



Guidelines for HQP Pooled Resource Competition - Round 2

This competition will fund the following:

- ❖ *New/Incoming Graduate* (Master's and PhD) students for up to two years
- ❖ *Current Undergraduate* students for four months

For graduate researchers, the program is intended to cover the research component of the annual salary, with the expectation that a teaching assistantship (TA) or scholarship would cover a significant fraction of the total package. This model may not be achievable at all institutes. Recognizing that the salary packages and number of TAs may vary by institute, applicants should outline the total salary, the source(s) of other funding with an explanation, and the amount of funding requested. The competition has a set envelope for this round, therefore, if successful applications request larger amounts on average, then there will be fewer overall tickets.

The applications will be scored on the quality of the research opportunity as well as the proposal's scientific merit, need, and alignment with the objectives of the McDonald Institute. The competition also evaluates how principles of equity, diversity, inclusion, and Indigenization are integrated into your recruitment processes and research environment, along with your plans for training, mentorship, and engagement with the broader McDonald Institute network. For more details on expectations with regards to EDII, please refer to Appendix A.

Eligibility

The applicant must be a faculty member able to supervise at an associated Canadian institution and be eligible to hold an institutional account for grants or awards. A postdoc can act as a co-supervisor for the proposed position. The proposed research must be related to the field of astroparticle physics. Proposals must be in line with the [McDonald Institute's vision and scientific goals](#).

Applicants may only apply for positions intended for incoming graduate students who will begin their graduate program in the 2026–2027 academic year and for current undergraduate students who are already enrolled in their academic programs. Current graduate students are not eligible.

Ticket Value

The McDonald Institute recognizes that different institutions have different pay scales and arrangements for student salaries. The expectation is for salaries to be consistent with the norms in your department. You may offer a higher salary however, the absolute *maximum contribution from the McDonald Institute* in Direct costs will be:

- ❖ \$30k maximum per year over two years for a PhD candidate, or
- ❖ \$26k maximum per year over two years for a Masters student, or
- ❖ \$12k maximum for up to a four-month position for an undergraduate student.

Successful applicants will receive one ticket for each position awarded.

Proposal Process

Complete a separate application form for *each* position. The completion of application form is mandatory and includes sections that have assigned page limits. The scoring matrix is available for review at the end



of the application document.

Applications that fail to follow the template will not be considered. Where applicable, certain information may be copied between applications, though each position is unique and will be considered on its own merits.

Completed applications must be sent to admin@mcdonaldinstitute.ca with the subject line “MRS HQP Pooled Resources Round 2 – {Supervisor Last Name}”.

For successful applicants, the awarded ticket is expected to be filled (i.e., an individual has been identified for this funding) by the end of May 2026. To ensure the two full years of funding for a graduate ticket, the student must be using the funds by September 2026, unless an explicit exception is granted. Undergraduate tickets are typically used for a summer position, however other arrangements are possible, e.g., a co-op position during term would be eligible, but the McDonald Institute support would be for a maximum of four months that must be used by the end of the 2026 calendar year. All unused tickets and/or portions of funding will be returned to the pool. The formal process to confirm a filled ticket will be provided to successful ticket applications.

Reporting Requirements:

To receive funding, all successful applicants must satisfy NSERC requirements relating to e.g., research security, as well as reporting requirements from the McDonald Institute to ensure completion of the NSERC annual report. Reporting needs and templates will be provided at time of award.

Scientific Management Committee

The Scientific Management Committee adjudicates applications and forwards recommendations to the Scientific Director. The Scientific Management Committee has representation across a large number of institutions with early career and established researchers involved in both theory and experiments. Applications will be scored as per the matrix available at the end of the application form.



Appendix A: Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Indigenization (EDII)

EDII considerations are key evaluation criteria in this competition. Applicants will be assessed on how they incorporate equity, diversity, inclusion, and Indigenization into both their recruitment of research personnel and the research environment they establish for Highly Qualified Personnel (HQP) to thrive. Evaluation points include the applicant's efforts to foster diversity and promote equity within their research group, strategies to attract candidates from equity-seeking groups, retention approaches, and how accommodations are provided to support individuals. For faculty unsure of where to start, we highly encourage you to utilize the Diversity and Equity Assessment Planning (DEAP) Tool to help demonstrate how you are advancing equity within your training environments. The DEAP Tool can be found on the McDonald Institute website here: <https://mcdonaldinstitute.ca/deap-tool-for-researchers/>

The McDonald Institute acknowledges that individuals hold intersectional identities (e.g., race, class, gender, sexuality, disability, nationality, religion, language, and age) and that categorizing HQP can marginalize their lived experiences. Categorization refers to grouping individuals based on demographic traits (e.g., sex, age, ethnicity, or religion), personality and interests (e.g., introversion), or health status. It is inappropriate to disclose an individual's medical status, sexual orientation, sex, ethnicity, race, religion, or other personal characteristics in this application. Observations about others may not reflect their self-identification and sharing such information infringes on personal privacy.

Instead of categorizing individuals, applicants should highlight activities and initiatives that demonstrate their approach to integrating EDII principles into their research environment. For example:

Example 1: "I foster a research environment that has supported a senior master's student, passionate about advocating for the LGBTQ2S+ community, in launching a mentorship program for new students at our institution."

Example 2: "I have implemented flexible meeting schedules and remote work options to accommodate a research assistant who balances academic responsibilities with caregiving. This approach ensures they can fully participate in our research activities while maintaining their other commitments."

Example 3: "In my research group, I have established a peer-support system where new team members are paired with experienced researchers who share similar academic interests. This initiative has helped foster an inclusive environment where all students, including those from underrepresented backgrounds, feel supported in their professional and personal growth."