

Frequently Asked Questions Research Tools and Instruments Grants Program (RTI)

General Information

- 1. Are universities provided with a quota for the number of applications that can be submitted to NSERC?**

The university quotas have been removed and the 2018 RTI competition will be open to all eligible Canadian university researchers.

- 2. Are there limits on the number of applications a researcher can submit?**

Researchers will be able to participate on one application per competition, either as an applicant or a co-applicant, but not both.

- 3. What is a comprehensive system?**

Requests must be for tools and instruments that form a comprehensive system; that is, one in which each tool or instrument forms part of an integrated system of operation to support the research program(s). Requests that bundle unrelated tools and instruments together are not acceptable.

- 4. Does the equipment funded by the RTI grant need to be used for NSERC funded research?**

Yes, NSERC will only accept requests for tools and instruments that form a comprehensive system intended to support NSERC funded research in the natural sciences and engineering (NSE).

- 5. Can the equipment funded by the RTI grant be used for research that falls outside the natural sciences and engineering?**

Yes, but the application must clearly document that the primary and majority of use will be directed toward NSERC funded research in the natural sciences and engineering. The assessment of your application will be based on the NSERC funded research that will be supported by the requested funds.



6. What is a co-applicant? Is there a limit on the number of co-applicants?

Co-applicants are major users of the equipment (those who frequently use the equipment). There is no limit on the number of co-applicants. Please also refer to the [NSERC Eligibility Criteria for Faculty](#).

7. Can users who are neither applicants nor co-applicants be part of a RTI grant application?

Users of the equipment who are neither applicants nor co-applicants may have their roles described in the proposal. No further information is required of them.

8. What do co-applicants need to submit?

Each co-applicant will receive an invitation email from the applicant through the Research Portal. Invitees must complete an Eligibility Profile and upload their CCV in the Research Portal. In addition, each co-applicant must indicate the number of hours per month that will be devoted to the use of the equipment.

9. I am an adjunct professor at my local university, but with a full-time job outside of academia; can I apply to the RTI program?

An adjunct professor with a full-time position outside of academia cannot be the applicant for an RTI application. The adjunct professor may participate as a co-applicant. Please also refer to the [NSERC Eligibility Criteria for Faculty](#).

10. If the equipment vendor offers a discount, would this discount need to be documented with a letter of support?

If the vendor discount is shown in the quote, no additional letter is required.

11. Does the Selection Committee provide written feedback or comments to applicants after competition?

Selection Committees do not prepare written comments for RTI applications; therefore, applicants should not expect to receive feedback or comments on their application. Applicants are informed of their score and rank.

Use of Funds

1. What is net cost?

Net cost represents the purchase cost of the equipment after any discount from the vendor and before taxes, customs and importation fees, transportation and shipping charges, and assembly and installation costs.

2. What is a cash contribution?

A cash contribution is financial support provided by another source of funding such as university, industry or other sources (e.g. NSERC Discovery Grant, Strategic Partnerships Grants, Collaborative Research and Development Grants, etc.). A vendor discount is not a cash contribution.

3. Does NSERC take into account fluctuations in currency exchange rates?

No, RTI funding will not be adjusted to account for any fluctuation in the currency exchange rate that may occur after applications are submitted. Applicants should seek other sources of funding to support rate fluctuation.

4. If the RTI program doesn't support laboratory infrastructure or provide funding that renders other equipment compliant with health and safety standards, how can I fund such costs?

For information on alternative funding, researchers can consult information related to the [Research Support Fund](#) and also contact the Research Grants Office at their institutions.

5. How long do I have to buy the equipment once awarded?

RTI funds are awarded for one fiscal year. The RTI program is subject to an automatic one year extension on the use of funds. For more information, please refer to the section on Extension Period for Use of Funds Beyond a Grant Period in the [Tri-Agency Financial Administration Guide](#).

6. Can I purchase equipment that is different from what I proposed in my application?

RTI awards must be used to purchase only the specific type of equipment for which the grant was awarded through the peer review process. Grantees who wish to purchase equipment different from that specified in the application must obtain written permission from [NSERC Finance](#) prior to its purchase. Grantees may, however, buy a model different from that requested in the application without prior NSERC approval (e.g. newer or upgraded model).