



REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

TERRY FOX NEW INVESTIGATOR AWARDS (2027)

Purpose

To support outstanding new researchers as they develop their careers as independent research scientists or clinician scientists to undertake high-quality cancer research. These awards enable recipients to undertake high-quality cancer research with mentorship from two senior investigators.

Scope

Support under this Request for Applications (RFA) is targeted at high-quality biomedical, clinical and/or translational research, providing information that may form the basis of innovative cancer prevention, diagnosis and/or treatment. The Terry Fox Research Institute (TFRI) is looking for outstanding investigators to be mentored by two senior investigators.

Support Offered

Awards of up to \$175,000 per annum are tenable for **three years** and provide:

- Research expenses, including research staff, consumables and equipment¹
- Travel and accommodation for scientifically justified visits².

Funding Envelope

TFRI intends to support approximately five awards annually depending on application pressure and partnerships.

Eligibility

To apply you should:

- Hold either a PhD, MD or the equivalent.
- Hold a full-time appointment, or an equivalent that is leading toward a full-time, faculty-level contract of employment at an eligible Canadian research institution. Your position should allow you to supervise or co-supervise research trainees. This usually means a graduate school cross-appointment in most Canadian institutions.
- Have made intellectual contributions to research that are published in leading journals and be able to demonstrate your potential to carry out independent research.

¹ A maximum of \$70,000 is permitted for equipment purchases as part of this RFA, to be requested in the first year of the grant. Details of allowable costs are included in the *Terry Fox New Investigator Application Guide (2027)*.

² A maximum of \$5,000 per year is allowed for scientific travel, including participation in the TFRI Annual Scientific Meeting.



- Be within five calendar years from the start of your first faculty-level appointment.³

Ineligible to Apply

- Applicants who currently hold or have held a Terry Fox New Investigator Award.
- Applicants who have applied unsuccessfully for a Terry Fox New Investigator Award three times.
- Applicants proposing mentorship at institutions located outside of Canada.

TFRI is committed to equity, diversity and inclusivity and strives to promote inclusive excellence in its research programs. We welcome eligible applicants of diverse backgrounds to apply for our funding opportunities.

Mentorship and Institutional Sponsorship

For your application to be eligible for consideration:

1. Mentorship to be provided by at least two senior investigators at any eligible Canadian Research Institution.
 - a. A letter from each of the mentors must accompany your full application outlining how they will provide mentorship for your development as an independent researcher. Evaluation of the strength of the mentorship plan will be an essential review criterion for this competition.
 - b. Mentorship by a TFRI-funded research project is no longer a requirement to hold a Terry Fox New Investigator Award. Applicants may propose mentors who are not on the TFRI-funded programs list.
 - c. It is preferred that one of the letters comes from a researcher not within the same university department as the applicant.
2. An eligible Canadian research institution must sponsor your application and:
 - a. Ensure that you have, or will have, a full-time, or an equivalent that is leading toward a full-time, faculty-level contract of employment with the institution which will have begun on or before January 1, 2027. Please include the start date of your full-time faculty-level contract of employment in the institutional letter.
 - b. Ensure that you have sufficient time and adequate space for your research.
 - c. Demonstrate that the institution will provide adequate resources to you for the tenure of the award (e.g., start-up fund and so on).
 - d. Have completed a Memorandum of Understanding with TFRI on terms and conditions of funding. This may be completed after an offer of award.

³ Interruptions in your work such as parental leave, medical leave, bereavement leave and/or COVID-19 related research delays will be taken into account when determining eligibility. Please describe any interruptions or delays that affected the continuity of your work in the respective sections of the Registration of Intent and Full Application.



How to Apply

1. A *Registration of Intent* is required electronically by **Friday, May 22, 2026** (5:00 p.m. Pacific Time)
2. A *Full Application* is required electronically by **Tuesday, August 18, 2026** (5:00 p.m. Pacific Time)
3. Peer Review Committee meeting – **October/November 2026**
4. Funding Announcement – **Mid December 2026**
5. Funding Start Date is – **January 1, 2027**

The Terry Fox New Investigator Application Guide (2027) will provide detailed guidance to assist applicants in preparing their proposal.

Please Note: All **Terry Fox New Investigator Awards** applications will be made using TerryFoxTrack, our online grant management system. We strongly recommend that you **do not wait until the last minute** to submit your ROI and Full Application, in case you encounter any unexpected technical issues.

Our Program Managers are available to support you. If you experience any difficulties, please reach out as soon as possible to rwatkins@tfri.ca and cc track@tfri.ca.

Application Advice

Reviewers assess:

- The potential impact of the research and the fit to the scope of the RFA,
- The caliber and potential of the applicant (applicant's research training and evidence of, or potential to, conduct independent research),
- The excellence and scientific merit of the proposed research, and
- The suitability and commitment of the mentors and the applicant's home institution (research environment, mentorship plan and institutional support).

Applicants may only apply for one New Investigator award at a time. Awards are not renewable.

Reviewers will assess the strength of the mentors' offer to support and mentor the applicant as part of a long-term commitment to help the applicant realize their career development in research. We encourage applicants to engage with mentors during their application writing stage.

Conditions of Funding

Applicants and sponsoring Institutions are expected to observe TFRI's Research Administration Policy. This includes:

1. Certificates and Requirements

Before funding is made available, the Applicants must obtain from the sponsoring Institution all applicable certificates, including:

- a. *Biohazards*. For projects involving use of biological material, a certificate guaranteeing that the project will be conducted under conditions which satisfy the Canadian Biosafety Standard (CBS) 3rd edition (2023) and the Canadian Biosafety Handbook (CBH), 2nd edition (2015). (<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/canadian-biosafety-standards-guidelines.html>)
- b. *Animal Care*. For projects involving use of experimental animals, a certificate guaranteeing that all animals will be cared for and studied under conditions meeting the standards set forth in the Canadian Council on Animal Care. (<https://www.ccac.ca/>)
- c. *Human Studies*. For projects involving human subjects, a certificate stating that the protocols and methods have been reviewed by the Institutional Research Ethics Board and found to be acceptable in accordance with current edition of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada, Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada: 'Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans – TCPS 2' (2022) (https://ethics.gc.ca/eng/policy-politique_tcps2-eptc2_2022.html). If studies use investigational compounds, regulatory approval from Canada's Health Protection Branch is also required.
- d. *Use of Human and Biological Samples*. TFRI is committed to ensuring that high quality bio-specimens are used in research it funds, as these yield high, reproducible quality data. For this reason, TFRI requires all applicants for funding to certify that (i) all prospective (new) bio-specimens included in the TFRI-funded research will be collected in accordance with the standards set by the Canadian Tissue Repository Network (<https://www.ctrnet.ca/en/resources/national-standards/>) and/or the Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments Act (CLIA) of the United States (<https://www.cms.gov/Regulations-and-Guidance/Legislation/CLIA/index.html>) and/or (ii) all retrospective (old) bio-specimens used in the TFRI-funded research have come from a CTRNet or CLIA-certified bio-repository. Links to the CTRNet certification program and registered biobanks can be found at <https://biobanking.org/webs/certification>. Applicants are required to submit evidence of current certification and participation in external quality assurance programs with the proposal.
- e. *Data Management and Sharing Plan*. TFRI requires funded projects to create a data management and sharing plan which will identify the data to be generated, and any appropriate metadata and documentation, along with software or code needed to access the data. The plan should ensure that the data are stored and maintained in a manner which is consistent with standards appropriate to that type of data, and with a clear plan for deposition of data in an accessible, secure and curated repository for use by the research community. In particular this is an absolute requirement for data which supports published research findings. For research involving human subjects, researchers must respect ethical, legal and commercial obligations that apply to sharing data. Controlled access repositories are acceptable for data from human participants in order to comply with ethical and informed consent requirements. Applicants are referred to the Tri-Agency Statement of Principles on Digital Data Management <https://science.ised-isde.canada.ca/site/science/en/interagency-research-funding/policies-and-guidelines/research->



[data-management/tri-agency-statement-principles-digital-data-management](#) as well as the NIH Policy for Data Management and Sharing <https://sharing.nih.gov/data-management-and-sharing-policy/about-data-management-and-sharing-policies/data-management-and-sharing-policy-overview#after> for further information. TFRI recognizes that Data Management plans are evolving documents and that specific standards vary between research domains, but compliance with this goal in a manner appropriate to their specific research data is required.

- f. *Human Pluripotent Stem Cell Research*. TFRI supports use of induced pluripotent stem cells for cancer research but discourages use of human embryonic stem cells. TFRI endorses the guidelines set forward by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research on ‘Human Pluripotent Stem Cells’ integrated into the ‘Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS 2), Chapter 12, Section F’ (https://ethics.gc.ca/eng/tcps2-eptc2_2022_chapter12-chapitre12.html).

- g. *Policy Regarding the Use of AI Tools in Grant Applications*. **(NEW!)** A declaration regarding the use of AI assistance will be included in application templates and be visible to reviewers.

Any use of AI must be disclosed (type and version of the tool) and the purpose indicated (generation of abstract, etc). The applicant takes full responsibility for errors introduced by the tool. For example, a known problem is in the synthesis of references that are not real. A reviewer may penalize an applicant should such errors persist in the submitted application. Given that all reviewers share their reviews with other reviewers on the panel, this is quite likely to yield an unfundable score.

Any text generated with AI tools should be indicated (for instance using italics or a different font). TFRI reserves the right to use AI detection tools when previewing an application if it suspects inappropriate or undisclosed AI use. However, current tools are known to be problematic and so will not be the only arbiter of AI use assessment.

TFRI recognizes that most applications have input from multiple people. All contributors should be made aware of this policy.

Should a reviewer indicate that their enthusiasm for a particular application was significantly reduced by the suspected (i.e. not disclosed by the applicant) use of AI, they will be asked to provide specific evidence in their review.

This is an interim policy which TFRI expects to modify over time as the field of machine learning and development and capabilities of AI tools is evolving quickly. The policy is based on the government of Canada policy that covers the Tri-Council’s and CFI on use of generative AI but has additional considerations and limits.

<https://science.gc.ca/site/science/en/interagency-research-funding/policies-and-guidelines/use-generative-artificial-intelligence-development-and-review-research-proposals>

This policy will be updated frequently and the latest version will be posted at: <https://www.tfri.ca/funding-opportunities/policies-guideline-templates>

- h. *Policy Regarding the Use of AI Tools in Review of Grant Proposals*. TFRI prides itself in recruiting expert reviewers for adjudication of its applications. This recruitment is international and based on the scientific excellence and pertinence of the reviewer’s expertise to evaluate the applications



being considered for funding. Furthermore, use of some tools could lead to breach of confidentiality. For these reasons, use of AI tools in the preparation of reviews for TFRI administered grants is currently strictly forbidden. A declaration by reviewers that AI tools have not been used is also required.

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This policy will be updated frequently and the latest version will be posted at: <https://www.tfri.ca/funding-opportunities/policies-guideline-templates>

2. Reporting

Annual Scientific Research Progress Report, Annual Research Metrics Report and Quarterly Expenditure Reports. Please refer to TFRI's Research Administration Policy for details on the reporting procedures. TFRI also expects the New Investigators to contribute/present at TFRI Annual Scientific Meetings during the award term.

3. Project Title & Use of TFRI Logo

Funded Applications are to be called 'The Terry Fox New Investigator in [*title of program*]'. Investigators are expected to comply with TFRI's Visual Identity Guidelines to be found at www.tfri.ca.

4. Employment Equity

TFRI is committed to compliance with the Canadian [Employment Equity Act](#) and to ensuring that our funded research programs provide equal employment opportunities to women, Indigenous persons, persons with disabilities and members of visible minorities. All Funded Applications are required to employ non-discriminatory hiring practices in their workplaces.

5. Inclusion of sex and gender in research design where appropriate

Applicants are expected to include a statement in the proposal that they have considered sex- and gender-based analysis (SGBA) as appropriate. The purpose of SGBA is to promote rigorous science that is sensitive to sex and gender and therefore has the potential to expand our understanding of health determinants for all people⁴.

⁴ Please refer to <http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/50836.html> for more resources on SGBA.



For inquiries, please contact:

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