



Kids Brain Health Network (KBHN)

Innovation and Implementation Programs

What are the eligibility criteria for applicants?

The proposed research **must**:

- 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
- Engage families and/or individuals with lived experience in the design, conduct, analysis and dissemination of the research; and
- Involve knowledge user partners in either the private or public sector who are well-positioned to adopt and implement the research outputs.
- Include a person with training in implementation science

Applications are required to include:

- Written commitment that KBHN's investment in the research will be matched from external sources at a ratio of at least 1:1; and
- Detailed plan for sustainability of the initiative beyond the term of this funding (e.g., commercialization strategy, scaling and implementation into practice).

What will applications 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, Inclusion, and representation of underserved populations.
- Relevance of the research to the priority areas of Kids Brain Health Network.

- Impact and feasibility of achieving the expected outcomes within the funding period requested.
- Opportunities for training of Highly Qualified Personnel (trainees, specialized staff, and research staff such as undergraduate and graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, research associates, research assistants, and technicians).
- Scale and spread strategy and sustainability plan, including the potential to generate near-term and long-term impact on children and families.

How do you define Equity Diversity, Inclusion?

- **Equity** is about fairness. It is about deliberate efforts to ensure processes for allocating resources and decision-making are fair and do not discriminate on the basis of personal characteristics. Equity is a summative concept that is the outcome of deliberate efforts to create more diverse and inclusive approaches to organizational practices and to program delivery, including research. Equity results in parity of outcomes for members of under-represented groups or for those who face discrimination.
- **Diversity** is about representation. It brings a focus to the representation of groups that have traditionally been under-represented and have faced systemic discrimination in spheres as varied as employment, participation in clinical research, or in attracting research funding. Diversity is a dynamic concept. Some individuals may identify in ways that do not change over time. For others, the ways in which they identify may evolve over time. For example, sexual identity may change over time.
- **Inclusion** is about belonging. It is socially constructed. It brings into focus the climate or culture that fosters belonging in workplaces or when participating in activities or programs. Belonging cannot be mandated; it is experienced. While diversity is measured more objectively, inclusion relies on qualitative metrics.
- **Equity Deserving Groups** means racialized persons, such as Black Canadians; persons living with disabilities, including invisible and episodic disabilities; members of the 2SLGBTQI+ communities; and First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples who are under-represented in positions of economic influence and leadership.

What types of research projects are considered for funding?

KBHN supports transformative research and implementation in **three core challenge areas**:

- **Early Identification:** Evidence-based early screening tools are needed to identify children at risk of a neurodevelopmental disability. With early identification, evidence-based interventions and supports can be harnessed in the critical early years for optimal brain development.
- **Access to Interventions:** Evidence-based interventions for neurodevelopmental disabilities are not progressing quickly enough into practice and/or are not being scaled in an accessible manner in all parts of the country or to diverse cultures and communities where there is a demonstrated need.
- **Family Support:** The supports for children living with neurodevelopmental disabilities and their families are fragmented and inadequate. This creates increased parental stress and anxiety, a disproportionate negative impact on the ability of caregivers, particularly mothers, to participate in the workforce, and a negative impact on the quality of life for both children and families.

Are multidisciplinary or collaborative projects encouraged?

Yes. Strength of the research team, including the commitment of partners is an evaluation criterion.

Due the nature of the projects we are funding, multi- and trans-disciplinary teams are expected.

What if we don't have a person with lived experience?

KBHN requires all projects to include someone with lived experience, as this improves the project from design to delivery. If your team does not currently include an individual with lived experience and would like to be connected to someone, please reach out to research@kidsbrainhealth.ca. We can facilitate introductions to individuals with lived experience who have completed the Family Engagement in Research course and may be a good fit to support your project.

What if we don't have a person with implementation training?

KBHN requires all projects to have someone with implementation training on the project team. KBHN has invested in training cohorts of Highly Qualified People through the level 1 Implementation Center Certificate. Should a project team need someone with implementation training, please reach out to research@kidsbrainhealth.ca and we can facilitate introductions to individuals with implementation training who may be a good fit to support your project.

How do we submit?

KBHN plans to launch a submission portal by mid-November. We will post the submission link on our website as well as send an update through the channels we have used to launch the proposal call. Submissions will not be accepted via email unless pre-approved.

Can international researchers or institutions participate?

No. The teams must be located in Canada; however, engagement in international activities is welcomed.

What documents are required for the application submission?

The full application must include the following:

- Description of project team: Nominated PI and/or PI, Co-PIs, co-applicants, collaborators and partners (1 page maximum)
- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Statement (1 page maximum)
- Abstract (1 page maximum)
- Proposal (10 pages maximum)
 - Provide a detailed explanation of the project objectives, methods, outcomes 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, or new or expanded market for commercialization of innovative solutions).
- Budget Justification (2-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**)
- Nominated PI/PI, Co-PI and co-applicant CVs (Canadian Common CV – CIHR Project Bio sketch or equivalent format)

Is there feedback provided for unsuccessful applications?

Due to the volume of the applications we receive, we are unable to provide tailored feedback to unsuccessful applications.

Can an applicant submit more than one proposal in a funding cycle?

An applicant can be on multiple proposals as a Co-Investigator or Co-PI. However, an applicant can only be the PI on one submitted proposal. Projects can be submitted to both streams; however, a proposal will only receive funding from one funding stream per cycle.

What costs can be considered in-kind?

Eligible:

- Actual salary cost (including benefits)
- Cost for 1 licence per software package
- Cost of equivalent commercial product, where donated software is not commercially available

Not Eligible:

- Flat-rate charges for overhead costs (indirect costs)
- Cost of developing or maintaining database
- Salary overheads
- External charge-out or consultant rates
- Cost of benefits outside the average market range

For full details please review Strategic Science Fund Guidelines for calculating the value of in-kind contributions or email research@kidsbrainhealth.ca with specific questions.

What are the reporting requirements if awarded funding?

- Financial and annual reporting will be subject to Strategic Science Fund (SSF) funding rules.
- KBHN is streamlining a mid-year check-in process to ensure projects are on track to meet their deliverables.

Is there a requirement for matching funds or institutional support?

Matched funding is required and must be contributions (cash or in-kind) to be spent on the SSF project. Match funds cannot include any federal source, including all federal sources that flow through separate entities (e.g. Tri-Agency funding to universities, federal funding to other organizations). Whilst these sources of funding do not count as match funding, the potential for leveraging other federal funding is encouraged. Matched funds for this competition cannot have been reported as matching funds for another federal program.

Will KBHN help applicants secure matched funding?

No. KBHN cannot guarantee help to applicants to secure matched funding.

What support does KBHN offer funded programs?

KBHN is building expertise in implementation and commercialization and will work with successful applicants to facilitating access to supports as needed for them to achieve success.

Can projects funded in past KBHN cycles apply?

Yes. Successful projects funded in past cycles by NCE funding may apply; however, they must continue to meet the new criteria. Having received funding from KBHN in the past will neither positively nor negatively impact in the evaluation. All proposals will be equally evaluated based on content of submission.

Are there ethical approval requirements that need to be met before applying?

No, but there needs to be a clear path to ethics approval for proposals that require it.

Can projects involve partnerships with industry or non-profit organizations?

Yes.

What obligations do researchers have regarding open access?

We follow Tri-Agency Open Access Policy on Publications.

Who can I contact for specific questions or assistance with my application?

research@kidsbrainhealth.ca

How are intellectual property rights managed for projects funded through KBHN?

At KBHN, we are committed to improving outcomes for children and families by supporting projects that focus on early identification, access to effective interventions, and strong family support. Our funding goes to initiatives led by innovators with a clear commitment to seeing their solutions put into practice and scaled across Canada, ensuring they reach those who need them most.

We recognize that intellectual property (IP) can present challenges, as policies differ between institutions. However, we believe IP should not become a barrier to spreading and scaling projects. It's important that the benefits of these innovations aren't limited by geographic or institutional boundaries. For example, an institution preventing the spread of a project beyond its province would limit its potential impact, which we aim to avoid.

At KBHN, we will work closely with our partners and their institutions to ensure that the projects we invest in can grow and be implemented more broadly. Our focus is always on maximizing positive outcomes for children and families nationwide. In return, we expect our role in helping these projects succeed to be recognized through fair participation in the benefits generated. This partnership approach is key to ensuring that our support leads to lasting, meaningful change.

Do projects need to be bilingual?

No. Projects can be submitted in either English or French.

What are the matching fund criteria for this opportunity?

Matched funding must be identified specifically for this project (i.e.: not as overhead costs for multiple projects). The matching can be made up of multiple partner contributions, including from foundations, as long as they're identified as specifically funding this project and for the duration of the project (i.e.: not funding set to end prior to the expected end date of the project with KBHN).

Are private corporations allowed to apply?

SSF allows companies that deliver public engagement activities and industry, including start-up companies, housed in Canadian post-secondary-linked incubators. Projects that meet all the requirements will be considered; however, an implementation partner with matched funding is required for all projects.

Would a provincial project qualify for this grant or does it have to be national?

We welcome all applications that meet the funding criteria and advances one of our priority areas: Early Identification, Access to interventions, and Family supports, and applications from groups led by people with lived experience. The projects must be scalable nationally; however, it does not need to start national in scope, especially at the innovation level.

What constitutes in-kind support?

You can find the full SSF In-Kind guidelines here: [Strategic Science Fund: Program guide Appendix C – Guidelines for calculating the value of in-kind contributions.](#)

Do PI salaries count as matching funds/in-kind support?

Although Principal Investigator salaries and Indirect Costs are not eligible budget expenditures and do not count toward 1:1 matching requirement, they must still be listed as in-kind support.

Are KBHN programs and funding options available to programs in the US?

We are excited when teams collaborate internationally; however, the PI for these programs need to be located in Canada and have Canada as their primary focus.

Will KBHN offer the Innovation and Implementation Programs funding opportunity every year?

We are excited to offer this current round of funding and are committed to supporting as many proposals as possible that meet our criteria and demonstrate implementation readiness. The decision to open another call next year will depend on the volume and quality of proposals we receive this time. However, we do anticipate additional funding opportunities over the next five years. We encourage you to submit your proposal and stay updated on upcoming opportunities through our [newsletter](#).

Can matching funds come from a provincial government?

Yes. Matched funds can come from any non-federal government entity or source (provincial, municipal, community, corporate, etc.) We can also look at “leveraged funds” if they come from other federally funded entities.

Can teams submit applications for both the Innovation and Implementation streams if the projects are unrelated?

An applicant can be a team member on multiple proposals. However, an applicant can only be the PI on one submitted proposal.

What are the criteria for a PI?

The Principal Investigator does not need to have academic affiliations. The PI will need to demonstrate that their experience and expertise allows them to successfully lead a project of the scale proposed in the application. The PI would be submitting the proposal, be responsible for project oversight, and reporting. They would already be a member of the team, likely the most senior member.