



Feast Centre for Indigenous STBBI Research
Centre du festin traditionnel de recherche autochtone sur les ITSS

Feast Centre Research Development Grants

Funding amount for each award: \$25,000

Number of awards: Up to 2

Important dates:

- **Call for applications: February 3rd, 2025**
- **Deadline to submit Letter of Intent (LOI): February 17th, 2025 @ 5 pm EST**
- **Deadline to submit full application: March 10, 2025 @ 5 pm EST**
- **Feedback from iterative review: March 31, 2025**
- **Deadline to resubmit (final submission) with feedback from iterative review: April 14, 2025 @ 5 pm EST**
- **Reviews and scoring from reviewers: April 14, 2025 – May 5, 2025**
- **Notice of decision: May 5, 2025**
- **Signing of transfer agreements: May 5 - June 2, 2025**
- **Project start / end: June 2, 2025 – June 1, 2026**

Introduction

The Feast Centre for Indigenous STBBI Research has created the Feast Centre Research Development Grants (originally the Indigenous COVID-19 STBBI Research Award) to support research related to Indigenous peoples (First Nations, Inuit, and Métis) living with or affected by Sexually Transmitted Blood Borne Infections (STBBI). This grant is intended to support innovative Inuit, Métis and First Nations STBBI research that is grounded in Indigenous ways of being and knowing, uses Indigenous methods and is responsive to community-identified needs.

The grant is valued up to \$25,000 to support research activities and the dissemination of knowledge that addresses Indigenous communities' varied and distinct experiences of STBBI. For this second call for applications for the grant, two project proposals will be supported, with an emphasis on representation from across the four pillars of health research (clinical, basic science, epidemiology, and social science). We are committed to supporting research that is regionally diverse that supports Inuit, Métis, and First Nations communities, especially rural, remote, and Northern community-based research.

The Indigenous Research Development Grants are meant to support **new and developing areas of research**, to encourage team members to engage actively with Indigenous methods and ways of knowing to develop, articulate, conduct and assess their proposed research. These awards are also intended to support further theoretical development in Indigenous perspectives to health, gender, and over-all wellbeing.

Based on the pool and quality of incoming applications and on agreement with our partnering institutions, the Feast Centre may be prepared to fund additional projects that are projected to have a significant community impact. Research teams previously funded through the COVID-19 grant are eligible to apply for further funding through the Research Development Grant. Previously funded research projects must meet reporting requirements for previous funding periods before new funding is released.

Note: Applicants who have previously received funding through the Feast Centre's Community Fellowship or Research Development Award (i.e., \$25,000 or more in funding) are welcome to apply; however, priority will be given to those who have not yet received Feast Centre funding or who have only received smaller awards (e.g. KTE or Conference Award). Members of the current cohort of Research Development awardees are not eligible to apply for a new grant, unless they have completed their projects and submitted all the reporting documentation by the application deadline.

A Collaborative Approach

The Feast Centre for Indigenous STBBI Research is a partnership between McMaster University and CAAN Communities Alliances and Networks and is affiliated with the McMaster Indigenous Research Institute (MIRI) and the Aboriginal HIV/AIDS Community-Based Research Collaborative Centre (the AHA Centre). Through our collaborative approach, the Feast Centre has representation from Indigenous and allied scholars, community organizations, Indigenous people with lived experience of HIV/AIDS and other STBBI and diverse and traditional knowledge holders.

The Feast Centre privileges the use of community-based research approaches that draw on Indigenous knowledges and adopts a decolonizing orientation to shape methodological approaches. Of particular focus is the use of culturally relevant data collection in addition to analytic procedures that create relationships and support Indigenous autonomy to respond to STBBI in ways consistent with diverse cultural traditions. This includes supporting research that is strengths-based that contributes to the health and wellbeing of Indigenous communities. Such actions include - but are not limited to - understanding cultural sources of resilience, focusing on social determinants of health, and exploring other faces of experiential knowledge (e.g., multigenerational Indigenous knowledges, cultural protocols, etc.). Towards this end, the Feast Centre emphasizes the four pillars of health research (basic, clinical, epidemiology/public health and social science) to maximize the effectiveness of activities.

Eligibility

Applicants **must be** a Feast Centre team member or **be working in partnership** with a Feast Centre team member, should have experience with community-based research, and a demonstrated relationship with an Indigenous community, collective or organization. Applicants who are working in partnership with a Feast Centre team member must demonstrate a meaningful connection with the team member throughout the duration of the proposed research. This could be demonstrated through a supervisory, advisory, or collaborative nature. Grants can also be held by an academic institution or community-based organization.

Applicants in partnership with a Feast Centre team member may be, but are not limited to:

- Professors working within an academic institution,
- PhD or clinical researchers working within government or health institutions,
- Community-based researchers,
- Academic trainees/students (undergraduate, graduate, or post-grad)

The ideal applicant will be part of a research project team that can collectively demonstrate previous experience in community-based research aligned with the vision of the Feast Centre, and can provide examples of current and/or past work such as community reports, conference presentations, publications, articles, or arts-based dissemination strategies, etc. The collective experience of team members on the research project should encompass:

- A PhD, a clinical researcher, and/or a community member with a minimum of five years of research experience. This person should demonstrate a publication and presentation record, including community reports, and be able to demonstrate how their work made a measurable community impact,
- An Elder who will provide meaningful guidance and support to the project from beginning to end of the project,
- An Indigenous person with lived experience of STBBI and/or a representative from an Indigenous community organization that works in the area of STBBI's.
- As a **requirement**, at least one member must be affiliated with an academic institution to request ethics review and acquire ethics approval for the project, if needed. The full name of this team member and their academic affiliation should be included in the application. As a reminder, any project involving human participants (e.g. gathering information from or about people through interviews, surveys and other direct interactions; observing behaviors where privacy expectations exist; collecting private, identifiable information about individuals), sensitive data (e.g. health records, personal identifiers, or private information), or activities that could impact individuals or communities (e.g. physical, psychological, social, or economic risks), and in particular Indigenous communities (considering Indigenous-led ethical protocols, such as OCAP) generally requires an ethics certificate.

Please note, if applicants have acquired research funds for this project through other grants, these funds must be reported prior to funds being awarded. It is the applicant's responsibility to meet this reporting requirement.

Please note, funds will be released as follows: Assuming the total amount requested is \$25,000, an initial \$5,000 (or 20%) will be released immediately upon acceptance of the award, and the remaining \$20,000 will be released upon obtaining an ethics certificate, if the project requires ethics approval. For smaller requests, the equivalent to 20% of the total will be released immediately and the remaining 80% upon obtaining an ethics certificate.

Application Process

This award requires:

- a. A Letter of Intent (LOI). Please, email your LOI by February 17th, 2025 at 5 pm EST to feastapp@mcmaster.ca. In your LOI please include the following information:
 - o Project title (or working title);
 - o Health research area(s)/pillar(s), e.g. clinical, basic science, epidemiology, social science, your project will be focusing on;
 - o Team;
 - o Indigenous community your project will be engaging with.
- b. A completed application form including a supervisory nomination form. Applicants who are not Feast Centre team members must identify a Feast team member as their first supervisor.
- c. A project proposal that outlines proposed activities aligned with a previous or ongoing research project and answers key questions posed (4-5 pages).
- d. A copy of the primary applicant's Curriculum Vitae (CV) highlighting research experience, education, and training; relevant publications, conference or meeting presentations; past research activity; knowledge translation activity; and community work.
- e. A detailed budget proposal with justification. If the research is already partially funded, this funding must be disclosed.
- f. The proposed timeline of the research project.
- g. One or more **signed** letters of support from an Indigenous community, collective or organization specifying how community has been asked to be meaningfully involved from their perspective, including a commitment to formalizing an agreement such as a memorandum of understanding guiding community/campus partnership. Letters of support from an Indigenous community organization must be on organizational letterhead. Letters must specify how community has been asked to be meaningfully involved in Knowledge Translation activities.

There are two deadlines for this grant. Applicants are encouraged to submit for the first deadline to participate in the iterative review process. Application packages submitted for this deadline are required to include all required materials noted above, except for letters of community support. All application material, including letters of support must be submitted (or resubmitted) as one package by the final deadline.

The first iterative review deadline: March 10, 2025

The Feast Centre will provide an iterative review process for applications. Applicants have the opportunity to ask for advice and support during application development and also after the applications are submitted for first round reviews. Applicants are encouraged to seek advice and support from Feast Centre team members while developing their application. Applicants who submit for the first draft deadline will be provided feedback on their research project proposal from the review committee, prior to the final application deadline. This iterative process will provide an opportunity for submission of robust, clear, and rigorous applications. The first round of reviews may result in questions from the review committee and applicants will be offered the opportunity to address those questions for the second round of reviews. Applications that come

in after this deadline will not be eligible for the iterative review process and will be provided feedback after the completed review.

The second and final deadline: April 14, 2025

The second deadline is the final application deadline. This second round of reviews is the final round, and eligibility for funding will be determined in this round. Late or incomplete proposals past the final application deadline will not be considered. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that applications are complete, and that all information is accurate.

All applications are to be submitted electronically using the instructions below.

- Submit the fully completed application (including all signatures) as one PDF file and send it to feastapp@mcmaster.ca. Include in the subject heading of the email, "Research Development Grant" and your name.
- Late or incomplete proposals will not be considered. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that applications are complete, and that all information is accurate.

Application Evaluation

All applications will be reviewed by a review committee. Applications will be evaluated based on research impact, methodology, team composition and considerations of gender and gender analysis. Ideal applications will address or include:

Research impact

- clear explanation of how the project has emerged from community perspectives and responds to community priorities, process is laid out through which community will be able to provide meaningful input;
- addresses an important research gap for the community in question including (1) what is already contained in the literature, (2) provides information on how the research is relevant to the community and responds to community-identified priorities, (3) provides a concrete plan detailing the steps to be taken in the research project, (4) project looks to build upon existing knowledge;
- the goals and objectives contribute to the health of an Indigenous community including clear description of the pre-existing health conditions of concern; strong connection between the overarching goal of the research proposal and the objectives of its constituent parts; clearly describes how the goals and objectives respond to Indigenous health and wellbeing.

Methodology:

- methodology demonstrates how it will respond to community-identified priorities with a clear explanation of how the community was consulted in order to identify their priorities and a detailed plan on how the community will continue to be able to offer meaningful feedback throughout the life of the project;
- clearly explains how the methodological approach will meet the aims of the study with connection between the methodological framework and the expected outcomes. Methodology is well-woven into every part of the research project. Applicant justifies the methodological choice and outlines nuances and contextual factors specific to the project;

Team Composition:

- Meaningful involvement of Elders, youth and community members with a clear explanation of how Elders, youth and/or other community members are meaningfully involved in all aspects of the project, including research planning activities, consideration of ethical dilemmas, data analysis, and knowledge translation and exchange;
- Inclusion of Indigenous people with lived experience of STBBI and/or service providers from community-based organizations that work in the area of Indigenous STBBI with a clear explanation of how Indigenous people living with STBBI/service providers are meaningfully involved in research planning activities, consideration of ethical dilemmas, data analysis, and plans for knowledge translation throughout the life of the project.
- As a reminder, it is **required** that at least one member of the team is affiliated with an academic institution to secure ethics approval for the project, if needed. The full name of this team member and their academic affiliation should be included in the application.

Gender Considerations:

- Appropriate consideration of gender (male, female, trans, nonbinary, two-spirit, etc.) with a clear description of how gender is a central consideration of the study;
- clear explanation of how different genders are being integrated, and explanation of steps taken to ensure that participants with different gender experiences are supported

Recipients will be selected based on the quality of their application, including their research plan, community engagement strategy, use of Indigenous and decolonizing methods, grades, and reference letters. Successful applicants will be notified via email regarding their award status.

Reporting Requirements

At the end of the award period, recipients will be responsible for:

- Submitting a financial statement reporting how money was spent;
- A one-to-two-page narrative report highlighting successes and challenges of the project;
- Present findings at bi-yearly Feast Centre team meeting;

Recipients will be encouraged to submit an abstract to present research findings at, but not limited to, the CAAN Communities, Alliances & Network's Wise Practices Conference or the International Indigenous Working Group on HIV/AIDS' Indigenous Pre-Conference;

Recipients will be encouraged to submit an article for publication consideration to, but not limited to, the *Journal of Indigenous HIV Research*.

Potential Project Ideas

This grant is open to a broad range of research projects that deal with STBBI in Indigenous communities and that can demonstrate a measurable impact. The following examples are meant to demonstrate the breadth of options, are not exhaustive, and not to suggest what projects will be funded:

Social Determinants of Health

- Mental wellness – ongoing effects of the COVID19 pandemic including experiences of crisis or isolation, changes to or withdrawal of services for mental wellness, including restricted access to ceremony
- Wellness strategies for people living with HIV and other STBBI complicated by the effects of long-COVID and other health conditions
- How does HIV stigma (stigma around pandemic experiences that intersect with STBBI) intersect with pandemics such as COVID19 or Monkeypox?
- How do people’s experiences of STBBI stigma intersect with pandemic stigma?

Policy Implications

- Policy implications i.e., ODSP or equivalent and how it needs to change (or not) to address pandemics.
- Challenges of delivering frontline services to people living with HIV, i.e., food banks, drop-ins, other programming that people depend on, in these challenging times in the context of ongoing COVID-19
- Interactions with/acceptability of HIV treatments with pandemic treatments and vaccines?
- How has access to HIV or STBBI testing and care been affected by COVID-19 in Indigenous communities?

Clinical Implications

- How has pandemics such as COVID-19 impacted those using opioid substitution therapy or those living with substance use disorders?
- How do pandemics such as COVID-19 or Monkeypox impact HIV care –such as virtual care, and how has that experience been?
- Rural, remote and Northern accessibility impacts to care after pandemics.
- Indigenous participation and acceptability in vaccine development and clinical trials.
- Intersecting pandemics
- Prevention work towards/with a targeted group, such as youth under-access to care, wellness, or prevention services.

Basic Science Implications

- How are Indigenous individuals living with HIV and STBBI affected by pandemics in terms of resilience to infection duration of disease or viral load during infection?
- Assessing past exposure by correlations of SARS-CoV-2 antibody and lived experience (living density, access to health care, etc.)

Culture

- What is the role of culture, ceremony and Indigenous knowledge in understanding and managing viral infection risk? Particularly as it relates to HIV and STBBI?
- How can culture and ceremony, including land-based activities, mitigate the risk of viral infections?
- How are older Indigenous people living with HIV and other STBBI managing in the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, and what are the considerations for prevention, testing, diagnosis, treatment and care?

- What does culturally safe care look like during a pandemic? How do we ensure that Indigenous people living with HIV and STBBI have access to culturally safe care in all settings? What needs to give, and what needs to be reinforced under these conditions?
- Intersections of technology such as the popular Go Ask Auntie or Sexfluent websites or platforms such as TikTok? (<https://goaskauntie.ca/>, <https://www.sexfluent.ca/>)
- Addressing stigma through culture.
- Addressing how Inuit organizations respond to diverse community needs (e.g., Inuit youth) regarding prevention and talking about sexuality. How do ways of talking about sexuality get taken up that is effective in Inuit communities?

Indigenous Research Development Grant Application Form

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Applicant Information

Principal Applicant: The applicant must be based in Canada and acts as the primary contact for the proposed research team. AIDS Service Organization (ASO) staff, staff at community-based organizations, graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, research associates and technical support staff are eligible to be a Principal Applicant.	
Name:	
Position/role:	
Agency/Affiliation (as applicable):	
Phone:	E-Mail:
Mailing Address (building, street, city, postal code):	
Applicant Signature:	

Project Information

Project Title:

Community where proposed project is being undertaken:
Total Funding Requested:
Amount of anticipated in-kind support (if any):
Total cost of project:
Anticipated Project Start Date:
Anticipated Project Completion Date:

Nominations from Supervisory Committee

Provide information for up to three members of your supervisory committee. The first supervisor must be a member of the Feast Centre. Supervisors must provide a signature (electronic signatures are acceptable) to acknowledge that they agree to supervise the research project.

1. First Advisor (must be a member of the Feast Centre):	
Position/role:	
Agency/Affiliation (as applicable):	
Phone:	E-Mail:
Applicant Signature:	

2. Second advisor:	
Position/role:	
Agency/Affiliation (as applicable):	
Phone:	E-Mail:
Applicant Signature:	

3. Third advisor	
Position/role:	

Agency/Affiliation (as applicable):	
Phone:	E-Mail:
Applicant Signature:	

Project Proposal Guidelines

Submit a 4–5-page project proposal answering relevant questions listed below. Use the bolded text as your headings to organize your proposal.

Background: What is the main issue the project will address? What is the critical health issue or challenge to health system that is being addressed? How does the challenge affect Indigenous STBBI population?

Research Question and Objectives: What is the research question of the proposed project? What is the corresponding proposed goal(s) and objectives of your project?

Methods and Methodology: What methodology and methods will you use to achieve your goals? How are Indigenous methods and ways of knowing foundational to the research project? How does the proposed research adopt Indigenous perspectives to method and methodology?

Plan for Analysis: What is your plan for analysis? Who will be involved in your plans for analysis? Will Indigenous knowledges be used to shape your analytic framework? Will you be incorporating gender analysis in your project? Are you demonstrating a commitment to gender analysis into your work? How has this understanding of gender shaped your project proposal? How has the meaningful participation and decision-making of differently gendered subjects been integrated into the study?

Research Impact: What are the expected “real-life” impacts of your project? How will this project impact Indigenous STBBI populations? What are the expected outcomes of your project?

Knowledge Translation Activities: What is the plan for knowledge translation? What are some projected outputs or products from this project? What are the communication and knowledge/intervention dissemination plans? How will the affected community partners benefit from the product/project?

Evaluation Framework: What does success look like? How do you plan on giving your findings back to the community? Who do you plan on bringing the findings to? What is the potential impact of your project? How will you measure and evaluate success?

Community Partners and Community Engagement: Who will be involved in your research project? What are your team’s community engagement strategies? How will you meaningfully engage and involve Elders, the Indigenous community in question and persons with lived experience? How will your team be managed and supported? Does the team have the resources necessary to complete the project? Are all partners and collaborators committed to the project? Do you plan on expanding the list of team members as the project develops? Who might you wish to further involve in this project?

Ethical Considerations: What are the ethical considerations of your project? How/will you gain ethical clearance for the project?

Budget Proposal Guidelines

This document should include:

1. A budget summary indicating the breakdown of all requested funds (rounded to the nearest dollar)
2. Justification for budget lines with a description of all items requested as supplies and expenses or salaries (see example below). Please disclose if funds have also been requested through other sources and how those funds would be allocated if attained.

Allowable expenses under this funding opportunity:

Supplies and Expenses: include expenses for materials (for example: cultural resources, photocopying and printing, teleconference costs, or catering) and research and/or meeting travel expenses. Expenses cannot be paid for rent, telephone, internet, or the purchase of computers/laptops or computer software other than for data analysis.

Salaries and Wages: include all positions that will be supported by this fund and describe the duties and proposed salaries or stipends. Indicate the amount of time (full or part-time), as well as the number of hours for part time work. The following are not eligible to receive salary/ wage support:

- i. Principal Applicant (academic or community)
- ii. Any person holding an academic rank equivalent to Lecturer or Assistant Professor or higher who is already drawing a salary from an academic institution, or who is a professional assistant, advisor or research associate,
- iii. Employees of the federal or provincial governments and investigators based outside of Canada

3. Total Amount Requested: Please indicate the total dollar (\$) amount requested up to \$25,000.
4. Name of Financial Officer: provide the name and contact information of the financial officer who will be responsible for the administration of this research grant and to whom all correspondence about the accounting should be sent.

Sample Budget-Summary

Expenses	Total Estimated Cost
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Total Materials and Supplies	\$XX.XX
Total Salaries and Wages	\$XX.XX
Total Amount Requested	\$XX.XX

Sample Budget-Justification (use as many lines as you need)

Supplies/salary Required	Total Estimated Cost
<i>Identify and describe all supplies and salary lines in your budget</i>	
<i>Example</i>	\$XX.XX
<i>Supplies- photocopying: handouts for community engagement session</i>	
<i>Honorarium: Elders community engagement</i>	\$XX.XX
Supplies/salary: brief description	\$XX.XX