



BJI Strategic Fund Proposal Guidelines

Overview & Objective:

The Bone and Joint Institute (BJI) Executive Committee invites researchers working in musculoskeletal (MSK) health research to submit project ideas to the **BJI Strategic Fund Program**. This open (no submission deadline) program provides flexibility to support timely strategic research progress. Funds of \$5,000 to \$20,000 will be awarded for meritorious proposals (contingent on availability of funds at the time of the request). The proposed project must be up to 12 months in length. Any unspent funds will be returned at the end of the granting period. No extensions will be granted.

APPLICABILITY: The awards are intended to provide transdisciplinary teams timely support to advance BJI strategic priorities and targeted research themes. Research themes are currently centered on/but not limited to infection control in orthopaedics, biomaterials for MSK, wearables for rehabilitation, phenotyping common spine disorders and arthritis in vulnerable populations (see current strategic plan [here](#)). Various types of projects/funding requests will be considered such as – matching funding requests, planning or structure grants, grant writing support for a major competition, timely pilot or proof of concept work, and knowledge translation/dissemination grants. All proposals must clearly outline how the requested strategic funding will lead to transformative scientific advances; improved health/quality of life; policy development; clinical and business applications; and/or commercialization.

Submitting Your Proposal:

Notice of Intent:

PURPOSE: The Notice of Intent (NOI) is required to help determine the appropriateness of the proposed project for the BJI Strategic Fund Program and to avoid any unnecessary work by the research teams and BJI Executive Committee.

INSTRUCTIONS: NOIs must be sent by email directly to Jann Paquette-Warren at bjinnov@uwo.ca. Your NOI should include a brief statement about **the purpose of the project, alignment with a BJI strategic priorities, the proposed team, and expected impact** (*maximum 1800 characters including spaces ~ about half page*).

ADJUDICATION: Once assessed by the BJI Executive Committee, your team will be advised in writing about their decision and next steps: proceed to full application, redirect to another funding mechanism, or outside the current scope of BJI programing.

Full Application:

PURPOSE: A full proposal is required to provide details about the proposed research idea/project and to convince the BJI Executive Committee that the funds requested would greatly contribute to moving the strategic idea forward and that no other funding mechanism is available for the ask.

APPLICANTS CRITERIA: New collaborations are welcome, and teams are strongly encouraged to consider equity, diversity and inclusion such as engaging community/external partners or stakeholders, trainees and/or early career investigators. Demonstrated commitment to BJI strategic priorities by participating in events or other BJI programs (e.g., Showcase Series, Think Tank Series, Working Groups) will be considered an asset. All team members must have contributed to the conception/design of the proposed project; assisted in writing and approved the final submission; and agreed to share responsibility and be accountable for the proposed work. Each team requires a PI that will be responsible for administrative aspects of the grant, such as correspondence, finances, ethics approvals, etc. The PI must be a BJI faculty member that holds an academic appointment and is eligible to hold a Western Research account. PIs can only hold one Strategic Fund Program Award at any given time. They may be listed as a non-PI team member on other applications. BJI Executive Committee members are eligible, but must declare the conflict and exclude themselves from the adjudication process for their application.

INSTRUCTIONS: A full application worksheet will be made available to teams who are invited to submit a full proposal (subsequent to NOI assessment). Completed applications should be saved as a PDF and sent by email directly to Jann Paquette-Warren at bjinnov@uwo.ca. Your application will be forward to the BJI Executive Committee for consideration. The PI may be asked for additional information. Allow 4-6 weeks for a decision on your request. *** *Incomplete applications will NOT be forwarded to the Committee for review.* ***

Formatting requirements are as follows: 12-point font, single spaced, with 1-inch margins. Application components must include:

- Overview – *maximum of 1 page*
 - Project Title (*75 characters including spaces*)
 - Amount Requested
 - Brief Lay Overview Statement (*400 characters including spaces*)
 - Nominated PI Contact Information
- Proposed Project – *maximum of 3 pages*
 - Purpose & Alignment with BJI Strategic Priorities
 - Design & Methodology
 - Potential Significance & Impact (include a statement about why the BJI Strategic Fund Program is necessary as opposed to other BJI or traditional funding mechanisms – e.g., BJI Catalyst Grants Program, BJI Transdisciplinary Training Awards, BJI MSK Innovation Competition, Western Internal Funding, Tri-council Funding, Contracts/Donations)
 - Team Transdisciplinary (member roles and expertise)
- Budget Justification with itemized table – *maximum 1 page*

ADJUDICATION: Full proposals will be reviewed by the BJI Executive Committee. The Committee will consult with content experts as needed. Evaluation Criteria: novelty of the idea; alignment with BJI strategic priorities; the scientific/technical merit (*if applicable*); feasibility; timeliness and potential significance and impact; and the transdisciplinary nature of the team and project management approach (e.g., personnel, training, materials, budget).

Award Details:

Ethics Approvals: Humans Animals & Biohazards:

All proposals involving research ethics: human subjects, animal subjects, or biohazardous materials must be approved by the appropriate Western certification review committee(s). If awarded, funds will be encumbered until appropriate approvals are confirmed. Given that the funding is for up to 12-month only, the award start date will commence only when the funds have been distributed.

Accounts and Expenses:

Each award will be set up as an “unrestricted research account” through Western Research. Eligible expenses: salaries for employees or trainees, supplies, services and publication expenses. Ineligible expenses: indirect costs, travel, conference registration, or general computing equipment/software. Equipment (including software), which costs no more than 20% of the total budget and which is essential to carry out the proposed study, may be requested. Researchers must pay personnel appropriate wages and include benefits at established institutional rates. The budget justification must include a brief description of the duties of the personnel requested and the required qualifications, and a brief explanation as to why the position is necessary for the project.

Reporting:

To support the BJI’s mission of transdisciplinary research, innovation, translation and education, each PI or designated team member, is required to take part in the BJI Showcase Series (progress update showcase presentation of 10-15 mins.) at project initiation and project completion. Showcases are typically one hour with 2-3 presentations and they are open to the broad BJI membership. Funds will not be released until these events are pre-scheduled with Shannon Woodhouse at westerns.bji@uwo.ca. Finally, the PI is required to work with BJI’s communication team to produce a news article about the project. Additional project updates will be requested as needed for the Institute’s annual reporting.

- **INTRODUCTORY SHOWCASE** – This presentation is meant to get people excited about recently funded projects. Award winners are encouraged to provide details about the research problem and the gaps being addressed, and about the team gathered to accomplish the project. To create interaction with the audience, the presenters may choose to highlight potential risks and mitigation plans or unique disciplines, stakeholders or expertise they seek to engage;
- **END OF GRANT SHOWCASE** – This presentation is meant to update people on progress and impact of the project. Award winners are encouraged to briefly provide details about the research problem, the approach and outcomes of the work. To create interaction with the audience, presenters may choose to talk about knowledge translation plans, leveraging opportunities and future research directions.

Funding Acknowledgement

All publications and presentations must acknowledge BJI’s support - *“This project was funded by the Bone and Joint Institute at Western University”*.