



Canadian Nurses Foundation
Fondation des infirmières et infirmiers du Canada

NURSING CARE PARTNERSHIP

Merit review process: Information for partners submitting proposals

BACKGROUND

Partnership Structure

The Nursing Care Partnership (NCP) is a research initiative to increase the pool of funds available for research on nursing care issues.

In January 2003, the **Canadian Health Services Research Foundation (CHSRF)** granted the **Canadian Nurses Foundation (CNF)** a five-year renewable award of \$2.5 million for the administration of the program.

Currently, NCP works on a partnership structure. The purpose of forming partnerships is to use the NCP fund to leverage existing nursing care research funding and to encourage new supporters of nursing care research. Partners include charities, hospital and research foundations, nursing specialty groups, institutes, health care corporations and other agencies with an interest in supporting nursing care research.

Nursing care researchers usually receive NCP funding by competing successfully in the partners' competitions. Partner organizations:

- 1 Run their own competitions, including peer/merit review
- 2 Submit successful proposals to CNF for approval through the NCP merit review process and CNF Board, and
- 3 Administer funds to successful candidates.

Merit Review Principles

- 1 Research supported with funds from the NCP will have undergone a review by the partner agency that includes positive assessment by nursing and other peers of its scientific merit and capacity of the research team. Reviewers will include scientists who have expertise in bio-ethics, statistics and research methodology.
- 2 Research supported with funds from the NCP will have undergone a review that includes positive assessment by decision-makers of its potential impact on nursing practice and health services delivery (either through the originating agency and/or through the CNF).
- 3 CNF strives to streamline the dual review process as much as possible in the interest of enabling partners to make timely funding decisions. To this end, CNF encourages partners to integrate NCP review criteria into their review processes. The NCP Executive Merit Review Panel (NCP panel) reviews the partner's



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- review panel and process and assesses for gaps. If there are gaps in the partner's process, CNF may review proposals from the perspective of the gap(s).
- 4 The NCP panel provides constructive feedback—from the perspective of meeting NCP criteria—to CNF partners on their review processes with the objective of developing stronger, more collaborative review processes that eliminate the need for dual reviews.
 - 5 The NCP panel provides constructive feedback to researchers, through the partner organization, on every proposal submitted, with the objective of developing stronger research projects and proposals.

What NCP funds

The goals for NCP are to support **research on nursing care issues** and **build nursing research capacity** by funding research on nursing care issues.

To this end, NCP only funds research on nursing care issues. NCP defines nursing care research or clinical nursing research as *research that is practice-based or that will provide the groundwork for future practice-based studies*.

NCP does not fund **health system research** (e.g. nursing recruitment, retention, management, organization, leadership and the issues emerging from health-system restructuring). However, there is often a fine line between health system research and nursing care research. For NCP to contribute funding, the panel must be comfortable that there is *a potential impact on nursing practice, whether direct or indirect*.

Research funded by NCP must be **relevant to decision-makers** – people who control health care resources and/or influence clinical practice.

Proposal budgets should reflect only costs directly related to research (e.g., laboratory materials and supplies, hiring research/technical assistants and related travel). The purchase of equipment, up to a maximum of 50% of the value of the first year's budget, is permitted. Stipends for research trainees (e.g., graduate students, post-doctoral fellows) are allowed. Funds may not be used as salary for the grantees or for indirect costs of research (e.g., library, heat and light, office furniture, overhead, administrative charges and fees). NCP does not fund the costs of program delivery, incremental or otherwise.

Research must address at least one of the **NCP priorities**:

1. Supporting research that takes place in "clinical" settings—where nurses provide care—including non-acute settings, e.g. in the community.
2. Supporting research that involves novice researchers.
3. Supporting research teams that are interdisciplinary.
4. Having a truly national program with projects in all provinces – including supporting projects in under-resourced areas.



Quality monitoring/improvement projects are not funded by NCP.

Program evaluations are funded by NCP if the study involves the creation of broadly applicable new knowledge for nursing practice.

NCP does not fund personnel awards.

TIMELINES

The NCP Executive Merit Review Panel meets in Ottawa twice a year in April and by teleconference in June and in September.

Data Collection Sheet Deadline	Application Deadline
8 February	1 March
11 May	1 June
9 July	13 August

Partners will be notified of the results of the review by 15 April, 15 July and 30 September.

Note: There may be exceptions to timelines based on the timing of the partner's competition. Exceptions must be negotiated with NCP program director at the time of forming the partnership.

INFORMATION REQUIRED FOR SUBMISSION

CNF requires **6 copies** of the following information at the time of proposal submission:

- 1 Full project proposal with the following information included or added:
 - Research team members – education and experience; role in the project.
 - Summary – purpose and objectives; background; method (sample, data collection, analysis, feasibility etc.); ethical considerations; **dissemination plans; potential impact on nursing care (direct or indirect)**.
 - Budget – detailed accounting of how research dollars will be spent.
- 2 Partner scientific review committee composition including name, discipline, area of expertise (e.g. bioethics, research methodology, statistics, decision-maker), and current role. It should be clear who is reviewing from a decision-maker point of view. Decision-makers include administrators, managers, Clinical Nurse Specialists and professional practice leaders. Clinicians and educators are not viewed as decision-makers.



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- 3 Partner review process including policy on formal ethical review; agency or program mandate; guidelines for reviewers, including assessment criteria and weighting. Describe how the project is reviewed for relevance and/or potential impact to health services delivery.
- 4 Reviewers' comments on individual proposals – strengths and weaknesses.
- 5 Final rating and ranking of individual proposals if applicable.
- 6 The completed DATA COLLECTION SHEET. Note: this is easily filled out by the principal investigator.

Submit **6 copies** of partner application package by **post or courier** to:



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