

Fessenden Innovation Prize Application Guidelines and Instructions

Opportunity to receive up to \$5,000 to explore and test a new idea

New discoveries often stem from outcomes of funded research programs, which have been both intellectually rigorous and scientifically validated. Eventually, the application of many discoveries become marketable through a sound technology/knowledge transfer plan. However, completely new discoveries can also arise from “*what-if*” ideas, unexpected research outcomes, or moments of inspiration. Ideas that hold promise and that may eventually develop into technologies or services to generate positive benefits for society. Seed funding can enable the validation of an idea for this technology/knowledge translation.

McGill’s Faculty of Science is very fortunate to have resources, partners, and visionary benefactors, such as Mr. Erik Blachford, to enable the process of translating discoveries from creative ideas into marketable technologies and services. Through the generosity of Mr. Blachford, the **Fessenden Innovation Prize** provides seed funding and mentoring to those behind new promising ideas.

The Fessenden Innovation Prize is a tribute to the legacy of Quebec-born inventor Reginal Aubrey Fessenden. Reg Fessenden joined Edison’s lab when he was only 20 years old; his ingenuity led to over 500 patents. Through this Prize, valued up to \$5,000, recipients have the opportunity to achieve two objectives. First, to explore, create, refine, and validate a minimum viable product or a prototype based on an idea. Second, to leverage a minimum viable product or prototype in other funding competitions and/or in applications to accelerator programs that operate outside the university sector to facilitate conversion of their technology into a viable business model. Applicants are not expected or required to have experience or training in business creation.

Funding value

The maximum value of each award is up to \$5,000.

Eligibility

- The Fessenden Innovation Prize is open to all students (undergraduate and graduate), post-doctoral fellows, faculty, and staff in the Faculty of Science.
- An individual, or a group of individuals applying as a team may submit one application. An individual cannot be part of more than one application.
- For team applications, a team can have up to 5 members, with at least 50% of the members having a direct affiliation to the Faculty of Science.
- The main applicant must be directly affiliated to the Faculty of Science, and must be a member holding the leadership role (for a team application).
- A team may be formed from a mix of students, or a mix of students and Faculty/staff members. A team may also have McGill alumni, as well as non-McGill students and external members (i.e. not affiliated to McGill).
- Applicants must disclose other sources of funding they have received related to the idea being proposed.

Application Process

Applicants must follow instructions found on the application form.

Selection Process

The Fessenden Innovation Prize is competitive. Not all applicants who apply may receive funding. Applications will be reviewed by a selection committee who will provide funding recommendations to the Dean of Science.

Use of Funds

The following guideline outlines examples of acceptable and non-acceptable expenses:

Examples of acceptable expenses (purchases must have been made after award notification):

- Hardware parts & materials; lab supplies; consumables
- Software licenses
- Conference fees for a local conference if you are attending to conduct a market scan (within a \$200-\$500 range)
- Market research expenses; accessing a market intelligence report
- Legal fees, patent fees, and/or incorporation fees, up to maximum \$1,000

Examples of non-acceptable expenses:

- Personal salaries
- Items not related to the overall idea or research project
- Personal computers or smart phones
- Course fees, internships
- Rent for housing or co-working spaces
- Uber, taxi, or private modes of transportation. Teams should use local public transportation, unless in particular circumstances for which public transportation may not be feasible.
- Outside developers or contractors. Only up to 20% of your funds can be used for outside developers or contractors, and must be approved by the Faculty in advance.

Important Considerations

Recipients are required to acknowledge support from the Faculty of Science at public and private events, published materials, websites, and social media. Recipients will be contacted by the Fessenden Innovation Prize manager to review progress, evaluate milestones, and discuss the experience gained by having received the prize. Recipients will be invited to speak about their experiences at various Faculty events.

Questions

Questions about the Fessenden Innovation Prize can be sent to Eduardo Ganem Cuenca: eduardo.ganemcuenca@mcgill.ca.

How to apply

Applicants must apply by completing the application form provided.

SECTIONS 1 to 3 must be filled out and submitted electronically as an attachment in MS Word document (.docx) format.

SECTION 4 must be filled out, printed, and then signed by each team member. This section must be submitted as a scanned document.

Your full application must be sent to the Fessenden Innovation Prize manager by email: eduardo.ganemcuenca@mcgill.ca, with a copy (cc) to team members (if submitting as a team). All attachments must be included in one (1) email message.

The subject field of your email AND the Word file name must follow this format: "VentureName_LastNameMainApplicant_FP_Application".

For example, if your venture name is called Mega Structures, and the Main Applicant is John Smith, the **subject field of your email AND the file name** of your application should be:

MegaStructures_Smith_FP_Application

The file name for the team signature page follows a similar format:

MegaStructures_Smith_FP_Signatures

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