

OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT, RESEARCH AND GRADUATE STUDIES

Sustainable Transitions Team Research Initiative 2024

Overview: The challenges we face – from climate change to widening economic inequality – are more intertwined and complex than ever. None can be adequately understood or addressed using a single lens; all demand creative solutions that draw upon convergent thinking across disciplines and sectors, supported by bold visions, inclusive collaborations, and effective knowledge mobilization. In addition to disciplinary and fundamental research, a host of innovative and reflective approaches embracing interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary research is needed to support sustainability and respond to the real-world action-oriented agenda of the [United Nations Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#).

The **Sustainable Transitions Team Research Initiative** (STTRI) seeks to inspire research, research-creation, and creation teams to convene participants from all disciplinary horizons and all venues with the goal of exploring something bold that might fail, but still has the potential for significant impact and learning (high risk / high reward). It supports the early-stage development of solutions-oriented research/creation and innovation focused on addressing a sustainability challenge (related to one or more of the SDGs). The aim is to support the incubation and experimentation of boldly integrative work, undertaken by inclusive teams that involve key stakeholders in the co-design, co-production, and co-delivery of sustainability-oriented research/creation.

Through seed funding, combined with dedicated support and training, this initiative will prepare and align teams in the development of applications for larger-scale partnership-oriented research and innovation grants, and in the development of proposals for donor-supported initiatives. Specialized support will take the form of workshops, online resources and team-building activities addressing innovative research methodologies and approaches, such as the following¹:

- Embracing knowledge co-design and co-production approaches
- Building inclusive high-functioning teams
- Embedding EDI in the research enterprise
- GBA+ analysis
- Creating high-impact partnerships
- Assessing impact and outcomes
- Developing effective donor proposals
- Knowledge mobilization/dissemination, including co-delivery and co-implementation

The Office of the Vice-President Research and Graduate Studies (OVPRGS) is responsible for administering the initiative, which is supported by funding from Concordia's [Sustainability Action Plan](#).

Value: Welcoming projects at any stage of development, funding between \$5,000 - \$20,000 per grant, with a total budget for the program of \$77,500.

Duration of Funding: One year, with the possibility of an extension.

Eligibility: All full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty members are eligible to apply. Part-time faculty members may be included as team members. Applicant teams must meet the following criteria:

¹ Topics to be defined in collaboration with teams

Sustainable Transitions Team Research Initiative 2024

- **Project Topic:** Projects must address a major challenge (related to one or more SDGs) requiring an interdisciplinary or transdisciplinary approach. Projects that address climate action, decarbonization, and/or reducing inequalities are particularly encouraged.
- **Team Composition:** Teams must include at least one early-career researcher (ECR) and one established researcher (ER); they must also identify at least one community partner. External collaborators can also be team members.

Use of Funds: Funds are to be used to support the development of a larger-scale team grant application (e.g., NFRF Transformation, NFRF Exploration, SSHRC Partnership Grant or Partnership Development Grant, etc.) At least **10%** of the budget must be dedicated to the participation of community partners in the project.

Eligible expenses include:

- Pilot projects
- Salary support for the hire of graduate and undergraduate research assistants (RAs)
- Grant writing assistants - teams may budget for assistance in grant writing, typically through a supplemental contract to current graduate students. Please contact the research development team (michael.verwey@concordia.ca) with any questions about where to recruit these candidates, and how such contracts have been structured in the past
- Team building and partnership development activities (e.g., workshop facilitation)
- Travel costs for fieldwork and data collection
- Supplies and small pieces of equipment, such as software or computers
- Up to \$2000 to cover eligible expenses related to the participation of community partners

Evaluation Criteria: Applications are evaluated by the FRC and adjudicated by the URC. Given that these committees may not include a member from the applicants' disciplines, adjudication will be based on the information that is presented; therefore, highly specialized technical language and/or disciplinary jargon should be avoided.

Applications are evaluated based on the criteria below. The *weights* are only suggestions and may be modified by the evaluation committee at its discretion; this will have to be justified in the evaluations provided to the URC.

1. Originality, innovation, and potential impact of the proposal (**40%**)
 - Significance of the proposal in advancing one or more of the SDGs
 - Explores bold ideas
 - Holds the potential for a breakthrough in knowledge or practice
 - Demonstrates innovative impact-oriented knowledge mobilization activities
 - Fosters interdisciplinary research, develops new research synergies or networking opportunities
2. Potential to attract external team funding within 1-2 years of receiving funding (**30%**)
3. Engagement of community partners and external collaborators, in addition to training of HQP and commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion (**20%**)
4. Evidence-based commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, and decolonization (**10%**)

Competition Deadline: Friday, March 4th, 2024.

Application Submission Procedures: Application requirements are available in ConRAD; select the Apply New button and choose the **Sustainable Transitions Team Research Initiative Form** to complete.

Projects supported by the OVRGS must comply with Concordia University policies governing research, including a requirement of compliance certification for all projects involving the use of animals or humans as well as the use of hazardous materials, biological materials, controlled goods or radioactive material.