

Request for Proposals: MI4 Flagship Programs

1. Background and Description of Opportunity

1.1. Background

The overarching goal of the McGill Interdisciplinary Initiative in Infection and Immunity (MI4) is to bring together investigators from across the McGill community and its partners to foster interdisciplinary research aiming to discover, develop and implement innovative solutions for infectious and immune threats to human health across the lifespan.

Under its Flagship Programs initiative, MI4 is working with leading researchers, University Advancement, the MUHC Foundation and other hospital foundations to mobilize the resources required to develop large-scale, compelling initiatives with the potential to demonstrate real-world impact in the short to medium term.

With the current Request for Proposal (RFP), MI4 invites researchers from across the MI4 community to submit new MI4 Flagship Program applications on a rolling basis. Successful applications will be added to the roster of accepted Flagship Programs for which MI4 is working with fundraisers to mobilize resources.

All proposals must be aligned with one of the following two broad thematic areas: 1) Infection; or 2) Immunity.

1.2. Objective

To support the development of flagship interdisciplinary programs that bring together McGill researchers and clinicians to address major infectious and immune threats to human health.

1.3. Scope

- Proposals should have a duration of up to 5 years and a budget of up to \$500,000 per year.
- Proposals should involve participation from multiple centres, programs, institutions or departments within the McGill community.
- Proposals should address major infectious or immune threat to human health and outline a 5 year plan to tackle this problem with clear milestones and deliverables.
- Programs should be ambitious in scale and build on existing strengths in the McGill community.
- Programs whose scope is within the mandate and reach of conventional research organizations (CIHR grant, NSERC discovery grant, etc) will not be considered for fundraising

1.4. Team Composition

- MI4 Flagship Programs must include at least 5 investigators and representation from a minimum of two centres, institutions, programs or departments within the McGill community.

- The intention is for MI4 Flagship Programs to support research led by McGill community researchers. Investigators external to the McGill community are welcome to join the team as collaborators, however are not eligible to receive direct funding via MI4.
- Program applications addressing infectious diseases in the context of global health (e.g. programs focused on low or middle-income countries) should justify the need for subcontracts to foreign institutions. No other subcontracts to investigators outside McGill University and its affiliated institutions are permitted.
- The availability of partners who can provide co-funding will be considered a strength.

1.5. Eligibility

- Lead Investigators must be based at McGill University or one of its affiliated research institutions.
- Lead Investigator(s) must meet the conditions of University Researcher or Clinical University Researcher as defined by the Fonds de Recherche du Québec ([frqs-generales-communes](#)). In accordance with the appropriate McGill policies, a researcher devotes more than 50% of their time to research and teaching.
- Researchers may be involved in multiple MI4 Flagship Programs.

1.6. Submission Deadline

MI4 Flagship Program applications are accepted on a rolling basis until further notice.

2. Procedure for Submission

All applications must be submitted by email in PDF format to grantsmcgilli4.med@mcgill.ca, copying admincoordmcgilli4.med@mcgill.ca and mi4programmgr.med@mcgill.ca.

3. Additional Information

If additional information is required to complete the MI4 SFG submission, please contact admincoordmcgilli4.med@mcgill.ca. Generally, a response will be provided within one business day.

4. MI4 Flagship Program Submission Package

Free-Form Program Description (4 pages maximum, extra material will not be reviewed).

Use the same headings for each section as shown below and respect the required page length per section.

1. **Program Information** (1 page)
 - 1.1. Program Title
 - 1.2. Lay Summary (max 0.5 pages)
 - 1.3. Selected MI4 Theme(s): Infection or Immunity
 - 1.4. Lead Investigator(s): Department, location, email
 - 1.5. Collaborators

1.6. Total budget

1.7. Suggested external reviewers (3 names, positions and email addresses)

2. Program Description (2 pages, including figures, no references required)

The following items must be addressed specifically:

- Significance of the threat to be addressed.
- Description of proposed program, including 5 year milestones and role of MI4 funding.
- Justification of the innovative nature of the proposed approach and why it is not fundable by conventional research support organizations.
- Justification of the strengths of the team within the McGill community and their ability to achieve the proposed milestones.
- Alignment with McGill University, University Faculties, and/or Hospital Research Institute Strategic plans.

3. Budget (1 page)

Provide a five-year proposed budget. Identify sources of co-funding if available.

4. Indication of Consent to Share Elements of Proposal with External Donors

Fundraising for infection and immunity research is an important part of the MI4 mandate. Indicate your consent for MI4 to share each of the following elements of your proposal with fundraisers and external donors in the future, should an appropriate opportunity arise. The applicants' response in this section will have no bearing on SFG proposal assessment. Please include the following text in your proposal and indicate the appropriate response.

I allow MI4 to share the following elements of this proposal with fundraisers and potentially interested external donors:

- | | |
|------------------|--------|
| 1. Title | Yes/No |
| 2. Lay Summary | Yes/No |
| 3. Full Proposal | Yes/No |

5. CVs

Using the NIH Bio-Sketch format (<https://grants.nih.gov/grants/forms/biosketch.htm>), attach to the main package the CV of the Lead Investigator(s) and a maximum of two other key project team members. Please limit CVs to 5 pages and only PDF format is acceptable.

5. Submission Format and Procedure

The free form document and the CVs must adhere to the following format:

- Page size: 8½ x 11 inches
- Margins: no less than 2.54 cm (1 inch) on all sides

- Font: Times New Roman (no smaller than 12 pts) or Arial (no smaller than 11 pts)
- Header: include the names of the Lead Investigator(s)
- Graphs and illustrations may be included, and may be in colour if they are of high enough quality to be legible upon printing, but will count as part of the set page limits for each section.
- Assemble the Free-Form and CVs into one PDF package; each page to be consecutively numbered.
- If the Free-Form Project Description exceeds the maximum page limit, it will not be reviewed.

6. Review

6.1. Assessment Criteria

MI4 Flagship Program submissions will be evaluated according the following equal-weighted assessment criteria:

- Significance of the proposed program and milestones and their alignment with MI4 strategic research priorities.
- Originality and potential impact of the proposed program.
- Feasibility of the proposed program to achieve the target milestones.
- Justification of the need for philanthropic support
- Capacity to attract philanthropic support.

6.2. Review Process

MI4 Flagship Program submissions will be reviewed in three stages:

Step 1 Due Diligence: The MI4 Executive Committee (Director and Co-Directors), with the MI4 Program Manager, will conduct a due diligence review of the submission to validate the required elements in the submission package (Section 4). Submissions that do not comply will be eliminated from further review and applicants will receive a summary of missing elements or deficiencies.

Step 2. Scientific Advisory Committee and Institutional Review: Applications will be externally reviewed by the MI4 Scientific Advisory Committee, according to the criteria listed above. The scientific leadership of the McGill office of Research and Innovation and the relevant Research Institutes will assess alignment with institutional strategic priorities.

Step 3. Fundraiser Review: Proposals will be reviewed by McGill University Advancement and relevant Research Institute Foundations to assess the feasibility of attracting philanthropic support.

At any step of the review process, applicants may be contacted by MI4 staff with requests to refine or modify proposals to align with reviewer's suggestions. Applicants of successful proposals will work with MI4 staff and fundraisers to develop a detailed case for support.

6.3. Conflicts of Interest

MI4 adopts a Conflict of Interest (COI) policy to ensure that anyone participating in the review process does not have a COI. Any person declaring a COI, or a potential COI, will be required to recuse themselves from the review process. COIs will be defined using the CIHR definition that can be found at: <http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/46378.html>.