Overall scoring

Overall score:	
Merit (M) score	50%
Relevance & Potential Impact (RPI) score	50%

The expert review committee includes scientific (**SR**) and patient/survivor/caregiver (**PSC**) reviewers. Reviewers will use two rating scales to score applications. A **Merit rating** and **a Relevance & Potential Impact (RPI) rating** should be given on a scale of 0-5, to 1 decimal place.

Note: Initial/preliminary scores given during the review process may not be the final scores, as reviewers may need more information to evaluate certain aspects of an application. **Reviewers are free to assess based on their own personal/intersectional expertise/experience and are expected to take the panel discussion into consideration and** evaluate the application holistically **to determine their final scores.**

Score descriptions

Descriptor	Score range	Definition	Outcome
Outstanding	4.5 - 5.0	<u>All scoring criteria</u> have been met and some exceeded. Each item has been appropriately and thoroughly addressed. Very <u>minor improvements</u> are recommended.	Priority for funding
Excellent	4.0 - 4.5	<u>The majority (>80%)</u> of scoring criteria have been met and some exceeded. The majority of items have been appropriately addressed. Some <u>minor changes</u> are recommended.	Priority for funding
Good	3.5 - 4.0	Many (60-80%) scoring criteria have been met. Most items have been appropriately addressed. There are <u>several minor or one moderate</u> areas for improvement, but no major weaknesses.	Fundable
Fair	3.0 - 3.5	Some (40-60%) scoring criteria have been met. Some items have been addressed but there are notable gaps. There is at least one major weakness <u>or</u> many moderate weaknesses.	Not fundable
Poor	2.0 - 3.0	Not enough (20-40%) scoring criteria have been met. Some items have been addressed but there are notable gaps. There is at least one major weakness <u>and</u> many moderate weaknesses.	Not fundable
Incomplete	Below 2.0	Few (<20%) scoring criteria have been met. Multiple major weaknesses. The proposal needs significant development before being competitive in this program.	Not fundable

Merit (M) rating scale

The **Merit** rating scale is to be used by reviewers to assess the merit of an applicant's proposed research project. The lists below show the criteria to be evaluated, and reviewers are asked to use these criteria to help them holistically assess each application. For example, minor or moderate weaknesses in some areas may be compensated for by strengths in other areas. **Only criteria highlighted in blue should be taken into consideration at the LOI stage. All criteria will be considered for the full application.**

Reviewers are asked to use this scale to assess each application, assign a Merit score (0-5), and record this score in EGrAMS prior to and during the panel meeting

If any major weaknesses are identified, this rating should **not** be above 3.5.

Merit criteria Proposal - 60% of merit score	SR	PSC
• Scientific rationale, question and evidence for the proposed work are clear, thorough, and compelling.	✓	
• Aims are clearly articulated and well-conceived. Strategies are in place to mitigate any potential issues related to interdependency of aims that may affect project feasibility.	✓	
• Methods/approach are justified, clearly described, and feasible and aligned with aims. Theories and/or frameworks guiding the research are clearly described and justified.	✓	
• Key milestones and timelines are clearly defined and realistic. There is a high likelihood that anticipated outcomes will be realized.	✓	
• Feasibility of the project is well-articulated, including identification of potential challenges and how they will be addressed, mitigating strategies and alternative approaches.	✓	✓
• The term and amount of support requested is appropriate. Relevant costs are accounted for.	✓	
• The public summary is written in non-technical language and clearly describes the aim of the project and alignment with the CCS goals/priorities, methodology, relevance and potential impact of the proposed project, methods and approach and the process for engaging patients, caregivers, end-users and other stakeholders in design, implementation and results dissemination.		✓
• Sex, gender, and other dimensions of diversity/social determinants of health (e.g. race, ethnicity, education, economic status) and their intersectionalities are appropriately <u>addressed and</u> <u>incorporated</u> in the study design, methods, analysis, interpretation, and dissemination/implementation of findings/outcomes.	✓	✓
• Ownership of data and other products resulting from the research are described and appropriate. 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.		

Merit criteria Team & environment – 40% of merit score	SR	PSC
• The applicant has the expertise to carry out the proposed research. The applicant demonstrates a good level of productivity in their research program: broad research outputs (i.e., not only publications) in accordance with previous funding and human resource capacity, while considering context (career stage, discipline/pillar, institution/location, leave history).	✓	✓
• Applicant has (or has a plan to secure) the necessary resources and additional expertise to complete the work, including alternative strategies.	✓	✓
• The environment(s) where the research will take place is/are appropriate (e.g. contain the required equipment, expertise, and support, including any collaborations, when relevant).	✓	✓
• Meaningful involvement has been demonstrated with <u>all</u> members of the research team (including patient/survivor/caregiver). Terms of Reference are clear and appropriate. Roles and responsibilities are clear, including time commitment and remuneration (where eligible, including for PSCs).	✓	✓
• Knowledge/End Users have demonstrated a commitment to uptake/implementation and/or sustainability, as relevant	✓	✓
• Accessibility, equity, diversity, and inclusion principles are evident in team composition, recruitment processes.	✓	✓
• For applications involving First Nations, Inuit, and Metis Peoples, the Principal Investigator self-identifies as Indigenous, **and/or** the project involves meaningful participation and direction as determined by Indigenous organizations, groups, or individuals related to the project's focus area. Examples of Indigenous participation could include Elders, Knowledge Keepers, governments, health centres, or community organizations/groups related to the project's focus.	✓	✓

Note:
- *Please be aware that the initial scores given during the review process may not be the final scores.*
- *The goal of varying types of reviewers is to **bring multiple perspectives** and balance to the review process. Guidance has been provided to indicate which criteria may be deemed most relevant by reviewer type, however reviewers are free to assess based on their own personal (and intersectional) expertise/experience and are expected to take into consideration the panel discussion in order to **evaluate the application holistically** to determine their final scores.*

Relevance & Potential Impact rating scale

The Relevance & Potential Impact (**RPI**) rating scale is to be used by all reviewers to assess the relevance and potential impact of an application and applicant. The table below shows the criteria to be evaluated, and reviewers are asked to use these criteria to help them holistically assess each application. For example, weaknesses in some areas may be compensated for by strengths in other areas. **Only criteria highlighted in blue should be taken into consideration at the LOI stage. All criteria will be considered for the full application.**

Reviewers are asked to use this scale to assess each application, assign a preliminary Relevance & Potential Impact score (0-5), and record this score in EGrAMS prior to and during the panel meeting.

If any major weaknesses are identified, this rating should **not** be above 3.5.

Relevance & Potential Impact criteria Project – 33% of RPI score	SM	PSC
• The proposed project demonstrates clear and/or compelling relevance to cancer.	✓	✓
• The proposed research is creative, innovative and/or original.	✓	✓
• The potential impact (short, mid or long-term) of the proposed research on people at risk and/or affected by cancer is clearly described and compelling.	✓	✓
• The application describes potential outcomes and intended or logical next steps if the research is successful. In other words, the applicant has thought about how the research would progress beyond this project.	✓	✓
• There is evidence that patients/caregivers and clinicians/end-users have been and will be engaged throughout the life of the research project. There is appropriate representation of patients/caregivers on the research team – or a description of how deficits will be addressed.	✓	✓
• The impact on patients/affected communities has been appropriately considered – the project will not exacerbate or place undue hardship and/or mitigating strategies have been described.	✓	✓

Relevance & Potential Impact criteria Applicant – 33% of RPI score	SR	PSC
• The applicant demonstrates evidence of commitment to cancer research.	✓	✓
• The applicant demonstrates evidence of independence in their cancer research program and career trajectory (i.e. divergence from training environment and/or mentor's focus areas)	✓	✓
• The impact of receiving this grant on the applicant's **cancer** research program and their research team is <u>evident and would be transformational</u>.	✓	✓

	SR	PSC
• The applicant shows leadership capabilities through research experience, community engagement, volunteering with patients, work experience, or/and other meaningful experience.	✓	✓
• The applicant has a well-developed career & mentorship plan, and the benefits will result in mentorship and leadership skills **improvement** and are likely to lead to greater impact in cancer research. Skills to be developed by the applicant (formal/informal, soft/technical) are outlined.	✓	✓

Relevance & Potential Impact **Knowledge translation, training & mentorship - 33% of RPI score**	SR	PSC
• The knowledge translation and mobilization plan is well described, integrated into the proposed research, and involves relevant partners at the outset (including at risk and/or patient representatives) to ensure utility of the proposed solution. Public and/or patient engagement strategies are evident. Equitable access to results is considered, including publication in open access journals and/or other methods of dissemination.	✓	✓
• Patients/Survivors/Caregivers have been/will be included/engaged in appropriate, defined aspects of knowledge translation, training and mentorship.	✓	✓
• The applicant has a demonstrated commitment to mentorship activities/experiences. Their plan reflects a vision and core values that support the next generation of researchers in this field of research, equitable access for each team member, and type of mentorship to be provided. It will result in a sustained increase in research capacity and momentum in the future (from a human resources perspective). Trainees' compensations are in line with CCS policy (found in application guide).	✓	✓
• Specific and appropriate approaches, activities, and skills to be developed are described for different career stages/types of team members as relevant, with consideration for accessibility, equity, diversity, and inclusion principles.	✓	✓

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