

2024 COMPETITION GUIDELINES

Game Changer Competition

BACKGROUND

The Alberta Cancer Foundation (ACF) exists to create more moments for Albertans facing cancer. We are the fundraising partner for all of Alberta's cancer centres. As the number of cancer cases continues to grow and more people survive their diagnosis, it's imperative for ACF to connect to donors and increase support for innovative programs across the province, from prevention and early diagnosis through to survivorship and end-of-life care. It is anticipated ACF will invest \$40M into cancer care and research in this fiscal year.

We are actively utilizing donor dollars to empower the best and brightest in cancer care and research through some of the following funding opportunities:

[Investigator Initiated Clinical Trials](#) (\$1.5M annually)

In addition to funding previously awarded IITs as they launch, ACF provides an annual \$1.5M funding envelope for new IITs. Funding decisions are made in consultation with Clinical Trials Unit and Clinical Research Unit leadership.

[Breakthrough Fund](#) (\$100K per project)

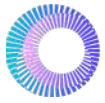
To truly transform patient outcomes and care, new ideas must move from research to development and through to commercialization. ACF's Venture Philanthropy stream provides \$100K investments to projects that are leading toward commercialization through a competitive process.

[Arthur Child Innovation Catalyst Grant Competition](#) (\$300K per project)

For the Arthur J.E Child Comprehensive Cancer Centre to grow as a world leader, it is critically important we seize emerging opportunities to maintain and enhance research and clinical excellence. The Arthur Child Innovation Catalyst Grant Competition will foster innovation in the screening/detection, diagnosis, treatment, supportive care, and/or long-term survivorship of cancer. It will allow research teams explore ideas with the potential to transform cancer care. Funding decisions will be made by the Arthur J.E. Child Advisory Committee.

[2023 Game Changer Competition](#) (\$5M total)

The inaugural Game Changer competition was a result of the incredibly successful We Cross Cancer campaign. It was designed to enable research teams to capitalize on existing areas of research strength, with the goal of boosting cancer research impact, productivity and capacity using creative approaches or fresh perspectives on existing ideas that may not be feasible using other sources of research funding. The result was support for 4 projects that are focused on new and innovative ways to identify, describe, and tackle important cancer research questions.



FUNDING COMPETITION GOAL

Growing on the success of the 2023 Game Changer Competition, ACF's future calls (outside the funding opportunities noted above) will be known as Game Changer Competitions. Each new competition will be unique, with levels of specificity that may include different themes or geographic focuses. The focus of each call will align to the priorities and opportunities of our partners in Cancer Care Alberta and post-secondary institutions and be aligned to donor interest.

The 2024 Game Changer Competition is centered around **Better Cancer Journeys**. The Alberta Cancer Foundation seeks to support patients through every stage of their cancer journey, no matter where in Alberta they live or the kind of cancer they're facing.

Applicants must be able to demonstrate the tangible, positive impact that their project or initiative intends to have on Albertans facing cancer.

ELIGIBILITY

- Principal Applicants must be based in Alberta and hold a position with Alberta Health Services (including Cancer Care Alberta), the University of Alberta, or the University of Calgary.
- Projects must be able to directly address the competition theme of better cancer journeys. There should be strong evidence that implementation of the proposed project or initiative will benefit the cancer journey within the next three to five years. Applications that do not make a convincing case for bettering the cancer journey will be deemed ineligible.

Past Examples of ACF-funded game changing projects would include:

Example 1: CAR-T Clinical Trial

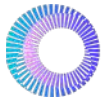
Example 2: Mobile Breast Screening Unit

Example 3: LINAC upgrade at the Arthur J.E. Child Comprehensive Cancer Center

USE OF FUNDS

Allowable expenditures include:

- Support for consumables, equipment and supplies, services, software, clinical / administrative data access, data storage;
- Equipment and supplies, trainee stipends or other supports, hiring of temporary staff or temporary salary offsets for existing staff, engagement activities designed to promote new collaborations, compensation for patient & family engagement, contributions to technician time, and other eligible costs linked directly to achieving the aim, objectives and desired outcomes of each project;
- Other reasonable expenses as approved by the ACF.



Ineligible uses of funding include:

- Facility renovations or structural alterations;
- Game Changer funding is time-limited (up to five years) and therefore cannot be used to hire permanent staff or contribute directly to salaries/benefits of existing staff. Hiring of temporary staff or temporary salary offsets for existing staff are allowed within the timeframe of the funding;
- Supporting ongoing maintenance or licensing of equipment or other services purchased under the auspices of the Game Changer funding. If ongoing maintenance or licensing is required following completion of the funding, applicants should provide details describing how they will find funds to ensure that the equipment or other services will be maintained beyond the term of the funding, and what will happen if no further funding is obtained;
- Legal costs associated with generating or reviewing agreements, applications pertaining to intellectual property, patents, or commercial product development; and/or
- Travel, registration fees, accommodation or other costs related to presenting the outcomes of the work described in the application.

APPLICATION PROCESS

This competition will not include an NOI phase. The application process will begin with a completion of the Full Application via an online portal [here](#). If you applied for the 2023 Game Changer Competition you will be able to use your existing login information. If you haven't applied previously, you will require the creation of new user profile in the portal. Applications received after the application deadline will not be considered for funding.

All applications must include the recommendation of a leader. **A recommendation from a leader is not meant to serve as a formal approval of the application, but rather as an acknowledgment of the general support of the host institution for the application to be considered for funding.**

Approved recommenders include:

Liz Ross, Senior Program Lead, Cancer Care Alberta

Doug Stewart, Medical Oncology

Michael Sidra, Senior Provincial Lead, Provincial Systems, Programs and Performance, Cancer Care Alberta

Paula Robson, Scientific Director, Cancer Care Alberta

Linda Watson, Executive Director, Supportive Care Services and Patient Experience, Cancer Care Alberta

Hanne Ostergaard, Director, Faculty of Medicine & Dentistry - Cancer Research Institute of Northern Alberta

Jennifer Chan, Director, Arnie Charbonneau Cancer Institute

Game Changer Committee

The Game Changer Committee core membership will include the leads of Alberta Health Services (AHS) newly created Program Improvement and Integration Network, the Executive Director of Supportive Care Services & Patient Experience at Cancer Care Alberta, and the Scientific Directors of the Cancer Research Institute of Northern Alberta (CRINA) and the Arnie Charbonneau Cancer Institute.

Full applications, including the name(s) and affiliations of Principal Applicant(s), will be shared with Committee members for the purposes of identifying any real or perceived conflicts of interest.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

In 2023, the Alberta Cancer Foundation held a series of engagement sessions with key stakeholders to develop a framework by which request for funding would be considered. The outcome was three distinct rubrics, each with a specific purpose.

Patient Need
System Need
Donor Interest

ACF leadership will utilize the Donor Interest rubric to undertake the assessment of projects for fundraising potential.

The Game Changer Committee will utilize the Patient and System Need rubrics to assess projects and to make funding recommendations to ACF leadership.

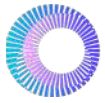
If required, at the request of the Game Changer Committee, individuals from the University of Alberta, the University of Calgary, the Clinical Research Unit or the Clinical Trials Unit may be asked to assist with the ad hoc assessment of applications.

We may also reach out to applicants and ask them to provide the name and contact details for one expert who does not have a conflict of interest (ie. hasn't co-published with the applicant in the past five years, preferably located outside of Alberta) who could provide further review of any projects if required.

Shortlisted applicants will be asked to present to the ACF Impact and Engagement Committee on February 13, 2025 and recommendations will be made to the ACF Board on March 13, 2025.

BUDGET & FUNDING

- Minimum funding amount of \$500K and maximum funding amount of \$5M, per application
- Maximum 5-year funding term to achieve outcomes, shorter timelines are allowed.
- Funds must be used within the funding term. A maximum of one no-cost extension to the funding agreement may be requested and considered for approval.
- Funds must be held at an approved host institution.



ALBERTA
CANCER
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GAME
CHANGER
COMPETITION

Better Cancer Journeys

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

Successful Game Changers will be responsible for providing ACF with interim reports annually and a final report after the completion of the project.

Game Changers must acknowledge funding support from the Alberta Cancer Foundation in all presentations, media and publications that result from the funded proposal.

Game Changers may also be requested to present to the Alberta Cancer Foundation Staff or Board.