

Guidelines for Research Grant Applications

2024-25

Application Deadline: January 30, 2025

1. Eligibility

Applicants (i.e., Principal Investigators) must be Tri-Agency eligible (eligible to apply for Tri-Agency funding, i.e. CIHR, NSERC, SSHRC) through their respective academic institution.

Please note that Co-Investigators must also be eligible to apply for and hold funds as per the policies of their institution. Collaborators do not need to be Tri-Agency eligible.

2. Clarification of Terms: Co-Investigator, Collaborator, Graduate Student, Government or Industry Partners

2.1

- a. A *Co-Investigator* is an eligible researcher who is responsible for specific aspects of a research project.
- b. Graduate students may not be listed as *Co-Investigators*. Graduate students are not permitted to assume responsibility for a research project in the event that the original Principal Investigator is unable to maintain principal responsibility and/or finish the project.
- c. Representatives of partners (i.e., NGO, government, industry) are Collaborators rather than Co-Investigators.

3. General Principles and Conditions

- 3.1 It is the Institute's practice to normally consider only one application from any Principal Investigator during any given grant competition.
- 3.2 Consideration will be given to all applicants, but funding will be provided based on the scientific merit of individual applications, contribution to the Institute's research mandate, contribution to one of the Research Areas outlined in the Call for Proposals document, policy relevance, and record of research achievement of the applicant. Preference will be given to those projects that will undertake research in or with strong relevance for Alberta. The Institute will seek peer review of grant applications.
- 3.3 Because the significance of the work is evaluated, applicants must provide a theoretical rationale and a full explication of methodology and a data analysis plan.
- 3.4 Successful applicants will be expected to collaborate with the Institute on the development of communication strategies and plans.



- 3.5 Successful applicants will be expected to collaborate with the Institute to develop strategies for policy analysis and consult with policy-makers throughout the project. Research programs may be required to establish, in collaboration with ALI, a Project Advisory Committee comprised of stakeholders e.g. from related industry, government, and academic fields.
- 3.6 Applicants must provide a non-technical abstract of the project that will be used for public communications such as the website (250 words maximum).
- 3.7 Grant funds may be used only for the project and purposes described in the application, subject to any special conditions outlined in the Notice of Award.
- 3.8 The applicant(s) must abide by the policies and regulations for research funding operative at the University of Alberta [or at their institution].
- 3.9 Funds will be transferred to the Principal Investigator by the University of Alberta's Research Services Office.
- 3.10 Normally the term of the grant will be in accordance with the applicant's request or as negotiated with the Institute. An extension to the term may be considered upon prior written request to the Director. Unspent funds are to be returned to the Institute at the conclusion of the project. Please note that funds may be held back if milestones are not met.
- 3.11 Applicants must indicate as precisely as possible the policy relevance of the proposed research project.

4. Termination

- 4.1 An award may be terminated if the General Principles & Conditions are not observed. Unspent funds must be returned to the Institute if the award is terminated.

5. Grants

- 5.1 The applicant is responsible for obtaining their required institutional approvals. For the University of Alberta, their Department Chair and Dean, and the Faculty's Research Facilitator must approve the application. If the applicant is the Department Chair (or Dean), they will require the approval of the appropriate Dean and/or Vice-President.
- 5.2 The applicant is responsible for ensuring their institutional approval. For the University of Alberta, they will follow the U of A's process for appropriate approvals.



6. Graduate Student Support

- 6.1 Applicants must comply with their university's guidelines on graduate students' rate of pay.
- 6.2 The Institute will contact the Principal Investigator once their grant has been disbursed to collect a list of all employees working on Institute-funded research including names, level of academic study (e.g. MA, MSc, or PhD), academic discipline, and contact information.

7. Other Budget Items on Detailed Budget Sheet

- 7.1 Indirect costs are not an eligible expense by the Alberta Land Institute.
- 7.2 Substantial transfer of funds (above 10%) from one budget category to another, and/or use of funds for a previously unspecified category are not permitted without prior written approval of the Director.
- 7.3 Grant funds may not be used to provide honoraria or teaching release or sabbatical salaries for the Principal Investigator and/or Co-Investigators and/or Collaborators.
- 7.4 Proposals should be clear and concise, justify the use of all monies requested, and provide all information requested on the application form.
- 7.5 Small equipment is generally not funded. Any small equipment that is included in the funding application must be fully justified. Please note that funding of small equipment is at the discretion of the Institute.

8. Evaluation Process Criteria

- 8.1 Grant applications will be reviewed by external experts. The peer reviewers will make recommendations to the Director. The decision of the Director on grant applications is final and not subject to further review or appeal.
- 8.2 Funding will be based on overall academic merit. In addition, applications will be evaluated according to the following criteria:
 - a) Is the research proposal consistent with the purpose and objectives of the Institute and the topics outlined in the call for proposals?
 - b) Are the contributions of the research to the development of policy options or policy analysis clearly described?
 - c) Does the proposal clearly describe the research problem and the potential contribution to knowledge?
 - d) Are the methods clearly described and appropriate for the problem?
 - e) Does the research team have a strong record of achievement and sufficient experience?



- f) To what degree will multiple research disciplines be engaged in the initiative? (Where applicable.)
- g) To what degree will collaboration with stakeholders outside of academic institutions (i.e., government policy-makers, NGOs, land users) be engaged in the project?
- h) Are there opportunities to build capacity by providing students with opportunities to engage in the research?
- i) Are the budget allocations sufficient to complete the work?
- j) Is the project feasible and appropriate given the objectives, budget, and methodology?
- k) Is the budget appropriate?

Please note that preference will be given to those projects that will undertake research in or with strong relevance for Alberta.

9. Reports

Further details on interim and final reports and financial reporting can be found in the *Report Guidelines*.

