

## AHSC AFP Innovation Fund

### LOCAL GUIDELINES AND APPLICATION PROCESS

#### 1.0 BACKGROUND

The Provincial AHSC AFP Innovation Fund was established from new annual AHSC FP funding from the Physician Services Agreement between the Ontario Medical Association (OMA) and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC). This Innovation Fund is targeted to support: *“the development of new and innovative practices in health care delivery, and to support leadership and the dissemination of knowledge across the healthcare system.”* (Excerpt from 08-09 Provincial Guidelines)

The intent of the NOAMA AFP Innovation Funding is to provide physician clinical faculty an opportunity to access seed funding to support innovative projects and to enable them to develop a program sufficiently to qualify for additional support and to facilitate the translation of new knowledge and strategies into medical practice.

The AFP Innovation Fund Sub-Committee manages the AFP Innovation Fund local process and formulates recommendations regarding funding approval of AFP Innovation Fund projects to the NOAMA Board. The NOAMA Board, in turn, submits recommended projects to the Innovation Fund Provincial Oversight Committee (IFPOC).

The Sub-Committee also reviews the progress reports for approved projects for consideration of funding continuation based on the allocated funding achieving the project objectives.

#### 2.0 CRITERIA FOR THE INNOVATION FUND

##### 2.1 Eligibility:

The principal investigator and any physician receiving payments under an AFP Innovation Fund project must be a participating physician in the AHSC AFP.

The project must indicate a topic and description that is *in-scope* as defined by the Provincial AHSC AFP Innovation Fund Guidelines.

The principal investigator and any physician receiving payments under an AFP Innovation Fund project must be compliant with the AHSC AFP Innovation Fund Framework and Guidelines (including local guidelines) of any outstanding AFP Innovation Fund projects to which they are involved. The lead physician cannot, at any time, hold more than two approved or current NOAMA AFP grants.

## 2.2 Funding:

- 1) The maximum amount of funding per applicant is limited to a total of \$50,000 per project submission except for exceptional circumstances. Exceptional circumstances would include projects that are deemed to have the potential to transform healthcare delivery in Northern Ontario. **Greater priority will be placed on submissions from new applicants who have not had previous Innovation Funding.**
- 2) The funding is a one-time investment over an agreed upon limited time frame, but no longer than two years. Funding can only be provided for the initial year with the release of the second year contingent on an annual review process to ensure the project is on time and is achieving its stated objectives. Applicants can submit more than one project; however, the AFP Innovation Fund Sub-Committee will recommend only one of the projects for funding in the same period.
- 3) The expectation is that projects will begin within six months of the funding being awarded.

## 2.3 Submission Requirements (including Budget):

- 1) The project must include a target start date, an implementation plan, a budget, and provide indicators of progress against which the success of the project will be measured.
- 2) The Provincial Guidelines stipulate what budget items are acceptable and what documentation is required. As a minimum, budget documentation includes budget assumptions as well as supporting calculations and explanations for the individual budget items.
- 3) Approved local AFP Physician compensation guidelines or Provincial Guidelines if required, will be applied to all successful projects. Local guidelines stipulate that:

*Physician compensation is eligible for funding based on the time involved at a rate no higher than the OMA per diem rates whether or not remuneration is for actual clinical activity. This time should not otherwise be clinically remunerated. Participating physician support is limited to a maximum of two days per week/ per year of support. Projects must specify re the number of weeks of physician support required.*

- 4) The resource implications for other Institutions must be considered. If there are resource implications (space, staff, and resources) to other institutions such as a hospital, research institute, a university, NOSM, etc., formal written approval by the institution is required. A letter of support must be included with the project submission.
- 5) The proposal should articulate a continuity plan if the project term exceeds the funding term. Continuity support from other institutions such as hospitals and or Universities cannot be assumed.

## 2.4 Ethical Review

- 1) The release of funding will be conditional upon receiving ethical clearance(s) from an appropriate Research Ethics Board (REB) or a letter stating that REB approval is not required for the project(s).

NOSM's Research Support Group is available to assist with the ethics review process. NOSM's Research Support Group can be contacted at [research@nosm.ca](mailto:research@nosm.ca).

Refer to the "[Where Do I Go to Get Research Ethics Approval?](#)" document posted in AFP Innovation Fund section of the NOAMA website for further information.

## 2.5 Funding Management

- 1) For individuals or groups awarded AFP Innovation Funding, a demonstration of an appropriate transfer payment agency or accountability mechanism for the monies must be made. Where there is no appropriate transfer agency, the funding will be transferred to NOSM Research Unit for administration. Project Leads are required to follow the approved procedures of the transfer payment agency.

Examples of an appropriate transfer agency include the hospital, clinic, university, or Local Education Group that the physician is associated.

## 3.0 APPLICATION PROCESS

All funding competition forms are now PDF fillable forms with word limits. The use of these forms is a new requirement of IFPOC.

Applicants are to complete and submit the following fillable forms:

1. P1 – Project Proposal
2. P2 – Project Budget

Forms P1 and P2 must be submitted **by email** to the AFP Innovation Fund Sub-Committee, c/o the NOAMA Office at [grants@noama.ca](mailto:grants@noama.ca)

Each application submitted will be acknowledged within 15 to 20 business days after the application deadline date to allow NOAMA staff time to complete the intake and record submissions received.

#### **4.0 PROPOSAL REVIEW AND FUNDING PROCESS**

- 1) All projects which meet the approved guidelines for submission will be reviewed and rated by the AFP Innovation Project Review Team for recommendation to the AFP Innovation Fund Sub-Committee. The AFP Innovation Fund Sub-Committee has comprehensive membership representing all signatories to the NOAMA agreement.
- 2) Physicians who have made applications for AFP Innovation Funding are considered to have a conflict of interest concerning participation on the NOAMA Board, the AFP Innovation Sub-Committee, Review Team, and PCTA Board, and are required to recuse themselves from discussions regarding AFP Innovation Funding recommendations.
- 3) Approved Provincial application criteria are considered during the evaluation process, and a scoring system similar to the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) Scoring System will be used to determine the score of each project. The AFP Innovation Fund Review Team and the Sub-Committee formulate consensus-based recommendations. The AFP Innovation Fund Sub-Committee recommend, to the NOAMA Board for consideration, project submissions to the IFPOC.
- 4) Notification of NOAMA Board funding decisions are communicated in writing to the applicants as soon as possible after the NOAMA Board meeting. Pending IFPOC approval, successful applicants will be notified of approved funding support for the initial year with the release of the remaining funding contingent on an annual review process to ensure the project is achieving its stated objectives. Applicants whose projects do not merit funding are provided reviewer comments which may include feedback to assist in consideration for submission at the next call for projects.

#### **5.0 Recognition of Funding**

- 1) All publications and presentations related to the project funded from the NOAMA AHSC AFP Innovation Funds are to acknowledge “Supported by the Northern Ontario Academic Medicine Association (NOAMA) AHSC AFP Innovation Fund Award” and are to include the NOAMA logo. The logo is available from the NOAMA office.