Participatory Action Research Grants

Investigate Grant Application Process & Questions Guide

Investigate grants are multi-year grants (up to $100,000 per year, for up to 3 years) to help teams answer a research question, analyze their findings, and share knowledge in a way that supports the community to take action in the future.

Applicants begin their application by completing the first stage of questions, and, if successful, are then invited to complete the remaining questions. Investigate grants are a two-stage application.

Application Step-by-Step Process

Zoom in on the document to increase readability.

Step 1

Consider Applying

Download the PAR resources including our **Decision-Making Framework and Guidelines** to determine your eligibility.

Step 2

Review the Program Details

If you still have questions after reviewing the PAR resources, you can schedule a time to meet with our staff who can answer your questions and provide clarity.

Step 3

Create a User Profile

Visit our online Grant Management System (GMS) to create a profile if all eligibility criteria are met.
If you have an existing account but forgot your password, select 'Forgot Password?' to reset your password.

Step 4

Apply Online

Apply on GMS to complete and submit Stage 1 of your application. You will receive a confirmation email once your application has been submitted successfully.

Step 5

Wait for a Decision

Details on Community Advisors' recommendations and feedback will be **sent through email once confirmed.** Decision dates are listed on our PAR webpage under the Key Dates section.

Stage 2: By Invitation Only

Application Questions

Stage 1 Questions

1. **Where you're at:** Tell us about where your project team is at in its research journey. Vancouver Foundation embraces all levels of experiences and wants to support teams where they are at. If your team has varying degrees of research experience, then select the statement that reflects the most experienced team members.
   a) We're new to the language and concepts of participatory action research.
   b) We're new to Vancouver Foundation's language of participatory action research, but not to community-based research.
   c) We've been using similar participatory action research language & concepts for a while.
   d) None of these statements quite fit where we're at.

2. **Project Summary:**
   a) State the title/name of your project
   b) Indicate the anticipated start and end dates for your project

   We may consider applications for research projects that are already running, provided that the request does not include expenses that have been, will be or should be paid through other sources of funding.

   Vancouver Foundation does not provide bridge funding to sustain research projects between grants. Project start and end dates should cover the period for which funding is being requested from Vancouver Foundation.

Applying for a research project that is already running does not increase the likelihood that it will be funded.

3. **Systemic Issues and Root Causes:** What are your health-related question(s), and how did they come forward from the community as a priority to investigate and research?

   State your research question. Describe some of the key elements within the system you intend to investigate and how they might relate to each other to create the systemic behaviours that are at the root cause of the pressing issue(s). How did the community's experience contribute to the identification and development of the research question?

4. **Systemic Change:** Why is investigating this issue important? How do you foresee the community using the findings of this research project to influence change? (1500 characters)

   What's the degree of community support that exists for the research you're proposing? What are your ideas at this point on how this research project will position the community to influence or change the system's behaviour? How will this change be transformative, and why will it matter?

5. **Ways of Knowing:** What is shaping your knowledge and understanding of the questions you're seeking to investigate? What and whose stories, experiences, research, evidence, and ways of knowing is your curiosity grounded in? (1500 characters)

   To what extent has this research question been explored already? How might your initiative differ from or build upon other work related to this issue? The evidence could be formal research, statistics, white papers, information gathered through community networks or peer groups, knowledge of similar projects or work in a similar system, and so on.

6. **Literature Review:** Please attach and upload a literature review (2-page maximum) of the critical, directly pertinent research related to your project. The accepted formats are PDF and Word documents, and the maximum file size is 5MB.

7. **Anticipated Outcomes:** What is your guiding star* for the change you'd like to see? What are the near star(s)* you're hoping to reach with this project, over the next one to three years? **These could be signals along the way that show your learning journey and where you hope to end up.* (3000 characters)

   Define the overall goal(s) and specific objectives of the project. Keep in mind that goals tend to be longer-view. Your project probably won't achieve the goal(s) on its own. Objectives are more sharply focused, and short- or medium-term. They describe realistic and specific expectations of what you plan to achieve.

Examples

- *Enhanced awareness by service providers regarding the barriers to appropriate shelter and housing for women fleeing domestic violence.*
- *Increased percentage of women in suitable housing two months after fleeing domestic violence.*
- *Adaptation of recommendations by planners and developers to remove the structural barriers to appropriate shelter and housing.*
- *Additional financial support from policymakers to increase the number of units of appropriate shelter and housing in the next official community plan.*

8. **Process:** What will be your core methodology and key activities to investigate these questions? Why have you chosen this approach? (3000 characters)
   Describe your research methodology, including the community involvement and participatory nature of the research.

   Provide a complete description of your proposed methodology, including its design, recruitment, samples, instruments, data collection and analysis. How does this research project align with the principles and processes of participatory action research? Please be specific.

9. **Collaboration:** Who are you currently partnering with? Who else do you intend to include in the development process? How are people affected by the issue involved?

   List your community and cross-sector partners and describe the extent to which you are collaborating with them on this research project. Indicate whether these collaborations are confirmed or still in development. Describe how people in the community who are affected by the issue are involved in the project and their specific roles at various stages within the project. Be as specific as possible. Finally, describe the nature and origins of the relationship between the Applicant and Partnering organizations.

10. **Project Description:** What are the pressing health questions that your team is investigating? Why is this investigation meaningful? How will your research findings position the community to influence systems change? (700 characters)

    Vancouver Foundation shares excerpts from approved grants on our website and with our donors and Board of Directors. We might also share your proposal with other funders or external reviewers that we think may have valuable insight into your work (such as your local community foundation). Many people do not have a background in your area of expertise, and so please use plain, compelling language, avoiding jargon, to write a paragraph that answers the following questions.

11. **Research Team Overview table:** List the two research co-leads, as well as the additional research team members. Provide the names, titles, emails and phone numbers for the Applicant and Partnering Organizations research team members. Describe their roles on the project and

include short biographies of their research, community, or life experience related to this project. You'll be able to add up to 10 additional members.
- We encourage a genuine partnership and equal involvement in the design of the research project between researchers and community representatives.
- A maximum of two co-lead researchers is allowed; otherwise, do not limit the size of the research team.
- A graduate student may be a co-lead researcher; however, they cannot be paid from Vancouver Foundation grant if they are one of the co-lead researchers.

12. **Project Budget table:** Project budget must be balanced and the expenses must reflect the real, incurred costs associated with the project. The duration of the project should equal the duration of the funding request. Select the number of years that the project will run and the funding (from all sources) required.
    a) How many years will the requested amount be spread out over?
    b) Revenue section - There are four sub-sections available for you to list your sources of project revenue. The first section is reserved for your request to Vancouver Foundation. The next two sections allow you to list the cash and in-kind contributions that your organization – and the other organizations you're partnering with – are contributing to the project. The final section allows you to list the contributions you are soliciting (or have secured) from other external funders.
    c) Expenses section - There are two sub-sections available for you to list the entire range of your expenses. The first section allows you to list the expenses associated with the administrative and operational processes of your project; the second section allows you to list the expenses associated with community participation and knowledge dissemination.

Application Questions

Stage 2 Questions

For Stage 2 of the Investigate Grant, applicants will be invited via email to submit a full application. Applicants will be able to update or revise their answers to Stage 1 (if needed) prior to completing the full application.

1. **Readiness:** Is the system/policy environment receptive and capable of supporting or integrating the results of your research? How have you tested this? (1500 characters)

   In what ways do you see the system being ready for change? For example, what kind of community support already exists for change? Tell us about the capacity of the current system to adapt and to allow for a future intervention based upon your research to shift the system's behavior.

2. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** How will you assess your progress towards the anticipated outcomes? How will you incorporate what you are learning into the ongoing development of the project? (1500 characters)

What evaluation tools/processes will you use? (e.g. pre- and post-participant surveys or feedback forms, anecdotal information from participants, photo-voice, etc.) What are the risks associated with this project? What processes will you put into place to recognize and respond to these risks?

3. **Shared Learning and Knowledge Exchange:** How will the knowledge generated by this project be shared with others? (1500 characters)

   Describe your knowledge exchange plan including presentations and publications, as well as reporting to partners and community. Be specific. For example, if you plan to share results at a conference, please indicate the name of the conference and when it will take place; if it is a community dialogue, then how often will it occur, and who is the target audience?

4. **Research Team Overview table:** Download and attach Appendix document (provided at this stage only) for each team member. The Appendix allows you to upload a personal profile for each team member that lists research and publication experience. The appendix form is required for academic members of the research team only. It is optional for community members.

5. **Project Timeline summary table:** Please describe the proposed activities for this project. Provide as much details as possible for a realistic projection of your activities. The table includes your time frame, key steps and person responsible for each activity. (500 characters for each field)

Example:

TIMELINE	KEY STEPS	PERSON RESPONSIBLE
January 2018 – mid February 2018	Facilitate community dialogues	Research Coordinator – TBD
March 2018	Outreach/recruit community research team	Dr. Jane Smith and Sheila Thomas, Co-lead Researchers
April 2018 – June 2018	Conduct environmental scan and meetings with government officials and local staff of housing organizations	Dr. Jane Smith and Sheila Thomas, Co-lead Researchers

6. **Supporting Documents:** The following documents are an important part of your application. Required documents are indicated with an asterisk and must be uploaded here before you are able to submit. Note: Only Word or PDF documents will be accepted. Do not use symbols or special characters in your file name. The document file size limit is 5 MB.

a) * Audited financial statements for last completed fiscal year: Submit a full financial statement (preferably audited) for each organization's most recently completed fiscal year, including any statement of accumulated surplus or deficit (e.g. balance sheet). If you do not have audited financials, then please submit the most recent year-end financial statements.

b) * Operating budget for the current fiscal year: Submit each organization's current fiscal year operating budget.

c) * Most recent year-to-date income statement or statement of activities: Submit your most recent interim (monthly or quarterly) income statement, comparing actual to budgeted expenditures, year-to-date.

d) * List of Board of Directors or Senior Governance Body of each organization: Attach a list of each organization's Board of Directors, including their names and positions. If your organization does not have a Board of Directors, please include information for an equivalent senior governance body. We do not require information that may be considered confidential, such as home mailing addresses or telephone numbers for your Board.

e) * Letters of support (maximum 3): You can include up to three letters from organizations that are working with you on this specific project or have endorsed your project (e.g. other funders; and community members who support your initiative, etc.). These letters should demonstrate genuine knowledge of and/or involvement with your project and be unique from one another.

f) Research Ethics Certificate(s): Vancouver Foundation must have assurance that all research will be conducted in an ethical, safe, and humane manner that respects the rights of the community, and a certificate of approval from a Research Ethics Board is required. Typically, the research ethics board is located within one of the research partners' own institution; however, ethics approval from a qualified 3rd party is also acceptable. If you have applied for, but have not yet obtained this certificate, you may still submit your application. Applications with ethics approval still pending will be reviewed and can be approved, conditional upon the receipt of ethics approval in the future.

g) Letters of release: Researchers working strictly in a clinical setting may request a contribution for release time of up to one day/week (20% of salary) if there is a letter from the agency/institution providing the rationale for the request, confirming that he/she will be released on full salary and that a replacement (other than an existing staff member) will be hired, and outlining the specific responsibilities of the relief person. These letters must be provided by the institution and/or agency to which the individual is affiliated.

h) Letter requesting allowance for Graduate Student participation and/or salary: Please include details if one or more graduate students are being hired to work on the project, and if they are/will be receiving any additional financial remuneration such as a scholarship, award or stipend. List the source of funding, amount, purpose, duration, the contribution to this project (if any) and a rationale for additional salary remuneration