
GUIDELINES & APPLICATION FORM

**Team Development Support: Pathways to Support
Access to Musculoskeletal Rehabilitation**

from the

Canadian MSK Rehab Research Network



**CANADIAN MUSCULOSKELETAL
REHAB RESEARCH NETWORK**

Canadian MSK Rehab Research Network Team Development Support

Dates

Call for Applications: March 31, 2025

Application Deadline: May 26, 2025

Funding Start Date = Notice of Decision: June 26, 2025

Description

It is a priority of the Canadian Musculoskeletal (MSK) Rehab Research Network to encourage new, externally funded, transdisciplinary research initiatives. Accordingly, a portion of our annual CIHR funding is allocated to enable Network members to work in teams to initiate innovative, high-impact, and early-stage projects. Support will be targeted specifically to teams/projects that meet the Network objectives (See *Objectives* below), have the potential to leverage future external funds, and address priority research themes in MSK rehabilitation.

Proposals must be focused on the Network's cross-cutting theme of **accessibility and equity of access to musculoskeletal rehabilitation**, including cost effectiveness research if it informs accessibility.

The funding is not intended to support the conduct of a pilot research study but should be used to plan the creation of a new pan-Canadian Research team focused on access to rehabilitation research. Activities could include but are not limited to planning the creation of a new innovation, and/or co-designing a study protocol to evaluate it, etc.

Funds Available

Up to \$120K in total will be allocated to up to 3 teams valued at a maximum of \$40K per team.

Funds will be allocated as follows:

- Up to \$25K will be allocated to a team that includes members from two provinces/territories.
- Up to \$30K will be allocated to a team that includes members from three provinces/territories.
- Up to \$40K will be allocated to a team that includes members from four or more provinces/territories.

Including international members on research teams is encouraged; however, funds cannot be provided to international institutions. Teams must be based within Canada.

Once applications are submitted, the MSK Network may suggest team members who may fit the project and can be contacted to join the team. Additionally, if two teams propose projects with similar interests, the MSK Network may ask them to work together and offer them more funding.

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Objectives

To form new teams with a common interest in **accessibility and equity of access to musculoskeletal rehabilitation**, which will lead to new pan-Canadian projects. The proposed work is anticipated to be of relatively short duration (e.g., 12 months), with plans outlined in the application to leverage new, larger external support. Applications should provide a clear rationale for the proposed research, exhibit innovation, and include a budget that justifies the planned expenditures.

Purpose

Research and our patient representatives have identified access to care as a major barrier to care in musculoskeletal rehabilitation. Major barriers to care can include distance, costs, waiting times, scheduling conflicts, cultural appropriateness, mobility challenges, reliance on inaccessible technologies, language, systemic issues (such as ableism and racism) and many others. Projects may address some or all the current gaps in service. Teams should be focusing on innovative solutions to resolve current access challenges.

The proposal is expected to be pan-Canadian, multi-centered, and expand different disciplines and/or professions, with a pathway to success outlined in the application for leveraging the team support into large-scale external support.

Eligibility

Each application is expected to meet the following:

1. address the issue of access to care in MSK rehabilitation;
2. include two or more members of the Canadian MSK Rehab Research Network (member list: <https://i-memo.org/en/msk-network-members>);
3. include multiple patient representatives or non-academic partners (e.g., individuals with lived experience, community organizations, patient advocacy groups, etc.) who are fully integrated in the research (explain the roles of the lay researcher) and represents diversity in perspective and experience. The team is required to state how they will support patient representative involvement (e.g., with honoraria);
4. include at least one early career researcher (within five years of date of their first independent research-related appointment);
5. include investigators from more than one province AND more than one discipline and/or profession;
6. describe how equity was addressed in team composition;
7. include a plan for how the funds will lead to larger future funding; and
8. describe plans for dissemination and potential future knowledge mobilization.

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Conditions of Funding

Applicants will be asked to provide a brief rationale for how funds will be used. The optimal allocation of funds to achieve the objectives will be the responsibility of the research team. Applicants are required to expend the funds in a manner that is consistent with CIHR guidelines.

Reporting: If possible, successful applicants are encouraged to present their research at the *Canadian MSK Rehab Research Network* annual meeting. Lay summaries of work completed will be requested throughout the project timeline and upon its completion. As per CIHR guidelines, financial reports (F300) will be required annually throughout the duration of the project. A final report, detailing the research accomplished and outcomes, is required within 1 year of completion. All publications and presentations arising from research funded in whole or in part by this team support must include acknowledgment of support from the *Canadian MSK Rehab Research Network*. The Network will contact recipients to determine if funds have been leveraged as a follow-up to the report.

Review Process

Proposals will be adjudicated by a review committee. The review committee will be composed of 3-5 Network PIs, a Network co-investigator, and 1-2 patient representatives. The committee will be chaired by the Network Coordinator. Each member of the committee will be asked to declare conflicts of interest. If any conflicts are identified, they will be dealt with appropriately. Each proposal will be reviewed by at least 1 Network Co-PI, 1 Network Co-I, 1 content expert, and 1 patient representative. The review criteria include:

- Alignment with the criteria described in the guidelines.
- Alignment with Network priorities.
- Scientific/technical merit (clarity and focus of the development plan, novelty, feasibility, appropriateness of work plan).
- Transdisciplinary, capacity enhancement.
- Potential for high impact (transformative scientific advances, commercialization, improved health or quality of life, policy development or clinical application).
- Potential to leverage future external funds.
- Use of Network infrastructure and collaborations.

Based on CIHR guidelines, eligible expenses for this support include:

- The salary of a Project Manager.
- Travel related expenses.
- Dissemination and knowledge translation expenses.
- Supplies/equipment.
- Patient honoraria.
- Administrative and collaboration activities (e.g., meetings, preparation of meeting agendas/minutes, liaison with researchers, stakeholders, and partners).
- Coordination of the team's future full grant application.
- Consumables (i.e., food and drink).

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This support opportunity cannot fund research activities (e.g., salaries for research assistants, salaries for collecting pilot data, support for direct research activities such as participant recruitment, data collection, data entry, data analysis, manuscript writing, etc.)

Submission

DEADLINE: May 26, 2025

Please ensure all sections are completed and the application is signed.

Compile the entire application as a single PDF and send it to rehabnet@uwo.ca

The nominated applicant will receive an email acknowledging receipt of the application.

If you have any questions, please email rehabnet@uwo.ca

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Application Submission

The following headings should be used in your application. The application should be a maximum of 5 pages, 12-point font, and single spaced.

Lay Summary (250 words maximum)

Problem

Proposed Solution and Rationale

Development Plan

Activities and Milestones

Patient Representative Engagement (explain how the patient representatives will be involved on this team)

Knowledge Mobilization Plan

Team Description

Please attach a CV (CIHR Biosketch or New Narrative CV or any format with a maximum of 10 pages per CV) for all team members (any format will be accepted) and a CV or statement of interest for all patient representatives outlining their experience in research.

Applicants	Name and Title	Affiliation
Nominated Applicant		
Co-Applicant		
New Investigator		
Patient Representative		
<i>*Add additional rows as necessary</i>		

Project Title	
Amount requested (Maximum \$40K)	

**Canadian MSK Rehab Research Network
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Budget – Provide a list of proposed costs and provide a brief justification			
	Description	Cost Per Unit	Total Cost
Patient Engagement			
Travel			
Project Manager			
Consumables			
<i>*Add additional rows as necessary</i>			
TOTAL			

DESCRIPTION/JUSTIFICATION:

Signature of Nominated Applicant

Date