



CANADIAN ARTHRITIS NETWORK | LE RÉSEAU CANADIEN DE L'ARTHRITE

CANADIAN ARTHRITIS NETWORK NATIONAL ARBORIGINAL ARTHRITIS RESEARCH INITIATIVE

Request for Applications

Important Dates	
Opportunity Launched:	September 4, 2005
Content Last Updated:	(No updates since launch)
Full applications must be sent by email and the signature page faxed or courier stamped by this date.	November 1, 2007
Anticipated notification of decision.	December 14, 2007
Anticipated start date.	January 2, 2007

Summary

The objective of the **Canadian Arthritis Network's (CAN) National Aboriginal Arthritis Research Initiative** is to initiate innovative community-based and scientifically excellent research partnership projects and relationships with First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities which, in partnership with the aboriginal community:

- further identify/define the problem of arthritis in aboriginal communities;
- build research and care capacity in the First Nations, Inuit and Métis community; and/or
- recognize the importance of the leadership role played by the First Nations, Inuit and Métis community.

The purpose of this program is to establish and develop meaningful and lasting relationships between researchers and First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities in order to lay the foundation for a federally-funded National Aboriginal Arthritis Research Initiative.

Funds Available:

Funding available for this initiative is subject to the grant provided by the Networks of Centres of Excellence program to CAN and the terms and conditions that may be attached to those funds.

- Individual grants valued up to a maximum of **\$50,000** for 1 year.
- The total amount presently available for this initiative is **\$200,000**.
- Successful applicants must complete a final report upon completion of the project at one year.

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Background

In November 2005, the First Nations Regional Longitudinal Health Survey (RHS) national conference reported the final national results of a 10-year longitudinal study – *2002/03 RHS Report on Adults, Youth, and Children Living in First Nations Communities*. (<http://www.rhs-ers.ca>).

Of First Nations adults living in First Nations communities surveyed, 18.4% live with arthritis – the most common medical condition now reported in their population; chronic back pain is fifth, at 14.1%. Based on these data, arthritis is the most pressing chronic health issue in the First Nations community.

Over the past 15 months, the Canadian Arthritis Network's (CAN) Partnerships and Sustainability Committee (PASC) began to nurture discussions with First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities – as equal partners – to develop a National Arthritis Research Initiative to address the significant research, education and care gaps in their community. Based on the RHS and feedback through existing CAN member relationships with Aboriginal community members, the need for such an initiative appears significant.

The concept for this initiative was brought to the PASC at the recommendation of Senator Pat Carney, Board of directors, CAN and developed mainly by Joyce Greene, Aboriginal Representative on the CAN Consumer Advisory Council, Cheryl Koehn, President of Arthritis Consumer Experts, and Dr. Jay Wortman, Regional Director, First Nations Health, Health Canada. Since, CAN Network Investigator Elizabeth Badley, Arthritis Community Research & Evaluation Unit and other external advisors have been involved in moving the concept of a National Aboriginal Arthritis Research Initiative forward.

As emphasized at PASC meetings by the above PASC members and discussed with their fellow committee members, a critical aspect of developing a National Aboriginal Arthritis Initiative is to support the First Nations, Inuit and Métis community in leading it from the

beginning - from relationship building and data collection, through to "championing" and launching the initiative.

To achieve this, the CAN Board of Directors has approved funding for projects aimed at developing meaningful and successful partnerships with First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities in order to:

- further identify/define the problem of arthritis;
- build research and care capacity in the First Nations, Inuit and/or Métis community; and,
- recognize the importance of the leadership role played by the First Nations, Inuit and Métis and/or community.

Letter of Introduction

Re: National Aboriginal Arthritis Research Initiative (NAARI)

The Canadian Arthritis Network is on the cusp, of dramatically improving the lives of the 19% of the Canadian First Nations adults living in First Nations communities with arthritis. Connecting with aboriginal communities, building mutual respect and trust, arthritis researchers, and aboriginal peoples living with arthritis, together will create newfound partnerships. For aboriginal peoples, the perspective is that health is a balance of mind, body, emotions and spirit.

For all aboriginal people, health cannot be dealt with in isolation from other issues. This understanding requires a commitment to capacity building, knowledge translation and the use of ethical approaches that are consistent with aboriginal values. The Canadian Arthritis Network National Aboriginal Arthritis Research Initiative will be a long term strategy of building on the mutual respect and trust between the researchers, aboriginal communities across Canada, and giving "HOPE" to all aboriginal people living with arthritis in Canada.

Joyce Greene
Aboriginal Representative for the Consumer Advisory Council
Canadian Arthritis Network

Overarching Considerations

The following overarching considerations were identified as important elements in the implementation of the National Aboriginal Arthritis Research Initiative:

- gender;
- knowledge translation and exchange;
- consumer and community inclusion and leadership in research program design;
- regional, cultural and age factors;
- remote and unique/indigenous populations; and
- training, e.g., of researchers, of consumers as advocates.

Projects funded with a focus on First Nations, Inuit and Métis living with arthritis must embrace the following guiding principles:

- Earning the trust of the First Nations, Inuit and Métis community through meaningful dialogue about arthritis in their communities and recognizing the importance of aboriginal leadership in such partnerships;
- Develop meaningful relationships and partnerships with First Nations, Inuit and Métis community partners interested in arthritis, on- and off-reserves and in Inuit communities, to describe arthritis in their community;
- In equal, ethical partnerships, work with the First Nations, Inuit and Métis community to develop “readiness” to raise awareness in their own community, to politicize arthritis in the First Nations, Inuit and Métis community and at the Federal and Provincial government levels;
- Partner or assist the First Nations, Inuit and Métis community with the creation and implementation of a National Aboriginal Arthritis Initiative in Canada.

In addition, CAN-funded projects must be developed following the processes and principles outlined in *Ownership, Control, Access and Possession (OCAP) or Self-Determination for First Nations Communities*.¹

Eligibility

Competition is open to CAN Network Investigators and CIHR eligible researchers.

Non-CAN Network Investigators must successfully apply and be granted Network Investigator status by the Board of Directors of CAN in order to receive funding.

CIHR research funding eligibility criteria apply for this program. The business office of the institution of an eligible Principal Applicant generally administers CIHR funds. Please refer to the [2007 CAN NAARI Competition Application Guidelines](#) regarding the eligibility requirements for individuals and institutions.

Randomized Controlled Trials (RCTs) will NOT be considered under this RFA. RCTs are defined as any study involving humans where at least two interventions are compared using random allocation, statistical methodologies and blinding techniques for the purpose of determining whether an innovative intervention leads to improved health.

Specific Eligibility Requirements

Eligibility requirements specific to this Request for Applications include the following:

- Research projects must focus on arthritis in First Nations, Inuit and/or Métis populations;
- Projects must demonstrate effective partnerships with the First Nations, Inuit and Métis community either through Letters of support from community leaders or Band/Tribal Council resolution. In addition, involvement of other relevant partners is encouraged.
- Projects applications must address all specific licenses and permit requirements applicable for the region in which they are conducting the research.

Peer Review Process and Evaluation Criteria

CAN will utilize its external international Scientific & Medical Advisory Council (SMAC) to review applications submitted to this RFA. A full listing of current members of the SMAC can be found at the CAN website (www.arthritisnetwork.ca) If required, CAN will contact additional international expert reviewers to ensure suitable competencies are available on SMAC.

The following evaluation criteria specific to this RFA will apply.

- **Progress and/or Enabling Factors:** The spirit of CAN includes promoting new ideas and does not penalize applications for a lack of preliminary data. Because a key goal of this competition it to create links with the First Nations, Inuit and/or Métis community that will permit the future development and funding of a national initiative to address scientifically the high burden of arthritis in First Nations, Inuit and/or Métis communities. Factors that will enable this should be described.
- **The Research Plan / Feasibility:** Although the NAARI does not focus on traditional CIHR style hypothesis driven research, the proposal will be structured to include each of the following elements: Realistic objectives (aims); Background and rationale; Clear description of the research plan and methods; Preliminary data or specific enabling factors; feasibility including the potential limitations (pitfalls).
- **Collaboration and Partnerships:** Involvement of members of the First Nations, Inuit and/or Métis community is essential. Successful applications will include a Band/Tribal Council resolution or other suitable endorsement from a local organization representative of the aboriginal population. Other important aspects of partnership/collaboration include: Projects that have active participation from the community, non-governmental organisations, government and other stakeholders; and, Projects that make the most effective use of the diverse resources of its partners.
- **Management Plan:** Applicants must provide a project Management Plan that clearly demonstrates the viability of the management approach relative to the size and complexity of the project. Elements of the Management Plan should include: a clear description of key elements of the plan that are necessary for the research to be successful and achieve the stated deliverables; the availability and appropriateness of human and physical resources (i.e. resource allocation); communication plans for the management of the project; budget details and justification (in reference to the Budget Module); a clear description of the roles and responsibilities of team members, collaborators and partners.
- **The Project Team:** CAN wishes to ensure that the Team assembled for the project has the appropriate scientific, technical and management skills required. The expertise and experience presented should be relevant to the scope and nature of the research to be undertaken. Roles of the team members should clearly fit their expertise.
- **Advancing CAN's Strategic Research Plan:** In contrast to CAN's Strategic Plan – Cycle II, the Board of Directors of CAN wish this RFA to be highly focussed on projects that meet the guiding principles, outlined above.

- **Training and Career Development of HQP:** Applicants are asked to submit a Training and Career Development plan for Highly Qualified Personnel (HQP- people with highly marketable skills, including undergrads, grads, post-docs, technicians, research associates, clinician-scientists) involved in this project. The involvement of the First Nations, Inuit and/or Métis community in setting training goals is important. Consideration should be given to developing training plans that would be part of a future national aboriginal arthritis research initiative.
- **Knowledge Translation & Exchange (KTE):** The plan should describe how new knowledge, processes and services created by the project will be made available most effectively to community, non-governmental, government and other stakeholders with maximum continuing impact. A two-way KTE strategy with members and leaders of the First Nations, Inuit and/or Métis community is paramount.

Communications Requirements

Grant recipients are required to acknowledge CAN in any communication or publication related to the project.

Monitoring, Performance Measurement and Evaluation

CAN is committed to demonstrating results to Canadians for the money invested in health research. Therefore, processes for monitoring progress and appropriate use of funds, as well as for performance measurement and program evaluation are in place. As a result, funded recipients must:

- Complete mandatory annual statistical reporting.
- Submit a final report to CAN at the completion of one year.

How to Apply

Applications to this RFA must be submitted in electronic format as described in the [2007 NAARI Competition Application Guidelines](#) and the [2007 NAARI Competition Application Instructions](#). Applicants must use the 2007 NAARI competition application forms and submit additional documentation as described.

Completed applications may be submitted electronically (email or CD ROM) on or before the submission deadline to the CAN office at:

Christine Bergen
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Canadian Arthritis Network
522 University Avenue, Suite 1002
Toronto, Ontario, M5G 1W7
Tel: (416) 586-4770

Fax: (416) 586-8395
Email: cbergen@arthritisnetwork.ca

Large applications (greater than 4000 Kb) or large files (greater than 4000 Kb) may be submitted to the CAN office on a CD ROM via courier postmarked on or before the submission deadline.

In addition, the Principal Investigator must submit an original signed signature page via courier postmarked on or before the submission deadline.

All applicants will receive notice confirming receipt of applications files.

It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that the application submitted is complete with all necessary additional documentation and that the electronic files submitted to the RFA are in good order.

Contact Information

For questions on CAN funding guidelines, how to apply, and the peer review process contact:

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Description of CAN

Applicants are encouraged to view information about CAN at www.arthritisnetwork.ca

ⁱ Schnarch, B. Ownership, Control, Access and Possession (OCAP) or Self-Determination for First Nations Communities. Journal of Aboriginal Health, January 2004.