
GACD application evaluation criteria and scoring

GACD Evaluation criteria

Reviewers will be asked to evaluate the applications based on the following criteria, with each criterion weighted equally:

- relevance and quality of the project to the grant call;
- quality of the team;
- feasibility of the project; and
- expected impact of the project.

The detailed scoring criteria are described below.

Relevance and quality of project

- The project is responsive and relevant to the funding call.
- There is sufficient evidence of the effectiveness of the intervention(s), in similar populations or contexts.
- Project uses implementation research approaches that are justified and supported by the published literature to explore adaptation, scale up, and sustainability of evidence-based interventions.
 - Implementation research framework(s) are selected and justified.
 - Specific implementation outcomes and impacts are identified, and there is a clear plan for how to measure these variables, using tools that are locally validated whenever possible.
- The applicants have appropriately accounted for ethical and context considerations that might arise, according to agency-specific guidance. Ethical considerations might be related to:
 - working with vulnerable life stages (such as youth, pregnant women, or older adults);
 - working with other disadvantaged people (e.g., members of the LGBTQ+ community, people living with physical or mental disability);
 - power dynamics and cultural differences between high income country (HIC) and low- and middle-income country (LMIC) team members and stakeholders; and
 - power dynamics and cultural differences between non-Indigenous and Indigenous team members and stakeholders.

Note: This list is not exhaustive; other ethical considerations should be accounted for as appropriate.

- Where feasible, the research will yield evidence on the cost-effectiveness of the proposed implementation strategies.
- Project adequately justifies the need to implement the proposed intervention or program by providing details about the current situation in the selected community or context that will receive the intervention.

Quality of team

The types of expertise that are required to be included on each team may vary by funding agency. However, across all GACD projects, the following criteria must be met:

- Teams must be multidisciplinary. Teams should collectively have all the expertise needed to undertake the proposed implementation research, including one or more implementation research experts.
- There is evidence of equitable partnership between HIC and LMIC team members (for projects taking place in LMICs) and between non-Indigenous and Indigenous team members (for projects taking place in Indigenous communities). This includes, but is not limited to, evidence

of joint development of and consensus around governance plans, shared leadership and management positions on the project team, and appropriate approaches to ownership of the data generated through the study.

- There should be evidence of meaningful involvement of early career team members in the research process. At least one early career individual should be named as a co-investigator.
- There is a capacity building plan for the professional development of researchers and practitioners on the project team, especially, but not limited to, in the field of implementation research. Capacity building should extend to early career investigators and investigators from resource-poor contexts but may also include more senior team members without implementation research expertise.
- There is sound evidence that stakeholders, such as decision-makers and service delivery partners, have been actively involved in the research process including the selection and adaptation of the intervention and the research design.
- There will be continuous demonstrable engagement (from project ideation, through the duration of the project, and afterwards through the sharing of learnings) with policymakers, practitioners, non-governmental organisation and community leaders, and/or other relevant stakeholders.
- Research teams will exhibit equity, diversity, and inclusion practices appropriate for the context(s) in which they are working.

Feasibility of project

- Major scientific, technical, or organisational challenges have been identified, and realistic plans to tackle them are outlined.
- Intervention strategies take into account the socio-political, cultural, policy, and economic contexts of their study settings. The proposal articulates how these factors, and their impact, will be analysed.
- Applicants identify any external factors that might disrupt their projects, such as humanitarian issues that include natural disasters (e.g., hurricanes), armed conflict, forced displacement, and major disease outbreaks (e.g. COVID-19) and develop appropriate contingency plans.
- The proposal identifies social inequities (for example, related to age or gender) that may impede access to or uptake of the intervention or limit its effectiveness in disadvantaged groups, and provides a plan for overcoming these threats to health equity.
 - If there is a focus on a particular population (e.g., gender, race and/or ethnicity), then the reason for this should be well-justified.
 - Wherever possible, projects should design their projects to be able to detect any outcomes differences by sex and/or gender.
 - Applicants provide a reasonable plan to capture data about the socioeconomic status, race and/or ethnicity, and other relevant factors of their study sample and the population from which the sample was drawn, in order to be able to consider the generalisability of their findings across different demographic, socioeconomic, and geographically disparate populations.
- Appropriate measures of process and outcome evaluation (including for both implementation and effectiveness outcomes) have been included. Projects are expected to be able to track clinical, public health, policy, and/or health system outcomes.
- The proposal includes a clearly articulated governance plan.
- There is a clearly articulated and robust study design for addressing implementation research questions.
- Detailed, clear, and logical implementation and scale up plans are described. A reasonable timeline is outlined. The plans are feasible for addressing the proposed research question(s).
- The budget and budget justification are feasible and realistic for the context where the research will occur. Together, they account for the full range of costs necessary to complete the project.
- There is a clear plan for dissemination of findings and knowledge translation.

Potential impact

- There is strong likelihood of contributing to the outputs listed in the 'Expected Impacts' section of this call text.
- The project has clear value for money.
- The project appropriately leverages existing programs and platforms (e.g., research, data, delivery platforms), if relevant.
- There is potential for sustaining the intervention(s) at scale.
- There is potential for the translation of the findings, methodologies, and frameworks into different settings.

Scoring Scale

All scores will be awarded out of 9, where 1 is the lowest score and 9 is the highest score. Half scores are permitted (*i.e.*, the range of possible scores is 1.0, 1.5, 2.0, 2.5 ... 9.0).

This table outlines the **review scoring scale**.

All GACD reviewers are highly encouraged to use the full range of scores when evaluating applications.

Score Indicators	Overall Impact	Example
9.0 Exceptional	High	e.g., Applications are addressing a problem of <u>high</u> importance/interest in the field. May have some or no weaknesses.
8.0 Outstanding		
7.0 Excellent		
6.0 Very good	Medium	e.g., Applications may be addressing a problem of <u>high</u> importance in the field, but weaknesses in the criteria bring down the overall impact to medium. e.g., Applications may be addressing a problem of <u>moderate</u> importance in the field, with some or no weaknesses.
5.0 Good		
4.0 Satisfactory		
3.0 Fair	Low	e.g., Applications may be addressing a problem of <u>moderate/high</u> importance in the field, but weaknesses in the criteria bring down the overall impact to low. e.g., Applications may be addressing a problem of <u>low</u> or <u>no</u> importance in the field, with some or no weaknesses.
2.0 Marginal		
1.0 Poor		