NSCC SPRINT FACULTY MICROGRANT GUIDELINES

Applied Research
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NSCC SPRINT Faculty Funding Guidelines

The **SPRINT Fund** provides support for NSCC Faculty and Students to engage in original research and innovation activities, build research skills and capacity. All applications will undergo a rigorous review process to ensure projects meet the eligibility and selection criteria. Projects that receive **SPRINT** funding should facilitate the creation and implementation of immediate solutions for challenges within NSCC's broader community.

Proposed activities must be hands-on research to develop practical solutions for industry's/community partner's real-world challenges. Each project must be done in collaboration with an industry partner, faculty supervisor/research lead and student(s).

2025-2026 SPRINT Funding Cycle

Application Deadline	**Winter 2026**: Friday, January 23rd, 2026
Award Amount	Up to $5,000 per project
Available SPRINT Faculty Funding **Total $35,000 per academic year**	**Faculty:** 6 awards each semester of up to a maximum of $5,000 each. 12 projects in total for the year. $2,500 – solo projects $5,000 – projects involving an Applied Research Lab
Funding Decision	**Winter 2026** Applications will be accepted until Friday, January 23rd, 2026. Funding decisions will be made by Friday, February 13th, 2026
Release of Funds	Timeline for release of funds will be determined on a case-by-case basis following the development and approval of each project plan, considering the unique requirements of each project.
Funding Period	All projects should be finished by June 30th, 2026

Sprint Application Package	• SPRINT Application Form
	• Required Elements
	  ○ Project Description
	  ○ Timeline
	  ○ Proposed Budget
	The SPRINT application package is available online at Faculty SPRINT Microgrant Application Form

SPRINT Faculty Microgrant Eligibility

1. The applicant must be a NSCC Faculty or staff member.
2. All projects require an industry/community partner.
3. All projects require student researcher(s).

4. Faculty applicants must get time allocation/project approval from their Academic Chair before submission for SPRINT funding.

5. An applicant may only be listed on one SPRINT project at a time. Provided that the applicant is eligible, another SPRINT Fund application can be submitted only after the successful completion of the previous SPRINT project.

6. All projects must provide meaningful, paid honorariums for NSCC students.

Need help with your application? Join the Student Research Network online office hours

Mondays and Wednesdays in December and January

December 1st, 3rd and 8th
January 5th, 7th, 12th, 14th,19th, 21st
11:30am to 1:30pm

Click below to join us on those days:
SRN Office Hours Team Link

These are drop-in sessions where you can ask questions or have a draft reviewed. Alternatively, applicants can discuss their research ideas with our Industry Liaison Officer, Joanne Firth, joanne.firth@nscc.ca. Joanne can answer any questions you may have and can meet with you to discuss your application.

Deadlines are fixed and will not be extended upon request. The completed application, including all required approvals and attachments, must be submitted online following the above link. **Applicants are encouraged to plan accordingly to ensure they have enough time to get Academic Chair approval before the application deadline.**

The application and review processes are designed to be transparent and equitable. To qualify for review, all applications must meet the eligibility requirements. Provided that they are eligible, all applications go through a competitive review process.

The demand for funds may exceed the total budget allocation for the SPRINT Fund. As a result, all applications that meet the requirements for submission are not guaranteed funding. All applicants will receive feedback on their application, regardless of whether the application is successful.

Funding Administration and Disbursement

These grants are part of a larger grant through the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC). All expenses must follow the Tri-agency Guide on Financial Administration (TAGFA) and be approved and administered through the Applied Research Office, following all applicable NSCC and NSERC expense guidelines. Release of funds is conditional on an approved budget, continued employment at NSCC, Research Ethics Board approval (if applicable), and/or the approval of any other regulatory bodies or organizations (if necessary).

For faculty projects, funds are allocated on a cost-incurred basis (i.e., the full award is not granted up front, you must submit your expenses as incurred through the Applied Research Office). Any expenses purchased by faculty not approved within the SPRINT Microgrant project budget will not be reimbursed by NSCC Applied Research.

FACULTY SPRINT APPLICATION

Below is an outline of the application. Please review before completing the application form.

The SPRINT Faculty application form can be found here: Faculty SPRINT Microgrant Application Form

Title
The title should clearly identify the focus of the project and be written in plain language.

Project Description
Please describe your project in detail. What is problem you are solving? Who is the industry partner? What will be the project deliverable(s)?

Community/Industry Partner
A partner could be any individual or organization external to the NSCC community that will both contribute to and benefit from the proposed project. Depending on the nature of the project, partners might be required to sign a Collaborative Research Agreement before the project begins.

Research Team
Please outline the research team and their roles. The project team may include other NSCC employees and/or external collaborators who are directly involved with the project in addition to student research assistant(s). List each of these people below, including their name, title, email address, organization, division/department, and employment status.

Research Ethics Board (REB) Approval
If any research involves human participants, REB approval and TCP-2 CORE-2022 Ethics certificate is required. REB application forms and guidelines are available on the NSCC REB website. Questions about the REB process can be directed to reb@nscc.ca. Applications may be submitted prior to receiving REB approval; however, funding will not be released until REB approval is granted.

Budget

Please prepare a budget template provided on the application form to indicate the requested budget items. All direct costs requested must be required for the SPRINT Microgrant project, be effective and economical and not result in personal gain for the project team.

Project expenses will only be reimbursed if the item has been approved within the budget of a successful SPRINT Microgrant application. All items require purchasing through NSCC procurement guidelines and receipts submitted to Applied Research. Any funds not spent within the project will remain with, or returned to, NSCC Applied Research.

Below is an example of some categories that might apply to your project.

Budget Template

Budget Item	**SPRINT Fund Cash**	**Budget Justification of direct cost**
Student Honorarium		
Materials, supplies, and equipment		
Outreach activities, networking to support		

project collaboration and knowledge sharing		
Travel		
Other (specify):		
TOTAL		

Budget Justification

Please briefly explain each item in your budget and why the cost is necessary. This can be a bulleted list.

Timeline

All projects should be completed by June 30th, 2026. Please identify the major milestones of the project, the projected dates of completion for each milestone, and a description of associated activities on the SPRINT application form. An example timeline is included below.

Sample Timeline

Milestone	Description of Activities	Start Date	Completion Date
Hire students	Recruit students (min 1) from a specific NSCC program(s)	2025-10-01	2025-11-01
Bi-weekly team meetings	All members of the team will meet every two weeks to discuss the progress and identify issues	2025-10-02	2026-06-30
Prototype development	Using xx methods, develop the final prototype	2025-10-05	2025-11-30
User testing	Small group of students from a specific course will test the initial product	2026-01-08	2026-02-28
Focus group	Small group of students from a specific course will provide feedback and suggestions in a focus group format	2026-03-20	2026-04-20
Final revisions and testing of prototype	Based on user testing and focus group feedback, revisions to the prototype and a final evaluation with students from a specific class and/or other users that may represent the target market	2026-05-20	2026-05-30
Final report	Prepare and submit final report in collaboration with student(s) and/or other applicants	2026-05-25	2026-06-1

ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

Typical eligible expenses include:

- Student honoraria
- Material, supplies must be direct costs related to the project
- Equipment requires justification to the project, model, manufacturer, prices and applicable taxes

- Modest mileage or public transportation expenses required for research purposes (meetings at partner site, etc.)
- Costs associated with knowledge dissemination activities, include posters, workshops and conference presentations
- Project-related equipment and/or supplies (cannot exceed 20% of the total budget)

Typical ineligible expenses include:
- Compensation for project partners
- Compensation for faculty supervisors

OPTIONAL ATTACHMENTS

Optional attachments can include:

- Letter(s) of support – Each letter should demonstrate support for the proposed project and clearly identify the ways in which the partner will both contribute to and benefit from the project
- Copies of any quotes or estimates referenced in the budget justification.
- Figures and/or tables.
- Data collection tools (surveys, focus group questions, etc.).

The application should be considered complete without the optional attachments. Reviewers are not obliged to review supplemental material, though it is often helpful to have copies of the data collection tools and letters of support.

Reviewers may request supplementary information. If the reviewers request information that was not included in the original, complete application, it will not negatively affect the review of the proposal.

Faculty SPRINT Evaluation and Scoring Criteria

Potential applicants are encouraged to discuss their application ideas with their Academic Chair prior to starting an application. All applications will be ranked by a review panel. Funds are awarded based on the merit of the application relative to the funding criteria, the number of applications received in a funding period, and the total annual SPRINT Fund budget.

Potential impact of anticipated outcomes	Proposals should be focused around a clearly defined innovation or research problem and define a measurable outcome. Applications must demonstrate the value of the anticipated results of the project, highlighting the potential impact of the outcomes. Applications should have metrics that could be used to evaluate the project impact at completion, six months post-completion, and beyond six months. A knowledge mobilization plan should be clearly defined to demonstrate how project findings will be disseminated at the college level and to external communities.	30%
Expertise	The applicant must have the expertise and experience to successfully accomplish the proposed objectives. It is expected that the proposed project is related to the applicant's area of expertise and/or will improve their reputation within their academic and/or professional field.	15%
Student Involvement	Applications should clearly demonstrate the nature of student involvement in the proposed project and the ways in which	25%

(Faculty Projects)	students will both contribute to and benefit from the proposed project as paid members of the project team. All applications should clearly describe the responsibilities of the students and the skillsets that they should possess and will gain because of their participation in the project.	
Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Considerations	Proposals should include EDI considerations in their project, such as team composition and recruitment processes, training and development opportunities and inclusion in the research environment. Information on how the Tri-Agencies evaluate EDI consideration can be found here: NSERC - NSERC guide on integrating equity, diversity and inclusion considerations in research	15%
Quality of partnership(s)	Partners external to NSCC must both contribute to and benefit from the proposed project, and contributions must meet the minimum criteria set out in the eligibility section. They must be actively engaged in the project and have a demonstrated need for the anticipated project outcomes. Include a description of partner capability to implement and/or use the anticipated project results, leading to impact within their organization and near-term social and/or economic benefits. Elements of partner engagement and need should be specific and measurable.	15%