

AV Research and Development (R&D) Partnership Fund Stream 2 – Technology Demonstration Projects

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Program Information and Eligibility Requirements

Overview and Benefits

The AV R&D Partnership Fund (**Stream 2**) contributes up to one-third of eligible project costs for approved projects up to a maximum of \$1,000,000, 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 (CAV) 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 should enable the demonstration of actual products/services. Significant accomplishments related to the project **MUST** be shared with the wider community through showcase events and media communications. Potential demonstration sites are: the [Demonstration Zone](#) in Stratford, Ontario; at [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 ([O. 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.

An *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 \$1,000,000
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 <i>Applicant</i> and/or <i>Partners</i> • Cash match MUST come from private sector contributions
Example	Total eligible project costs = \$400,000 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum OCI contribution = \$133,000 • Minimum industry contribution = \$267,000
Funding Recipient	OCI funds flow only to the <i>Applicant</i> . The <i>Applicant</i> is responsible to reimburse <i>Partners</i> , if applicable.
Institutional Overhead	This program is not eligible for overhead payment by OCI. Academic overhead is also not an eligible expense.

Applications to the AV R&D Partnership Fund (Stream 2) are accepted during open funding rounds. 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 and support from other levels of government in Canada.

An application to Stream 2 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 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 is activated. Until activation is complete, 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 an SME (generally defined as having fewer than 500 full-time employees)
- 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
- 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 (as *Secondary Partners* only)
- Municipalities
- Indigenous Communities
- Not-For-Profit Organizations

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*, not an academic institution. Unlimited number of additional, *Secondary Partners* can join.
- Project activities are carried out in Ontario.
- Minimum 2:1 cash match by *Applicants and/or Partners*.
- Projects can be up to 24 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.

- *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.
- Eligible projects **MUST** include demonstration of actual products that can be showcased at events, at the [Demonstration Zone](#) in Stratford, Ontario; in Ottawa, Ontario, on the road, and/or at customer sites.

How to Apply

Application Process and Timelines

Program Status: **Open for Applications – Expressions of Interest due by 2:00pm on Wednesday, May 19, 2021**

Stream 2 of the AV R&D Partnership program contains two stages: an Expression of Interest (EOI) and a Full Application.

1. To begin the EOI submission 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 EOI (and eventual application). Your OCI BDM will also maintain oversight responsibility for any approved project.

2. *Applicants* whose EOI are selected by the EOI Review Committee will be invited to submit a Full Application to OCI. A sample application form can be viewed for informational purposes only. Full applications must be submitted to OCI through OCI's online AccessOCI system where full application and program *Partner* requirements are listed, by the Full Application Intake date.
3. Prior to submission, an *Applicant* must first request from their BDM an endorsement of the application for eligibility and suitability.
4. Once the endorsement is provided, the *Applicant* or BDM will then be able to submit the application.
5. 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.
6. Successful *Applicants* and their *Partners* must execute OCI's standard Funding Agreement, including a completed Schedule "D": [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. **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.

Milestones and Key Activities

Round 1 – Fiscal Year 2021/2022

Activity	Date
EOI Submission Deadline	Wednesday, May 19, 2021
EOI Results and Invitation for Full Application	Friday, June 25, 2021
Full Application Submission for BDM Endorsement	Wednesday, July 28, 2021
Full Application Review Meeting	Monday, September 27, 2021

Note: Application intakes are on-going until December 31, 2021, or when all funds are committed. The timelines above will be updated following each round.

Reference Documents

- OCI Funding Agreement
- Eligible Expenditures Guide
- Sample EOI Questions
- 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.

EOIs (Expression of Interest) and 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.

The application process has the following steps:

1. An Expression of Interest (EOI) is submitted.
2. EOI are reviewed by the EOI Review Committee. Upon approval of the EOI, an *Applicant* is invited to submit a Full Application.
3. Those *Applicants* and their Partners who meet a minimum scoring threshold will be invited to present their proposals in-person or by video conference to the ERP.
4. ERP makes funding recommendations to OCI's Internal Review Panel (IRP).
5. IRP, comprised of senior OCI staff, makes the final decision.
6. Successful *Applicants* will be notified by OCI and provided an outline of conditions and additional information necessary to activate the project.
7. Applicants who are not selected will be notified by OCI. Feedback on the decision can be provided by their OCI Business Development Manager.

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 OCI 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 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 from *Applicant* to OCI are made when submitting interim and final reports

Payment Terms

- 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)

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)

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.

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, 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.

- If required, *Applicants* MUST request project extensions 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 extensions 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:

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

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