

Guidelines and Evaluation Criteria

***Québec Vert* Competition**

May 2011



TABLE OF CONTENTS

1.	GÉNOME QUÉBEC'S MISSION AND OBJECTIVES	3
2.	OVERVIEW OF THE PILOT PROJECT COMPETITION.....	3
	ERREUR ! SIGNET NON DEFINI.	
3.	APPLICATION AND EVALUATION PROCEDURES	3
3.1.	TIMEFRAME.....	4
3.2.	REGISTRATION LETTER	4
3.3.	FULL APPLICATION	ERREUR ! SIGNET NON DEFINI.
3.4.	REQUEST FOR SERVICES FROM TECHNOLOGY CENTRES.....	5
3.5.	ECONOMIC IMPACTS OR BENEFITS FOR QUÉBEC	5
3.6.	EVALUATION PROCESS	5
3.7.	EVALUATION CRITERA	5
3.7.1.	<i>Quality of the research</i>	5
3.7.2.	<i>Quality of the principal investigator and research team</i>	5
3.7.3.	<i>Socio-economic impacts or benefits for Québec</i>	6
3.7.4.	<i>Budget</i>	6
4.	FUNDING	6
4.1.	ELIGIBLE EXPENSES	6
4.2.	NON-ELIGIBLE EXPENSES	7
5.	CO-FUNDING.....	8
6.	FUNDING ADMINISTRATION	8
6.1.	CONDITIONS FOR THE DISBURSEMENT OF GÉNOME QUÉBEC FUNDS	8
6.2.	PROJECT LAUNCH	8
6.3.	RESPONSIBILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITY	8
6.4.	MONITORING SCIENTIFIC PROGRESS	8
6.5.	FUNDING MANAGEMENT	9
6.6.	FINAL REPORTS.....	9
7.	GÉNOME QUÉBEC RESOURCE PERSON	9

1. GÉNOME QUÉBEC'S MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

Génome Québec is a private non-profit organization. Through partnerships with key national and international players in the life sciences, Génome 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.

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

2. OVERVIEW OF THE PILOT PROJECT COMPETITION

The pilot project funding program aims to fund proofs of concept in support of the development of large-scale genomics projects able to obtain critical provincial, federal and international funding with a specific emphasis on competitiveness in Genome Canada competitions.

In this context, the *Québec Vert* Competition seeks to fund pilot projects that will use genomics to solve ecosystems health issues. This program will be launched on May 16th, 2011, and projects funded by no later than December 31st, 2011. The *Québec Vert* Competition will allow for the strategic positioning of Québec's researchers in a sector where various strengths were identified and which accounts for about 25% of genomics researchers in the province.

Génome Québec's total funding envelope for this competition will be up to \$300,000, with a maximum funding of \$100,000 per project. Funding is for a maximum period of two (2) years, and is non-renewable. This competition should thus make it possible to fund three (3) projects.

A researcher can, within the framework of this competition, only submit one application as principal investigator or co-applicant. He can, however, be a collaborator on other 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 [#03](http://www.frsq.gouv.qc.ca/en/financement/regles_generales/regles_gen.shtml)) can submit an application as principal investigators in a Génome Québec competition. All applications submitted by researchers working in hospital centres should be sent to Génome Québec through the research office or the vice-rector of research of their institutions. Funding may only be used towards the cost of research activities conducted in universities located in Québec.

3. APPLICATION AND EVALUATION PROCEDURES

3.1. TIMEFRAME

Action	Deadline
Competition guidelines and registration form posted online	May 18, 2011
Submission of registration letters by e-mail (MANDATORY)	June 15, 2011, by no later than 5:00 p.m.
Submission of full applications (FTP site)	July 15, 2011, by no later than 5:00 p.m.
Announcement of results*	End of September 2011
Launch of projects	At the latest: 3 months after results announcement

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

3.2. REGISTRATION LETTER

Investigators who wish to apply to the *Québec Vert Competition* must complete the registration letter and submit it via e-mail, by no later than 5:00 p.m. on June 15th, 2011, to the following address: concoursppqv@genomequebec.com.

Registration letter forms are available in both English and French.

ALL REGISTRATION LETTERS RECEIVED AFTER THE STIPULATED DEADLINE WILL BE REJECTED, AND ONLY THOSE TEAMS WITH DULY SUBMITTED REGISTRATION LETTERS WILL BE INVITED TO SUBMIT A FULL APPLICATION.

3.3. FULL APPLICATION

Full applications for the *Québec Vert Competition* must be submitted using the form that will be available on the Génome Québec Web site (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.

Applications must be submitted to Génome Québec by no later than 5:00 p.m. on July 15th, 2011. Submissions will be done via an FTP site (registered investigators will receive the necessary instructions in a timely manner).

Incomplete applications or applications that fail to meet all of the competition criteria will not be submitted to the review process. In such a case, Génome Québec will notify the principal investigator in the days following an application's submission.

Full applications must include the following:

- Application form;
- Appendix I: CVs of the principal investigator and co-applicants, in PDF format (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>.

Each application must include a detailed description of all of the technological services that will be outsourced to organizations external to 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 QUÉBEC

All applicants must describe the anticipated benefits for Québec, which must be realized within the two-year period following the project's completion.

The pilot project funding program aims to fund proofs of concept in support of the development of large-scale genomics projects able to obtain critical provincial, federal and international funding with a specific emphasis on competitiveness in Genome Canada competitions.

The benefits described must therefore include elements associated with 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 application evaluation process will include a scientific review by a peers committee supervised by 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 the review of the Benefits section and will proceed to a due diligence review of the financial aspects of the project (section 3.7.3 and 3.7.4).

The results of the reviews will be submitted to Génome Québec's 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 proposed objectives, deliverables and timeframes 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.

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

- Excellence of the principal investigator and co-applicants.
- Experience of the 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 Québec

- Extent to which the anticipated benefits are in line with the competition objectives, which is to fund proofs of concept in support of the development of large-scale genomics projects able to obtain critical provincial, federal and international funding with a specific emphasis on competitiveness in Genome Canada competitions.
- 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.

4. FUNDING

4.1. ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

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

- Salaries: salaries and benefits for students (post-doctoral, PhD, 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 centre services;
- Standard laboratory supplies, including consumables and analysis software;
- Administrative costs, which cannot exceed 5 percent (5%) of the total budget and which may 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

- Institutions' overhead 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 with 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 with entertainment, hospitality and gifts. These 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, extended to all laboratories in a research facility.
- Costs of 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.
- Costs of moving a laboratory.
- Costs of alcoholic beverages.

5. CO-FUNDING

Génome Québec does not require matching funds for this competition.

6. FUNDING ADMINISTRATION

6.1. CONDITIONS FOR THE DISBURSEMENT OF GÉNOME QUÉBEC FUNDS

The disbursement of Génome Québec funds is contingent on:

- The signing of agreements between Génome Québec, the contracting organizations (private and academic) and the investigators 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 Génome Québec and the MDEIE.
- The revision of the scientific activities and budget as per the review committee's recommendations and as approved by Génome Québec's Board of Directors.
- The obtaining of appropriate certifications for projects involving human subjects, human embryonic stem cells, animals, biohazards or radioactive material, or with a potential environmental impact.
- 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.
- The participation of the project's principal investigator and host institution in a Génome Québec information session on management processes and use of Génome Québec funds.

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, as well as any project not accompanied by the signed agreements as described in section 6.1, and this 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. RESPONSABILITIES AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Génome Québec must meet the MDEIE's requirements regarding evaluations, audits, responsibilities and accountability, including information enabling Génome Québec to evaluate the continuous performance of projects and their associated activities. Investigators 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 for all project activities.
- 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 total budget, will be withheld until these final reports are submitted.

7. GÉNOME QUÉBEC RESOURCE PERSON

Anne-Marie Alarco, Ph.D.
Director, Research Development
Génome Québec
630, boul. René-Lévesque West, Suite 2660, Montréal (Québec) H3B 1S6
Telephone: 514 398-0668, ext. 222
Fax: 514 398-0883
amalarco@genomequebec.com