



Strategic Project Grants Program



Natural Sciences and Engineering
Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en sciences
naturelles et en génie du Canada

Canada 

University of Alberta

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Research Partnerships Programs

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RPP Programs

Strategic Partnerships

- Strategic Project Grants
- Strategic Network Grants
- Collaborative Health Research Projects
- Automotive Partnership Canada

Industry-Driven Collaborative R&D

- Collaborative R&D Grants
- Industrial Research Chairs
- Chairs in Design Engineering
- Interaction Grants
- Engage Grants
- Partnership Workshop Grants
- Innovation Frontiers

Commercialization

- Idea to Innovation Grants

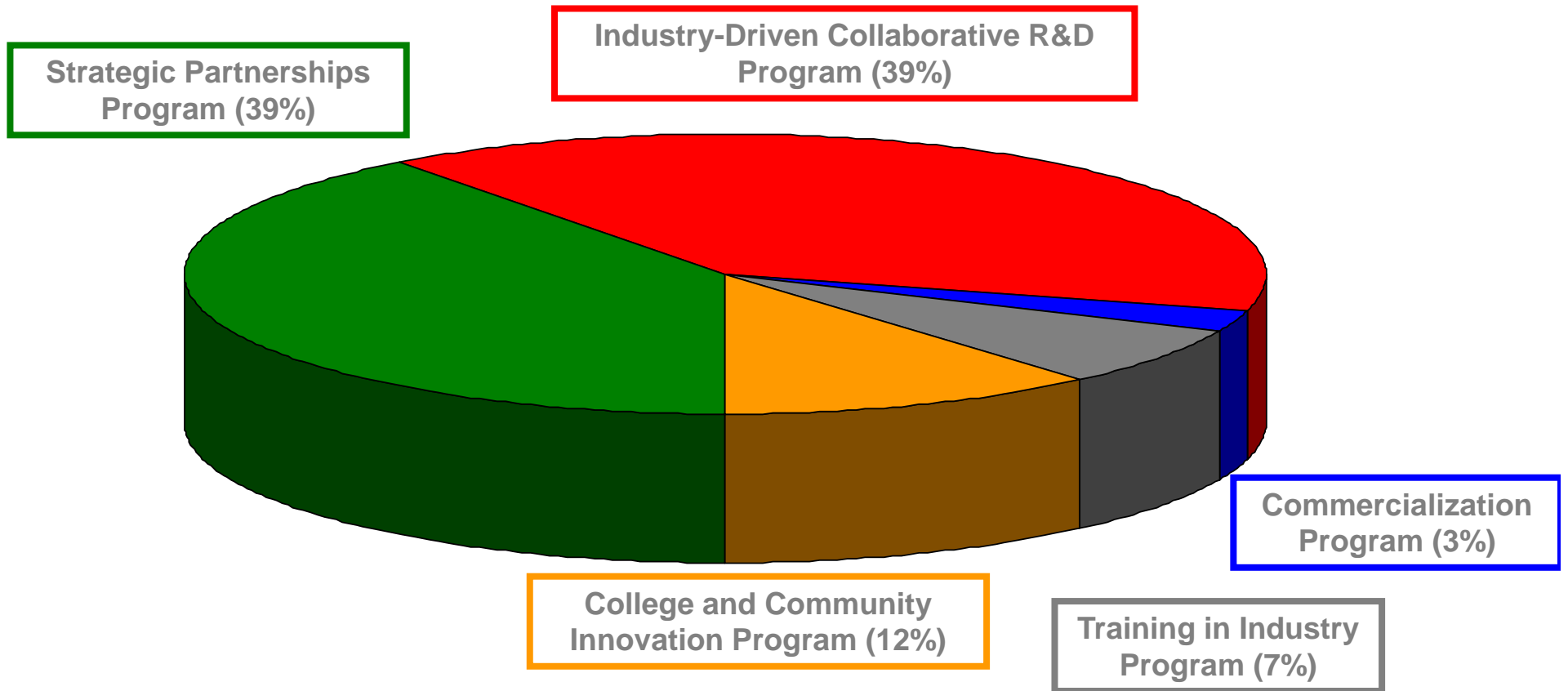
Training in Industry

- Industrial Postgraduate Scholarships
- Industrial R&D Fellowships
- Industrial R&D Internships
- Industrial Undergraduate Student-Research Awards

College and Community Innovation

- Applied R&D Grants
- Applied Research Tools & Instrument Grants
- College-University Idea to Innovation Grants
- Industrial Research Chairs for Colleges
- Innovation Enhancement Grants
- Technology Access Centres Grants

2012-2013 RPP Budget (\$284.4M)*



*Does not include Networks of Centres of Excellence

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Collaborative Research and Development Grants (CRD)

- 1 to 5 years duration, usually 2 to 3 years
- Average grant \$55,000 per year, but can vary from \$10K/year to > \$400K/year
- *Industry responsible for at least 1/2 costs & must exploit results*
- Flexible leverage: cash and in-kind
- 80-85% success rate
- No fixed application deadlines

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Strategic Project Grants (SPG)

Objective

To increase research and training in **targeted areas** that could strongly influence Canada's economy, society and/or environment **within the next 10 years.**

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Why the Strategic Project Grants?

- Focus on specific areas
- Opportunity to take research beyond the university
- NSERC will fund direct costs of a 3-year project (students, post-docs, consumables, equipment)
- There must be significant involvement from the partner BUT a cash contribution is not required

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What's New for 2013

- **Competition Deadline - April 1st, 2013**

- **International Collaborations**

 **France:** French National Research Agency has replaced the Programme Blanc Int'l with their theme-driven programs:

- Agrobiosphere
- Hardware and Software Infrastructures for Digital Society (INFRA)
- Digital Models

 **Brazil:** Research Foundation for the State of São Paulo (FAPESP) to jointly fund research collaborations in all four target areas


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Ongoing

- **International Collaborations**

-  **Taiwan (no change)** - all target areas

-  **Japan (no change)** – i.e. only for “Renewable Energy” and “Energy Use” research topics within the Natural Resources and Energy Target area.

- **Student Stipends**

- Specific minima and maxima pertaining to stipends paid from grants are no longer in effect.
 - Restriction on providing supplements from grants to award holders has been removed.

Ongoing (continued)

- A pre-selection process will (likely) be carried out by the selection panel members using the 7 evaluation criteria to retain the strongest proposals (50-60 applications per target area).
- Applications will be strictly screened for fit to program and target area and research topic. You must specifically address this in the “Introduction” section of the proposal.
- Applications targeting incremental improvements to existing technologies will not be accepted.

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Expected Results

- **New knowledge/technology** with strong potential to strengthen Canada's industrial base, generate wealth, create employment and/or Canadian public policy
- Highly qualified **personnel trained** in the target areas
- Increased **participation of companies and/or government organizations** in academic research
- **Transfer of knowledge/technology** to Canadian-based organizations that are well positioned to apply the results for economic gain or to government organizations to strengthen public policy

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Requirements

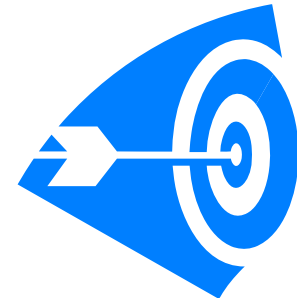
The project must:

- Fall within one of the target areas (focused research)
- Have well-defined objectives, scope, milestones, and duration (1-3 yrs.)
- Have one or more supporting organizations that is actively involved in all stages of the project and can apply the results

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Four Target Areas



Priority research topics within:

- Environmental Science and Technologies
- Information and Communications Technologies
- Manufacturing
- Natural Resources and Energy

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Focused Research

- There are priority research topics identified within each target area (80% of budget is used to fund projects in these research topics)
- Exceptional opportunities outside the research topics but within the target area (up to 20% of budget can be used to fund these projects)
- Research outside the 4 priority target areas will **not** be considered for funding

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Non-Academic Supporting Organizations

- **Private sector**

Canadian-based companies with Canadian operations (R&D or manufacturing) that can apply the research results for economic gain

- **Public sector**

Canadian government organizations that can apply the research results to strengthen policies

- **Do not qualify as supporting organizations:**

NGO's, venture capitalists, government research labs, foreign research institutions, implementation sites, potential customers

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Supporting Organizations

A supporting organization must also:

- Have a demonstrated interest in the project (letters of support, in-kind contributions)
- Be involved in all stages of the research (help to develop the proposal, interact with researchers and students, provide input to the project)
- Validate the results of the research
- Provide guidance concerning exploitation of results

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What's in it for the Partners?

Access to:

- Team of researchers with expertise in a desired area to solve a problem
- Technology/idea of commercial interest
- Research facilities and infrastructure that the industry lacks
- Potential access to a source of highly qualified personnel
- Give companies a competitive edge in global markets

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International Collaboration

- Agence nationale de la recherche (France)
- National Science Council (Taiwan)
- Japan Science and Technology (JST) Agency (Japan)
- Research Foundation for the State of São Paulo (Brazil)

Canadian applications must meet all the requirements of the SPG Program including:

- Falling with the 4 target areas;
- NSERC applicant collaborating with at least one eligible supporting organization or manufacturing operations in Canada

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The SPG Application

- Application for a Grant (Form 101)
- Personal Data Forms (Form 100) + CVs of collaborators
- Form 183A (partner's information & contributions)
- Letter of support describing partner's involvement (see instructions for specific items to be addressed)

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Research Proposal- Format

- Introduction (1 page) – why is the research you propose strategic?
- Section 1 (7 pages) – objectives, approach, work plan, roles of team members
- Section 2 (1 page) – training plan
- Section 3 (1 page) – interactions with supporting organizations, intellectual property
- Section 4 (1 page) – benefits to Canada
- Additional pages – references, relationship to other research

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Additional Points to Consider

- Collaborations outside NSE: applicants are encouraged to collaborate with experts outside the natural science and engineering, where appropriate. Can represent up to 30% of the project costs.
- Overlap of funds: the onus is on the applicant to provide as much information as to how/why the project differs from those currently funded
- Provide as much details as possible in your budget justification. Show all your calculations and how you arrived at totals presented.

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Evaluation Process- Timeline

- **April 1-** Submission of Applications
- **April/May - Pre-Selection**
 - Preliminary review by target area selection committee
 - Proposals with significant weaknesses are removed
- **June/July - External referees**
 - Typically three per application
 - Technical expertise to aid the Committee
 - Appendix C: your suggestions
 - Panel suggestions and NSERC database
- **August/Sept. - Internal Selection Committee**
 - Proposals are assigned to three internal reviewers
 - Discussion amongst the whole group
- **October-** Results announced

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Evaluation Process

- Projects are evaluated against seven criteria
- Each criterion is graded from 1 (lowest score) to 4 (highest score). For details, see: <http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/OnlineServices-ServicesEnLigne/instructions/101/e.asp?prog=spg>
- Each criterion is of **equal** weight
- Only projects that are strong in **all 7 criteria** are eligible for funding

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Selection Criteria

- ✓ Originality of the research
- ✓ Quality of the research
- ✓ Project work plan
- ✓ Quality of the applicants as researchers
- ✓ Training potential
- ✓ Interactions with the supporting organizations
- ✓ Benefits to Canada and the supporting organizations

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Selection Criteria (cont'd)

- **Originality of the Research**

The project must promise to generate new knowledge or to apply existing knowledge in an innovative manner.

- **Quality of the Research**

The project must be scientifically sound and technically feasible. It must fall within a specific target area.

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Selection Criteria (cont'd)

- **Project Work Plan**

The project must have a clear and coherent work plan that demonstrates a high probability of achieving the objectives in the proposed time frame.

- **Quality of the Applicants as Researchers**

The research team must have all the expertise to address the defined objectives competently and to complete the project successfully.

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Selection Criteria (cont'd)

- **Training Potential**

The project must provide opportunities to train students and other highly qualified personnel with skills relevant to the needs of Canadian organizations.

- **Interactions with Supporting Organizations**

The supporting organizations must have the capacity to apply the results of the research and must be actively involved in all stages of the project.

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Selection Criteria (cont'd)

- **Benefits to Canada and Supporting Organizations**

The proposal must identify how the work will benefit the supporting organization(s) and must demonstrate that exploitation of the research results will benefit Canada within a 10-year time frame.

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Competition Statistics

| Competition Year | # of Applications | # of Awards | Success Rate |
|------------------|-------------------|-------------|--------------|
| 2012 | 314 | 81 | 25% |
| 2011* | 425 | 70 | 16.5% |
| 2010 | 547 | 122 | 22% |
| 2009 | 465 | 122 | 26% |
| 2008 | 352 | 129 | 37% |
| 2007 | 309 | 149 | 48% |

*First competition with new target areas

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Top Ten Tips

1. Start early!
2. Take full advantage of the Research Office and NSERC staff.
3. Make the application comprehensible to people outside your field and position your project within the current literature/state of the art - Literature review should not be Task 1 of project!
4. Pay full attention to all aspects of the application, not just the proposal
5. Make sure the partner is going to benefit actively from the research, not just be an end user

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Top Ten Tips (continued)

6. Explain the fit to the target area clearly
7. Ensure that all partners and co-applicants are fully involved
8. Understand how your proposal will be evaluated
9. Tailor your Form 100 to the Program you are applying to
10. Explain both the applied and basic aspects of the project

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Resources

For questions relating to fit to target area, eligibility of partners or applicants or Program requirements, please send your query to:

STRGR@nserc-crsng.gc.ca

For questions/support regarding the on-line application process, please contact:

Helpdesk: (613) 995-4273

webapp@nserc-crsng.gc.ca

NSERCPARTNERSHIPS.CA

