

## Call for projects 2021-2022 – Inter-network Initiatives Cellular, Tissue and Gene Therapy Research Network of Quebec (ThéCell) and Quebec Bio-Imaging Network (QBIN)

### Objectives of the program

This joint program between the ThéCell Network and the Quebec Bio-Imaging Network (RBIQ) aims to promote interactions between researchers from Quebec networks who carry out research on issues common to both partner networks. Proposed projects must be aligned with the networks' mission and focus on the respective research themes / priorities of the networks concerned. This funding should be used for at least one of the following purposes:

- Generate knowledge and data that can lead to a concrete clinical or health care application.
- Obtain sufficient preliminary data to allow the team to submit funding requests to granting agencies.
- Serve as leverage for larger grants from partners to conduct a long-term research agenda.
- Allow Quebec researchers to establish their leadership at the national and international levels in the targeted research themes.
- Allow, as much as possible, to have an activity or a product dedicated to the transfer of knowledge to users or target populations.

A project corresponding to the research areas of the networks and tied to at least one of the above objectives will be funded based on excellence. This project must involve at least one regular member of each network (ThéCell and QBIN). The project may involve more than one Quebec research center, as well as other centers in Canada. The \$ 20,000 award (\$ 10,000 per network, to the respective network researcher) is granted for a period of one year. Expenditures must be made in Quebec during this period and must comply with FRQS policies. The grant may be extended by up to one year (without budget increase), but only if adequately justified to the networks. The eligibility criteria and the evaluation method are described below. The project of excellent scientific quality demonstrating a structuring effect for research within networks will be funded at the level of \$ 20,000 for one year.

**The deadline for declaring your intention to submit a project**, by email, containing the title of the project and the names of the two regular members of each network to [Friederike.pfau@crchudequebec.ulaval.ca](mailto:Friederike.pfau@crchudequebec.ulaval.ca) and [rbiq@usherbrooke.ca](mailto:rbiq@usherbrooke.ca) is: **January 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021.**

**The deadline for submitting applications is February 22nd, 2021 at 23h59.**

Requests submitted late, incomplete or that do not meet the eligibility criteria will not be evaluated.

## Eligibility Criteria and Evaluation Criteria

1. The request for funding must include two principal investigators: a **regular member** from ThéCell and one from QBIN;
2. Co-researchers affiliated with Quebec research centers may receive funding only if they are members of one of the two networks before submission of the final application;
3. **Only one application per year as a principal investigator** can be submitted for the Inter-Network Initiatives competition. There is no limit as a co-investigator;
4. Requests for funding from new collaborations between researchers will be considered favorably.
5. The inclusion of a young researcher eligible for the FRQS Junior 1 will be considered favorably.
6. For this program, researchers may be part of the same research center.
7. Applications may include additional research centers in Quebec, Canada or internationally. However, funds are allocated to Québec member researchers only;
8. Demonstration of the structuring effect for research within the networks, according to their objectives (e.g., establishment of new inter-sectoral collaborations within the network or internationally, standardization of methods, implementing platform or common resources).
9. Demonstration of a clear plan for obtaining subsequent funding from an external organization other than ThéCell or QBIN (e.g., CIHR, private partner or other).
10. It is the responsibility of researchers to ensure that they follow good research practices and obtain and maintain all necessary certifications from their respective institutions (e.g., radiation protection, biosecurity, committee approval animal or human ethics, controlled substances used in the project and associated authorizations).

## Duration of awards

The \$ 20,000 award is granted for a period of one year. Expenditures must be made in Quebec during this period and must comply with FRQS policies. The grant may be extended by up to one year (without budget increase), but only if adequately justified to the networks.

## Obligations of researchers towards the program

By applying to this program and if they are subsidized, the researchers commit to:

1. Acknowledge networks support as an initial funding agency in any publications (e.g., abstract, peer-reviewed article) or poster or oral presentation resulting from this research.
2. Produce a progress report at the end of funding period. This report will summarize the status of the research results, including copies of articles published as a result of this research;
3. Participate at the annual scientific day of its home network in order to keep all members informed of the results of the funded pilot project.
4. Notify the Networks of any positive decision of granting agencies related to the subsidized project.

## Documents required for the submission of the application :

1. The completed form in word format must be submitted by email to [Friederike.pfau@crchudequebec.ulaval.ca](mailto:Friederike.pfau@crchudequebec.ulaval.ca) and [rbiq@usherbrooke.ca](mailto:rbiq@usherbrooke.ca) with one annexe consisting of one single file in PDF format (see point 2 a.-c.)
2. Accompanying documents: all documents must be in PDF format
  - a. An up-to-date Canadian Common CV (CIHR – 5-years) of all researchers involved in the application, and a free format CV for international collaborators.
  - b. The signatures form for PIs and co-researchers (add page as required)

Other documents:

- c. References and Figures to support the description of the project, if necessary.

## Application Assessment Process

An external scientific committee will be formed to evaluate all applications submitted. The co-chairmanship of the committee will be held by a member of the Steering committee of each network (*and who have not submitted a request*). Competition results will be announced in March following the submission date.

Applications will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

### **1) Competence and complementarity of the research team (35 points):**

- **New collaboration, quality of research teams and multicentricity (20):** *The relevance of each Research Theme/Networks should be clearly identified in this section*
  - Establishment of new local or international intersectoral collaborations;
  - Scientific achievements, history of publication, funding and training of students;
  - Complementarity of the participating teams (e.g., how the expertise of each will be used to carry out the project).
- **Integration of a Young investigator (5).**
- **Involves HQP and Contributes to training (10):**
  - Importance given to the training of students and research professionals

### **2) Originality of the request and scientific merit of the project (30 points):**

- **Clarity and testability of hypotheses (10):** ○ *Originality of the hypotheses, clarity of the research question and clarity of scientific rationale;*
  - Feasibility of the methodological approach in the proposed financial framework.
- **Realistic and well-defined objectives (10):** ○ *Appropriateness of the experimental design;*
  - Potential to create new knowledge.
- **Methodology and analysis (10):** ○ *Novelty of the approach, new methodologies, or new application of existing methodologies including participant recruitment, access to databases, laboratory methods or any other data collection method.*

### **3) Realism of the budget proposal (10 points):**

- **Budget justification (10):**
  - Relevance of the proposed use of the funds.

### **4) Potential impact and structuring effect for research within networks (25 points):**

- **Relevance, scientific or clinical impact of the project related to the participating networks and their themes (15):** ○ *Immediate or potential impact of the proposed project on research within the networks, according to their objectives;*
  - Standardization of methods, establishment of a platform or common resources.
- **Potential for external funding following the pilot project (10):** ○ *Clarity and feasibility of the plan for obtaining future or concomitant funding.*

## Information

Any request for additional information may be directed to the Coordinator of the ThéCell Network, Friederike Pfau (418-525-4444 #61685) ([friederike.pfau@crchudequebec.ulaval.ca](mailto:friederike.pfau@crchudequebec.ulaval.ca)) OR to the Coordinator of the QBIN, ([rbiq@usherbrooke.ca](mailto:rbiq@usherbrooke.ca)).