

A. Background

The Kids Brain Health Network (KBHN) is a national research network established under the Networks of Centres of Excellence (NCE) Program, an initiative of the Canadian government to foster partnerships between universities, industry, government and not-for-profit organizations with the goal of mobilizing knowledge generated through research in ways that deliver socio-economic benefit to Canada.

As a national organization, KBHN partners with community groups, non-profit organizations, industry, parents, clinicians, health professionals, and provincial and federal governments to advance evidence-based solutions to improve outcomes for children with neurodevelopmental disabilities and their families. KBHN particularly values the voice of families and individuals with lived experience in the research that it funds, as partners in the research itself, in the review process and in mobilizing the knowledge generated.

Our Vision: All children living with neurodevelopmental disabilities enjoy quality of life, inclusion in all aspects of society and reach their full potential.

Our Mission: Through catalyzing collective action across sectors, KBHN ensures optimal care and better outcomes for children with neurodevelopmental disabilities and their families.

KBHN supports transformative research, provides training opportunities for the next generation of researchers and practitioners, empowers communities with the right tools and information, and translates research findings in **three key focus areas**:

- (i) earlier identification of children at-risk for a neurodevelopmental disability;
- (ii) evidence-based interventions for these children; and
- (iii) enhanced support for families.

KBHN is committed to implementation of research innovations into practice and ensuring evidence-based solutions reach their intended audience. In support of this goal, the Strategic Investment Fund was established to provide a mechanism for KBHN to respond to opportunities for supporting new projects that demonstrate a strong, near-term potential to advance KBHN's mandate to make a difference in the lives of children with neurodevelopmental disabilities and their families across Canada.

Purpose of this Request for applications

This request is designed to solicit proposals to the Strategic Investment Fund that will leverage KBHN funds and Network expertise in new ventures with the potential to generate impact and value for end users and stakeholders. The **expected outputs** of these projects could include, but are not limited to, changes in practice or policy, advancing new technologies or establishing new applications for existing technologies, and expanding or scaling direct supports for children and families.

Award Amount and Term

Successful project teams may request up to \$100,000/year for either 1 or 2-years from KBHN.

Application Procedure and Eligibility

This competition will involve a 2-stage application and review process. All applicants must submit a Letter of Intent (LOI) that will be ranked according to the criteria identified below by an independent

panel of experts assembled for this purpose. Selected applicants will be invited to submit a Full Application that will be adjudicated by KBHN's Research Management Committee. Applications at either the LOI or Full Application stage that are incomplete or do not provide all required information will be considered ineligible and withdrawn from the competition. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that all required elements of the LOI and Full Application are submitted on time. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.

The Nominated Principal Investigator must be eligible to receive NCE funds (consult the NCE Program Guide at www.nce-rce.gc.ca for information on eligibility). However, the Principal Investigator and/or Co-Principal Investigator may be from a partner organization.

The proposed research **must:**

- (i) advance innovative solutions that improve outcomes for children with neurodevelopmental disabilities and their families in at least one of KBHN's key focus areas; and
- (ii) engage families and/or individuals with lived experience in the design, conduct, analysis and/or dissemination of the research; and
- (iii) involve knowledge user partners in either the private or public sector who are well-positioned to adopt and implement the research outputs.

At the Letter of Intent stage an indication of the amount and source of partnership funding should be identified in the Letters of Support.

At the **Full Application** stage, there will be a **requirement** for (i) a written commitment that KBHN's investment in the research will be matched from external sources at a ratio of at least 1:1; and (ii) a detailed plan for sustainability of the initiative beyond the term of this funding (e.g., commercialization strategy, scaling and implementation into practice).

Proposal Submission-Review Timeline:

RFA Launch	April 30, 2021
LOI Submission Deadline:	<u>June 25, 2021 (5pm PT)</u>
Notification and Full Application Invitations:	July 30, 2021
Application Submission Deadline:	<u>October 1, 2021 (5pm PT)</u>
Anticipated Date for Award Notices:	December 30, 2021
Anticipated Award Start Date:	<u>January 1, 2022</u>

B. Letter of Intent Stage

Letters of Intent must be received by 5 p.m. PDT on June 25, 2021, and can be submitted to research@kidsbrainhealth.ca

The Letter of Intent with all required components should be submitted as a single pdf document. Page margins must be a minimum of 2 cm, and the font size used for text and headings must be no smaller than 11.

Only one (1) Letter of Intent may be submitted by an individual Nominated Principal Investigator/Principal Investigator/Co-Principal Investigator. The LOI must include the following:

- Project team: Nominated PI and/or PI, Co-PIs, co-applicants, collaborators, partners, stakeholders
- Lay Summary (200 words maximum)
- Research Proposal (3.5-pages maximum) that includes information on the following:
 - The specific need/problem that the research addresses
 - The current state of knowledge/evidence for the proposed solution
 - The research objectives, methods and evaluation plan
 - The strength of the project team and how it is positioned to adopt the research innovation into practice
- References
- Letters of Support outlining contributions (scientific and financial) of key partners and stakeholders

Only the strongest proposals will be invited to submit a full application.

Letter of Intent Review Criteria:

- Strength of evidence supporting the proposed solution and feasibility of achieving the expected outcomes within the funding period requested.
- Relevance of the research to the priority areas of the Kids Brain Health Network.
- Strength of the project team, including the commitment of partners to long-term sustainability of project outcomes.

NOTE: Applicants who do not have access to family partners are encouraged to contact KBHN for help and advice on recruitment of family partners to the research team. KBHN has established a strong cohort of committed family representatives who have received training through the Family Engagement in Research Certificate Course.

The Nominated Principal Investigator will be notified of the results of the Letter of Intent stage by July 30, 2021.

C. Full Application Stage

Applications must be received by 5 p.m. PDT on October 1, 2021 and can be submitted to research@kidsbrainhealth.ca

The full application must include the following:

- Project team: Nominated PI and/or PI, Co-PIs, co-applicants, collaborators, partners, stakeholders
- Equity, Diversity, Inclusivity, and Indigeneity Statement (1-page maximum)
- Abstract (1-page maximum)
- Research Proposal (10-pages maximum)
 - Provide a detailed explanation of the research objectives, methods and evaluation plan, including timelines and key milestones.

- Describe the role/contribution of each member of the project team.
- Provide a detailed plan for sustainability of the initiative beyond the term of this funding (e.g., commercialization strategy, scaling and implementation into practice).
- References
- Lay Summary (200 words maximum)
- Impact Statement (2-pages maximum)
 - Describe the metrics by which success and impact of the project will be determined (e.g., number of children/families who will benefit from the research, number and type of knowledge user organizations, new policies or practices expected from uptake of the innovation, new intellectual property created, new or expanded market for commercialization of innovative solutions).
- Budget Justification (1-page maximum)
- Budget Template
- Letters of Support confirming scientific, implementation, and financial contributions (cash and in-kind) of key partners and stakeholders

Required attachments (**no other attachments or supplementary information will be considered**)

- PI, Co-PI and co-applicant CVs (Canadian Common CV – CIHR Project Bio sketch or equivalent format)

Full Application Review Criteria

Applications will be evaluated on:

- Strength of the research team, including the commitment of partners and key stakeholders.
- Current state of knowledge/evidence supporting uptake of the innovation.
- Level of engagement of families and/or individuals with lived experience in the design, conduct, analysis and/or dissemination of the research.
- Strength of the proposal in addressing Equity, Diversity, Inclusivity, and Indigeneity.
- Relevance of the research to the priority areas of the Kids Brain Health Network.
- Impact statement and feasibility of achieving the expected outcomes within the funding period requested.
- Opportunities for training of Highly Qualified Personnel.
- Knowledge translation and sustainability plan, including the potential to generate near-term and long-term impact on children and families.

The Nominated Principal Investigator will be notified of the results of the Full Application by no later than December 30, 2021. Successful awardee/s will be expected to work with KBHN Communications to generate a suitable press release.