

Healthy Starts Catalyst Grant and Institute for Global Health Seed Grant 2023 Competition Guidelines

We are pleased to invite applications to the Healthy Starts Catalyst Grant Competition and Institute for Global Health Seed Grant Competition for 2023. These two Competitions are run in conjunction as there are typically a portion of teams interested in both opportunities and thus a shared application and review process is more efficient for both the teams and administrators.

Healthy Starts Catalyst Grant

The Healthy Starts Research Theme of the BC Children's Hospital Research Institute (BCCHR) invites its members to submit new project proposals for the 2023 Healthy Starts Catalyst Grant Competition. The purpose of the Competition is to provide active Healthy Starts Theme Investigators with the opportunity to conduct collaborative research projects that will contribute to the long-term vision of Healthy Starts. The overarching goal of Healthy Starts is to understand how child health and development is influenced before birth and in early childhood, with the aim of preventing lifelong health challenges as well as infectious and chronic diseases. The Healthy Starts Research Theme receives core funding from the BC Children's Hospital Foundation (BCCHF), through which these Catalyst Grants are supported.

A Healthy Starts Catalyst Grant should:

- Fit the long-term vision of Healthy Starts and have clear significance for child health;
- Catalyze a new research project that in turn lays the groundwork for future research activity (e.g., generation of preliminary data to support applications to external funding opportunities);
- Not be for a project that has existing funding or be part of a larger project, as the intent of this Competition is to catalyze new research projects;
- Support research activity – PHSA has a helpful [tool](#) to determine if your project counts as research, or you can reach out to the Healthy Starts Office to discuss your project scope and which funding opportunities are appropriate.

Institute for Global Health Seed Grant

The Institute for Global Health at BC Children's Hospital and BC Women's Hospital + Health Centre (IGH-BCCWH) invites individuals based at BC Children's Hospital and BC Women's Hospital + Health Centre and its affiliated research institutes to submit new project proposals for the 2023 IGH-BCCWH Seed Grant Competition. The purpose of the IGH-BCCWH Seed Grant Competition is to catalyze the development of high-quality, transformative global health projects in research, education, or capacity-building. Projects that are not primarily research projects will be considered but they must have an appropriate plan for evaluating implementation and impact. This Competition is initiated by IGH-BCCWH and supported by donors of the BCCHF.

An IGH-BCCWH Seed Grant should:

- Support [CICH 2020-2024 Strategic Priorities](#). This includes: Building capacity through global partnerships; Enhancing global health education; and Enhancing global health research;
- Support BCCHF's mission to transform child health, including through integrated approaches that consider the health of a child and their mother;
- Be informed by the local needs and priorities of partners in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs, as defined by the [Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development](#)), with $\geq 50\%$ of the funds spent in-country by the LMIC partner;
- Catalyze a new project or program with potential for continued impact.

Funding Availability

Both Competitions invite applications for funding **up to \$40,000 over two years**. We expect to award up to four Healthy Starts Catalyst Grants, including at least one with an Early Career Researcher (ECR) as the Principal Applicant (based on the [CIHR definition](#) of ECR). We expect to award up to two IGH-BCCWH Seed Grants. All grants will have start dates of March 30, 2024.

Overview of Competition Process

All teams are required to submit a **Letter of Intent** (LOI) in line with the requirements listed in **Appendix 1**. In the first instance, the Healthy Starts and IGH-BCCWH Offices will use this LOI to complete an eligibility check. This will include checking that the scope of the proposal, initial budget, and composition of the project team meet the Competition guidelines. In the event of high demand, the Healthy Starts and IGH-BCCWH Offices reserve the option to implement a streamlined peer review of applications to shortlist proposals that will be invited to move forward to the Full Application stage. All applicants should submit their LOIs with the understanding that they may be used for shortlisting. Applicants will be notified shortly after the LOI deadline whether this shortlisting process will be necessary.

Teams are then required to submit a **Full Application** in line with the requirements listed in **Appendix 2**. Full Applications will be reviewed against the Competition review criteria by a joint Healthy Starts – IGH-BCCWH peer review committee. The review criteria are set out in **Appendix 3**. The review committee will make a funding recommendation to Healthy Starts leadership and the IGH-BCCWH Executive Committee, who will ratify the final funding decision. In the case of Healthy Starts, this process will ensure that at least one Early Career Researcher is funded and that both global and non-global research projects receive support. In the case of IGH-BCCWH, this process will ensure that funding is distributed across projects that support IGH-BCCWH's three main pillars (Research, Education, and Partnerships). Where a project is submitted to both Competitions, the selection of awardees for Healthy Starts Catalyst Grants will occur prior to the selection of IGH-BCCWH Seed Grants. Teams can expect to receive decisions on their applications in early 2024.

Project Requirements

Project requirements for the Healthy Starts Catalyst Grants and IGH-BCCWH Seed Grants differ in terms of the research team composition and eligible expenses. The guidance in **Appendices 4 and 5** explains what you need to consider for each Competition. If you plan to submit a project to both Competitions, please carefully review the guidelines to ensure you meet both sets of criteria.

Deadlines

- LOI deadline: October 16th, 2023, 4:00 PM PDT

- Full Application deadline: December 7th, 2023, 4:00 PM PDT

Both the LOI and Full Application should be submitted to Varun Nair, Healthy Starts and IGH-BCCWH Coordinator (varun.nair@cw.bc.ca). Varun must receive your complete application packages via email by the deadlines or they will not be accepted.

Award Terms and Conditions

Successful teams will be provided the full terms and conditions when awards are offered, but should note that:

- Recipients should request ethics approval as soon as they have received notice of award, since start dates will be March 30th, 2024;
- Recipients are asked to acknowledge the award funding in any communication, presentation, or publication related to the project;
- Recipients will be asked to present their study findings in a relevant BCCHR seminar series, as agreed with Healthy Starts and/or IGH-BCCWH;
- The awards are subject to ongoing reporting requirements, which differ according to the award you are offered.

Contacts

Please direct questions about both Competitions to Varun Nair, Healthy Starts and IGH-BCCWH Coordinator (varun.nair@cw.bc.ca).

Appendix 1: LOI Requirements

Your LOI should contain each of the sections described below. You should generate a single PDF including each section in the order described.

For all documents use letter size pages (8.5 x 11" or 21.2 x 27.5 cm), with 2 cm margins on all sides and single line spacing. Use Times New Roman font (uncondensed) in 12-point font size.

Requirements for Healthy Starts Catalyst Grants and IGH-BCCWH Seed Grants differ. If you are submitting a project to both Competitions, please ensure it meets both sets of requirements.

Please note that modifications to the project details (e.g., title), plan (e.g., methods) and budget between LOI and Full Application are permitted, but should not substantially change the proposal. Changes to the team composition are also permitted but must be reported to Varun Nair immediately as these may impact the peer review assignments.

1) Cover Sheet

Available to download [here](#). The cover sheet must be completed and signed by both the PA and Co-PA(s). Electronic signatures will be accepted.

2) Project Summary (maximum two pages including any references, tables, charts, figures and photographs)

- a) Scientific Summary: Describe the project rationale, objectives and/or hypotheses, approach, and methodology or monitoring and evaluation plan that will be used.
- b) Relevance: Describe how your project is catalytic, and relevant to the mission, goals, and objectives of Healthy Starts and/or IGH-BCCWH/CICH's strategic priorities.

3) Budget

Complete the budget spreadsheet, which can be downloaded [here](#). Note that for applications to IGH-BCCWH or Healthy Starts + IGH-BCCWH, at least 50% of the funds must be spent in-country in the LMIC. The spreadsheet includes space for a brief description of any leveraged funding that will be used to support the project (if applicable), including total amount, proportion used towards proposed activities, and how the Healthy Starts or IGH-BCCWH funds will catalyze a new project that would not otherwise be possible even with these leveraged funds.

Appendix 2: Full Application Requirements

Your Full Application should contain each of the sections described below. You should generate a single PDF including each section in the order described.

For all documents use letter size pages (8.5 x 11" or 21.2 x 27.5 cm), with 2 cm margins on all sides and single line spacing. Use Times New Roman font (uncondensed) in 12-point font size.

Requirements for Healthy Starts Catalyst Grants and IGH-BCCWH Seed Grants differ. If you are submitting a project to both Competitions, please ensure it meets both sets of requirements.

1) Grant Cover Sheet

Available to download [here](#). The cover sheet must be completed and signed by both the PA and Co-PA(s). Electronic signatures will be accepted. This can be an updated version of the same sheet provided at the LOI stage.

2) Project Proposal and Supporting Documents

- a) Scientific abstract (maximum 300 words).
- b) Plain language abstract (maximum 100 words).
- c) Proposal (maximum three-pages, not including references, tables, charts, figures or photographs). The following elements should be addressed:
 - Background and rationale;
 - Hypothesis(es) and/or objectives;
 - Research or implementation plan, including specific aims, project design, methodology, analysis plan, and preliminary data (if any);
 - Feasibility in the context of the team's expertise and the timeline/budget;
 - Discussion of future directions/sustainability;
 - Potential impact/significance of the project to child health;
 - Risk identification and mitigation strategy;
 - Approach to incorporating equity, diversity, and inclusion considerations in the proposed project and working environment of the project team.

Note that the description of methods or evaluation and monitoring plans, as well as the discussion of data, should be included in the body of the proposal and not in figure legends nor included as an appendix.

- d) Competition-specific supplement (additional to the proposal page length):
 - For applications to Healthy Starts or Healthy Starts + IGH-BCCWH: Relevance of the project to the vision of Healthy Starts (maximum of 300 words) and description of team members' involvement and engagement with the Healthy Starts Theme (maximum 300 words). Examples may include attending research seminars, presenting or having trainees present at seminars, serving as a judge for Research Day, inviting speakers, involvement in collaborative projects/initiatives, etc.

- For applications to IGH-BCCWH or Healthy Starts + IGH-BCCWH: Relevance to the CIHR 2020-2024 Strategic Plan (maximum of 300 words), and plan for building further partnerships and/or ensuring long-term impact of the project (maximum of 300 words). For research projects, this may focus on a knowledge translation or implementation strategy. For educational or capacity-building projects, this may focus on a plan for ensuring continued learning and/or ongoing curation of project outputs (e.g., course or training materials).
- e) Supplementary materials – references, tables, charts, figures and photographs (maximum two additional pages).
- f) Resubmissions from previous Competitions may include a letter of response to previous reviewers (half page maximum).

3) Budget and justification

- a) Complete the budget spreadsheet, which can be downloaded [here](#). Note that for applications to IGH-BCCWH or Healthy Starts + IGH-BCCWH, at least 50% of the funds must be spent in-country in the LMIC. The spreadsheet includes space for a brief description of any leveraged funding that will be used to support the project (if applicable), including total amount, proportion used towards proposed activities, and how the Healthy Starts or IGH-BCCWH funds will catalyze a new project that would not otherwise be possible even with these leveraged funds. This can be an updated version of the same sheet provided at the LOI stage.
- b) Written justification of your budget explaining the purpose of the items included, in the context of your proposal (half page maximum).

4) CVs

Common CV of all applicants based in Canada (PA, Co-PA, and Co-As) in the [CIHR Biosketch format](#) (same CCV as used for CIHR Project Grant submissions). For investigators not based in Canada, CVs can be provided in any format.

5) Research Project Information Form

Available on UBC's website [here](#). Investigators based at BCCHR must send RPIFs signed by themselves and their Department Head to Nur Eisma (neisma@bcchr.ca) at the Office of Research Services (ORS) approximately one week prior to the Full Application deadline to ensure that institutional signatures are obtained in time. Investigators based at WHRI must also obtain a signature from Kathryn Dewar (KDewar@cw.bc.ca), Senior Research Manager at WHRI, prior to sending the RPIF to ORS. Electronic signatures will be accepted.

Note: Letters of Support are not required and will not be included in the application package provided to reviewers if submitted along with the proposal.

Appendix 3: Review Criteria

For the LOI Stage, the Healthy Starts and IGH-BCCWH Offices will complete an eligibility check to ensure that the scope of the proposal, initial budget, and composition of the project team meet the Competition guidelines. In the event of high demand, the Healthy Starts and IGH-BCCWH Offices reserve the option to implement a streamlined peer review of applications to shortlist proposals to move forward to the Full Application stage. In that situation, the following review criteria would be used:

Letter of Intent Review Criteria (if peer review required)	
For Healthy Starts	For IGH-BCCWH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project: Is it catalytic (i.e., is this a new study/initiative that would not be possible without the grant funding)? 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scope: Is there clear alignment with the long-term vision of Healthy Starts and clear significance for child health? Scope: Is the proposal for a research project that lays the groundwork for future research activity? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scope: Is there clear alignment with the CICH 2020-2024 Strategic Plan? Equity: Is there clear involvement by in-country partners in terms of project conceptualization, evaluation/implementation and knowledge exchange, or plan for building capacity in these areas? Sustainability: Is there potential for further impact (i.e., plan for knowledge translation or sustained training/capacity-building)? IGH-BCCWH Seed Grants are not intended to fund one-off training or capacity-building initiatives.

For the Full Application, the following review criteria will be used in addition to the LOI review criteria outlined above:

Full Application Review Criteria	
For Healthy Starts	For IGH-BCCWH
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rigor and quality of the research proposal or evaluation plan; Clarity and feasibility of the objectives, methods, budget, and timelines; Strength of the PA/Co-PA's expertise to guide the project, the appropriateness of each team member and their roles, the team's capacity to do the proposed work; Extent to which the proposal identifies a pathway for future activity/sustainability, including (where applicable) the ability to leverage additional funding sources or partnerships to support future activity/implementation; 	

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Degree to which the proposal considers equity, diversity, and inclusion with respect to the project (including in its aims and methods/evaluation plan) and working environment. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No additional criteria for Healthy Starts. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Potential impact on patients or healthcare providers in LMIC; Ability to build capacity among health researchers or healthcare providers within LMICs, particularly among nurses and other allied health professionals (AHPs); Degree to which the project builds global health capacity within BCCWH, including mentorship for global health trainees and among nurses and other AHPs.

In light of the review criteria, the reviewers will score each proposal according to the following scoring scale (from CIHR). When deciding whether to submit to both the Healthy Starts and IGH-BCCWH Competitions, please consider whether your project adequately addresses all criteria or is better suited to submission to just one Competition.

Descriptor	Range	Definition	Potential Impact
Outstanding	4.5 – 4.9	The application excels in most or all relevant aspects. Any short-comings are minimal.	Extremely Significant
Excellent	4.0 – 4.4	The application excels in many relevant aspects, and reasonably addresses all others. Certain improvements are possible.	Very Significant
Good	3.5 – 3.9	The application excels in some relevant aspects, and reasonably addresses all others. Some improvements are necessary.	Significant
Fair	3.0 – 3.4	The application broadly addresses relevant aspects. Major revisions are required.	Moderate
Poor	0.0 – 2.9	The application fails to provide convincing information and/or has serious inherent flaws or gaps.	Limited

Regardless of their funding outcome, all teams submitting Full Applications can expect to receive feedback on their application.

Appendix 4: Research Team Eligibility

Please review the below table to understand the eligibility of individuals to hold roles in the application team.

	For Healthy Starts	For IGH-BCCWH
Principal Applicant	May only be listed as PA or Co-PA on one application to either Competition, but may be listed as an Additional Co-A on other projects. The PA cannot hold an active Healthy Starts or CICH Seed Grant (as its PA or Co-PA).	
	PA must have current full Investigator status with the BCCHR Healthy Starts Theme and hold an active University faculty position.	PA must be affiliated with BCCWH or its affiliated research institutes and be able to hold research/operating funds through an institutional account (e.g., at UBC/SFU or PHSA).
Co-Principal Applicant	Applications to either Healthy Starts or IGH-BCCWH require one Co-PA. The eligibility criteria for Co-PAs differs for the two grants (see below). Thus, applications being submitted to Healthy Starts + IGH-BCCWH require two Co-PAs. An individual can only be listed as a Co-PA on one application to either Competition, but may be listed as an Additional Co-A on other projects. Co-PAs cannot hold an active Healthy Starts or CICH Seed Grant (as its PA or Co-PA).	
	Co-PA must be a full or affiliate Investigator at BCCHR with membership in any Theme, although representation from Healthy Starts is preferred. New collaborations between Investigators are encouraged, but not mandatory (i.e., you can have previously collaborated).	Co-PA must have a full-time position in an LMIC. They can be affiliated with any organization appropriate to the proposed project (e.g., health centres, educational institutes, professional organizations, not-for-profits, governments).
Additional Co-Applicants	Co-As should include individuals appropriate for the particular project proposed. There is no set number of Co-As for a project. Interprofessional collaborations and involvement of trainees (e.g., residents, clinical fellows, research associates, postdoctoral fellows, graduate students) are encouraged but not required. However, it is expected that individuals listed as Co-As will contribute substantially to the intellectual content, design, and implementation of the research project.	

	<p>Representation from Healthy Starts members is encouraged, but not required. Co-As can be members of any BCCHR Theme and the inclusion of others outside of BCCHR is encouraged where appropriate to the project.</p>	<p>Co-As can be based anywhere.</p>
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Appendix 5: Eligible Expenses

Please review the below table to understand the eligibility of expenses.

	For Healthy Starts	For IGH-BCCWH
Eligible Expenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salary support for trainees and technicians; • Expenses directly associated with conducting the project (materials, supplies, and services); • Patient/family support (e.g., honoraria, compensation for travel and child-care) or recruitment costs; • Database development for data collection. 	
	<p>Direct costs of research only. Projects can take place in any location.</p>	<p>Costs of research or educational/capacity-building projects in LMICs to drive improvements in clinical care.</p> <p>Additional eligible expenses are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Travel to the LMIC, to a maximum of \$5,000 CAD (please justify why this is required); • Travel within the LMIC for local project team; • Salary support for Co-PAs and Co-As in LMICs; • Expenses to support virtual engagement; • Indirect costs for the partnering LMIC institution, up to 10% of the total direct costs allocated towards the LMIC partner. <p>In total, at least 50% of the funds must be spent in-country in the LMIC.</p>
Ineligible Expenses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equipment (greater than \$5,000); • Conference expenses, including associated travel; • Salary support for investigators (unless based in LMIC); • Indirect costs (unless for LMIC partner institution). 	