



# Best Practices to Secure OCI-NSERC Funding for Industry-Academic Projects

Program Information Session for the University of Toronto



OCTOBER 4, 2022

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## About OCI

- A not-for-profit funded by the Government of Ontario.
- Works in partnership with government, industry and academia to commercialize innovation.
- Supports SMEs and entrepreneurs through projects that create jobs and exports, attract local and international co-investment and make Ontario more globally competitive.
- Focuses on province-wide economic development.



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Voucher for  
Innovation and  
Productivity (VIP)

- **Accelerate** commercialization by leveraging expertise in Ontario's academic institutions
- **Generate** economic benefits for Ontario and its small and medium sized companies



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Voucher for  
Innovation and  
Productivity (VIP)

**Industry Partner:**

- For-profit SME
- Minimum 2 years in business
- Minimum 5 FTE



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## Voucher for Innovation and Productivity (VIP)

### Funding:

- \$20K - \$150K grant from OCI
- Project duration: 6 - 24 months
- Industry partner matches OCI funds (50% cash to academic institution)
- Spend focus: HQP
- No overhead shown in budget



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## Voucher for Innovation and Productivity (VIP)

### Partnered Options (in addition to NSERC)

#### SOSCIP

- Access to high performance IBM infrastructure
- Free access to IBM software and tech support
- Three platforms
  - GPU-Accelerated
  - Parallel CPU
  - Cloud Analytics

#### MITACs

- \$7500 per intern for 4-6 month internship
- Simply check box on the OCI application



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## Voucher for Innovation and Productivity (VIP)

### Application Process:

- One-page summary of project
- Academic institution and partner must agree on IP
- OCI Business Development Manager reviews application.
- Endorsement required from academic research office
- Submission to decision timeline ~ 30 days
- Success rate > 85%



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### NSERC at a glance

## Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC)



nserc-crsng.gc.ca

NSERC is the largest funder of science and engineering research in Canada. NSERC supports world-class research across the country with an annual budget of \$1.2 billion.

Our investments deliver discoveries—valuable world-firsts in knowledge claimed by a brain trust of over **11,000** professors.



**3,800** collaborations between researchers and partners in the private, public and not-for-profit sectors supported by NSERC last year.



**37,000** students are trained each year by Canada's most talented scientists and engineers.



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**Alliance Grants**



nserc-crsng.gc.ca

**Program objectives**

1. Alliance is NSERC's university research partnerships program
2. Support research in the natural sciences and engineering (NSE) led by strong, complementary, collaborative teams.
3. Enable collaborations with a broader set of partner organizations (private, public, not-for-profit sectors)
4. Interdisciplinary collaborations are encouraged with up to 30% of cost-shared project costs covered by Alliance.
5. Remove barriers and provide more flexibility in building partnerships that will effectively generate new knowledge and accelerate the application of research results for the benefit of Canadians.

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**Alliance Option 1**



nserc-crsng.gc.ca

**Who?**

**University  
researchers**

collaborating with private-sector,  
public sector or not-for-profit  
organizations

**How long?**

**1 to 5  
years**

**How much?**

**\$20K to \$1M  
per year**

The limits of the funding range  
are not yearly averages.

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Alliance Option 2

Who?

University researchers

collaborating with private-sector, public sector or not-for-profit organizations

How long?

1 to 5 years


How much?

>\$30K to \$300K per year

The limits of the funding range are not yearly averages.

Your proposal must meet all three specific characteristics to qualify for Option 2


societal impact  
making connections  
broad outcomes




nserc-crsng.gc.ca

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VIP-Alliance Grants



Where Next Happens



OVERVIEW



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## Guiding Principles



- Focus on high potential Ontario SMEs
- Suitable for 1-year projects with academic expenses less than \$90K
- OCI and NSERC fund 80% of academic cash expenses
- Opportunities vetted prior to applying
- Apply using NSERC online system



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## Who can apply?



### Academic Researchers:

- Eligible to hold Tri-Council funds
- Faculty from eligible Ontario universities
- Researchers with active OCI or NSERC peer-reviewed grants



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## Who can apply?



### Industry Partners:

- For-profit SME organization, with Ontario R&D and/or manufacturing operations related directly to the project
- 5-499 global full-time employees and incorporated at least two years.



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## Project Expenses

(Up to 12 months)



**\$20-30K**



**\$20-30K**



**Industry Partner**

**\$20-30K**

(at least 50% must be spent at the Academic Institution)






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# Project Cost Sharing Example


NSERC Cash	\$30K
OCI Cash	\$30K
Industry Cash	\$15K
Industry In-kind	\$15K
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$90K</b>





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# Application Process

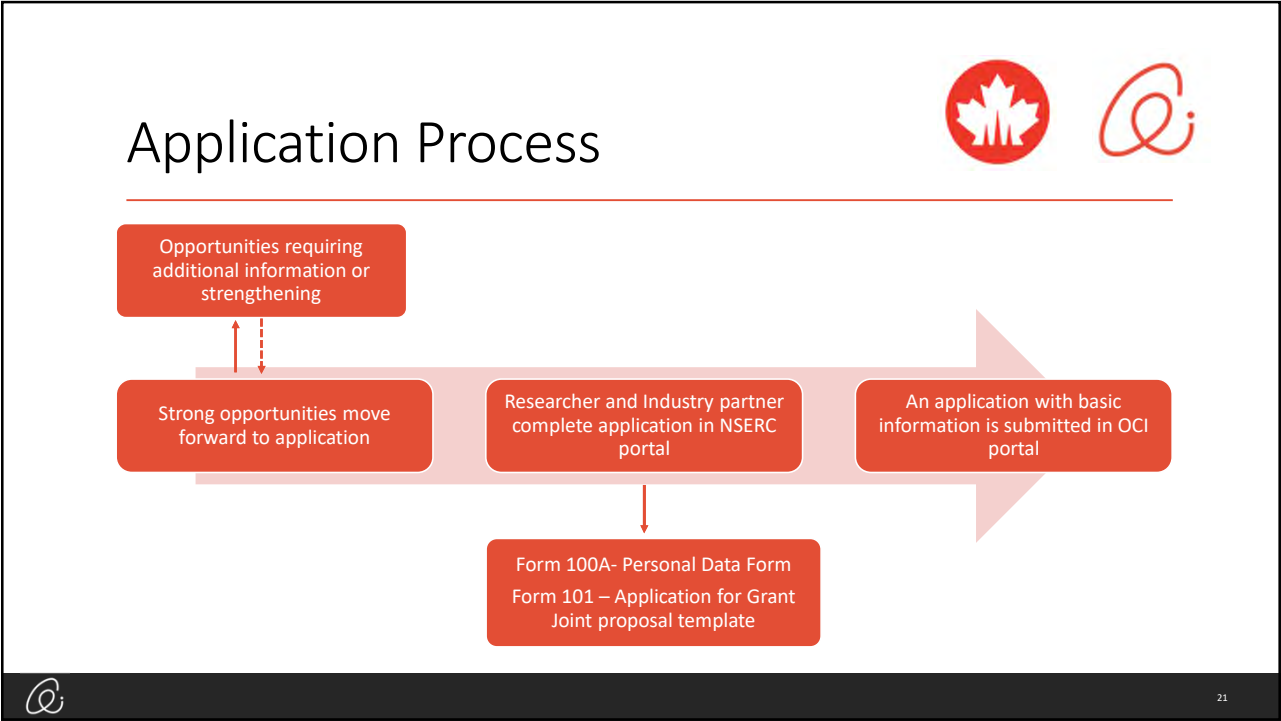


```
graph LR; A[Researcher Discusses Project Idea with NSERC or OCI Business Development Manager (BDM)] --> B[Researcher, Industry Partner and OCI BDM complete one page project summary]; B --> C[Opportunity is vetted by NSERC and OCI];
```

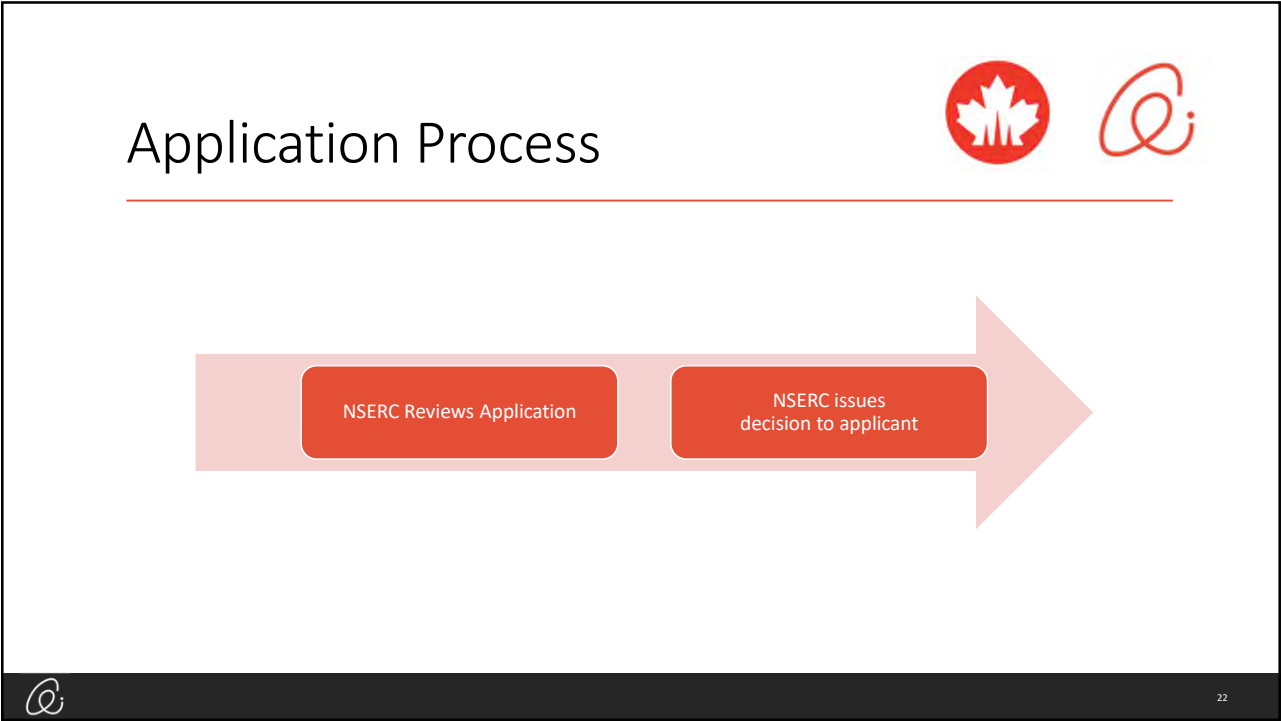


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## Joint Proposal Template



- Do not use the standard Alliance proposal template
- Please request the VIP-Alliance proposal template from your OCI Business Development and Commercialization Managers



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## Joint Proposal Template - Sections



### Relevance and Expected Outcomes

- What are partnership goals?
- What are the benefits to Ontario and Canada?
- How will project fill knowledge gaps?
- What Investment will industry partners make post-project?

### Potential for Commercialization

- Describe industry partners' business.
- Describe new products, services, productivity improvements, and competitive advantages anticipated.
- Provide quantitative estimates of project outcomes.

### Partnership

- List all industry partners involved.
- Describe industry partner's experience and efforts to date to address the problem.
- Describe how each industry partner will be involved.

### Proposal

- Outline research objectives.
- Indicate timelines and deliverables
- Explain how equity, diversity and inclusion have been considered in the research design.



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## Joint Proposal Template - Sections



Team	Training Plan
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>List applicant, any co-applicants and key industry staff</li> <li>Describe expertise and roles of team members</li> <li>Explain how equity, diversity and inclusion have been considered in academic team composition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Indicate how knowledge and experience gained by research trainees and industry partners are relevant to advancement of the field</li> <li>Explain how research trainees will develop relevant skills</li> <li>Explain how equity diversity and inclusion are considered in the training plan</li> </ul>



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## Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in your Training Plan



- You **must** describe **specific, concrete practices** that you will put in place to ensure that EDI is intentionally and proactively supported in your project's training plan.
- Vague or generic statements regarding EDI in the training plan (e.g., “the university is committed to EDI” or “in future hiring, EDI will be considered”) are insufficient and will lead to your application being rejected.



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## Equity, Diversity and Inclusion



- **Specific** actions or practices implemented to support EDI in your project's training plan should be guided by the following overarching objectives:

Removing **systemic barriers** from the recruitment processes to encourage full participation of individuals from underrepresented groups

Increasing diversity in the composition of teams

Integrating diversity and equity in mentoring, training and accessing career development opportunities

Fostering an equitable, inclusive and accessible research environment needed to enhance excellence in both research and training



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## National Security Guidelines for Research Partnerships – Risk Assessment Form



- **All** Alliance-VIP applications require a [National Security Guidelines for Research Partnerships Risk Assessment Form](#) to be complete and included with the application.
- For any questions answered “Yes” or “Unsure” in the “Know Your Research” and “Know Your Partner” sections, you **must** complete the “Potential Risks Identified” and “Risk Mitigation Plan” sections to explain your “Yes” or “Unsure” responses.
- Failure to properly complete the Risk Assessment Form will result in the rejection of your application.

The form is titled 'National Security Guidelines for Research Partnerships Risk Assessment Form'. It includes a header with the Canadian flag and the ISED logo. The form is divided into several sections: 'Know Your Research', 'Know Your Partner', 'Potential Risks Identified', and 'Risk Mitigation Plan'. Each section contains specific questions related to national security concerns, such as the nature of the research, the expertise of the researchers, and the potential for the research to be misused. Response options are provided for each question, including 'Yes', 'No', and 'Unsure'. The form also includes a 'Protected When Completed' label in the top right corner.



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# National Security Guidelines for Research Partnerships – Risk Assessment Form



## Best practices for completing the Risk Assessment Form

- Ensure to read the form in its entirety and consult any external resources mentioned in the form to ensure your responses are as accurate as possible.
- Use the tools and resources on the [Safeguarding Your Research](#) portal for information on how to identify and mitigate risks to security in research partnerships.
- Use your best judgement and show due diligence when developing a mitigation plan that addresses the potential risks you have identified. Examples of specific mitigation measures to include in your plan are included in the form
- All projects are unique and thus should be addressed through tailored risk mitigation measures.



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## Q&A



For more information about our programs, please visit:



[www.oc-innovation.ca](http://www.oc-innovation.ca)



[www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca)



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## Contact Information

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