Networks of Centres of Excellence

Networks of Centres of Excellence Knowledge Mobilization (NCE-KM) Initiative Competition

Letter of Intent Guide

The Networks of Centres of Excellence (NCE) Program is a federal initiative administered jointly by 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 (ISED) and Health Canada. The NCE-Knowledge Mobilization Initiative is an initiative under the NCE Program.

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Networks of Centres of Excellence Knowledge Mobilization Initiative

NCE-KM Network Competition

The NCE Secretariat invites potential applicants to submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) to the Networks of Centres of Excellence Knowledge Mobilization Initiative competition.

Guidelines for Completing a Letter of Intent

This guide is to be used in conjunction with the NCE-KM Initiative Competition Guide.

The LOI provides an overview of the goals and objectives of the proposed network. All LOIs will be evaluated according to the five NCE-KM Initiative Review Criteria, as well as the goal and objectives of the NCE-KM Initiative, to determine which applicants will be invited to submit a Full Application.

The LOI should be submitted on behalf of the proposed network by an eligible academic researcher (i.e., "the applicant", who is normally a proposed Network co-Director) and by the Host Institution. The applicant and Host Institution must be eligible to receive funding from one of the three federal granting agencies. (Further details regarding applicant and host eligibility can be found in the Competition Guide.)

The LOI must clearly describe the challenge(s) the proposed network aims to address. It must be co-developed with the knowledge user co-applicant and other relevant partners and stakeholders from the private, public and/or not-for-profit sectors. The extent of partner- and stakeholder-integration will be assessed; partners must be aware that their level of involvement, in addition to their cash and/or in-kind commitments, is critical to the success of the network.

Deadline

The deadline for the electronic submission of the LOI for the NCE-KM Initiative Competition is **April 16, 2018. LOIs must be received by the NCE Secretariat by 4:30 p.m. the applicant's local time.**

Applications must be submitted to the NCE on-line electronic application system as a single, searchable PDF file. Instructions for merging PDF documents can be found in Appendix B.

General Formatting and Presentation

Print must be in black ink on a white background, 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.

Page size is 8½ x 11 inches (21.5 cm x 28 cm), with margins of 3/4 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.

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. NCE-KM LOI Application Form *(Fillable PDF Form)***:**

The LOI Application Form is available on the NCE web site.

Section A: Summary Information

Complete and sign Section A of the LOI Application Form for the NCE-KM Initiative Competition. (Refer to Appendix A for the meaning of signatures.) The following information must be provided:

- **Applicant:** name, preferred language of correspondence
- **Network Co-Director:** name, preferred language of correspondence, and percentage of the total salaried time committed to the network
- **Knowledge User Network Co-Director:** name, preferred language of correspondence and percentage of the total salaried time committed to the network
- **Network title:** name and acronym of the proposed network (in both official languages) as it will be used for publication and communication purposes
- **Keywords:** up to ten keywords related to the proposed network

Names of Institutions and Representatives for
- **Five primary partners and/or stakeholders:** provide the names of up to five key non-academic partners/stakeholders (the signatories of the letters of support). Indicate their committed cash and/or in-kind support to the proposed network, if applicable.

Signatures and contact information for:
- The applicant, the Network co-Directors, and President or CEO (or delegate) of the proposed Host Institution. Also indicate the affiliation of the applicant and proposed Network co-Directors and include the complete mailing address, telephone number, and e-mail address for both.

2. Description of Proposed Network *(Free Form)***:**
Using the following headers, please provide details for each section while respecting the maximum page limit (Maximum 7 pages; 5 pages of free form + 1 page logic model + 1 page organization chart).

A. Expected Impacts and Added Value (Maximum 1 page)

Describe the goal of the proposed network. Include reference to the following under sub-headings:
- the challenge(s) the proposed network will address (including barriers and resistance to uptake);
- the goal of the proposed network;
- the anticipated key outcomes and impacts that will be realized by the end of the funding cycle; and
- the strategic importance and benefit for Canada of the proposed work/anticipated impacts.

B. Plan for Knowledge Mobilization (1 page logic model, 1 page description)

Provide a 1-page logic model that reflects the network's strategic plan. In addition, briefly describe the following in relation to the logic model:
- the projected timing of network activities and anticipated outcomes (a Gantt chart can be used);
- the knowledge mobilization techniques that will be used; and
- how progress and success will be measured.

C. Stakeholder Engagement (Maximum 1 page)

Referring to information provided in the Network Stakeholders table (Section 5), provide additional details such as:
- their involvement in the conception and design of the network;
- their anticipated involvement in the execution of the network's activities;
- any committed contributions (cash and/or in-kind); and
- the history of past collaborations between the network co-Directors and the stakeholder, if applicable.

Briefly describe the network's plan to engage additional stakeholders over the funding cycle.

D. Proposed Network Team (Maximum 1 page)

Provide an overview of the key players for the network. Describe how they:
- collectively have the required experience and/or expertise to execute the network's strategy (considering all facets of successfully running a network); and
- represent the diversity of perspectives required to enable the network's success.

Indicate the time commitments and planned contributions for each individual. There is no need to repeat information presented in Section C where there is overlap between the proposed network team and stakeholders; in such cases, provide complementary information only.

E. Management and Governance (1 page organizational chart, 1 page description)

Describe the proposed management and governance structures for the network, **including a 1-page organizational chart.** Describe how the co-leadership model will be implemented. Provide information about the nature and level of involvement of partners and stakeholders in the management and governance of the network, in particular with regard to strategic planning and the design and execution of network activities.

Briefly outline the administrative and operational structures of the proposed network, with regard to co-ordination of activities, setting schedules, monitoring the network's progress towards its strategic goals, and allocation of resources.

If the network Host is to be an industry-led incorporated not-for-profit consortium, provide evidence that the organization has in place the required financial controls, policies, procedures and a history of funding academic research.

3.   Explanation of Overlap (Maximum ½ page)

Where there is a potential for perceived overlap with currently or previously funded initiatives, describe the differences therein. Explain how the network will complement or build on the activities and achievements of the other initiatives, and highlight the network's added value.

4.   Support Letters

A. Host Institution Letter (Maximum 1 page)

A letter, signed by the President or CEO (or delegate) of the institution that proposes to host the network administrative centre (i.e., the Host Institution), must be included. This letter should outline the anticipated support from the proposed Host Institution. Host Institutions play an important role in networks through both direct support of the administrative centre and, normally, participation in network governance through voting membership on the Board of Directors.

The signature on the letter should match the signature in Section A of the Application Form.

B. Letter from Knowledge User co-Director's Organization (Maximum 1 page)

A letter, signed by the President or CEO (or delegate) of the organization for which the Knowledge User co-Director works must be included. This letter should confirm the organization's support of the proposed network, specifically referencing the commitment of the co-Director's time (as an in-kind contribution) to the network.

C. Letters of Support from Primary Partners and/or Stakeholders (Up to 5 letters, 1 page maximum per letter)

Up to five Letters of Support from the primary non-academic stakeholders listed in Section A of the LOI Application Form may be included (if applicable).

Letters should:
- come from a senior executive with influence over a budget;
- indicate the anticipated level, duration, and nature (cash and/or in-kind) of support for the proposed network;
- describe potential involvement and added-value of the proposed network to the stakeholder's current and future activities;
- indicate current and past associations with individuals participating in the proposed network's activities;
- not be template formatted by the applicant; and
- be dated and signed no earlier than December 2017.

5.   Network Stakeholders (Table – maximum 1 page)

In the table provided, please list the individuals and organizations that will be integral to the proposed network. Arrange the table by role (Knowledge producer, knowledge user, end beneficiary) and provide an estimate of their time commitment to the network.

6. Financial Overview (*Excel Tables and Free Form*)
(Maximum 3 pages)

Table 1: Anticipated Expenditures (Excel table, maximum 1 page)

Use Table 1 to indicate the anticipated expenditures of both NCE and non-NCE sources of funds (if applicable) for the proposed network (years one to four).

Please note: The NCE-KM Initiative funds knowledge mobilization activities and related networking activities (networking costs, network administration, etc.). NCE-KM funds may **not** be used for research-related expenses (see the *NCE Program Guide* for more information on eligible expenses).

Table 2: Anticipated Funding (Excel table, maximum 1 page)

Use Table 2 to indicate the cash and in-kind funding committed from up to five non-NCE stakeholders listed in Section A, if applicable (years one to four).

Note: at the LOI stage of the competition, it is not expected that applicants be able to list all anticipated sources of funding.

Explanation of Expenditures and/or Funding (Free-form, 1 page maximum)

Use a maximum of one page to briefly describe the anticipated expenses and/or funding.

Information Webinar

The NCE Secretariat will host webinars on **Friday, February 16, 2018**. In order to participate in the webinar(s), the followings links are to be used.

English webinar, 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. (ET): **http://nsercofcanada.adobeconnect.com/kmi_webinar/**

French webinar, 3 p.m. to 4 p.m. (ET): **http://nsercofcanada.adobeconnect.com/wic/**

To join the meeting :
- Enter your name
- Click "Enter Room"

We have updated our virtual meetings with VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol). If you are experiencing technical difficulties with the videoconference, join through teleconference using the information below. Do not join the teleconference unless you are instructed to do so.
- Local dial-in: 613-960-7514
- Toll-free dial-in: 1 877-413-4790
- Enter the conference ID: 7462843

Reminders and Contact Information

The deadline for the electronic submission of the LOI for the NCE-KM Network Competition is **April 16, 2018. LOIs must be received by the NCE Secretariat by 4:30 p.m. the applicant's local time.**

Applications must be submitted to the NCE on-line electronic application system as a single, searchable PDF file. Instructions for merging PDF documents can be found in Appendix B.

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

The *NCE-KM Competition Guide*, *NCE-KM LOI Application Form* and *NCE-KM LOI Excel Tables* can be obtained at www.nce-rce.gc.ca.

For more information, please contact the NCE Program at:

Telephone: **(613) 995-6010**
E-mail: **info@nce-rce.gc.ca**

Checklist

Each LOI **must not exceed 20.5** pages and must be submitted in the following order.

- ☐ NCE LOI Application Form (Fillable PDF Form) (2 pages)
- ☐ Description of Proposed Network (Free Form) (7 pages maximum)
  - ☐ Expected Impacts and Added Value (1 page maximum)
  - ☐ Plan for Knowledge Mobilization (1 page logic model, 1 page description)
  - ☐ Stakeholder Engagement (1 page maximum)
  - ☐ Proposed Network Team (1 page maximum)
  - ☐ Management and Governance (1 page organizational chart,1 page description)
- ☐ Explanation of Overlap (Free Form) (½ page maximum)
- ☐ Support Letters (7 pages maximum)
  - ☐ Host Institution Letter (1 page)
  - ☐ Letter from Knowledge User co-Director's Organization (1 page)
  - ☐ Letters of Support (1 page per letter, max of 5 letters)
- ☐ Network Stakeholders Table (1 page maximum)
- ☐ Financial Overview (Excel Tables and Free Form) (3 pages maximum)
  - ☐ Table 1: Anticipated Expenditures (Excel Table) (1 page)
  - ☐ Table 2: Anticipated Funding (Excel Table) (1 page)
  - ☐ Explanation of Expenditures and/or Funding (Free Form) (1 page)

Appendix A: ELECTRONIC SIGNATURES

What do the electronic or original signatures on the application mean?
For the Lead applicant
By signing and submitting my application, I (the Lead applicant):

- certify that the information provided in my funding applications and related documents is true, complete and accurate and that I have represented myself, my research and my accomplishments in a manner consistent with the norms of the relevant field;
- consent to the sharing between the NCE Secretariat and any academic institution to which I am, or may become, affiliated of any and all information, including personal information, in any way related to the application and to the grant/award;
- understand the Access to Information Act and the Privacy Act (including the Use and Disclosure of Personal Information Provided to the NCE Secretariat) as they pertain to grant application information;
- attest that participants listed on the application have agreed to be included;
- certify that I am not currently ineligible to apply for and/or hold funds from Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC), Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) or any other research funding organization world-wide for reasons of breach of responsible conduct of research policies such as ethics, integrity or financial management policies;
- certify that I respect and comply with the Values and Ethics Code for the Public Service, as required **only** if I am, or was in the last 12 months, a public servant in the federal government;
- accept the terms and conditions set out in NCE Program Guide and the [Agreement on the Administration of Agency Grants and Awards by Research Institutions](#) between the federal granting agencies and Canadian institutions;
- will inform the NCE Secretariat and institutional officials of changes in eligibility status;
- agree to comply with the policies and guidelines described in the Requirements for Certain Types of Research, including:
  - research involving humans;
  - research requiring human pluripotent stem cells;
  - research requiring the use of animals;
  - research involving controlled information;
  - research involving biohazards;
  - research involving radioactive materials;
  - research activities having potential effects on the environment; and
  - other related policies;
- will inform the NCE Secretariat and institutional officials of any changes in the nature of the research that may have an impact on certification or approvals on the same policies as in the previous bullet; and
- understand that maintaining public trust in the integrity of researchers is fundamental to building a knowledge-based society. By submitting this application or by accepting funding from CIHR, NSERC and/or SSHRC, I affirm that I have read and I agree to respect all the policies of these agencies that are relevant to my research, including the Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research. In cases of a serious breach of agency policy, the agency may publicly disclose my name, the nature of the breach, the institution where I was employed at the time of the breach and the institution where I am currently employed. I

accept this as a condition of applying for, or receiving, agency funding and I consent to such disclosure.

For academic participants:
By accepting to participate in the Network, I (the academic participant) also agree to the above.

The signatures of the institutional authorities certify that:
- the institution will abide by the roles and responsibilities as set out in the [Agreement on the Administration of Agency Grants and Awards by Research Institutions](#) with the three federal granting agencies;
- the applicant has met, or will meet, the eligibility requirements;
- the institution obtained written approval from other institutions involved in the application process prior to submission; and
- the institution agrees to comply with NSERC's, CHIR's or SSHRC's data protection requirements and has adequate safeguards in place to protect sensitive information entrusted to it by the NCE Secretariat for the purpose of administering applications and awards.

The signatures of authorized officers of other supporting organizations certify that the organization:
- agrees with the content of the application and will provide the committed resources; and
- agrees to the release of the public summary of the award and to the publication of the organization's name as a supporter of the initiative.

For further information, see the Questions and Answers on the Consent to Disclosure of Personal Information at address [on NCE's Website](#).

Appendix B: Guidelines for Merging PDF Documents

Adobe Pro is required in order to merge PDF documents, which is available for download online on [Adobe's website](). Once Adobe Pro has been downloaded, various PDF documents can be merged into a single document.

The Application Form is a protected document, so you will need to follow the steps below in order to merge various PDF documents into one cohesive, *searchable* document.

1) Preferred method:
   a. Open the completed LOI Form
   b. Select '**file**' then '**print**'
   c. When the print options opens select '**Adobe PDF**' as your printer then click on '**print**'
   d. This will not print the document. It will let you save it as another version
   e. Once you have saved it, you will be able to merge the LOI Form with the other files
   f. In order to merge various files, go to the last page of your newly formatted Form, and click the "Add Page from Another Document" icon in the toolbar; browse to the next PDF document that you want to add, double-click it and choose '**after**' – the document will automatically be added.
   g. Repeat step F with your subsequent PDF documents until you have one final merged document.

If you do not have the option to merge (which can happen depending on the software you are using, although it is fairly rare), you will have to complete the above steps then use one of the PDF merging websites below:

> http://www.primopdf.com/ (recommended – free and easy to use)
> http://foxyutils.com/mergepdf/
> http://www.pdfmerge.com/

2) Alternate method:
- From the LOI Form
  a. Click '**File**'
  b. Click '**Create**'
  c. Click '**Combine files into a Single PDF**'
  d. Click '**PDF portfolio**' in the upper right
  e. Use the '**Add Files**' button to select all PDFs that you want to merge together (including selecting the document you are currently using as the first one you select)