

AV Research and Development (R&D) Partnership Fund Stream 1 – Collaborative R&D Projects

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Program Information and Eligibility Requirements

Overview and Benefits

The AV R&D Partnership Fund (**Stream 1**) contributes up to one-third of eligible project costs, for approved projects, up to a maximum of \$100,000, with the remainder contributed by *Applicants* and/or *Partners*. Project funding can be used towards the development and demonstration of technologies in the Connected and Autonomous Vehicle (C/AV) sector, in the following *Priority Areas*:

- Mass light vehicles (e.g., cars, trucks and vans)
- Heavy duty vehicles (including commercial vehicles, trucks, buses, RVs and others used for goods movement)
- Transportation infrastructure
- Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)
- Transit-supportive systems and vehicles

Projects can benefit from additional funding to support qualified interns and /or fellows. For more information on support for internships and/or fellowships, please refer to the AVIN *TalentEdge* Internships and Fellowships guidelines.

Projects are encouraged to include demonstration of actual products, which can be showcased at events; at the [Demonstration Zone](#) in Stratford, Ontario; at one of the AVIN [Regional Technology Development Sites](#) with appropriate facilities; on the road, and/or at customer sites.

NOTE: AVIN does not preclude the testing and/or demonstration of C/AV technologies elsewhere in Ontario, subject to Ministry of Transportation's (MTO's) Pilot Project ([0. Reg. 306/15, under Highway Traffic Act, R.S.O. 1990, c. H.8](#)) and all other applicable laws and regulations.

Intellectual Property (IP) arising from a project will be managed by project Applicant and Partners as OCI does not claim or manage IP rights.

The Applicant and the *Primary Partner* must have an arm's-length business relationship.

Applications that are outside of the scope of the program may be referred to funding partners or other OCI administered programs as appropriate.

Benefits to applicants and partners	Benefits to society
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercialization of Ontario-made technologies Demonstration of Ontario-made technologies to potential customers Relationships with researchers to extend company R&D Marketable solutions to current challenges Public/private partnerships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased road safety Better road condition monitoring Better collection and analysis of transportation-related information Innovative new products and services to reduce driver distraction Reduced environmental and carbon footprint

How Funding Works

OCI Contribution	One-third (maximum) of total eligible project costs, up to \$100,000
Matching Requirement	Two-thirds (minimum) of total eligible project costs (i.e. minimum 2:1 match to OCI contribution) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cash match may come from Applicant and/or Partners Cash match MUST come from private sector contributions
Example	Total eligible project costs: \$100,000 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maximum OCI contribution = \$33,000 Minimum industry contribution = \$67,000
Funding Recipient	OCI funds flow only to the <i>Applicant</i> . The <i>Applicant</i> is responsible to reimburse <i>Partners</i> , if applicable.
Academic Applicant Option	Application follows VIP II rules. OCI funding goes to the academic institution. OCI funding is matched by 100% cash (minimum) and 100% other contributions from industry partner.
Institutional Overhead	This program is not eligible for overhead payment by OCI. Academic overhead is also not an eligible expense.

This is a reimbursement program. Reimbursements are triggered by the submission and approval of quarterly reports.

NOTE: The maximum level—or stacking limit—of total government assistance (government assistance for the same eligible expenditures) will not exceed 75 per cent of the value of eligible expenditures. Applicants will be required to disclose all sources of funding being applied for and/or received for the project and the full proposal will incorporate a breakdown of all government assistance as required. Government assistance includes OCI administered programs and support from other levels of government in Canada.

NOTE: OCI and Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) may partner to support selected collaborative Stream 1 and [Collaborative Research and Development \(CRD\)](#) or [Applied Research and Development \(ARD\) \(college only\)](#) projects. Partnership may be possible where the two applications are prepared in parallel, the projects are aligned and include unique and complementary milestones, and the industry cash contributions are not already allocated. Potential opportunities must be assessed by an OCI Business Development Manager on a case-by-case basis prior to commencing an application.

An application to Stream 1 can also embed a funding request for interns and fellows from the AVIN Talent Development program.

Eligible Expenses

- All project activities must be performed within Ontario, unless prior written approval has been obtained from OCI before submission of an application
- OCI may reimburse expenses incurred after the application approval date. The Funding Agreement must be executed by relevant parties before a project gets activated. Until activation is performed, project expenses are incurred at the risk of the participants
- Applicants must refer to the Eligible Expenses Guide for full details

Eligibility Requirements

Applicants

- An *Applicant* is either an SME (generally defined as having fewer than 500 full-time employees) or a post-secondary academic institution.
 - An SME may be an *Applicant* on only one AV R&D Partnership Fund or WinterTech Development Program project at a time.
- Must have operations (R&D, manufacturing, product management, etc.) in Ontario
- An Ontario publicly-funded post-secondary academic institution (college or university) can be an *Applicant*. For universities, the project lead is a principal investigator. For colleges, the project lead is a representative of the applied research office; project researchers are included as team members. Principal investigators, project leads, and researchers must have an arm’s-length relationship with all *Partners*.
- Companies who have received over \$500,000 of OCI funding in their lifetime (excluding TalentEdge) are required to obtain OCI approval before a new application for funding is initiated. Your Business Development Manager can guide you through the process.

Partners

- Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs)
 - SMEs may be Primary or Secondary *Partners* on multiple concurrent projects.
- National and Multi-National Enterprises (NEs and MNEs)
 - NEs and MNEs can be Primary or Secondary *Partners* on multiple concurrent projects.
- Publicly-funded Post-Secondary Academic Institutions
- Municipalities
- Indigenous Communities
- Not-For-Profit Organizations

Partners for academic institution applicants can **only** be SMEs, NEs, or MNEs -Wherever applicable, *Applicants and Partners* must:

- Be for-profit and have operations (manufacturing, R&D, etc.) in Ontario
- Aim to commercialize, demonstrate and/or implement the results of the project in Ontario and for the benefit of Ontario
- Be innovation-driven businesses developing products or services addressing industry challenges
- Have sound business plans and secure financial backing
- Be in good financial and reporting standing with OCI
- Demonstrate capacity to conduct contracted project activities. OCI reserves the right to limit the number of applications from companies already benefitting from, or applying to, other OCI program funding

Project

- Minimum one *Applicant* and one *Primary Partner*
- Minimum 2:1 cash match by *Applicants and/or Partners*
- Project activities are carried out in Ontario
- Projects can be up to 12 months in duration
- This program is not intended for research to prove feasibility or basic technology research. Projects should be at Technology Readiness Level [3-7](#) (3: proof of concept; 7: operational environment functional demonstration)
- Typical project activities include: technology development, demonstration, product/service validation, testing, and proof of concept
- *Applicant* and *Partners* should demonstrate close collaboration and scalable outcomes with high potential for commercialization, strong commercial pull, competitive advantage and alignment with intended program benefits.

How to Apply

Application Process and Timelines

Program Status: **Open for applications (accepted on a rolling basis).**

1. To begin the application process, please complete a [client intake form](#).

Please note: completion of this form does not constitute an application for funding. An OCI Business Development Manager (BDM) will contact you to discuss the opportunity and assist you with developing your application. Your OCI BDM will also maintain oversight responsibility for any approved project.

2. Prior to submission, an *Applicant* MUST first request their BDM to provide an endorsement of the application for eligibility and suitability.
3. Once the endorsement is provided, the *Applicant* or BDM will then be able to submit the application. A sample application form can be viewed for informational purposes only. Applications are only accepted through OCI’s online AccessOCI system where full application and program *Partner* requirements are listed.
4. Applications must be accompanied by a signed Letter of Support (LOS) from contributing Partner organizations, confirming financial commitment to the project, activities, duration, resources as a “Project Contributor/Partner”, and acknowledgement of the requirement to sign the standard OCI funding agreement. A template for the Letter of Support is available. Use of the template is optional, however all items listed must be included in the letter.
5. Successful *Applicants* and their *Partner(s)* must execute OCI’s standard Funding Agreement, including a completed Schedule D, Intellectual Property Term Sheet, and Schedule “E”: DISP requirements, within 30 days of notification of award. A copy of the Funding Agreement can be downloaded for your reference. Please do not fill out this form; the formal agreement will be generated through our online management system and sent to you upon approval of your project.
6. **IMPORTANT:** *Applicants* should start negotiations with their project *Partner(s)* regarding intellectual property (IP) preferably before submission of the application.

Please contact your Business Development Manager to discuss potential applications to this program.

Timelines

Milestone	Date
Program Launch	November 8, 2017
Application Intake	Ongoing until December 31, 2021, or until all funds are allocated
Project Start Date Deadline	March 31, 2022
Deadline for the completion of all projects	Within 12-month period of project start date

Reference Documents

- OCI Funding Agreement
- Eligible Expenditures Guide
- Sample Proposal Questions (Note: this sample application template is for informational purposes only. Applications are only accepted through OCI's online system where full application requirements are listed).
- Letter of Support Template
- AVIN Data and Information Sharing Protocol (DISP)

Assessment Process and Criteria

The AV R&D Partnership Fund is a discretionary, non-entitlement program with limited funding. OCI will fund qualified projects with potential for the greatest economic benefits and contribution to transportation advancements to Ontario. Not all eligible applications can be funded.

All eligible applications are assessed on their merit and reviewed against program objectives and evaluation criteria.

Applications are internally reviewed for eligibility, completeness and financial compliance, prior to evaluation by independent external reviewers with domain and sector expertise. All reviewers are bound by Non-Disclosure Agreements (NDAs). The final funding decision is made by OCI.

Evaluation Criteria

Evaluation criteria include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Clarity of the challenges, significance of the market opportunity, expected economic benefit to the companies and Ontario (e.g. new revenues, job creation/retention, productivity improvements) and potential benefit/contribution to Ontario's transportation ecosystem (e.g. infrastructure, systems and vehicles)
- Technical merit, novelty, and ability of the innovation to address challenges and market opportunities
- Expertise and experience of the team members, clarity of roles and responsibilities, and evidence of collaboration
- Clarity, feasibility and appropriateness of the project plan and budget
- A clear strategy and capacity to bring the results to market and/or implement proposed solutions
- Overall quality and completeness of the application

Project Activation, Funds and Reporting

Project Activation

- Upon approval, the *Applicant* and *Primary Partner* (at least) and *Secondary Partners* (if contributing) must execute an OC funding agreement, including a completed Schedule "D": Data Sharing and Reporting Requirements, within 30 days of approval of the award.
- A non-executable copy of the Funding Agreement, without Schedules, can be downloaded (subject to change) for your reference (please see above). Please do not fill out this form; a copy of the executable agreement with Schedules will be generated through our online management system and sent to you upon approval of your project.

Flow of Funds

- OCI funds flow only to the *Applicant*. The *Applicant* is responsible to reimburse *Partners*, if applicable.
- Reimbursements are triggered by the submission and approval of claims and reports
- Reimbursement claims (for SME *Applicant*) or disbursement claims (for academic *Applicant*) are made when submitting the required interim and final reports

Applicant is an SME	Applicant is a Post-Secondary Academic Institution
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An advance payment of up to 10 per cent is released upon activation of the project • Quarterly interim payments (based on submitted and approved reimbursement claims and reports) • 10 per cent final payment (based on submitted and approved reimbursement claim and final report) • Payments are based on the total OCI award project value (including the Talent Development (TalentEdge) Program, if applicable) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An advance payment of up to 45 percent is released upon activation of the project • A 45 per cent interim payment (based on submitted and approved disbursement claim and report) • 10 per cent final payment (based on submitted and approved disbursement claim and final report) • NOTE: This program is not eligible for overhead payment by OCI. Academic overhead is also not an eligible expense. <p>Payments are based on the total OCI award project value (including the Talent Development (TalentEdge) Program, if applicable)</p>

Project Reporting

A major component of the AVIN Project is the generation and analysis of data and information to support Ontario's C/AV ecosystem (e.g., governments, broader public-sector organizations, industry, academia, transportation authorities, etc.).

OCI will not be collecting, analysing or otherwise handling and disseminating data and information considered by applicants to be proprietary or commercially sensitive. OCI will work with applicants to ensure that the collection of information reflects specific project design or business needs and supports their interests. Please refer to the Data and Information Sharing Protocol for details.

Copies of detailed reporting instructions and templates will be sent to successful parties at the time of contracting. Reports must be received and approved by OCI prior to release of funds for eligible claims.

The following project reports will be required. **Please note that completion of all required reports is a contractual obligation to receive funding from OCI.**

Interim Progress and Claims Report(s)

SME Applicants:

Quarterly reports (based on OCI's fiscal year starting April 1), including progress, project metrics, data and information requirements, proof of expenditures and partnership contributions, financial attestation, and a request for reimbursement must be submitted by the *Applicant*. Report is accessed directly on the AccessOCI system from the Report Tab.

Academic Applicants:

One Interim Report including progress, project metrics, data and information requirements, proof of expenditures and partnership contributions, financial attestation, and a request for disbursement must be submitted by the *Applicant*.

Final Report and Claim Report

A final report, including progress, project metrics, data and information requirements, proof of expenditures and partnership contributions, financial attestation, and a request for reimbursement/disbursement, is required at the end of the project. Forty-five days prior to the scheduled completion date, the *Applicant* and all contributing *Partners* will receive an email notification of the project end date from the AccessOCI system, with a link to the Final Progress and Claim Report should the parties wish to begin entering data.

Note: Applicants MUST retain all proof of purchases, receipts, and other relevant documentation relating to eligible expenses. These should be included in all reporting.

- If required, *applicants* MUST request a project extension using the Project Administration tab in its AccessOCI project file. Extension requests must be made at the earliest possible opportunity.
- *Applicants* can request early reporting by emailing the Program Manager
- On the scheduled project completion date, the *Applicant* and all contributing *Partners* will receive another notification and a link to complete the Final Project Progress and Claim Report from OCI's AccessOCI system
- *Applicants* and contributing *Partners* must submit their Final Report within 30 days of project completion to be reimbursed for eligible expenses and maintain good financial standing with OCI

Project Metrics

If a project continues past an OCI fiscal year end (March 31), the *Applicant* and contributing *Partners* will be required to complete an annual metrics survey each April, for the part of the project that has been completed since the previous March 31. This annual report is mandatory for OCI to fulfil its contract with its funders. Required metrics reports must be submitted to maintain good financial standing with OCI.

Retrospective Survey

At one, two and three years after project completion, the *Applicant* will be sent a link to complete a retrospective survey to collect data on commercial outcomes from the project. This information is required by OCI for assessment of program impact and continuous improvement.

Project Changes

To request a variance to the OCI budget (exceeding 10% of the total project value) or an extension to the project end date, the Applicant must secure OCI approval prior to the project end date. A Project Change Request (PCR) form can be found under the Project Administration tab in your AccessOCI project file.

Contacts

[Search OCI's Knowledge Base of Frequently Asked Questions.](#)

For inquiries related to application initiation, please contact:

Martin Lord

Senior Sector Manager, Automotive and Mobility

Tel: 416 629 3126

Email: MLord@oc-innovation.ca

Dan Ruby

Sector Manager, Automotive and Mobility

Tel: 416 799 9194

Email: DRuby@oc-innovation.ca

For general, eligibility, contracting and funding disbursement inquiries, please contact:

Graham Takata

Program Portfolio Manager, Automotive and Mobility Innovation

Tel: 416 660 8552

Email: GTakata@oc-innovation.ca