

OVIN Research and Development (R&D) Partnership Fund – Connected and Autonomous Vehicles (C/AV) & Smart Mobility – Stream 2

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Program Information and Eligibility Requirements

Overview and Benefits

The R&D Partnership Fund – C/AV & Smart Mobility – 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 private sector *Partners*. Project funding can be used towards the development, piloting, demonstration, commercialization, and deployment of Connected and Autonomous Vehicle (C/AV) technologies, 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

At project completion, recipients are required to demonstrate their product and/or service developed or advanced through Ontario's support. Please note that any public communications about the project, OVIN, or Ontario funding will require review and approval from OCI prior to release. Sharing information and achievements through showcase events and media communications is encouraged and will be supported.

NOTE: OVIN does not preclude the testing and/or demonstration of automotive and mobility technologies anywhere 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.

NOTE: Lower budget threshold applications of up to a maximum of \$100,000 contributing to one-third of eligible project costs are available for the R&D Partnership Fund – C/AV Stream 1. See [Full Details](#) and contact your [Business Development Manager](#) to discuss potential applications.

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

OVIN 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 OVIN contribution)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribution match may come from <i>Applicant</i> and/or <i>Partners</i> • Contribution match MUST be in the form of private sector contributions, and be unencumbered from other government grant sources
Example	<p>Total eligible project costs = \$400,000</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximum OVIN contribution = \$133,000 • Minimum Private Sector contribution = \$267,000
Funding Recipient	OVIN funds flow only to the <i>Applicant</i> . The <i>Applicant</i> is responsible for reimbursing <i>Partners</i> , if applicable.

Applications to the R&D Partnership Fund – C/AV & Mobility – 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: *Applicants* will be required to disclose all sources of funding being applied for and/or received for the project.

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

Applicant

- The *Applicant* is an Ontario-based small- and medium- sized enterprise (SME) with fewer than 500 full-time employees.
- The *Applicant* is the direct recipient of project funding from OCI for the project. The *Applicant* may be an *Applicant* on only one R&D Partnership Fund (C/AV, [WinterTech](#), or [EV](#)) project at a time.
- Must have operations (R&D, manufacturing, product management, etc.) in Ontario
- *Applicants* who have received over \$500,000 of funding from OCI administered programs 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.
- The *Applicant* is a co-signatory to the Funding Agreement

Primary Partner

A *Primary Partner* is an organization directly participating in the R&D project and whose participation demonstrates "market pull" (e.g. as a customer) for the Applicant's technology.

- The *Primary Partner* may participate in multiple concurrent projects.
- The *Primary Partner* is a co-signatory to the Funding Agreement.

The *Primary Partner* may be:

- Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs)
- National and Multi-National Enterprises (NEs and MNEs)
- Publicly-funded Post-Secondary Institutions
- Municipalities
- Transit Authorities
- Crown Corporations
- Indigenous Communities
- Not-For-Profit Organizations

Secondary Partners

Secondary Partners are additional organizations directly contributing **matching leverage** to the project.

- *Secondary Partners* may participate in multiple concurrent projects
- *Secondary Partners* are co-signatories to the Funding Agreement.

Secondary Partners may be:

- Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs)
- National and Multi-National Enterprises (NEs and MNEs)
- Not-For-Profit Organizations (such as industry associations and Not-For-Profit Organizations with non-public sources of funding)

Note:

- **Collectively, the Applicant, Primary Partner, and Secondary Partners must achieve a 2:1 private sector contribution to the project.**
- **Contributions from public entities (municipalities, transit authorities, academic institutions, local electricity distribution companies, government agencies, provincial and federal departments and grant programs, etc.) do not constitute an eligible source of matching.**

Other Partners

Other Partners are organizations – such as public entities – providing support to the project, which can be recorded as an “other contribution” but do not contribute to the 2:1 private sector matching contribution requirement. *Other Partners* do not need to co-sign the contract.

Project

- Minimum one *Applicant* and one *Primary Partner*. Unlimited number of additional *Secondary Partners*, or *Other Partners* can join.
- An *Applicant* and the *Primary/Secondary Partner(s)* must have an arm’s-length business relationship.
- Project activities are carried out in Ontario.
- Minimum 2:1 contribution match by *Applicants* and/or private sector *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 3-9](#).
- Typical project activities include: technology development, demonstration, product/service validation, testing, certification, piloting.
- Intellectual Property (IP) arising from a project will be managed by project Applicant and Partners as OCI does not claim or manage IP rights.
- *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 in Ontario at events, on the road, and/or at customer sites.

How to Apply

Application Process

The OVIN R&D Partnership Fund – C/AV & Smart Mobility – Stream 2 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 your 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. 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.

Note: Application intakes are based on funding rounds throughout each year until December 31, 2025, or when all funds are committed. Funding round timelines are stated in the [Programs Overview](#) on the OVIN website.

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](#)
- [Data and Information Sharing Protocol \(DISP\)](#)

Assessment Process and Criteria

The OVIN R&D Partnership Fund – C/AV & Smart Mobility – Stream 2 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 External Review Panel (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
- Potential impact and outcomes to the automotive and smart mobility sector, social, environmental, and/or other benefits (i.e. leading to globally competitive business and market opportunities)
- 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* must execute an OCI funding agreement, including a completed Schedule "D": Data Sharing and Reporting Requirements, within 30 days of approval of the award.
- The executable agreement with Schedules will be generated through our online management system and sent to all contracting parties 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
- An advance payment of up to 10 per cent, at the sole discretion of OCI, 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

Project Reporting

A major component of OVIN is the generation and analysis of data and information to support Ontario’s automotive and mobility ecosystem (e.g., governments, broader public-sector organizations, industry, post-secondary institutions, transportation authorities, etc.).

OCI will not be collecting, analysing or otherwise handling and disseminating data and information considered by applicants to be proprietary, commercially sensitive, or publicly 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.

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.**

Note: Applicants MUST retain all proof of purchases, receipts, and other relevant documentation relating to eligible expenses.

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 (45) 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.

- *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

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

The Applicant must complete a Project Change Request form to request a variance to the OVIN budget exceeding 10% of any budget category value or to request an extension to the project end date. Applicants are encouraged to reach out to their business development manager for further guidance on project change requests.

Contacts

For inquiries related to application initiation, please contact:

Martin Lord

Senior Sector Manager, Automotive and Mobility Innovation

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Dan Ruby

Sector Manager, Automotive and Mobility Innovation

Tel: 416 799 9194

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

Shane Daly

Program Portfolio Manager, Automotive and Mobility Innovation

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