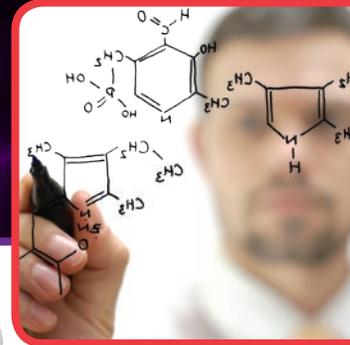
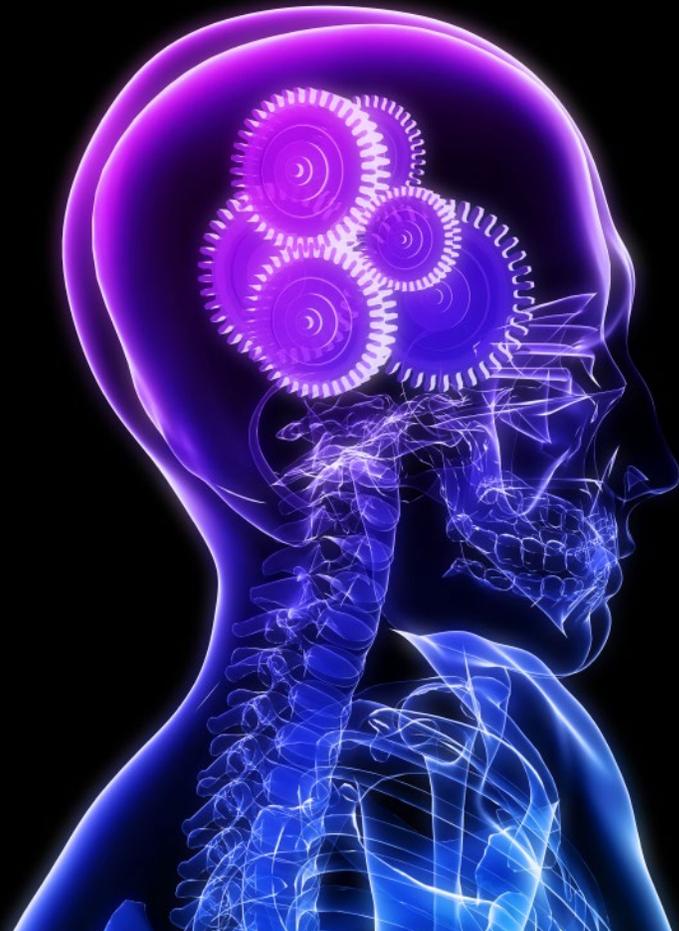
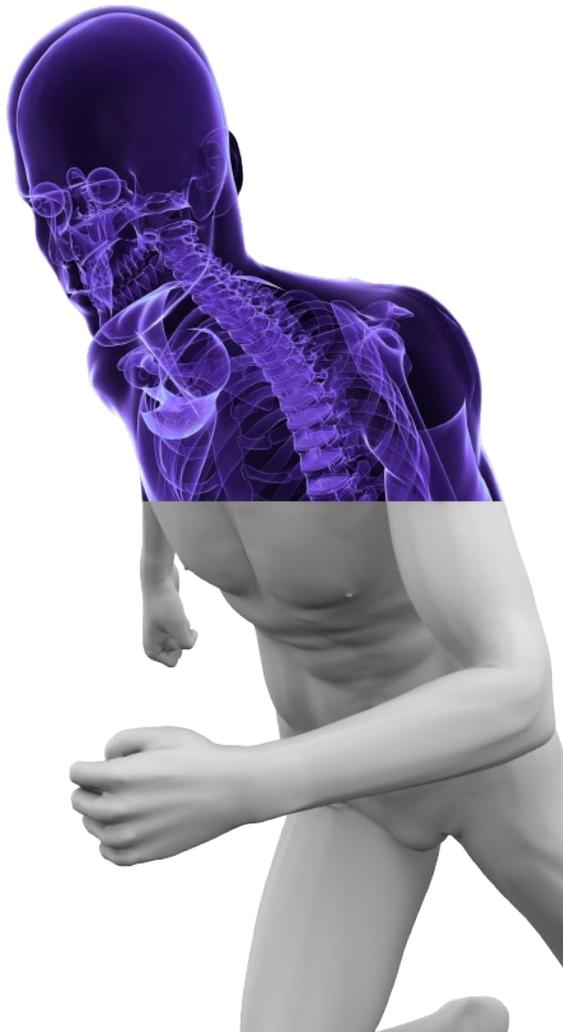




“Unlocking the Future”







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Introduction

WCB-Alberta's Research Program collaborates with the local research community to find solutions for WCB issues, develop research in the areas of work-related injuries and illnesses and assist in the administration of injury compensation systems.

The program enhances the relationship between WCB and the scientific, academic, and medical research communities.

The Research Program facilitates the development and application of knowledge in a practical way that benefits the operation of the workers' compensation system in Alberta.

The goal is to foster, support, and promote research excellence in WCB issues by:

- Developing research capacity in Alberta in disciplines pertaining to workers' compensation.
- Promoting research initiatives of strategic benefit to the workers' compensation system in Alberta and its stakeholders.
- Increasing and expanding current knowledge or promoting the use of existing knowledge in ways that benefit WCB.



Research Priorities

The Alberta Research Program provides support to high-quality scientific and scholarly research projects that address the most pressing issues facing WCB.

WCB's research priorities include:

- Obtaining optimal clinical outcomes.
- Obtaining optimal return-to-work outcomes in claimants experiencing lost time.
- Improving the efficiency of claims management through reducing unnecessary medical and administration costs.
- Examining worksite factors which impact injury, recovery and return-to-work and their implications for our compensation system.
- Improving the efficacy, efficiency and fairness of the workers' compensation system.

In addition to these general priorities, WCB may request research proposals to address specific areas of interest.

Funding grants are made available to a broad spectrum of disciplines, including, but not limited to: medical science, economics, law, epidemiology, population health, rehabilitation, basic sciences and social sciences.





How to Apply for Funding

Typically, the Research Program will issue a Request for Proposals once per calendar year.

Requests for Proposals are posted in the Research section of WCB's website:
www.wcb.ab.ca/research

Although the Research Program will accept Concept Outlines at any time, funding for proposals received during our annual Request for Proposals are prioritized.

Letter of Intent (LOI)

Researchers interested in pursuing grant opportunities may submit an LOI to the committee. The LOI signifies the researcher's interest in requesting support and funding from WCB.

Before submitting a LOI, potential applicants may wish to informally discuss their ideas with WCB's research coordinator. This consultation may lead to the identification of related projects or materials and prospective research partners, as well as more detailed information about research initiatives.

The committee will assess whether the plan outlined in the LOI meets the goals and general criteria of WCB's research priorities. Applicants whose plan most effectively meets these goals and criteria will be invited to proceed to a full proposal. Unsuccessful applicants will be notified by the research coordinator immediately.

The LOI application form is available online during the formal competition process.

Note: An invitation to submit a full research proposal does not guarantee final acceptance. Not all proposals will be accepted.

Full Proposal

If the committee invites a full proposal, applicant(s) will be provided with a Full Research Proposal Form template that must be completed before the proposal is sent to the committee. The committee will not accept an incomplete Full Research Proposal Form.

All supporting material, such as separate appendices (e.g., letters of support and partnership, copies of survey instruments, measurement tools, clinical protocols, ethics and biohazard/biosafety certificates), should be submitted with the full proposal.

Full proposals are reviewed by the committee. Research contracts are drawn up for successful projects and researchers are required to provide quarterly updates and a final report.

A project summary for each proposal is posted on the WCB website and quarterly and final reports are posted on WCB's internal intranet.

Please Note: An invitation to submit a full research proposal does not guarantee final acceptance. Not all proposals will be accepted.

Concept Outline

A concept outline is a brief, high-level synopsis of a problem or issue to be explored. The synopsis should provide the committee with sufficient information to assess the proposal with respect to WCB's research goals and priorities.

It should also include the names of project members and the contact information of the principal applicant. Before submitting, researchers may wish to discuss their ideas with WCB's research coordinator.

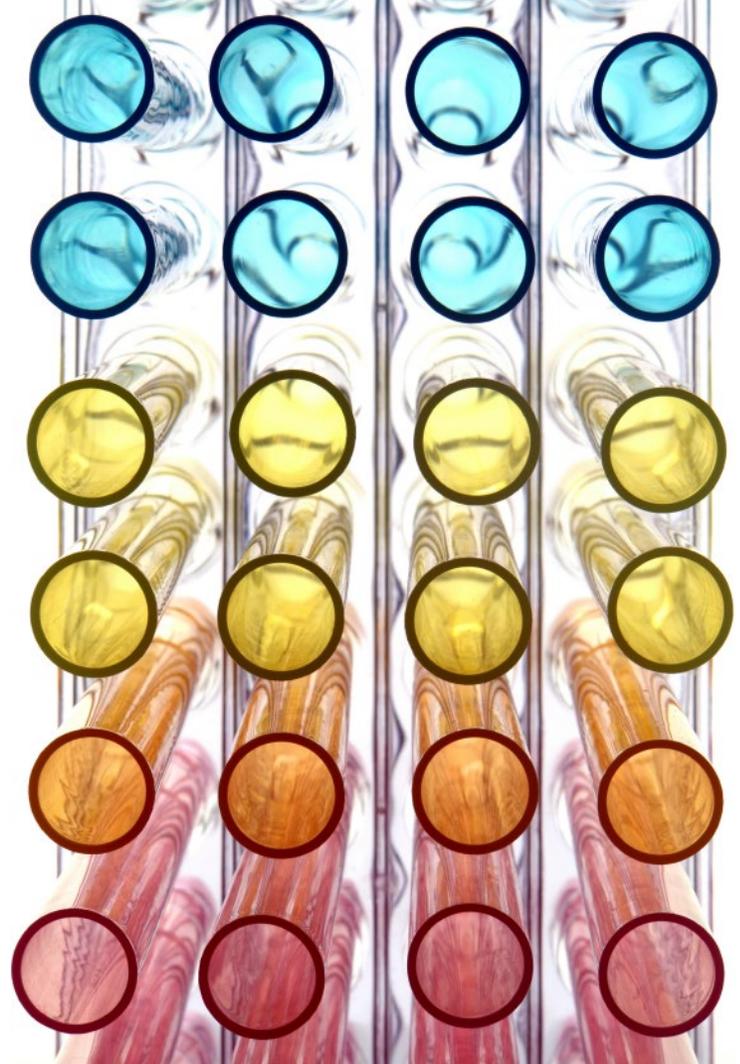
Concept Outline continued

When the concept outline has been reviewed by the committee, the researcher will be contacted by the research coordinator.

If the proposal is of interest, the researcher will be asked to submit a letter of intent (LOI).

Feedback from the committee will allow the researcher to determine the level of interest and support for the project. As well, it will assist the researcher in the preparation and focus of the LOI.

Note: A concept outline may be submitted to WCB's research coordinator at any time. However, an invitation to submit a LOI or full research proposal does not guarantee final acceptance. Not all proposals will be accepted.



Eligibility Criteria for Funding

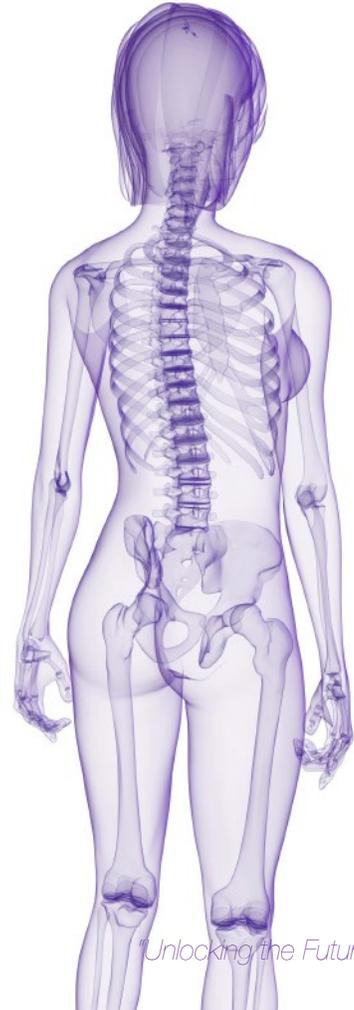
Who can apply for research funding?

Anyone may apply to WCB for funding; however, grants under the program are normally awarded to Alberta-based researchers. Out-of-province, multi-jurisdictional proposals, or proposals where researchers are collaborating with Alberta researchers may be considered if the focus is a high priority for WCB.

The committee will also consider research proposals for co-funding with other granting agencies, occupational health and safety institutes, or workers' compensation agencies. All projects are subject to the same budgetary parameters and review process.

The committee encourages collaboration amongst workplace parties and researchers.

Where advisable, the committee will suggest possible research partnerships in the early stages of proposal development. The committee maintains linkages with researchers and research bodies sharing an interest in research into injury prevention and workers' compensation issues.





Eligibility Criteria for Funding continued

WHAT PROJECTS ARE CONSIDERED?

WCB favours research projects with a high degree of relevance and practical utility for Alberta, focusing particularly on compensation issues, disability management, and return to work.

Proposals must be consistent with WCB program goals and research priorities. Literature reviews, either as independent projects or as part of the project work plan, are usually not funded as this is considered an integral part of a project plan.

Structured reviews or consolidation of scientific literature, case law, or other compensation systems may be considered in exceptional circumstances.

Applicants must demonstrate that the objectives of the proposed initiative have not been achieved elsewhere or cannot be met more efficiently or appropriately through other funding sources. In addition, applicants must be able to articulate the benefit and relevance of their research projects to WCB.

WCB encourages diversity in projects and project team members. Project team members can include, but are not limited to the following areas: clinical medicine, epidemiology, population health, rehabilitation, basic sciences, law, economics and social sciences.

A WCB technical resource can be made available, upon request, to assist with WCB data extraction and consultation on database issues.

HOW ARE PROJECTS JUDGED?

The merits of proposals will be judged on a case-by-case basis with attention given to the potential significance of findings. The project should provide practical outcomes for WCB and its stakeholders.

Of interest are creative, well organized, and systematic proposals that add to current knowledge or that use existing knowledge in new and innovative ways.

Some of the considerations are:

- Relevance of the problem to WCB and to the research priorities.
- Probability of demonstrating a meaningful effect.
- Potential impacts of the project outcomes (e.g., improve/reduce costs, reduce disability duration, etc.)
- Probability of the research outcomes being translated into practice or policy in Alberta.
- Appropriateness and thoroughness of the methodology.
- Qualifications, experience and capability of the research team.

- Feasibility of the research work plan.
- Timeline in which the research can be accomplished.
- Acceptability of the budget requested.

WCB reserves the right to be selective in the number, type, and nature of projects it funds.





Eligibility Criteria for Funding continued

METHODOLOGY AND PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Applicants must demonstrate sufficient subject expertise to competently complete the project. Proposed methodologies must be technically sound. Applicants must also demonstrate the necessary project management skills to control and be accountable for all aspects of their plan, including financial control. WCB reserves the right to monitor or audit approved initiatives.

WHAT FUNDING IS AVAILABLE FOR EACH PROJECT?

WCB does not have set maximum or minimum amounts per project funded. Both small (under

\$10,000) and larger projects (\$60,000+) can be accommodated. The average per project funding is \$30,000.

Contracts will require that successful applicants inform the research committee, in writing, of any other funding (including the source and amount) obtained to support the same research initiative.

Co-funding is encouraged. Funding is not provided where it simply replaces funds otherwise available from another source or where funding is more appropriately gained elsewhere.

WCB does not cover indirect or overhead costs. Nor shall research funds be used to cover

expenses incurred prior to the proposal's final approval date from the research committee.



Research funding is at all times conditional upon, and subject to, availability of research funds.

WILL WCB PROVIDE DATA? IF SO, WHAT TYPE OF DATA CAN BE REQUESTED?

WCB data is usually restricted to the provision of aggregate, anonymous data. However, in those exceptional circumstances where researchers have demonstrated that they require access to personally identifiable data, and WCB agrees to provide such access, the researcher must sign a research agreement with WCB containing confidentiality provisions as specified by Section 42 of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FOIP)*.

The provision of personally identifiable data must be approved by the research committee and WCB's FOIP office. No personally identifiable data will be released by WCB until the WCB research agreement has been signed.

Pursuant to the terms of the research agreement, researchers shall not use information provided to them by WCB to contact workers or employers directly.

DOES WCB REQUIRE AN ETHICS REVIEW AND APPROVAL ON PROJECTS?

Yes. Unless WCB has specifically dispensed with ethical approval in the case of non-human study, WCB will not approve a proposal

unless appropriate ethical approval is obtained from the university host institution or, for non-university projects, another recognized authority.

It is the responsibility of the principal investigator to ensure that an appropriate ethical review has been received and that a copy of the approval has been forwarded to WCB prior to the start of the project.



Eligibility Criteria for Funding continued

Researchers should obtain the required ethics approval or have the process underway when submitting their proposals for review. The research committee

may accept a project pending ethics approval; however, all approvals must be completed before any funds are released.

All research proposals must adhere to Canadian ethical standards for research involving human subjects, as well as WCB policy regarding disclosure.

See the University of Alberta and University of Calgary websites listed below for more information on their ethics review processes:

<http://www.reo.ualberta.ca/>

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/research/researchers/ethics-compliance/chreb>



WHO CAN I CONTACT?

WCB - Alberta
Research Program
Attn: Research Coordinator
P.O. Box 2415
9925 - 107 Street
Edmonton AB T5J 2S5

Tel: 780-498-4816
Fax: 780-498-7884
E-mail: research@wcb.ab.ca

Information about other workers' compensation research programs may be found at the **Association of Workers' Compensation Boards of Canada** website.



“Unlocking the Future”