



health
INNOVATION HUB



Innovation Pathway Program Guide

March 1, 2023

Strategic Innovation Division, Ministry of Health

Innovation Pathway Program Guide

Objective

The British Columbia Ministry of Health (the Ministry) is working collaboratively with system partners to build on existing strengths and enable an innovation ecosystem that supports and advances innovation across the health system. *The objective of the Health Innovation Pathway program is to identify and support the testing and assessment of promising innovations in clinical settings.* The program also helps to support a thriving and active innovation culture and environment in health authorities and the health system. This program guide is intended to provide a high-level overview of the program and a roadmap of how to apply. Please be aware that the Ministry may modify this guide from time to time as the program evolves.

The Ministry will invest up to \$750,000 each fiscal year to support testing of innovations with potential for broad system impact. There is no maximum budget for each proposal, although it is expected that the average award will be approximately \$50,000. Funds must be used in the fiscal year they are provided. Any unused funds must be returned to the Ministry. Collaboration with others in the innovation ecosystem and health system partners is highly encouraged and receiving funding from other sources does not eliminate projects from consideration for program funding.

The program uses a transparent and standardized process to intake and assess innovations that are proposed by health authorities and their partners. The Ministry is seeking innovations that address an existing gap or problem, benefit the system, have scientific merit, are aligned to health system priorities, and have potential for broad system impact.

Health System priorities are articulated in Ministry [Service plans](#) and mandate [letters](#). The Ministry may prioritize funding supports for innovations impacting current areas of focus including access to primary care, seniors care, mental health and addictions care, cancer care, ambulance services, surgical and diagnostic services, and hospital services.

Eligibility

All innovation proposals require a health authority to sponsor the initiative¹ and a clinical lead to champion and oversee the clinical aspects of the initiative. Health authorities will ensure a link to health system expertise, access to key partners, report to the Ministry on key indicators/measures, and will provide oversight of the initiative. To qualify for funding, innovation proposals must:

¹ Community health care providers with innovation ideas that are community-based and require no health authority involvement should connect with the Health Innovation Hub team at healthinnovation@gov.bc.ca.

- Be supported with evidence of a reasonable expectation of benefit realisation.
- Demonstrate potential for broad system impact.
- Clearly indicate how Ministry funds will be used.
- Provide measurable objectives for the initiative that will be tested and assessed. To support assessment of the innovation, proposals must:
 - Identify and report on one to three key performance indicators that will demonstrate benefits of the innovation.
 - Identify and report on at least one measure of potential cost savings (cost avoidance) and/or return on investment.
- Be aligned with [Ministry priorities](#) for the health system.

Reporting to the Ministry on indicators/measures will occur on a regular basis and must be complete within two years of receiving funding. Measures identified can signal when there is a need to pivot the approach or possibly discontinue if/as appropriate and help form the basis for a business case for spread of the innovation if results/outcomes are compelling.

Funding Mechanism

Funds will be transferred to health authorities through a shared cost arrangement or through the quarterly budget transfer process. In the latter process, a funding letter will outline the amount of funding, identify the project, and the expected use of funds. Both funding mechanisms involve a letter of understanding which outlines the project, expectations of all partners, and measures which will be reported to the Ministry on a quarterly basis. Funding can generally be used for:

- Labour costs for individuals working directly on the project.
- Reasonable material costs.
- Equipment required for the project.
- Software or information databases.
- Subcontractors for direct project work or evaluation.
- Costs which the BC Ministry of Health preapproves in writing as an eligible expense.

How to Apply

1. Application for innovation idea funding is accomplished online through the program [intake form](#) (see Appendix A). Questions or requests for the intake form should be sent to healthinnovation@gov.bc.ca.
2. There are two intake/funding cycles per fiscal year. Proposals should be submitted to the program by April 15 for the first cycle and July 15 for the second cycle.

Intake Form Receipt Deadline	Approval Signatures on Letter of Understanding	Funding Transferred to Health Authority ²
April 15, 2023	June 1, 2023	June 30, 2023
July 15, 2023	September 1, 2023	September 29, 2023

3. To better understand the proposal and ensure alignment to priorities, Health Innovation Hub staff will meet with the submitter, health authority innovation leads (see Appendix B) and Ministry program areas. Collection of additional information may be required.
4. Proposals will be considered using the four criteria in the decision support tool (see Appendix C). While the proposal will be given a score (XX/51), the purpose of the criteria is to better understand the proposals and fit for the program, and the score itself is not the single determining factor for a funding recommendation.
5. The Health Innovation Hub team will prepare a package of materials containing gathered information, decision support score, and recommendations for Assistant Deputy Minister review.
6. If funding is approved by the Assistant Deputy Minister, the Health Innovation Hub team will inform the submitter and work with them to generate a funding letter (letter of understanding) and/or the terms of the agreement (for Shared Cost Arrangement).
7. The funding letter will outline the funding amount transferred to the health authority and outline expectations of how Ministry funds are to be used. It will also indicate timelines for submission of agreed upon measures for the initiative.
8. If funding is not approved, the Health Innovation Hub team will connect with submitters to discuss the rationale for the decision.

The Ministry of Health reserves the right to conduct public communications, announcements, events, outreach, and promotional activities related to the Pathway program and innovations supported. The submitter agrees to connect with the Ministry to coordinate any communications they are planning about Pathway funded initiatives. Advance notice of at least 30 days is required.

Health Innovation Pathway Program Contact Information

Fiona Macpherson
 Director, Health Innovation Hub
 Strategic Innovation Division
 BC Ministry of Health
 Office: 250-952-3263
 Email: fiona.a.macpherson@gov.bc.ca

Kevin Samra
 Executive Director, Health Innovation Hub
 Strategic Innovation Division
 BC Ministry of Health
 Office: 250-952-2346
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² Funding transfer dates are approximate.

Appendix A: [Innovation Intake Form](#)

Health Innovation Intake

Do you have an innovation that the Ministry of Health should consider? This intake form is a first step in accessing the Ministry of Health innovation process. The Ministry asks those submitting innovation ideas to the Innovation Hub to complete this form to help decide if this is something that the Ministry can support/explore, or if there is an organization/agency better suited for further conversation.

The Ministry collects the information below to identify the best path for your idea. If required, the Ministry will follow up with you to better understand your innovation idea. Questions 1 to 18 are mandatory, so please respond to the questions to the best of your knowledge. If you are unclear about a question or would like to provide additional information to the Ministry, please leave a comment (Question #19). Answering 'No' or 'Not Applicable' does not disqualify you from the Ministry's Innovation Process.

1. Idea title

Date submitted

2/21/2023



Submitter Information

2. Submitter name

3. Submitter title

4. Submitter organization

5. Submitter email

6. Submitter phone number

555-555-5555



Tell us about your innovation

7. Provide a brief description of your innovation.

8. How will your innovation benefit the health system?

9. How does your innovation align with the Ministry's mandate?

The Ministry has overall responsibility for ensuring that quality, appropriate, cost effective and timely health services are available for all British Columbians. For more information, refer to the [Ministry's website](#). More information can also be found in the [Ministry's service plan](#).

10. Is your innovation currently being used?

- Currently used by another industry (other than healthcare)
- Currently in use within a healthcare provider site
- Currently in use within a health authority
- Never been developed (true research and development)

Provide more detail and a current contact

11. Is there a clinical champion of the innovation in the province?

Please select:

12. Do you have support for your innovation from a health system stakeholder?

Please select:

e.g., the Ministry, Health Authority, clinician

13. Do you have someone in the health system that is interested in sponsoring the implementation of your innovation?

Please select:

14. What stage of development is your innovation at?

Please select:

Provide more details.

15. How can the Ministry assist in advancing your innovation?

e.g., information, referral, research, innovation testing support

16. Have you contacted anyone else at the BC Ministry of Health about this innovation?

Please select:

17. Is this innovation evidence and data-driven? What evidence/research supports your innovation.

Please attach any supporting documentation and material (optional)

Drag files here or use the button below.

Select Files

18. What are the risks to the viability of this innovation in BC and how will they be mitigated?

19. Is there anything else you would like to share with the Ministry about your innovation? (optional)

Collection Notice

Personal information on this form is collected for the purpose of the Innovation Front Door by the Ministry of Health, Strategy and Innovation Division under s. 26 (c) & (e) of the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. Please be aware that any personal information you provide is stored in British Columbia at the Ministry of Health. For questions regarding the collection of personal information, please contact Kevin Samra, Executive Director, 1515 Blanshard St., Victoria, B.C., (250) 952-2346, kevin.samra@gov.bc.ca

Appendix B: Innovation Contacts

Organization	Innovation Contact	Email
Fraser	Mel Dube	Melusi.Dube@fraserhealth.ca
Interior	Deanne Taylor	Deanne.Taylor@interiorhealth.ca
Island	Matthew Miller Graham Payette	Matthew.Miller@islandhealth.ca Graham.Payette@islandhealth.ca
Northern	Julia Bickford	Julia.Bickford@northernhealth.ca
Vancouver Coastal	Rachael Ritchie	Rachael.Ritchie@vch.ca
Providence Health Care	Holly van Heukelom Balraj Bains	hvanheukelom@providencehealth.bc.ca Bbains@providencehealthbc.ca
Provincial Health Services	Trushna Kassan	Trushna.Kassan@phsa.ca
First Nations	Katie Skelton Pamela Garner	Katie.Skelton@fnha.ca Pamela.Garner@fnha.ca
Ministry of Health	Fiona Macpherson Kevin Samra	Fiona.A.Macpherson@gov.bc.ca Kevin.Samra@gov.bc.ca

Appendix C: Decision Support Tool

The purpose of this tool is to help consider the fit of innovation proposals for the program.

FIT AGAINST CRITERIA MATRIX					
NOTE: ALL INITIATIVES REQUIRE A HEALTH AUTHORITY PARTNER AND CLINICAL SPONSOR					
HA Partner & Clinical Sponsor Mandatory Criteria	Pass or Fail: _____				
Scoring 0 = None 1 = Minimal 2 = Moderate 3 = Substantial					
	Substantial	Moderate	Minimal	None	SCORE
Criteria	3	2	1	0	3
1. Innovation Gap					
Innovation addresses an existing gap or problem					
2. Value Proposition					
Potential clinical impact (patient health)					
Impact on patient and family experience					
Impact on provider experience					
Impact on population health					
Impact on health system sustainability					
Impact on health equity					
Impact on health human resources					
Impact on social determinants of health					
Impact on the environment					
Potential for broad system impact (spread/scale)					

3. Scientific Merit					
Reasonable expectation of benefit realisation					
Study design is methodologically sound and generates quality evidence					
Risks considered (and mitigation embedded) in study design					
Suitability of project team and engagement of partners					
4. Relevance					
Alignment to health system priorities					
Measurable impacts within study period					