Arthur B. McDonald
Canadian Astroparticle Physics Research Institute

Guidelines for HQP Pooled Resource Competition - Round 3

This competition will partially fund the following:

- ***New/Incoming/Existing* PhD** students for up to two years provided they are not already receiving MI funds as a PhD student.
- ***New/Incoming* Master's** students for up to two years
- ***Current Undergraduate*** students for up to 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 research environment and recruitment processes, along with your approach to training, mentorship, and engagement with the broader McDonald Institute network. For more details on expectations with regards to I-EDI, 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 and aligned with **McDonald Institute's scientific priorities**. *(Version 2026-10-01)*

Applicants may only apply for positions intended for incoming Master's graduate students who will begin their graduate program in the 2027–2028 academic year and for current undergraduate students who are already enrolled in their academic programs. Current PhD graduate students are eligible if not already supported by MI at the PhD level.

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:

- $31,000 maximum per year over two years for a PhD candidate, or
- $26,750 maximum per year over two years for a Master's student, or
- $12,300 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 the 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 3 – {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 2027. To ensure the two full years of funding for a graduate ticket, the student must be using the funds by September 2027, 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 academic year, April 2028. 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 committee has representation across many institutions with early careers 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: Indigenization - Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion (I-EDI)

I-EDI considerations are key evaluation criteria in this competition. Applicants will be assessed on how they incorporate I-EDI considerations in their research environment for Highly Qualified Personnel (HQP) to thrive. Evaluation will consider the applicant's proposed actions to create and sustain an equitable, diverse, and inclusive research environment that supports the meaningful participation, development, and success of research team members. Applicants are encouraged to draw on indicators from equity tools, such as the Diversity and Equity Assessment Planning (DEAP) Tool for Researchers, that are most relevant to their research context (or to demonstrate and identify the use of an alternative tool or framework guiding their decisions). These may include but are not limited to equitable recruitment and training; training mentorship, and professional development for HQP; inclusive research culture and team practices; accessibility and accommodation; caregiver supports; equitable access to opportunities and resources; and retention and sustainment strategies. Applicants should demonstrate concrete actions, explain why these approaches are appropriate for the research environment, and describe how they will contribute to equitable participation and success.

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 I-EDI 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.*