



CCS Accelerator Grants

Scientific Merit Rating Scale

The Accelerator Grants Scientific Merit rating scale is to be used by all reviewers to assess the scientific merit of an application. Assigned reviewers are asked to assign a preliminary **Scientific Merit** score (0-5) based on the criteria below, and to record this score in EGrAMS prior to the panel meeting. *Note that guidance has been provided to indicate which criteria may be deemed most relevant by reviewer type, particularly for interpreting score descriptions below, however reviewers are free to assess based on their own personal (and intersectional) expertise/experience.*

Review Criteria	Sci	PSC	End-User
Research Strategy			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rationale and evidence for the proposed work is thorough and compelling (where relevant, evidence-based interventions are underpinned by randomized efficacy trials and effectiveness studies, are cited in systematic reviews and/or meta-analyses, or are included in evidence summaries, such as clinical practice guidelines) 	✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scientific approach, including theories and frameworks, is well-described and feasible, with potential challenges and alternative solutions discussed 	✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High likelihood that the project, as described, will generate anticipated results 	✓		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aims are clearly articulated (research question clearly articulated when relevant) 	✓	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sex, gender, and other dimensions of diversity (e.g. race, ethnicity) and their intersectionalities are appropriately addressed throughout the project, including the study design, methods, analysis, interpretation, and dissemination/implementation of findings/outcomes 	✓	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The term and amount of support requested is appropriate. Relevant costs are accounted for. 	✓	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is thoughtful consideration of barriers to recruitment and accrual, for example, number of hospital/clinic visits, number of tests, costs to get to treatment (i.e., travel and parking, etc.) 	✓	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If possible, the proposed research considers quality of life of study participants in tangible, measurable ways, and addresses the cancer burden to participating patients and caregivers 	✓	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The public summary clearly spells out the need, goal, methods (including co-creation methods) and expected outcomes of the project and is written in non-technical language. 	✓	✓	✓
Team Composition & Environment			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research team (including patient/survivor/caregiver and implementer/decision-maker stakeholders) possess the relevant/appropriate expertise and experience, as well as capacity (i.e. time) for the proposed project. No expertise is 'missing' 	✓	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessibility, equity, diversity and inclusion principles are evident in team composition 	✓	✓	✓



<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is sufficient (and fair) representation of affected populations (patient/survivor/caregiver stakeholders) on the research team – or an acknowledgement of deficits that will be addressed 	✓	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meaningful (i.e. co-creation) involvement has been demonstrated with all members of the research team, and in particular affected community stakeholders. There is evidence that patients/survivors/caregivers have been and will be engaged throughout the life of the research project. The process of engagement will be evaluated as part of the project. 	✓	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For projects involving First Nations, Inuit, Métis or Urban Indigenous communities – there is evidence of alignment with Indigenous principles of self-determination and self-governance such as the First Nations Principles of OCAP® (Ownership, Control, Access and Possession), the CARE Principles for Indigenous Data Governance, or other relevant principles of Indigenous self-determination in research. 	✓	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementers/decision-makers are appropriate, have been fully engaged throughout the research process, and have demonstrated a commitment to uptake/implementation and/or sustainability (as relevant, for Synthesis or Implementation Science applications) 	✓	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans for sustainability beyond the project term are clear and feasible (and demonstrated through in-kind and/or financial contributions and/or written commitment to ongoing implementation) 	✓	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms of Reference are clear and appropriate. Roles and responsibilities are clear, including time commitment and remuneration (where eligible). 	✓	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The environment where the research will take place is appropriate 	✓	✓	✓

Score descriptions

When interpreting score descriptions, the proportion of criteria addressed (all, majority, most, etc.) should pertain only to those that are relevant to a given reviewer. For example, if PSCs are scoring based on 15 (of the possible 18 points above), then 15 is the denominator for the descriptions below.

Description	Score range	Funding priority
All scoring criteria have been met and some exceeded. Each item has been appropriately and thoroughly addressed. Very minor improvements are recommended.	4.7 – 5.0	Highest
The majority (>85%) scoring criteria have been met and some exceeded. The majority of items have been appropriately addressed. Some minor improvements are recommended.	4.3 – 4.6	High
Most (70-85%) scoring criteria have been met. Most items have been appropriately addressed. There are several minor or moderate areas for improvement, but no major weaknesses	3.9 – 4.2	Medium-High
Many (60-70%) scoring criteria have been met. Many items have been addressed. There is at least one moderate weakness.	3.5 – 3.8	Medium-Low



Some (30-60%) scoring criteria have been met. Few items have been addressed. There are major weaknesses and the proposal needs further development before being competitive in this program.	3.0 – 3.4	Low
Not enough (<30%) scoring criteria have been met. The weaknesses of the proposal outweigh the strengths.	Below 3.0	None

Relevance and Potential Impact Rating Scale

The Accelerator Grants Relevance and Potential Impact rating scale is to be used by all reviewers to assess the relevance and potential impact of an application. Assigned reviewers are asked to assign a preliminary **Relevance and Potential Impact** score (0-5) based on the criteria below, and to record this score in EGrAMS prior to the panel meeting.

Criteria	Sci	PSC	End-User
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Application is relevant to one or more of the following CCS Research Goals: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Preventing cancer in Canada Detecting and diagnosing cancer earlier in Canada Enhancing the duration and quality of life for people diagnosed with cancer in Canada Increasing the number of people in Canada who have equitable access to timely, affordable, and high-quality cancer prevention and/or care 	✓	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Intervention is (or will be) relevant to the specific community(ies) 	✓	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence of need for implementation of an/the clinical or other intervention is demonstrated. Benefit of successful implementation is clear. There is value (intrinsic and/or scientific) from a patient, survivor or caregiver perspective. 	✓	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence that the intervention will be sustainable over the long-term (for Implementation Science applications only) 	✓	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Impact on patients/affected communities have been appropriately considered - project will not exacerbate or place undue hardship and/or mitigating strategies have been described 	✓	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High likelihood that the project, as described, will generate outcomes that will be meaningful to people affected by cancer within 2-5 years 	✓	✓	✓
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limitations to applicability of results have been described. 	✓	✓	✓

Score descriptions

Description	Score range	Funding priority
All scoring criteria have been met and some exceeded. Each item has been appropriately and thoroughly addressed. Very minor improvements are recommended.	4.7 – 5.0	Highest
The majority (>85%) scoring criteria have been met and some exceeded. The majority of items have been appropriately addressed. Some minor improvements are recommended.	4.3 – 4.6	High



Canadian
Cancer
Society

Most (70-85%) scoring criteria have been met. Most items have been appropriately addressed. There are several minor or moderate areas for improvement, but no major weaknesses	3.9 – 4.2	Medium-High
Many (60-70%) scoring criteria have been met. Many items have been addressed. There is at least one moderate weakness.	3.5 – 3.8	Medium-Low
Some (30-60%) scoring criteria have been met. Few items have been addressed. There are major weaknesses and the proposal needs further development before being competitive in this program.	3.0 – 3.4	Low
Not enough (<30%) scoring criteria have been met. The weaknesses of the proposal outweigh the strengths.	Below 3.0	None