

Ministère de l'Économie et de l'Innovation

RESEARCH AND INNOVATION SUPPORT PROGRAM

SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATIVE RESEARCH PROJECTS

2019 M-ERA.NET CALL WITH PRIMA QUÉBEC (PSO-INTERNATIONAL)

Application Guidelines

TABLE OF CONTENTS

TERMINOLOGY	4
INTRODUCTION	6
PROGRAM OBJECTIVES	6
ELIGIBLE CLIENTS	6
ELIGIBLE PROJECTS	7
ELIGIBLE EXPENSES	8
INELIGIBLE EXPENSES	10
FINANCING PACKAGE	11
PROJECT SELECTION	12
PROJECT APPROVAL	12
PROJECT MANAGEMENT COSTS	12
PROJECT TRACKING	12
Appendix 1	14

Documents required when submitting the application:

- ☐ Duly completed PRIMA Québec application form (signed and dated). Every section in the form must be filled out.
- ☐ Project Leader CV, along with those of the researchers and industrialists belonging to the M-ERA.NET consortium's Quebec team. CVs should not exceed five pages or contain more than five points for each section.
- ☐ Signed letters of support from partners (companies and non-profit organizations (NPOs) involved in the financing package).
- ☐ Signed intellectual property and partnership protocols or draft agreements. If the project is approved, the final documents must be duly signed and forwarded before the first grant payment.
- ☐ The corporate partner's most recent annual financial statements.

Please note:

- Funding will only be awarded upon proof of the following:
 - All additional funding (NSERC, NRC-IRAP or other) has been approved (a copy of the approvals must be forwarded to PRIMA);
 - The full M-ERA.NET proposal has been recommended for funding;
 - The other organizations in the M-ERA.NET consortium have obtained their funding;
 - The various parties have drafted and signed an intellectual property agreement before the first grant payment.
- After submitting the additional funding request, a copy must be forwarded to PRIMA Québec before September 6.
- Partners in the consortium's Quebec portion must be members of PRIMA Québec.

Contacts

For any additional information, or for assistance regarding the application form, please contact Michel Lefèvre at (514) 284-0211, Ext. 227.

Applications must include a single PDF file (Adobe Acrobat) sent by email to sylvie.dufort@prima.ca before noon on June 18 (Brussels time).

TERMINOLOGY

- Internal research and development (R&D) activities: Activities undertaken by an organization with the human and material resources required to conduct part of its research program (researchers, equipment and infrastructures).
- Eligible NPO: A non-profit organization whose mission is to conduct R&D and innovation activities, excluding intermediation organizations and those that promote such activities.
- Stakeholder: The end user of the product, process or service developed under the project. The term “stakeholder” refers to any company or organization with a potential interest in applying, using or promoting the relevant research results.
- Foreign partner: Any foreign partner that meets the eligibility requirements applicable to Quebec partners (teaching and research institutions, hospitals, research NPOs and companies).
- Justifiable expense: Any expense directly attributable to the project's completion.
- Salary expenses: The portion of expenses that represent actual salaries within the purview of the project, prorated to usage time (in addition to fringe benefits).
- Student grants: The grant amount actually paid out to students within the purview of the project, prorated to usage time.
- Equipment purchases or leasing: The fees actually paid out for equipment usage and operating rights. In the case of purchases, the purchase value of the equipment must be less than \$15,000 before taxes.
- Material, consumables and supplies: Perishable goods required to implement the project, excluding fixed assets, but including small equipment directly related to the project's completion.
- Animal facility and platform costs: Recurring costs related to the operation of animal facilities and platforms (owned by the applicant) required for the project's completion.
- Travel and living expenses for Quebec researchers and students: Travel expenses covering air and ground transportation, along with entry fees (visa). Travel arrangements must involve the most economical means of transportation and the most direct route. The minister will not reimburse travel-reward program credits. Living expenses will include accommodations and meals, including taxes and service (see details in Appendix 1). These expenses must not exceed 15% of all eligible expenses (travel and accommodation expenses in Quebec must not exceed one-third of this amount).
- Consultant fees and sub-contracting costs: External R&D fees required for the project's completion (e.g. analysis costs), excluding costs related to administrative support activities (accounting, auditing, etc.), or any activity that is not eligible under the program. Consultants and sub-contractors must not be employees of any organization mentioned in the application (applicant, corporate partners, stakeholders, etc.).

- Commercialization of research and innovation results and intellectual property protection costs: Professional patent agent fees for specialized consulting services, research acquisition fees (or fees involving similar documents), Canadian or foreign patent application and registration fees for industrial design and integrated circuit topography, along with all intellectual property (IP) protection fees. IP maintenance or commercialization costs will not be eligible.
- Duly authorized signatory: Any person authorized to sign the grant agreement through a resolution from the applicant organization's Board of Directors, or any administrator clearly identified under the *Registraire des entreprises du Québec* (REQ), should the *Ministère de l'Économie et de l'Innovation* approve the funding request.

INTRODUCTION

The Québec government considers innovation as an important driver of economic growth. If Quebec is to maintain its status as an advanced society, exercise influence and open itself up to the world, it must ensure the participation of its researchers and organizations within collaborative industrial research projects that can generate future technologies. The government therefore seeks to encourage international research partnerships.

PSO-International helps support the international efforts of Quebec's universities and colleges, along with those of institutional and industrial players working within various research and innovation markets. To this end, the *Ministère de l'Économie et de l'Innovation* (MEI) supports PRIMA Québec's participation in the 2019 M-ERA.NET call.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

General Objective

Support and implement international research and innovation initiatives between universities, colleges, institutions and industries.

Targeted Results

1. Increased research collaboration between universities and industry, along with greater international, inter-sectoral and inter-agency collaboration;
2. Greater visibility for Quebec researchers and their institutions at the national and international levels;
3. Greater development for researchers seeking to improve their competitive positioning in Quebec's future markets through R&D projects.

ELIGIBLE CLIENTS

The following clients are eligible:

1. NPOs that conduct internal R&D activities in Québec and operate within various research and innovation sectors or markets, along with those that promote and disseminate science and technology;
2. Health care and educational institutions that operate within various research and development markets;
3. Quebec public research institutions.

Details

- The minister reserves the right to refuse any financial assistance request from organizations and companies that are currently in default regarding PSR-SIIRI projects.

ELIGIBLE PROJECTS

Any research project with the appropriate technology readiness level (TRL 1-9) will be eligible.

Any joint bilateral or multilateral international research and development project will be eligible, along with any multilateral project outside of Quebec.

Research and development projects involving the participation of strategic clusters, centres of excellence or Quebec companies with major networks, international research and innovation consortia, or R&D framework-programs within Quebec's priority sectors.

Projects seeking to promote the creation, development or consolidation of international research partnerships and networks that bring together universities, colleges, institutions and industry.

Projects must involve the participation of at least one Quebec company (primarily an SME), along with an eligible research organization; failing this, the submitted proposal will not be considered. The involvement of partners must be subject to a signed letter of support.

Projects must demonstrate a balanced participation of both Quebec and foreign parties for their entire duration; a financial/cash contribution totalling at least 20% of eligible expenses in Quebec will be required from the Quebec stakeholders, along with a contribution in cash or in kind totalling at least 30% of all M-ERA.NET consortium project expenses from all foreign partners.

The MEI's financial assistance will take the form of a non-repayable and non-recurring contribution of up to 50% of the Quebec portion's eligible expenses, for a maximum of \$500,000 over three years per project. Proof of all other contributions will be required (official signed letters specifying the amounts granted for the project's completion).

Duration of Projects

The maximum duration of the project will be three years.

PRIORITY THEMES

Eligible projects must fall under M-ERA.NET 2019 call themes, which are similar to those of PRIMA Québec (see the M-ERA.NET guide for theme descriptions):

- Modelling for engineering and materials processing;
- Innovative surfaces, coatings and interfaces;
- High-performance composites;
- Functional materials;
- New strategies for advanced material-based technologies in health applications;
- Materials for additive manufacturing.

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

Eligible expenses are those that involve the Quebec team's research activities and include project-related costs in Quebec. No additional financial assistance will be granted for any cost overrun regarding an approved project.

The following expenses will be eligible when justified and directly attributable to the project.

DIRECT PROJECT COSTS

The following expenses will be eligible if deemed reasonable, justifiable and directly attributable to the project:

- Salary expenditures for the R&D personnel hired to complete the project (by organization type):
 - **For universities and institutions in the health and social services network where research activities are conducted:** Salary expenditures for graduate students, research assistants, research professionals and technicians;
 - **For College Technology Transfer Centres (CTTCs), NPOs and public research institutions:** Salary expenditures paid out to researchers and R&D personnel hired to complete the project without any other financial support from the MEI.
- Student scholarships;
- The purchase or leasing of project-related equipment¹;
- Research-related consumables and supplies;
- Animal facility and platform-related costs;
- Travel and living expenses for Quebec researchers and students (airfare, local transportation, accommodations, meal expenses and visa costs);
- Consulting fees and sub-contracting costs;
- Management costs for the use of intellectual property;
- Knowledge dissemination costs;
- Costs related to the use of research and innovation results and intellectual property protection (publication costs, scientific and technological dissemination costs, workshop and seminar administration costs, international patent fees, etc.);
- Legal document translation and design costs for partnership consolidations (maximum \$10,000).

¹ Expenses regarding small equipment purchases or equipment leasing will be limited to a maximum of 25% of all eligible expenses. The purchase value of each piece of equipment must be equal to or less than \$15,000 before taxes.

Specifications

Eligible project salaries are set according to the agreed-upon salary rates within each organization and **prorated to the involvement of the various employees.**

Maximum Wage Grid for the Analysis of Applications	
Position	Maximum Wages + Fringe Benefits
Project Manager (Research Professional)	Maximum \$50/hour (provide for fringe benefits up to a maximum of 18%, depending on the organization), up to a maximum of \$90,000/year
Student or Research Assistant	Maximum \$30/hour (including fringe benefits)
External Consultant	Maximum \$100/hour, or \$75,000 per project
Secretary	Maximum \$25/hour (including fringe benefits)
Technician	Maximum \$45/hour (including fringe benefits)

Travel and living expenses in Quebec and abroad for Quebec researchers and students must not exceed **15%** of all eligible expenses (up to a maximum of 5% of all eligible expenses in Quebec). When calculating the grant, only amounts that correspond to current Government of Quebec rates will be considered (see Appendix 1 herein for details).

Expenditures involving the purchase or leasing of equipment and materials, consumables and supplies, including costs related to animal facilities and platforms dedicated to the project, must not exceed **25%** of all eligible expenses. The purchase price for each piece of equipment must not exceed \$15,000 before taxes.

INDIRECT PROJECT COSTS

Additional operating expenses will be eligible for **universities and affiliated hospitals**. A maximum rate of **27% prorated to the MEI contribution** will be applied to the following five eligible cost items included in the direct project-related costs:

- Salaries and fringe benefits;
- Student scholarships;
- Materials, consumables and supplies, including animal facility and platform-related fees;
- Equipment purchases or leasing (maximum \$15,000 before taxes per purchased equipment);
- Travel and living expenses.

Indirect research fees (IRF) will be included in the MEI's financial support. Every financial partner involved must match this contribution.

INELIGIBLE EXPENSES

Ineligible expenses will include, among others:

- Salaries for university professor-researchers, college professors and researchers from participating federal research centres;
- Salaries for administrative support staff;
- Travel expenses for the Quebec team's researchers and students attending events not directly related to the project;
- Accommodations, travel and living expenses for foreign researchers and students;
- Support expenditures for the programming of activities;
- Equipment purchases priced above \$15,000 before taxes;
- Expenses for project planning activities, or any commercial, economic or technology transfer activity, including:
 - Detailed market research;
 - Detailed financial studies;
 - Technological demonstrations;
 - Product or process testing and validation;
 - Product certification;
 - Market expansion;
 - Marketing plans;
 - Promotional activities;
 - Regulatory issues beyond the scope of intellectual property management and use, etc.;
 - The sale of samples, products, equipment and technology;
 - Any building purchase, sale or construction;
 - Licensing;
 - Joint ventures, mergers, acquisitions, etc.
- Any expense not directly related to the project;
- The cost of establishing an on-line presence or web hosting;
- Support expenditures for the programming of activities;
- Grant funds already received from the following:
 - Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI), excluding the Infrastructure Operating Fund (IOF);
 - Other MEI financial assistance programs.

FINANCING PACKAGE

MEI financial assistance will not exceed 50% of eligible cash expenses. PSO-International will accept co-financing for eligible cash expenses from multiple sources, including but not limited to:

- The applicant organization;
- Institutions in the health and social services and education networks;
- Private sector companies legally incorporated in Quebec to conduct research and innovation activities in Quebec;
- NPOs, including foundations and professional associations.
- Federal departments and agencies, including federal granting councils.
- Provincial and municipal departments and agencies, along with Quebec research funds.
- Crown corporations.

Financial assistance under the PSO will not be combined with contributions from any other MEI program, including MITACS grants, which will not be accepted as co-funding for the financing package.

Co-funding sources must be included in the financing package; a copy of the additional funding request must be provided upon submission. The additional funding request must be submitted before September 6.

Combined assistance from municipal, provincial and federal governments, as well as from partners with intervention funds financed by these levels of government, will not exceed **80%** of all project-related expenses. The assistance considered in this calculation will involve project-related grants, loans and tax incentives.

Companies must provide a minimum **cash** contribution equal to **20%** of eligible expenses.

FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE TERMS AND CONDITIONS

Form and Amount

The financial assistance will be provided over a three-year period and represents a non-repayable, non-recurring financial contribution. It may reach 50% of eligible cash expenses related to the performance of activities in the Quebec portion, but it will not exceed \$500,000 over three years. It may reach 50% of eligible expenses, up to a maximum of \$500,000 per research and development project under the M-ERA.NET call. The \$500,000 amount will include direct research costs, MEI management fees (2%), as well as indirect research costs, where applicable. The MEI financial contribution will be non-repayable and non-recurring.

PROJECT SELECTION

Following a call for proposals, projects will be submitted and evaluated by competent PRIMA Québec and M-ERA.NET network committees.

Representatives from the *Direction des partenariats et des programmes canadiens et internationaux* (DPPCI) will act as observers during the regional selection committee meeting.

PRIMA Québec will issue funding recommendations for a list of projects prioritized by its Board of Directors.

The Board of Directors will approve the list and indicate the cut-off threshold. It will then issue recommendations that include, among other points, the title of each approved project, along with the relevant financial commitment.

PROJECT APPROVAL

Funding recommendations and assessment reports will be forwarded to the MINISTER, in accordance with the agreement. The MINISTER may then approve projects and award co-funding according to the established parameters, or refuse the co-funding of certain projects while specifying the problematic components that led to the refusal.

Project funding approvals will be confirmed through an award letter that specifies the terms and conditions surrounding accountability.

PROJECT MANAGEMENT COSTS

Funding applicants are required to inform the industrial partners of PRIMA Québec's management fees. These partners must contribute to PRIMA Québec's management costs, up to a total of 3% of the amount of the research mandate. The MEI's management fee will be 2%.

PROJECT TRACKING

The annual activity report must include a progress report containing updated information on every active project.

CALL FOR PROJECTS CALENDAR

2019 Call Launch	March 19, 2019
Pre-proposal and PRIMA Québec form submission deadline for the Quebec portion of the consortium	Noon on June 18, 2019 (Brussels time)
Deadline to submit a copy of the additional funding request	September 6, 2019
National/regional pre-proposal verifications, completed and issued on line via computer tool	September 11, 2019
Coordination meeting and feedback for candidates	September 18 and 19, 2019
Full proposal submission deadline	November 19, 2019
Full proposal national/regional eligibility verification deadline	November 21, 2019
Start of full proposal central evaluation	November 22, 2019
Deadline for individual evaluations by international evaluators	December 20, 2019
Peer review reports and ranking list for the consortium call	January 21, 2020
Project recommendations by PRIMA Québec's Board of Directors (BOD) to the MEI	Before January 24, 2020
National/regional commitment for the completed funding (provided on line via computer tool), leading to a preliminary selection list MEI decision regarding projects eligible for funding	January 24, 2020
Selection meeting - coordination of national/regional funding recommendations for the final selection list	End of January 2020
Final MEI decision	End of January 2020
Feedback to candidates	Early February 2020
Start of contract negotiations for proposals selected at the national/regional levels Issuing of award letters and financial assistance agreements to PRIMA Québec for signature	March 2020
Start of funded projects	March 2020

APPENDIX 1

DETAILS ON ELIGIBLE TRAVEL EXPENSES

TRAVEL EXPENSES IN QUEBEC

Travel expenses refer to costs incurred by a person travelling outside of his or her usual work territory.

This appendix will cover travel expenses regarding certain modes of transportation, hotel accommodations and restaurant expenses. Other travel expenses, or reimbursements in excess of those established, may be authorized if necessary, but only when documented. Barring exceptional circumstances, the methods chosen must demonstrate due regard for cost saving.

The BENEFICIARY must comply with the "Directive sur les frais remboursables lors d'un déplacement et autres frais inhérents", available on the *Conseil du trésor* website at the following address: <http://www.tresor.gouv.qc.ca/publications/secretariat/>.

On the agreement signature date, these guidelines prescribed the following rates:

Transportation

More economical forms of public transportation must be prioritized over personal vehicles.

With regard to personal vehicles, the following rates will be eligible according to the applicable kilometrage during the BENEFICIARY's fiscal year:

Annual Kilometrage	Rates
1 st instalment: 1 to 8,000 km	\$0.455/km
2 nd instalment: More than 8,000 km	\$0.410/km

If the appropriate public transportation is available but the BENEFICIARY opts for a personal vehicle, the eligible rate will be reduced to \$0.145 per kilometre travelled.

Hotel Accommodations

The following maximum daily allowance for hotel accommodations will apply:

City	Maximum Allowance	
	Low Season ²	High Season ³
City of Montreal territory	\$126	\$138
Quebec City territory	\$106	
The cities of Laval, Gatineau, Longueuil, Lac-Beauport and Lac-Delage	\$102	\$110
Establishments located elsewhere in Quebec	\$83	\$87
All other establishments	\$79	

These rates are based on the *Secrétariat du Conseil du trésor* guidelines and may vary.

These maximum amounts do not include the Goods and Services Tax (GST), the Quebec Sales Tax (QST), or the accommodation tax, which will be reimbursed where applicable.

Restaurant Expenses

The following maximum daily allowance for restaurant expenses will be applied:

	Applicable Rate
Breakfast	\$10.40
Lunch	\$14.30
Dinner	\$21.55
Total	\$46.25

These rates are based on the *Secrétariat du Conseil du trésor* guidelines and may vary.

The rates shown above include taxes and service.

² From November 1 to May 31

³ From June 1 to October 31

TRAVEL EXPENSES OUTSIDE QUEBEC

This section covers expenses incurred outside Quebec for programs that include these costs.

City/Country	Maximum Allowance	
	Accommodations Per Day In CAD	Meals Per Day In CAD
CANADA (OUTSIDE QUEBEC)		
Calgary	\$166	\$50
Charlottetown	\$148	\$50
Edmonton	\$115	\$50
Halifax	\$136	\$50
Moncton	\$148	\$50
Ottawa	\$148	\$50
Regina	\$108	\$50
Saskatoon	\$102	\$50
St. John's (Newfoundland and Labrador)	\$159	\$50
Toronto	\$184	\$60
Vancouver	\$184	\$55
Victoria	\$184	\$50
Winnipeg	\$102	\$50
Other cities	\$102	\$50
AMERICA	In USD	In USD
Atlanta	\$120	\$50
Boston	\$192	\$50
Chicago	\$130	\$50
Dallas	\$120	\$50
Detroit	\$120	\$50
Los Angeles	\$120	\$50
Miami	\$120	\$50
New York	\$192	\$60
Philadelphia	\$120	\$50
San Francisco	\$160	\$50
Seattle	\$120	\$50
Washington, D.C.	\$120	\$50
Other cities	\$120	\$50
Brazil	\$123	\$40
Mexico	\$177	\$43
EUROPE	Local currency	Local currency
Germany	€137	€60
Belgium	€137	€54
Spain	€161	€59
France	€174	€62
Italy	€218	€52
Luxembourg	€125	€52
Netherlands	€111	€61
United Kingdom	£139	£51
Switzerland	209 Francs	92 Francs

City/Country	Maximum Allowances	
	Accommodation Per Day	Meals Per Day
SCANDINAVIAN COUNTRIES	In USD	In USD
Denmark	\$105	\$65
Iceland	\$153	\$69
Norway	\$114	\$78
Sweden	\$127	\$55
Finland	Local currency €125	Local currency €71
NEAR EAST		
Israel	In USD \$219	In USD \$80
ASIA	In USD	In USD
China	\$145	\$48
South Korea	\$159	\$57
India	\$190	\$38
Japan	\$164	\$89

These rates are based on the *Secrétariat du Conseil du trésor* guidelines and may vary.

These maximum amounts do not include the Goods and Services Tax (GST), the Quebec Sales Tax (QST), the accommodation tax, or any other tax in effect within the relevant countries, which will be reimbursed where applicable.

Stated amounts are based on the US dollar, notwithstanding Canada and countries that use the Euro. Local currencies are used for information purposes only.

Please contact us for any other destination.

Support documents, including receipts and proof of payment, will be required and must be kept by the applicant for possible auditing purposes.

