental Assessment Act (CEAA) 2012 came into force. As a result, the review process for applications has been revised. Grant applicants are required to provide more specific information under a completely revised Appendix A (Environmental Information). Appendix B (CEAA Pre-Screening Checklist) no longer exists. In addition, the Policy on Environmental Assessment has been revoked and replaced by [Guidelines on Environmental Review and Assessment](#).

Please review the Guidelines and if any of the network's proposed activities fall under these Guidelines, please complete and submit the required documentation.

Privacy Act Statement

Information provided to the NCE is collected under the authority of the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council Act; the Canadian Institutes of Health Research Act; and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Act.

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On-line Resources

NCE website

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

Information Regarding the Meaning of Signatures

[Electronic Approval \(NSERC\)](#)

[CIHR - Meaning of Signatures on Applications](#)

Information Regarding In-kind Eligibility

[Guidelines for Organizations Participating in Research Partnerships](#)

[In-kind Eligibility Table \(CIHR\)](#)

Tri-Agency Use of Grant Funds

[Use of Grant Funds](#)

Other Useful Resources

For more information on the NCE Program, the use of NCE funds, and other relevant NCE program information, consult the [NCE Program Guide](#).

For more information on Management and Governance, see the [NCE Resource Manual on Best Practices for Governance and Operations](#).