

**Guidelines and  
Evaluation Criteria**

**Pilot Project  
Competition**

**March 2010**



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## **1. GÉNOME QUÉBEC'S MISSION AND OBJECTIVES**

Génomique Québec is a private non-profit organization. Through partnerships with key national and international players in the life sciences, Génomique Québec contributes to strengthening the competitiveness of the system for innovation in genomics, and this with an eye to maximizing the resulting socio-economic impacts in Québec. This is achieved by funding major genomics research initiatives and implementing the tools required for scientific and strategic development in the field.

Génomique Québec's mission is to put genomics at the heart of the Québec's scientific and socio-economic development by increasing the benefits ensuing from genomics and creating opportunities for the latter's growth.

## **2. OVERVIEW OF THE PILOT PROJECTS COMPETITION**

This program aims to support pilot projects in genomics or related sciences such as proteomics, transcriptomics, pharmacogenomics, chemogenomics and metabolomics, and including techniques such as bioinformatics and biostatistics.

Through this competition, Génomique Québec is seeking to fund pilot projects and to enable future funding for genomics research projects at a national (Génomique Québec, Genome Canada, etc.) or international level (Genome Canada, NIH or FP7, for example).

Funded projects can also act to spur the development of national or international partnerships in the academic or private sector.

The total funding envelope of this competition is of \$600,000, 50% funded by Génomique Québec. Génomique Québec requests a 1:1 co-funding, from public or private source (a maximum of 50% of expenses can be fund by Génomique Québec). The maximum total budget for a given project is \$200,000 (with a maximum of \$100,000 from Génomique Québec). Funding is for a maximum period of 2 years, and is non-renewable. This program will thus enable funding of 3 and 6 projects.

A researcher can only submit one application as principal investigator or co-applicant to this program. He, however, can be a collaborator in an unlimited number of projects. Only university researchers recognized as independent researchers (as defined in point 1.2 of the Common Rules and Regulations for the three FRSQ research funds, at [http://www.frsq.gouv.qc.ca/en/financement/regles\\_generales/regles\\_gen.shtml#04](http://www.frsq.gouv.qc.ca/en/financement/regles_generales/regles_gen.shtml#04)) can submit an application as principal investigators in a Génomique Québec competition. All applications submitted by researchers working in hospital centres should be sent to Génomique Québec through the research office or the vice-rector of research of their home institutions. Funding may only be used towards the cost of research activities conducted in university and government laboratories located in Québec.

### 3. APPLICATION AND EVALUATION PROCEDURES

#### 3.1. TIMEFRAME

Action	Deadline
Program guide and application form posted online	March 11, 2010
Submission of registration letters by email (MANDATORY)	March 31, 2010, by no later than 5:00 p.m.
Submission of full applications (FTP site)	April 12, 2010, by no later than 5:00 p.m.
Announcement of results	End of July 2010
Launch of projects	August 2010

**N.B.: Results announcement may be delayed depending on the number of applications received**

#### 3.2. REGISTRATION LETTER

Researchers who wish to apply to the pilot project program must complete and submit by e-mail to [concourspp@genomequebec.com](mailto:concourspp@genomequebec.com) the registration letter available on Génome Québec's web site ([www.genomequebec.com](http://www.genomequebec.com)) by no later than 5:00 p.m. on March 31, 2010.

Registration letter forms are available in both French and English.

#### 3.3. FULL APPLICATION

Full applications for pilot project funding must be submitted using the form available on the Génome Québec Web site, at [www.genomequebec.com](http://www.genomequebec.com), and be in compliance with the evaluation criteria provided in the guidelines (section 3.7).

Application forms are available in both French and English.

Full applications must be submitted to Génome Québec before 5:00 p.m. on April 12, 2010. Submissions will be via an FTP site; all registered investigators will receive the necessary instructions in a timely fashion.

Incomplete applications or applications that fail to meet all of the competition criteria are not submitted for the review process and Génome Québec notifies the principal investigator in the days following the application's submission.

Full applications must include the following:

- The application form
- Appendix I : CVs in PDF format of the principal investigator and co-applicants (refer to instructions)
- Appendix II : Publications in PDF format (refer to instructions)

#### 3.4. REQUEST FOR SERVICES FROM TECHNOLOGY CENTRES

Génome Québec strongly encourages the use of its technology centers. The list of Génome Québec technology centres is available at the following address:  
<http://www.genomequebec.com/v2009/centresTechnologiques/index.asp>.

All applications must have a detailed description of all the technological services that will be outsourced to organizations outside the project, including technology centres funded by Génome Québec and/or Genome Canada.

The use of services from technology centres other than those funded by Génome Québec must be justified.

### 3.5. ECONOMIC IMPACTS OR BENEFITS FOR QUEBEC

All applications must describe the anticipated benefits for Quebec, which must be realized within no more than two years after the project's completion.

The pilot project competition aims to fund projects that will enable researchers to be more competitive in their funding applications for projects ensuing from their pilot project. The benefits described must therefore include elements associated to these objectives.

Applicants must include a plan explaining how they will transfer, disseminate, use and/or apply all potential research results so as to concretely achieve the anticipated impacts and benefits.

### 3.6. EVALUATION PROCESS

The evaluation process of applications will include a scientific review by a peers committee managed by the Fonds de la Recherche en Santé du Québec (FRSQ) and the Fonds Québécois de la Recherche sur la Nature et les Technologies (FQRNT) (sections 3.7.1 to 3.7.3). Génome Québec will proceed to a due diligence review of the financial aspects of the project (sections 3.7.4 and 3.7.5).

The results of the scientific reviews carried out by the FRSQ and FQRNT-managed peer committees and those of the due diligence process conducted by Génome Québec will be submitted to Génome Québec Board of Directors for a final decision.

### 3.7. EVALUATION CRITERIA

#### **3.7.1. Quality of the research**

- Research excellence and originality.
- Rigour of methodology.
- Relevance of the proposed research in light of recent scientific progress.
- Degree to which the objectives, deliverables and timeframes proposed can be achieved.
- Project feasibility, based on the expertise of applicants and the requested funding.
- Proposed activities' ability to enable obtaining funding for ensuing projects.
- Potential for implementing public or private sector collaborations, on a national or international scale.

#### **3.7.2. Quality of the principal investigator and research team**

- Excellence of the principal investigator and co-applicants.
- Experience of principal investigator and co-applicants in the proposed area of research.
- Ability to secure funding.
- Complementary character of the research team, if applicable (the group has the necessary expertise to carry out all aspects of the proposed research).

#### **3.7.3. Socio-economic impacts or benefits for Quebec**

- Degree to which the anticipated benefits are in line with the competition objectives, as described in section 2 of the guidelines.
- Quality of the plan for the transfer and dissemination of research results.

### **3.7.4. Budget**

- The budgeted expenses are in line with the proposed research activities.
- The justification provided for budget items is reasonable and plausible.
- Budget items comply with the eligible expenses as described in section 4.1.

### **3.7.5. Quality of the co-funding plan**

- Compliance of the co-funding plan with the co-funding eligibility guidelines described in section 5.1.
- Adequate level of co-funding.
- Feasibility of the co-funding plan, i.e., the ability to secure co-funding from other sources to cover eligible research costs.
- Proven relationship between the proposed co-funding and the project's objectives.

## **4. FUNDING**

### **4.1. ELIGIBLE EXPENSES**

Eligible costs are defined as the cost of expenses that directly support the objectives of projects approved by Génome Québec. Génome Québec funds can notably only be used to cover the cost of research activities performed in academic and government labs located in Quebec. Eligible costs include:

- Salaries: salaries and benefits for students (post-doctoral, Ph.D., M.Sc.), trainees, technicians, managers (e.g. project managers) and support staff needed for the efficient operation of the research infrastructure.
- Inflation rate cost for salaries, up to a maximum of 2% per year
- Technology center services.
- Standard laboratory supplies, including consumables and analysis software.
- Administrative costs must not exceed 5 percent (5%) of the budget, include:
  - Costs for the communication of results, including the costs of developing Web-based information (including Web site maintenance fees) and disseminating results through traditional media as well as via video or CD-ROM.
  - Costs for the publication of articles, including fees to ensure open access to findings (for example, publication costs in an open access journal or costs of providing open access to an article).
  - Costs of preparing a research manuscript for publication.
  - Costs of translating research findings for dissemination purposes.

### **4.2. NON-ELIGIBLE EXPENSES**

- Salaries (or bonuses) of the principal investigator and co-applicants.
- Equipment.
- Expenses for the general maintenance of the research equipment used to perform the proposed project.
- Costs of the construction, renovation or rental of laboratories or supporting facilities.

- Monthly fees for the rental or installation of telephone or other lines.
- Monthly Internet access fees at the institution or at home.
- Costs associated to the rental or purchase of cellular phones or personal data assistants (BlackBerry, Palm Pilot, Pocket PC, etc.), including service plans and long-distance and local calling fees.
- Costs associated to entertainment, hospitality and gifts. This may, for example, include expenses incurred for regularly networking with colleagues and meeting with staff.
- Costs of employee bonuses and staff recognition initiatives.
- Costs of holding workshops or seminars.
- Travel expenses.
- Education-related costs, such as those involved in the writing of a thesis, and tuition and course fees.
- Costs related to professional training or development, such as computer or language courses.
- Costs involved in the preparation of teaching material.
- Costs of the basic services, such as heat, lighting, water, compressed air, distilled water, vacuums and janitorial services, offered to all laboratories in a research facility.
- Costs associated to insurance premiums for buildings and equipment.
- Expenses incurred to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements, specifically with regard to the ethical review, necessary safety measures to counter biological risks and risks of a radioactive nature, and environmental reviews of the measures introduced to ensure adherence to municipal or provincial by-laws or regulations.
- Monthly parking fees for vehicles, unless specifically required for field work.
- Sales tax to which an exemption or rebate applies.
- Patent-related expenses.
- The costs of moving a laboratory.
- Costs of alcohol beverages.

## **5. CO-FUNDING**

Génome Québec requires that at least 50% of the eligible project costs be covered by matching funds (co-funding) from other sources (see section 5.1). A detailed co-funding plan must be presented along with the application. Awardees must have secured 75% of the co-funding prior to the signing of the funding agreements. A well-developed and achievable plan to secure the remaining 25% of co-funding must also be submitted.

### **5.1. ELIGIBLE CO-FUNDING**

To be eligible under this competition, the co-funding application must have been submitted by June 18, 2009 (6 months prior to the program's announcement). The co-funding must cover those costs specifically identified in Génome Québec's budget.

Génomique Québec considers the following co-funding sources (Canadian or foreign) as acceptable:

- Institutional funds;
- Trusts or foundations;
- Federal government departments and agencies, including the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC);
- Private corporations;
- Voluntary organizations;
- Individuals;
- Venture capital or other investment funds;
- Funding from provincial and municipal departments and agencies, but solely when funding **does not originate from the MDEIE**.

In-kind contributions, defined as non-cash eligible budget items that can be assigned a cash value, may be considered as co-funding if:

- The value can be reasonably determined and supported by documentation;
- The expenditure represents an item that would otherwise have to be acquired with funds belonging to the project.

## 5.2. NON ELIGIBLE CO-FUNDING

- Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) funds.
- Supplier discounts.

## 6. FUNDING ADMINISTRATION

### 6.1. CONDITIONS FOR THE DISBURSEMENT OF GÉNOME QUÉBEC FUNDS

Disbursement of funds awarded by Génomique Québec will be conditioned by:

- Signature of agreements between Génomique Québec, the contracting organizations (private and academic), investigators and co-funding partners which set the primary conditions, including the nature of financial contributions, intellectual property, project management and the dissemination of data. These agreements must comply with the agreement between Génomique Québec and the MDEIE.
- Revision of the scientific activities and budget as per the review committee's recommendations and approved by Génomique Québec's Board of Directors.
- Obtaining appropriate certifications for projects involving human subjects, human embryonic stem cells, animals, biohazards, radioactive material and possible effects on the environment.
- The implementation of a well-defined policy and plan for the dissemination of data, the sharing of resources ensuing from the project and the publication of results.
- Co-funding of eligible costs secured by at least 75%.



## 6.2. PROJECT LAUNCH

All applicants must demonstrate that they are able to receive Génome Québec's funding within three (3) months of the notice of award. **Génome Québec reserves the right to withdraw funding for any approved project that is not ready to receive funding at that time, as well as any project not accompanied by the signed agreements as described in section 6.1, the latter within three months of the notice of award.**

The notice of award of funding sets the official project start date. Eligible expenses may be incurred for the project and acknowledged up to three (3) months prior to the date of the notice of award.

## 6.3. RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Génome Québec must meet the MDEIE's requirements regarding evaluations, audits, responsibility and accountability, including information enabling Génome Québec to evaluate the continuous performance of projects and their associated activities. Researchers funded by Génome Québec are responsible for taking part in that process and providing the appropriate performance and evaluation data, and this in compliance with Génome Québec's requirements regarding a given project. Génome Québec will provide a guide on the use of the funds received to all applicants granted funding. This guide will notably describe the processes associated with these requirements.

## 6.4. MONITORING SCIENTIFIC PROGRESS

As pertains to the obligations described in section 6.3, investigators must submit a report, mid-way through the project, on the status of the scientific activities, objectives and timeframes put forth in the application. Génome Québec will make a report template available for this purpose.

## 6.5. FUNDING MANAGEMENT

- The principal investigator and his institution must submit, mid-way through the project, a financial report accounting for consolidated project expenses and giving the status of the co-funding.
- Génome Québec will ensure the project's funding as per the disbursement process described in its guide on the use of Génome Québec funding, and this up to its maximum contribution to the project (as defined in the notice of award). Disbursed amounts will be calculated according to the project budget as well as the actual project expenses as reported in the financial project report.

## 6.6. FINAL REPORTS

In the three-month period following the completion of the research project, each principal investigator must submit the following documents to Génome Québec: a final report describing the project results, a final financial report reconciling actual expenditures with budgeted and received amounts, and lastly, a report on the actual status of all concrete results attained due to Génome Québec funding. A final payment, equal to 5% of the budget, will be withheld until these final reports are submitted.

## 7. GÉNOME QUÉBEC RESOURCE PERSON

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