



GÉNOME QUÉBEC

FINANCIAL GUIDELINES

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1. GÉNOME QUÉBEC MISSION STATEMENT

Génome Québec’s mission is to catalyze the development and excellence of genomics research and promote its integration and democratization. It is a pillar of the Québec bioeconomy and contributes to Québec’s influence and its social and sustainable development.

2. INTRODUCTION

Génome Québec’s Financial Guidelines (hereafter referred to simply as the “Guidelines”) will, in general, apply to all Génome Québec initiatives. For Genome Canada competitions in which Génome Québec funds are disbursed, Genome Canada’s guidelines for funding (or GAPP Investment Strategy, where applicable) will also be applied. Requests for Applications (RFAs) will note any exceptions to the Guidelines or include additional rules applicable to particular competitions/programs. The Guidelines provide details on eligibility for Génome Québec funding, acceptable uses of funds, the obligations of fund recipients and other related matters.

Génome Québec designs, funds and administers a suite of programs to fuel the research and innovation pipeline – from discovery through to applications of research – in four strategic sectors (health, agrifood, forestry and environment) in Quebec. Génome Québec typically participates in periodic Requests for Applications (RFA) by Genome Canada and supports autonomous competitions and initiatives financed by the ministère de l’Économie et de l’Innovation (MEI). For Genome Canada competitions, Génome Québec assist applicants in preparing competitive applications, facilitates access to genomics technology service providers, helps projects/platforms with aspects of project development and management and, working with the applicants, can assist in securing necessary co-funding. Génome Québec is responsible for selecting which projects/platforms to put forward to Genome Canada. Génome Québec has the mandate to ensure effective management of projects and platforms financed through either Genome Canada’s or MEI’s funds and to transmit performance measurement indicators and other pertinent information back to the funding sources.

Génome Québec defines genomics as the comprehensive study, using high throughput technologies, of the genetic information of a cell or organism and its functions. The definition also includes related disciplines such as epigenomics, metabolomics, metagenomics, proteomics, transcriptomics, bioinformatics, synthetic biology and phenotype data analysis as long as the link to genetic information is clear.

Génome Québec also funds research into the implications of genomics in society (GE3LS research). The acronym GE3LS stands for “Genomics and its Ethical, Environmental, Economic, Legal and Social aspects”. However, it should be understood broadly as research into the implications of genomics in society from the perspective of the social sciences and humanities. Therefore, it is not strictly limited to disciplines that make-up the acronym but rather encompasses all those that rely on quantitative and qualitative methodologies to investigate the implications of genomics in society, and inform applications, practices and policies. Specific details on GE3LS research funding opportunities can be found in relevant RFAs.

For the purpose of these Guidelines, “project” includes all research-related endeavours receiving funds from Génome Québec including support for technology platforms or initiatives.

3. GENERAL GUIDELINES

Funding provided by Génome Québec must be used solely to pay for the costs of activities that directly support the project objectives presented in the budget approved by Génome Québec and be incurred in the province of Québec.

3.1. Eligibility Requirements

3.1.1 Eligible Institutions

Génome Québec funds can only be awarded to individuals affiliated with one or more of the following types of organizations:

- Quebec universities and affiliated institutions including research hospitals and research institutes
- Quebec-located not-for-profit organizations (including community or charitable organizations) with an explicit research mandate

For the purpose of these Guidelines, “Host Institution” is the institution, at which the research by the Project Leader is carried out, “Participating Institution” is any remaining research institution participating in the project (hosting Co-Project Leaders or Co-Investigators).

3.1.2 Eligible Individuals

Individuals eligible to receive and administer Génome Québec funds must be:

- autonomous regarding their research activities; and,
- have an academic or research appointment at an eligible institution, such that the individual is:
 - allowed to pursue the proposed research project independently for the duration of the funding, to supervise trainees, and to publish the research results and,
 - obliged to conform to institutional/organizational regulations and guidelines concerning the conduct of research, the supervision of trainees, and the employment conditions of staff.

3.1.3 Project Participant Categories

Project Leader (e.g., Project Leader, Platform Leader or Academic Leader depending on the program)

The Project Leader is responsible for the intellectual direction of the project. In applications where the responsibility for the intellectual direction of the project is shared more or less equally between two or more individuals the project may identify more than one Project Leader. However, at least one of the Project Leaders must be eligible to receive and administer Génome Québec funds. The project must identify the Project Leader who will assume the overall administrative and financial responsibility for the Génome Québec's funds provided in support of the project.

Receptor Leader

Some programs, such as the Genomic Applications Partnership Program (GAPP) may require a Receptor Leader to represent all involved receptors on the project team and in interactions with Génome Québec and other interested parties. The Receptor Leader (supported by their organization), and other receptor representatives, are expected to provide technical expertise and direction for technology implementation, manage issues related to regulation, commercialization and adoption, and administer any project activities and associated costs taking place within their organizations.

Co-Investigators

A Co-Investigator is an individual who makes a substantial intellectual contribution to the proposed research and who will be involved in the day-to-day execution of the project. Co-Investigators may be independent researchers, or representatives of user or receptor organizations. Co-Investigators will likewise be responsible for the funds paid to their institutions, from Génome Québec or other sources.

Collaborator

A Collaborator is an individual who is not involved in the day-to-day execution of the research, but whose role is to provide a specific service or expertise (e.g., access to equipment, provision of specific reagents, training in a specialized technique, statistical analysis, access to a cohort, etc.). Collaborators will likewise be responsible for the funds paid to their institutions, from Génome Québec or other sources.

User/Receptor Representatives

Users are defined as organizations that are able to use the information generated through research to make informed decisions on issues such as practice guidelines and standards, policies, programs and product development and use. Examples of Users include companies (private / public, Canadian / foreign-owned), industry consortia and associations, government departments and agencies (federal, provincial and municipal), health-care organizations, and not-for-profit organizations.

In some programs such as GAPP, Users are known as Receptors and are defined more specifically as organizations that intend to further develop the innovation and/or knowledge resulting from a project leading to it being put into practice (i.e., in internal operations, by commercialization, or otherwise making it available to its ultimate users).

3.2. Sharing of Data and Publications

Génome Québec is strongly committed to the principle of rapid sharing of the outputs of Génome Québec-funded research including open access to publications, release of data and sharing of unique resources to the scientific community. By providing the broader scientific community with timely access to the outputs of Génome Québec-funded projects, it is anticipated that the translation of research will be accelerated for the benefit of Quebec and the wider global community.

Génome Québec encourages that funded research is peer-reviewed, published in online-repositories, appropriate public databases and/or journals to ensure free access within 12 months of publication. The following policies should guide dissemination of results and data management/sharing:

- open access policy for dissemination of research developed by FRQS
- Tricouncil data management policy

Génome Québec supports a variety of programs across the spectrum from discovery to translation and does so in partnership with many different organizations. In circumstances where the details of one or more of the aforementioned policies does not apply to a particular program, it will be made clear in the Request for Applications. Génome Québec recognizes the importance of maintaining the confidentiality of commercially valuable information and seek a balance between openness and protection of economic interests. Applicants may therefore request an exemption from data sharing requirements to allow for commercialization. These requests will be evaluated by Génome Québec and applicants will be promptly informed of the decision.

4. APPLICATION AND EVALUATION PROCEDURES

Application requirements vary depending on the program and competition. Applicants are expected to review the relevant program literature, request for applications, and application forms for the specific requirements. The appropriate application forms are to be used without modification at each stage. Page limits will be strictly enforced; pages beyond the limits and unsolicited appendices will be removed before they are reviewed. Due to the tight timelines for review, applicants will be notified if this occurs but will not have the opportunity to revise their applications to meet the page limits.

Génomique Québec has the final decision on eligibility of any application it receives, unless noted otherwise in the RFA.

In cases where applicants submit the same (or very similar) applications to more than one Génomique Québec competition for which the review periods overlap, Génomique Québec will automatically withdraw the second application from the competition.

Evaluation of applications is carried out by independent experts and processes vary depending on the program and competition. Please refer to the RFA for details. Génomique Québec may adjust its evaluation processes where warranted by the complexity of proposals received or other relevant factors. Any changes will be rapidly communicated through Génomique Québec's website.

Once a project is approved for funding, Génomique Québec may request a detailed budget. Financial review of budgets may differ from one competition to another, please refer to the RFA for details.

5. USE OF FUNDS FROM GÉNOMIQUE QUÉBEC OR OTHER SOURCES

The following guidelines regarding eligibility of expenses apply to all funds, whether Génomique Québec or from other sources, that make up part of the project budget.

Note that Génomique Québec's funds may only be used for cost incurred in Quebec within eligible institutions (see 3.1.1) and for services provided by independent third parties under a reasonable fee-for-service arrangement or contract.

5.1 Eligible Costs

Funds can only be used for eligible costs which are defined as reasonable costs for items that directly support the objectives of the approved project. Project budgets must NOT include items for which funding has already been approved from other sources, unless the request for funding of these items was specifically made to support activities as co-funding in the Génomique Québec project and meets all other eligibility criteria.

The RFA will describe exceptions or additional guidelines with respect to eligible costs applicable to projects funded in a particular competition.

Unless otherwise specified in the RFA, expenses funded through Génomique Québec must be incurred after the Notice of Award (NOA) to be considered as eligible costs, while expenses covered by eligible co-funding incurred up to six months prior to the NOA may be considered eligible.

The main categories of eligible costs are: salaries and benefits, consumables, equipment, general and administrative costs, and services from others, as described below.

Salaries and Benefits:

- Salaries and benefits for team members (note that salaries of researchers or senior management currently funded by their respective organizations, are not considered eligible costs).
- Actual benefit rates as charged by the institution. Eligible benefits include payroll taxes, group insurance and group pension only. For institutional benefit rates higher than 20% of the employee's salary, supporting documentation (such as a letter from the institutional human resources department that includes a detailed breakdown of the components making up the benefit rate) must be provided.
- Actual cost of release time from teaching and clinical duties, if supported by a letter from the institution.
- Annual inflation for salary expenditures in the second and later years of the project at actual rates as charged by the institution; for inflationary increases exceeding 1.5% of total salary and benefits, supporting documentation must be provided.
- Maternity and/or parental leave payments for students and postdoctoral fellows. Génome Québec will allow for maternity and/or parental leave payments to eligible students and postdoctoral fellows who are paid out of the project and who are primary caregivers for a child. The payment will be provided to students and fellows as per their current salary/stipend for up to six months following the child's birth or adoption. If both parents are supported by project funds, each parent may take a portion of the leave for a combined maximum of six months. The payment will be prorated if the student or postdoctoral fellow is being trained in research on a part-time basis. Students or fellows who are eligible for employment insurance or parental leave payments from other sources do not qualify for parental leave payments.

Equipment:

- Equipment is defined as any item (or interrelated collection of items comprising a system) which is used wholly or in part for the research proposed and meets all three of the following conditions: 1) non-expendable tangible property; 2) having a useful life of more than one year; and, 3) a cost of \$2,000 or more.
- The equipment category also includes research infrastructure such as scientific collections and information databases used wholly or in part for the research proposed.

Consumables:

- Material and supplies: includes items that meet at least one of the following conditions: 1) expendable tangible property; or, 2) useful life of 1 year or less; or, 3) a cost of less than \$2,000. As an example, a laptop computer that costs less than \$2,000 would be considered a consumable even though it is a non-expendable tangible item with a useful life of more than one year.
- For consumables commonly utilized in most laboratories, a general rate per FTE will be accepted, provided that the rate is appropriately justified in the supporting documentation.

- The consumables category also includes items such as equipment maintenance contracts and general maintenance of research infrastructure and travel that is directly related to the conduct of the project.
- Costs associated with translating results to applications, e.g., technology development, proof-of-concept, validation, market research, patenting and business case development.
- Costs associated with downstream product development, such as formulation, kit or primary package design, and protocol development and validation, may be eligible and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

General and Administrative Costs

- Costs for the communication of findings, including the costs of developing Web- based information (including Website maintenance fees) and publicizing findings through traditional media, video, etc...;
- Page charges for publications, including fees to ensure open access to findings (e.g. 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 findings to be disseminated;
- Costs of holding a workshop or seminar directly related to the funded research (including non-alcoholic beverages and meal costs);
- Travel and subsistence costs (meals – excluding alcohol – and accommodation), which include reasonable out-of-pocket expenses for research conferences and collaborative trips, air travel corresponding to the lowest rate available, not to exceed full economy fare, and travel cancellation insurance.
- Standard office supplies (paper, photocopies, mailing expenses, etc.);
- Monthly fees for the rental or installation of lines (telephone, videoconference or other links);
- Monthly Internet access fees at the institution or at home;
- Rental or purchase of cellular phones, including service plans and long-distance and local fees;
- Costs related to professional training or development.
- Administrative costs must not exceed five percent (5%) of the non-administrative costs of the budget.

Services from Others

- Services from others refer to the costs related to services provided by Génome Québec's Genomics Technology Platforms or other fee-for-service providers.
- Project plans and budgets must include a detailed description of all outsourced technical services that will be employed. It is the obligation of the project team to understand and describe the work that will be outsourced and to manage the service provider's involvement in the project. Applications must include letters from service providers describing in detail and quantifying the specific work being requested, specifying unit costs and/or pricing schedules, and providing other relevant details.

- Although Project Leaders are encouraged to work with Centre d'Expertise et de Services Génome Québec, they may use other fee-for-service providers, either Canadian or foreign. Project Leaders must include a justification for their choice of fee-for-service providers and, for out of province fee-for-service providers, include the reasons for not using a Quebec-based alternative. The justification should address factors such as the availability, quality, timeliness and cost of the services provided.

5.2. Ineligible costs

Examples of ineligible costs include:

- Payments to out-of-province persons, for example, salaries and benefits of project team member.
- Costs of bonuses and staff recognition
- Discretionary severance and separation packages
- Costs of entertainment, hospitality and gifts, for example, for the purposes of networking with colleagues and meeting with staff
- Education-related costs, such as thesis preparation, tuition and course fees
- Costs involved in the preparation of teaching material
- Indirect costs to the project, including institutional overhead costs
- Rent, renovation or construction of buildings or facilities, and the opportunity cost of using existing infrastructure
- Costs of basic services, such as heat, lighting, water, compressed air, distilled water, vacuums and janitorial services offered to all laboratories in a research facility;
- Insurance costs for buildings and equipment;
- The costs of moving a lab;
- Costs associated with regulatory compliance, including ethical review, biohazard or radiation safety, environmental assessments or provincial or municipal regulations and by-laws
- Costs associated with commercialization beyond the proof of concept stage, such as packaging, testing, marketing and related consultants
- Sales and marketing activities, such as sales training, marketing strategy development, detail aids, and sales-related promotional and educational events
- Inflation applied to consumables, equipment, general & administrative costs or services from others, such as technology platforms.
- Monthly parking fees for vehicles, unless specifically required for field work;
- Sales taxes for which an exemption or rebate applies;
- Costs of alcoholic beverages;

6. CO-FUNDING

Génomique Québec's model is premised on partnership, and leverages its investments in research projects through co-funding with others. This approach is intended to stimulate new and greater investment in genomics research and development in Quebec, and is a tangible indicator of a partner's interest in the outcomes of the research.

Génomique Québec therefore normally requires that a portion of the requested funding for eligible costs for any given project be obtained through co-funding from other sources. The co-funding requirements for each competition will be specified in the RFA. At the time of application, a well-developed and feasible co-funding plan must be provided. In cases where co-funding is required, Génomique Québec funds will not be released to a project until the project meets the co-funding requirements as outlined in the RFA. Génomique Québec reserves the right to withdraw its funding for any approved project that does not meet these requirements or if there is a substantial change in the project's co-funding status.

As mentioned above, expenses covered by eligible co-funding incurred up to six months prior to the NOA may be considered eligible. Project budgets must NOT include items for which funding has already been approved from other sources, unless the request for funding of these items was specifically made to support activities in the Génomique Québec project and meets all other eligibility criteria.

6.1. Eligible Sources of Co-funding for Projects

Eligible co-funding sources include:

- Companies
- Venture capital or other investment funds.
- An industry consortium
- Institutional funds, trust funds, or foundations
- Charities and philanthropic organizations
- Departments and agencies of the federal government (e.g., Natural Resources Canada, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, and regional development agencies)
- Departments and agencies of provincial and municipal governments, funded by sources other than the MEI
- Voluntary organizations
- Individuals
- Independent corporations funded by the Federal Governments may be partially eligible, please contact GQ for details (examples: CFI, Mitacs)

Unless otherwise specified in the RFA, funding originating from the ministère de l'Économie et de l'Innovation (MEI), such as funds from Fonds de Recherche du Québec (FRQ), are ineligible co-funding sources for Génomique Québec-funded projects.

6.2. Co-funding Requirements

Co-funding must be applied to eligible costs directly related to new or incremental activities that are an integral part of the Génome Québec approved project (see Eligible Costs, Section 5.1).

6.2.1 In-kind Contributions

In-kind contributions, defined as non-cash eligible budget items that can be given a cash value (such as salaries for company personnel working on the project) may be considered as co-funding if:

- the value can be reasonably determined and supported by documentation from the supplier; and,
- the expenditure represents an item that would otherwise have to be acquired with cash. This excludes the cost of pre-existing facilities or equipment (i.e., budgets cannot include the opportunity cost of space or equipment).

Suppliers' discounts, such as the generally accessible institutional discounts available to medical and/or research institutions, are not eligible as co-funding.

The value of existing IP transferred to a project is NOT considered eligible co-funding unless it is a contribution by a supplier of IP (e.g., a licence that would otherwise have to be acquired from a third-party supplier). Such items must be supported by appropriate documentation from the supplier's executive management.

Funding to support the indirect costs of a project (including overhead) is not eligible co-funding.

6.2.2. Valuation of in-kind contributions

The valuation of in-kind (non-cash) contributions must be supported by a clear rationale and calculation of how the value of the contribution was determined (including documentation to support all assumptions, price lists, quotes from suppliers, supporting letters, etc.). All in-kind contributions must be auditable by outside experts and clear explanations are required if there are discrepancies between the value outlined in the co-funding document and the project budget. Examples of supporting documentation to support in-kind co-funding include

Salaries

Unless RFA details other information requested, each in-kind salary line must be detailed by position in the budget template and represent the actual salary and benefits of the position in accordance with the applicable salary provisions of Eligible Costs listed in section 5.1.

Consumables

Documentation that indicates the cost to the co-funder to acquire the consumables or documentation that indicates the price that would be typically paid for the item(s) on the commercial market.

Equipment and Software

- Letter from a senior official of the vendor that shows the price that the customer would typically have paid for the equipment or software (net of typical discounts including institutional discounts which are not eligible as co-funding).
- For custom-made or used equipment, a third party valuation will normally be required.
- For previously developed custom-made software or IP, only new costs are eligible.
- Samples and Other Biological Resources
 - If samples are typically available at no cost, then there is no cost of acquiring such samples and as a result no value can be deemed to be co-funding.
 - If samples are typically sold, then any proposed contribution would require the same documentation as equipment and software.

6.2.3. Documentation Required to Support Co-funding

Applications must include complete documentation to support the proposed co-funding, including a letter of commitment or an agreement defining the terms and conditions of the proposed co-funding and a description of how the co-funding will directly and exclusively support the objectives of the Génome Québec funded project.

The following provides specific examples of documentation required, depending upon the co-funding source, or type:

From a government:

- confirmation that the government will provide co-funding
- the amount anticipated
- a letter signed by a high-ranking government official with appropriate authority

From a funding agency:

- a copy of the full application
- **project** summary
- **NOA** (if applicable).

Documentation must clearly demonstrate that funding is being used for eligible costs included in the budget of the Génome Québec approved project. As noted above, project budgets must NOT include items for which funding has already been approved from other

sources, unless the request for funding of these items was specifically made to support activities in the Génome Québec project and meets all other eligibility criteria.

From organizations including industry, charities, and philanthropic organizations:

- Documentation and supporting information which clearly demonstrates the organization's level and terms of commitment to the project. Appropriate documentation could include but is not limited to a Board Resolution, and/or, a letter from the organization's CEO, legal counsel or Corporate Secretary.
- Reasonable documentation supporting the organization's financial viability and its ability to provide the co-funding. Depending on the organization and the level of funding committed, documentation could include the organization's most recent audited financial statements, including Auditor's Report, Balance Sheet, Income statement, Statement of Cash Flows and Notes to the Financial Statements.
- Any other information or documentation which provides credible support to the organization's financial viability and ability to fulfill its co-funding commitments (e.g., press releases announcing significant new financing, cash flow projections, etc.).

7. ADMINISTRATION

7.1. Project Readiness

Leader(s) of approved projects must meet, through formally submitted documentation, all relevant conditions that may be specified in the Notification of Award (NOA) and letter of acceptance or refusal of financial support form (if applicable) received from Génome Québec and be in a position to receive Génome Québec funding no later than three months after the effective date of the NOA. Génome Québec reserves the right to withdraw funding for any approved project that is not ready to receive funding at that time.

7.2. Conditions for Release of Génome Québec Funds

Before funds can be disbursed, several conditions for funding must be satisfied and are detailed below.

- All conditions for release of funds as outline in the NOA and letter of acceptance or refusal of financial support, where applicable, have been met; and funds will flow to the project once eligible organizations participating in the research have a signed an agreement with Génome Québec. Agreements must clearly demonstrate agreement among the relevant parties, on all significant issues including but not limited to, the nature of financial contributions, IP ownership and management, data release and sharing, the commercialization process, the funding term, a termination policy, financial and

administrative policies, and periodic reporting of expenses and co-funding status, etc. The agreements must be in compliance with the agreement between Génome Québec and other funding partners, where applicable.

- A revised budget, updated objectives and milestones, may be requested by Génome Québec in instances where there are budget implications arising from recommendations of the reviewers (as outlined in the Review documents and NOA). Génome Québec will NOT accept revisions to the budget for any other reasons prior to the commencement of a project. Final budget approval will be based on a review by Génome Québec.
- An updated co-funding summary that demonstrates secured co-funding (received or firmly committed) for the project. Génome Québec reserves the right to withdraw its funding for any approved project/platform that does not meet the requirements of the competition or if there is a substantial change in the co-funding status.
- Pertinent certification must be obtained for the research approved for funding
- A commitment to make accessible results and data within 12 months from publication
- A commitment to ensure that the conduct of research and use of funds is in accordance with the spirit and intent associated with the funds of the ministère d'Économie et Innovation and a commitment to conduct research in accordance with the policies of responsible conduct of research developed by the FRQ.

7.3. Management of Funding

7.3.1. Project Management

Unless specified otherwise in an RFA, projects can have a designated project manager. Project managers coordinate administrative and reporting requirements.

7.3.2. Project Monitoring

To ensure Génome Québec funded projects meet their milestones and to maximize the likelihood of their success, projects are monitored by the Génome Québec on an ongoing basis.

7.3.3 Financial Management of Large-Scale Projects

Génome Québec will begin to advance funds at the start of the project to the Host Institution once all conditions of Section 7.2 of these Guidelines have been met. The Host Institution commits to distribute funds to Participating Institutions, where applicable. It shall also be responsible for ensuring that expenses presented by these institutions are eligible according to these Guidelines and in compliance with the approved budget.

If co-funding is secured by way of a binding agreement, and funds can be shown to be available to meet the co-funding obligations, Génome Québec's contributions can be adjusted to accommodate the timing of the expected receipt of funds from co-funding partners. However, where co-funding sources are not secured, Génome Québec's

contribution will be based on its share of the approved quarterly budget up to the maximum amount approved by the Board.

Génom Québec provides funding in regular instalments, “in advance”, subject to receipt of reports of expenditures (for funds from both the institution and co-funding sources), including actuals to the previous reporting period, estimates for the current reporting period, and forecasts for the reporting period of the advance. Subsequent advances may be adjusted to account for any unused funds.

The financial status of co-funding must be reported on a quarterly basis, except as noted below or detailed otherwise in the RFA

For the purpose of a financial settlement at the end of the project, Génom Québec’s percentage share of the total actual expenditures is based on the most recently approved budget up to the maximum approved contribution amount. A revised budget may include less co-funding than originally approved but must always meet the minimum requirements for the program. See a summary table at the end of section 7.3.4.

7.3.4. Financial Management of Small Projects

Génom Québec will follow a streamlined payment process for small projects to reduce administrative burden. For all projects with total Génom Québec funding less than or equal to \$500,000 Génom Québec shall disburse to the institution:

- the first year of the budgeted Génom Québec project contribution in one instalment upon project inception
- its contributions for subsequent years in semi-annual instalments based on the approved

Génom Québec budgeted contribution, the expenses incurred in the previous time period(s) and the project financial needs of the project for the coming period. In the final year of the project, a holdback of 5% will be applied. This hold-back will be disbursed upon submission of closure documents to Génom Québec and their approval by Génom Québec.

Furthermore, for projects with total Génom Québec funding less than or equal to \$100,000, Génom Québec shall disburse to the institution the entire sum of its approved project contribution upon project inception (less 5% holdback). This hold-back will be disbursed upon submission of closure documents to Génom Québec and their approval by Génom Québec.

To further reduce administrative burden, for all projects with Génom Québec funding less than or equal to \$500,000, the financial status of co-funding will only be required to be updated on an annual basis, and project leaders will only be required to submit financial reports to the Génom Québec semi-annually, unless detailed otherwise in the RFA. See table below.

Total Project Budget (\$)	Installment			Report frequency		
	First installment(s) according to approved budget	Next installments according to expenses and budget needs	Holdback	Financial Report	Scientific Report	Final Report
<100 000 \$	Total contribution less holdback	Not applicable	5% of the contribution	At the end of the project	At the end of the project	Two months after the end of the project
100 001 \$ à 500 000 \$	Amount equivalent to the 1st year	Semi-annually		Semi-annually	Annually	
>500 001 \$	Amount equivalent to the first two quarters	Quarterly		Quarterly	Semi-annually	

7.3.5. Reporting and Performance Measurement

Génome Québec expectations:

Results of projects funded by Génome Québec must be presented in a reasoned, diligent and transparent manner. To obtain the funding at the anticipated dates and ensure the smooth operation of funded activities, it is crucial that all reports (e.g. financial report, scientific report and metrics) are submitted by the deadlines stipulated in the RFA.

Leaders or their designates must also, to the extent possible, agree to participate in, and provide information for, any evaluation activities that may be undertaken from time to time by Génome Québec up to five years subsequent to the end date of the project. It is the responsibility of the Host Institution to ensure that the Project Leaders(s) meet these reporting requirements.

Periodic project reports will typically include updates on progress against project milestones, actual expenditures of Génome Québec funds compared to approved budget, receipt and uses of co-funding, and descriptions of project outputs such as Highly Qualified Personnel (HQP), publications and other achievements.

Financial reports, prepared by the Host Institution and signed by their finance department and the project leader, must be sent to Génome Québec's Accounting Department.

A financial report template including the approved budget of the project will be prepared by Génome Québec and provided to the Host Institution during the first quarter of the project.

Actual expenses incurred by the project should include i) all disbursements and ii) supplier invoices for services rendered or supplies received but not yet disbursed. Any items that do not fall under these categories should not be included in the report. Financial reports must be based on the institution's accounting records.

Financial reports and supporting documentation must be sent by mail and email to Génome Québec projets@genomequebec.com. Génome Québec reserves the right to request further justification for any amounts included in financial reports.

Génome Québec reserves the right to hire an external firm to audit project expenses. The main goal of such an audit is to ensure that expenses claimed meet all the criteria outlined in the agreement's financial conditions and provisions regarding eligible expenses; in other words, to make sure that:

- expenses claimed reflect eligible activities and budget categories;
- expenses claimed by the Host Institution and other Participating Institutions are actual expenses incurred by the project and adequately supported by invoices and/or proofs of payment;
- assets are used for the purpose of the project and their existence can be verified;
- expenses claimed by each institution comply with the financial Guidelines presented herein.

In the event of an audit, Génome Québec will contact in advance the finance department of the Lead Institution.

7.4. Management of Changes

Over the term of a project, adjustments to the initially approved plan may be required due to changes to the scientific, managerial or financial conditions of the project. Project Leaders are expected to notify Génome Québec before such changes are applied, requesting changes to the approved plan. For this, a summary of the proposed changes, the justification for these changes and their impact on the scientific program and budget must be submitted by email to the program manager in charge of the project at Génome Québec.

Scientific changes requiring approval include significant modification to the research plan, status and involvement of the Project Leader or Co-Investigator. Financial changes requiring approval include budget and co-funding changes exceeding 75,000 \$ by budget category, item or year, on a cumulative basis.

Certain major changes could require filling out change request forms, providing additional information.

Approval of requested changes will be required from Génome Québec in order to maintain project funding. Upon approval, the last approved budget will be the reference for the duration of the project. It cannot be replaced by any other budget, unless Génome Québec issues a specific directive to that effect.

7.5. No-Cost Extension

To ensure that maximum benefits are gained from the projects, Génome Québec may provide an opportunity to apply for a one-time no-cost extension (NCE), the option of an NCE will be detailed in the RFA for the competition.

NCEs may be requested for projects that:

- require more time to complete their approved objectives and research activities; and,
- have unspent funds forecast at the approved end date.

For all requests, the Génome Québec will perform the appropriate financial and programmatic due diligence to ensure reasonableness of the request, before approval, if applicable.

7.6. Final Reports

Within two (2) months of the completion of the project, each project leader will be required to submit to Génome Québec a final report that includes a description of the accomplishments of the project relative to the approved objectives as well as a detailed financial report in a format determined by Génome Québec. A percentage of the final payment will be held back by Génome Québec and will only be disbursed to the Host Institution pending receipt and approval of the Final Report by Génome Québec. The holdback for each project will be calculated as 5% of the total Génome Québec contribution to the project, up to a maximum of \$50,000.