



Mississauga Healthy Communities Grant— Collaborative Action Projects (2025)

Call for Catalyst Grant Projects

In partnership with:



Introduction:

The Mississauga Healthy Communities Grant - Collaborative Action Projects has been developed in partnership with the Novo Nordisk Network for Health Populations (NHP), Cities for Better Health (CBH) and the City of Mississauga to act on community generated ideas obtained during the Diabetes Healthy City Strategy engagement process. NHP will fund projects that aim to develop, expand or adapt evidence-informed programs, interventions, or evaluations in Mississauga. These projects must align with NHP's mission: To reduce social inequities in the risk and burden of diabetes and related cardiometabolic diseases through improved care, reduced risk factors, and healthier living environments.

Cities for Better Health (CBH) is a global public-private partnership focused on improving urban health by advancing prevention and promoting health equity through strategic local collaborations. The initiative targets the root causes of chronic diseases, with a strong emphasis on vulnerable communities, to create lasting impacts through early intervention and prevention efforts.

In June 2021, the **City of Mississauga** joined the CBH program (formerly known as Cities Changing Diabetes) to address the growing rates of Type 2 diabetes by reducing obesity and enhancing preventive measures within the community. As part of the collaborative effort to develop a comprehensive diabetes strategy, the City of Mississauga engaged a consulting firm to conduct community engagement to better understand challenges and identify community needs.

For more information about Cities for Better Health, please visit: [Cities for Better Health](#)
For details on the City of Mississauga's Diabetes Prevention Strategy, please visit: [Mississauga Diabetes Strategy](#)

The **Novo Nordisk Network for Healthy Populations** (NHP) is committed to supporting multi-disciplinary, collaborative teams to co-design projects that will support the development of interventions and programs in the Peel Region focused on reducing the burden of diabetes and related cardiometabolic diseases. The NHP will support an evidence-to-practice approach to tailor, adopt, and integrate evidence-informed practices, programs, and policies into local health care, community services, and living environments. This grant opportunity will catalyze partnerships between researchers and local community partners to bridge the divide between research and practice and bring programs that work to communities in need.

For more information about the Network, please visit: [Novo Nordisk Network for Healthy Populations](#)

Catalyst Grant Description:

The NHP's *2025 Mississauga Healthy Communities Grant – Collaborative Action Projects*, will focus on building and growing collaborations between academics, researchers, clinicians and the Mississauga community while offering resources and capacity building opportunities to support the processes required for collaboration and research proposal development. Catalyst Grants will be awarded to support projects that aim to design, expand, adapt or evaluate evidence-informed tools, programs or interventions that align to the Network's mission: ***To reduce social inequities in risk and burden of diabetes and related cardiometabolic diseases through better care, lower risk factors and healthier living environments.***

The Catalyst Grant Program also aims to align our findings to meet the needs of the community by:

1. *Applying an equity-based approach to priority setting:* To ensure a fair and equitable approach to priority setting, community members have been actively involved in the process.

2. *Supporting community-based organizations in local research projects: To establish partnerships with those that will, or are already, addressing the issues being studied.* This will not only help incorporate community perspectives into the research but also provide opportunities for community organizations to contribute new research ideas based on local insights and lived experience.
3. *Emphasizing education and capacity building:* To provide education and capacity building opportunities to increase community, trainee and faculty members' knowledge and skills related to research. This will enhance their ability to participate in and benefit from the research.
4. *Fostering relationships between academics/researchers and the Peel Region:* To encourage collaboration between U of T students and faculty and community members to establish a long-lasting relationship and build trust. This will ensure that future research aligns with the needs and perspectives of the community.
5. *Identifying future research priorities/themes:* To engage community members to identify future research priorities and themes. This will ensure that the research is relevant, meaningful, and addresses the most pressing issues for the community.

The Catalyst Grant program will focus on supporting collaborative, community-driven research projects. Through this process the NHP will bring together cross-disciplinary and cross-sectoral teams to form projects based on priorities identified through a multi-step process. The process includes:

1. A Letter of Intent (LOI) due **November 1, 2024:** To determine the project topics and academic leads.
2. A project team development workshop held in late **November/early December 2024:** Successful applicants will be invited engage additional partners and confirm the project topic.
 - The workshop aims to bring together interested partners to validate the research questions and confirm their interest in participating on a project team. Project teams will also spend this time discussing potential research ideas, exploring study design methods, building teams, outlining team roles and responsibilities, and discussing the team's full application.
3. Following the workshop, applicants will be invited to submit a full application in **early 2025.**

Catalyst Grant Project Themes and Requirements:

Catalyst grant projects must be aligned with one or more of the following themes, which have been identified for the development of the Mississauga Diabetes Healthy City Strategy, with a focus on reducing the burden of diabetes and related cardiometabolic diseases:

1. **Access to and Affordability of Healthy Foods:** Enhance access to and affordability of nutritious foods for all communities.
 - We are seeking projects that support the design, identification, implementation and/or evaluation of evidence-informed interventions to improve access to healthy and affordable food options, especially within communities where these resources are limited. We seek projects that address barriers to obtaining and/or affording nutritious foods, recognizing the critical role of diet in preventing and managing diabetes. These projects should focus on creating diverse, accessible food sources close to home.
2. **Awareness and Education:** Increase community-driven and culturally relevant education and access to type 2 diabetes prevention, care, and management.
 - We are seeking projects that support the design, co-creation, implementation, and/or evaluation of evidence-informed interventions aimed at improving access to

culturally relevant type 2 diabetes education, resources and services. We encourage collaborative approaches that strengthen connections between residents and local services, with an emphasis on culturally relevant, holistic support for prevention, care, and disease management.

3. **Connection and Belonging:** Foster community connections and a sense of belonging to support health and well-being.
 - We are seeking projects that support the design, identification, implementation and/or evaluation of evidence-informed interventions that will enhance social connection and reduce isolation by supporting activities that foster a sense of belonging and encourage healthy behaviours that improve cardiometabolic health. We will prioritize projects that leverage existing community networks to create inclusive spaces for learning, social interaction, and mutual support for cardiometabolic risk reduction.
4. **Outdoor Activities and use of outdoor spaces:** Improve and promote the use of outdoor spaces for physical activity and community engagement.
 - We are seeking projects that support the design, identification, implementation and/or evaluation of evidence-informed interventions that optimize equitable access to and use of safe and health-promoting outdoor spaces for physical activities, particularly for seniors and other at-risk populations. We seek projects that will aim to enhance the use of the outdoors or simulated outdoor spaces for engagement in physical activities and community connection.

Priority Areas

For this grant, the focus will be on communities within Mississauga, where the prevalence of type 2 diabetes is highest, specifically in the Malton neighbourhood and the western areas of Hurontario and Gateway West. These areas have been identified due to their environmental and social characteristics contributing to higher rates of type 2 diabetes and related health disparities.

Applicants are encouraged to develop projects tailored to these communities' unique needs, focusing on addressing the social determinants of health. The goal is to identify, design, implement, and/or evaluate targeted interventions where they are most needed, creating meaningful and sustainable impacts that reduce health inequities and improve overall well-being in these regions.

Project Requirements:

1. **Evidence-informed:** Projects must justify how evidence generated will inform the development, implementation and/or evaluation of an intervention, program or policy that will improve indicators of diabetes and related cardiometabolic diseases; or a proposed intervention, program or policy must be informed by prior evidence showing promise at improving service indicators, environmental conditions, risk factors and/or outcomes for type 2 diabetes and related cardiometabolic diseases;
2. **Equitable:** Must have a population health and equity focus and aim to positively affect all or specific priority populations within Mississauga. The project should integrate an equity-based, intersectional lens into all practices, promoting diversity, inclusion, and fairness while improving the environmental, social, cultural, and structural determinants of health related to diabetes and cardiometabolic diseases. Accountability and transparency to the community should guide efforts to create lasting, positive impacts on priority populations;
3. **Implementable:** Proposed interventions can include policy changes, introduction of a new program or practice, and/or physical changes to the environment to improve risk and/or outcomes of diabetes and related cardiometabolic diseases that can be adapted and feasibly be implemented within Mississauga;

4. **Engaged:** Must engage local community collaborators as equal partners in the research. Partners should be involved in developing the research questions and methodology, data collection, the interpretation of findings and dissemination of results.

Project Leadership and Collaborators:

1. For the Letter of Intent, the Co-Principal Applicants (Co-PAs) must include at least one academic faculty member from the University of Toronto and a community organization in Mississauga as co-leads; only a U of T Co-PA needs to be confirmed in the Letter of Intent (LOI). However, all projects submitted for the full application must have a confirmed academic researcher lead and community-based lead.
2. The academic lead (Co-PA) must have an appointment at the University of Toronto and be eligible to hold research funding.
3. Project teams must demonstrate a cross disciplinary and intersectoral focus, and include:
 - At least one student or early career researcher (within 5 years of faculty appointment). (This is not required to be named on the LOI application, but must be determined by the time of full proposal submission)
 - At least one community organization from Mississauga as a member of the project team (not required to be formalized by the LOI submission date but must be confirmed by the time of full proposal submission). All identified and potential community partners should be included in the LOI. Preference will be given to projects who have identified partners by the LOI submission date.
 - At least one knowledge user from Mississauga, outside of the community lead (not required to be named on the LOI application but must be determined by the time of full proposal submission).
4. Proposals with demonstrated multidisciplinary teams, ideally from different disciplines, sectors or areas of study, will be rated higher.
5. Students, trainees and fellows without faculty appointments may be listed as co-applicants or team members but cannot apply as principal applicants.
6. Project teams should consider opportunities for engagement with impacted community organizations and/or municipal decision makers.

The table below outlines the roles that need to be fulfilled. Please note that a single team member may hold multiple roles. While this table does not need to be finalized for the LOI, it must be completed for the final application.

Role	Description	Required?
Co-Principal Applicant (Co-PA)	The role on a project application for multiple individuals who are responsible for leading community engagement or research methodology , depending on their area of expertise for proposed projects (see above for specific requirements). Please note: one or both Co-PAs can be responsible for coordinating the financials and will enter into a transfer payment agreement with NHP.	Yes
Co-Applicant (Co-A)	Provide support in shaping the project. Co-As are involved in key decision making related to the project, and will be kept informed of all project timelines, findings, deliverables. Co-As may provide in-kind contributions to the project and may lead implementation of certain aspects of the project.	Optional
Collaborator	An individual whose role in the proposed activities is to provide a specific service (e.g., specialized expertise, training in a	Recommended

	specialized technique, statistical analysis, access to a patient population, etc.).	
Knowledge User	Individual who can use the knowledge generated through research to make informed decisions about health policies, programs and/or practices. Level of engagement in the research process may vary in intensity and complexity depending on the nature of the research and their information needs.	Yes
Decision Maker	An individual who makes decisions about, or influences, health policies or practices. They can work at the local community, municipal, provincial or national level. Decision makers are those individuals who are likely to be able to make use of the results of the research.	Recommended
Advisor	An individual who provides information, recommendations, and advice that ensure project success. This individual can be a scientific, systems, and/or community engagement expert.	Optional
Community Organization	An organization that has direct involvement with an affected community, understands the needs of the community and how research can lead to useful practical outcomes for the community, and who can facilitate the involvement of the community in the research process.	Yes (at least 1)
Person with Lived Experience	Contribute insights about project priorities, methods, and knowledge translation based on an understanding of their living or lived experiences and/or those of others in their community.	Yes (at least 1)
Senior or Mid-Career Researcher	A researcher who, at the time of application, has assumed his/her first independent research position, <i>Senior Researcher</i> : more than 15 years ago. <i>Mid-Career Researcher</i> : 5-15 years ago.	Yes (at least 1)
Early Career Researcher	A researcher, who at the time of application, has assumed his/her first independent research position less than 5 years ago.	Yes (Unless there is a Trainee)
Trainee/Student	An individual who is enhancing their research skills and who works under the formal supervision of an independent researcher; or an independent researcher who has taken a leave of absence from their academic or research position.	Yes (unless there is an early career researcher)

Budget Considerations:

- LOI applications must include an estimated overall budget and a short description of how the funds would be allocated to meet the project goals.
- Allowable expenses include trainee salaries, salaries/hourly pay for community partners, honorariums for project partners, research activities (i.e., analyses), conferences and knowledge translation activities, equipment and open access journal fees, and additional administrative costs required to support the project. Co-Principal Applicant's salaries are not considered an allowable expense.

Funding Guidelines:

Award Amount: Grants will be awarded up to \$100,000 for 1 year, based on submitted budgets.

Exclusions: Current Catalyst Grant Fund holders are excluded from applying as Nominated Principal Applicants and cannot hold funds for more than one NHP Catalyst Grant at a time. Current NHP Catalyst Grant holders may apply as Co-Applicants, Collaborators etc., but may not hold funds.

This funding is not to be used as bridging or emergency funding, nor is it intended to support ongoing studies. It may, however, support a new direction of a previously funded project, and can be combined with additional funding to support new projects. A clear rationale for this should be provided in the application.

Ongoing Support Provided by the Network for Healthy Populations:

Project success depends on each team's effort and collaboration. To assist teams throughout the life cycle of their projects, NHP will provide a range of supports including:

- Resources and tools for project implementation, including dedicated NHP staff support and capacity building resources (such as webinars, events, and shared libraries).
- Infrastructure to enable teams to collaborate virtually via teleconference or webinar, and to hold in-person meetings
- Identification of academic partners to enhance the research and program evaluation capacity of teams
- Access to and connections with our intersectoral network of stakeholders
- Facilitation of data collection and outcome evaluation

Submission, Review and Notifications Process:

- **Completed LOI application forms**, along with the CV of the nominated Principal Applicants(s) (including current appointments, grants, and relevant publications in an abbreviated format, maximum of five pages), **must be submitted by November 1, 2024, at 5:00 PM EDT**. Incomplete LOI applications will not be processed.
- **The applications will be reviewed by the Network's Review Committee**. Ad hoc reviewers with subject matter expertise may also be included in the review process.
 - If a member of the Network's Selection Committee applies, they will be recused from reviewing their own application. A replacement Committee member will be appointed to ensure a fair adjudication process.
- **Top-ranked LOI applicants will be notified by the week of November 11, 2024**, and invited to participate in a Project and Team Development Workshop, to take place in person on December 2, 2024, at the University of Toronto Mississauga. **Attendance at this workshop is mandatory for those wishing to proceed in the application process.**
- Following the workshop applicants will be invited to submit a full application. Application packages will be available at a later date.
- **Full applications must be submitted by January 31, 2025, at 5:00 PM EDT.**

Application Process Timeline:

Activity	Deadline
LOI submissions due	November 1, 2024
Notice of decision: Invitation proceed to workshop	Week of November 11th
Project Development Workshop	December 2, 2024
Notice of decision: Invitation to submit full application	Mid December
Full application submissions due	January 31, 2025
Notice of decision and funding to begin	March 2025

Letter of Intent Submission:

[*Please click here to access the Letter of Intent Application Form.*](#)

Completed LOI application forms and the Co-Principal Applicants CV (maximum 5 pages, including current appointments, grants and relevant publications, per applicant) must be received by **November 1, 2024, 5:00pm EDT**. Please submit CVs through the application form, as a PDF attachment.

For questions, please contact: director.novonordiskhp@utoronto.ca.