Ontario SPOR SUPPORT Unit (OSSU)

EMPOWER Projects

Engaging **M**ulti-stakeholders for **P**atient **O**riented-research **W**ider **E**ffects and **R**each Projects

September 2022

SUMMARY

Program:	EMPOWER Projects
Overview:	...
Funding:	$25,000 for a one-year period
Launch Date:	September 15, 2022
Application Deadline:	October 20, 2022
Anticipated Notification:	January 20, 2023
Funding Term:	1 year starting from February 1, 2023

ABOUT SPOR AND OSSU

Canada's Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research (SPOR) is a national collaboration of federal, provincial and territorial partners dedicated to enhancing the integration of research into care. SPOR was created by the Canadian Institutes for Health Research (CIHR) to integrate funding, research and expertise to foster evidence-informed health care by bringing innovative diagnostic and therapeutic approaches to the point of care to ensure greater quality, accountability and accessibility. SPOR has several elements through which to achieve its goals, including the provincial and territorial SUPPORT Units and national SPOR research networks. The Ontario SPOR SUPPORT Unit (OSSU) will facilitate the implementation and mobilization of SPOR in Ontario for capacity building towards sustainability of patient-oriented research (POR).

Established in 2013, OSSU is a collaboration of 14 leading health research centres, supported by a Coordinating Centre which facilitates, connects, and integrates activities across the network. Jointly funded by the Government of Ontario and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research, the initiative engages patients[1], researchers, clinicians, policy makers, industry representatives and other health system professionals to implement SPOR within Ontario.

DETAILS: EMPOWER Projects

Ontario is home to a wealth of high-quality patient-oriented research, with research teams meaningfully partnering with patients, families, caregivers, and communities to deliver rigor, relevance and results from their patient-oriented research project. For these patient-oriented research findings to enter the evidence chain for changing health policy, practice and health outcomes, there is often a need to support end-of-grant knowledge mobilization activities to build the relationships and push the results to those who can use them to effect real impact and change for Ontario. This includes the extent to which patient-oriented research findings will be transferrable and scalable to support Ontario's response to health system and public health challenges (e.g., to practice, programs and/or policy contexts). **End-of-grant knowledge mobilization covers any activity aimed at diffusing, disseminating, or applying the results of a research project. Outputs at the end-of-grant stage include a focus on knowledge-users and community dissemination. The goals of end-of-grant**

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[1] "Patient" in the terminology of SPOR includes patients, family members, caregivers, and community members.

activities include raising awareness of the research in the original project and promoting action in moving the research forward to practice and policy.[2] Funding is explicitly designed to extend mobilizing the results of the original project to help to support Ontario's response to health system and public health challenges (e.g., to practice, programs and/or policy contexts).

In our current health system climate in Ontario, patient-oriented research is more important than ever in informing practice and policy. Research that affects the implementation of changes in the health and public health systems can be all manner of health systems, health services, health policy, clinical or public health research that is applicable to our current health system and public health challenges.

Fairness or equity in health care and health outcomes can be promoted through patient-oriented research. As outlined in OSSU's Fairness is Excellence framework, a research project can promote health equity when they are designed and conducted with equity in mind, when patients or members of the public who reflect the diversity of the actual population are meaningfully engaged, and teams are formed fairly.

SELECTION PROCESS

OSSU is inviting submissions from qualified research teams who can demonstrate that an existing and completed POR project would benefit from: a) an injection of knowledge mobilization investment is needed for the co-production of outputs stemming from the original project findings and b) this investment may have beneficial impacts for the health of Ontarians and the Ontario health system.

OSSU welcomes co-designed (with patient and caregiver partnership) submissions that relate to one or more of the following 3 priorities that advance the objectives of OSSU for the development of capacity and sustainability of POR in Ontario:

1) Equity with a focus on: Improving health equity through using data OR Equitable access to and use of health data;
2) Mobilizing knowledge with diverse populations and minorities, linguistic groups including/not exclusive to Francophone community partners, Indigenous community partners, patient partners, and decision makers;
3) A project that demonstrates the general goal of advancing the goals of the quadruple aim (improved patient experience, better outcomes, lower costs, and improved provider experience).

EXPECTATIONS OF FUNDING SUPPORT RECIPIENTS

OSSU's EMPOWER Projects recipients are expected to complete the following in their funding period:

- At the outset of the funded period, OSSU's Research Centre at the McMaster Health Forum will run a mandatory online training session for all project teams that will cover:
    - Writing policy briefs;
    - Engaging with citizens and plain language outputs;
    - Integrating knowledge users in knowledge mobilization activities to increase impact; and,

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[2] Guide to Knowledge mobilization Planning at CIHR: Integrate and End-of-Grant Approaches. Retrieved April 4, 2022, from https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/45321.html

- o Utilizing multiple information and activity streams to support knowledge mobilization activities **as per the definition under the Details section**.
- All recipients are required to produce a targeted policy brief around the findings of their POR project that will be developed using integrated knowledge mobilization approaches and are expected to provide a copy of the targeted policy brief to OSSU at the time of submission of the final report survey.
- Recipients are expected to produce a diverse set of approaches to knowledge mobilization that are designed to meet the needs of stakeholders who can make the most impact from the health POR project findings. Recipients are expected to provide a copy of created outputs to OSSU at the time of submission of the final report survey.
- Recipients are expected to create a short (2-3 paragraph) impact narrative to support research and patient-oriented activities. This is laid out in the End of Project Reporting Survey, which recipients will receive prior to the end of funding support (due within two months after funding has ended).
- Recipients are expected to demonstrate how their proposed project takes into account equity or fairness and to complete relevant training offered by the OSSU.
- Recipients are expected to demonstrate inclusion of trainees and patient partners in the proposal and the maintenance of this in the final report.

Funding support for the OSSU EMPOWER Project are NOT to supplement research activity funding or to conduct further research based on the initial patient-oriented research project. Funds are to support knowledge mobilization activities to achieve impact of the original research.

FUNDS AVAILABLE
OSSU will allocate up to $25,000 for a one-year period beginning February 1, 2023 for up to six Project and we encourage Early Career Researchers to apply.

HOW TO APPLY
Submissions involve three documents:
1. The original project proposal
2. EMPOWER workplan, following workplan criteria (see EMPOWER Workplan Template)
3. Budget using the OSSU budget template provided

WORKPLAN
The workplan for the EMPOWER Project proposal should follow the OSSU Workplan Template provided. The workplan must clearly identify:
- Who the Recipient of funds is; the title of the project that this end of grant funding support is supplementing; the funding agency; and funding dates of the original project;
- That the EMPOWER Project being applied for is related to a patient-oriented health research project with meaningful patient partnership (through a short patient partner[3] testimony from a patient partner in the initial project);
- The proposed stakeholders who will be targeted and engaged through the EMPOWER Project to maximize the impact of the POR project are identified;
- Outcomes (with milestones) to be accomplished via the proposed EMPOWER Project;
- How patient partners are going to be an integral part of the proposed EMPOWER Project; and

- How the project will address diverse populations and minorities, linguistic groups including/not exclusive to Francophone community partners, equity, diversity, anti-racism, inclusion, and Indigenous issues faced in Ontario.

BUDGET
Using the budget template provided, prepare the budget and budget justification. Honoraria or other compensation for patient partners are eligible costs under the OSSU budget process.

ELIGIBILITY
In order to be eligible for this funding opportunity, proposals must identify:
- That the initial POR project has taken place in Ontario;
- That the initial POR project ended no more than 2 years from the start date of the EMPOWER Project funding (e.g. POR project completed no later than December 31, 2022);
- That the initial POR project can demonstrate meaningful patient partnership;
- That the initial POR project was NOT funded by the Ontario SPOR SUPPORT Unit as part of its IMPACT Award demonstration Project;
- That the proposed knowledge mobilization team incorporates patient partnership in the proposed activities;
- That the recipient of funding is associated with a CIHR-eligible institution to whom OSSU funds can be flowed (as per CIHR's TAGFA); and
- That the recipient of funding has not held an EMPOWER Project (previously EMPOWER Award) within the last 3 years on the original project.

We encourage candidates at all career stages to apply, including early career researchers within the first 5 years of independent appointment.

REVIEW PROCESS AND EVALUATION
Submissions received by the closing date will be assessed in a two-stage process. The first stage is a review by a committee of experts in patient-oriented research, knowledge mobilization, and implementation science. These include policy-makers and health system researchers. The committee will consider:
- The quality of the initial patient-oriented health research project that will be built on with the EMPOWER Project (scientific quality, patient partnership approach);
- Extent to which the patient-oriented research findings will be transferrable and scalable to support Ontario's response to health system and public health challenges (e.g., to practice, programs and/or policy contexts);
- The relevance and involvement of the stakeholders implicated in the proposed EMPOWER Project; and
- The appropriateness and feasibility of the activities outlined in the proposed EMPOWER Project and proposed impacts.

Those submissions successfully shortlisted for potential funding support will then be assessed by the OSSU Patient Partners Working Group, who will assess proposals based on:
- The meaningful engagement of patient partners in the initial POR project;
- The proposed knowledge mobilization activities;
- The potential benefit to patients, families, caregivers, and communities of the outcomes of the proposed knowledge mobilization activities through the funding support of the project.

Based on the findings of the expert review committee and the patient partner review, up to six applications will be selected for funding.

The application deadline is Thursday October 20th at 5pm. Submissions sent after 5pm will not be included.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS
Workplan Template
Budget Template

CONTACT
Further information about the call and application requirements can be obtained by emailing ossu@ossu.ca, please indicate **RFP EMPOWER Project VI, attn Hilary Edelstein** in the subject line.

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Online resources related to Patient-Oriented Research

OSSU   www.ossu.ca
CIHR   www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca
PCORI   www.pcori.org
NIHR https://evidence.nihr.ac.uk/

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