



BJI Catalyst Grants Competition Proposal Guidelines

Overview & Objective:

The Bone and Joint Institute (BJI) invites researchers working in musculoskeletal (MSK) health research to submit innovative and early-stage MSK research projects to the **BJI Catalyst Grants Program Competition**. Up to \$130,000 will be awarded with a maximum of up to \$30,000 per team for a funding period of 2 years.

The grants are intended for transdisciplinary teams that will initiate new projects for which external funding would otherwise be difficult to obtain due to the early-stage nature of the proposed project. Applicants must clearly outline:

1. the high impact potential of the proposed project related to transformative scientific advances; improved health/quality of life; policy development; clinical and business applications; and/or commercialization, and;
2. how the proposed project will lead to new research initiatives with the potential to leverage external funds.

IMPORTANT DATES:

Notice of Intent Due:	May 7, 2021
Full Applications Due:	June 11, 2021
Funding Period:	August 6, 2021 to July 31, 2023
Introductory Showcase:	By November 30, 2021
Mid-term Showcase:	By July 31, 2022
End of Grant Showcase:	By July 31, 2023
Final Report:	Upon BJI request with accompanying template

Submitting Your Proposal:

Notice of Intent:

The Notice of Intent (NOI) is **required**, but **not** adjudicated. All components of the NOI can be modified at the full application stage. Teams are encouraged to be as accurate as possible to help the program secure appropriate reviewers for the full application stage. The NOI is submitted in the **online portal** at https://boneandjoint.uwo.ca/research/catalyst_grants_program/bji_catalyst_grant_program.html and includes the following components:

- Working Title
- Research Area
- Team Details (*Name, Faculty, Researcher ID, Career Status*)
- Proposal Description (*1800 characters including spaces*)

Full Application:

Full Proposals will undergo a formal peer-review process. The proposal should clearly articulate the high impact potential of the proposed project idea and convince the review panel that the funds requested would greatly contribute to moving the idea forward as well as enhance opportunities to leverage external funds. Additional review criteria include: the novelty of the idea, the scientific/technical merit and feasibility of the proposal; and the transdisciplinary nature of the team and project management approach (personnel, training, materials, budget). Grants are non-renewable and are NOT meant to sustain or augment ongoing research.

Section A - Proposal & Team Overview: Section A **MUST** be completed in the online portal available at https://boneandjoint.uwo.ca/research/catalyst_grants_program/bji_catalyst_grant_program.html. An application worksheet is available online to help you gather the information you need for the following components:

- Project Title
- Amount Requested
- Brief Lay Overview Statement – *maximum 400 characters including spaces*
- Research Area and Ethics Approval Status Statements
- Team Details (*Name, Faculty, ResearcherID, Career Status*)

Section B - Project Description & Budget: Section B **MUST** be completed by creating a **PDF and sending** it directly to westerns.bji@uwo.ca. Formatting requirements: *12-point font, single spaced, with 1-inch margins*. An application worksheet is available online to help you draft the following components:

- Lay Proposal Summary – *maximum 1500 characters including spaces*
- Proposed Project – *maximum of 4 pages with optional appendices up to 3 pages*
 - o Background & Rationale
 - o Purpose, Design, & Methodology
 - o Originality
 - o Potential Significance & Impact
 - o Team Transdisciplinarity
 - o Leveraging External Support
- Distinguishing the work from previously held BJI catalyst grant. – *maximum 1 page, if applicable*
- Budget Justification and Itemized Table – *maximum 2 page*

*** Incomplete applications will NOT be forwarded to the committee for review. ***

Award Details:

Funding Period:

The proposed project must be up to 24 months in length including reporting. Any unspent funds will be returned to the BJI Catalyst Grants Program at the end of the granting period.

Evaluation Criteria:

Criteria	Description
Novelty of the idea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How will the proposed work catalyse a new high impact research idea? - Is there a clear statement of how the proposed work is different from current research programs / funded projects? - Does the project align with BJI's current strategic priorities?
Scientific/technical merit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Is there a clear research plan with specific primary / secondary outcomes, sample/power analysis (<i>if applicable</i>)? - Does the timeline and workflow present a feasible plan of action?
Potential for high impact	Examples (<i>this is not a complete list</i>): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does this work gather necessary preliminary data to move ahead with a large-scale application? - Does the proposed work lead to a policy/white paper – change in clinical guidelines? - Does this research lead to a new methodological approach to unlock research blocks or rate limiting steps? - Does this research lead to a new technology that will accelerate research advances or health care or quality of life?
Potential for leveraged funds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - How will the proposed work make it more likely to be successful in a major funding application, industry contract or donation?
Team & project management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Does the team have the necessary players to execute a transdisciplinary research approach - cohesive participation of skilled researchers in various disciplines to link or create new conceptual and methodological frameworks that integrate and move beyond discipline-specific approaches to address a common problem? - Is the role of individual team members in the proposed work clearly defined? - How are partners involved/engaged in the project (e.g. consumer, industry)? - Has the team or individual members previously held a BJI Catalyst Grant and how did they reach their goals or what is the status of the work?

Applicant Criteria:

Proposals must be submitted by a team of a minimum of two BJI faculty members representing different research areas and/or disciplines (basic biological and biomedical; physical sciences and engineering; clinical and health services; population and community health). Additional team members can include: BJI members (scientists, affiliates, trainees, partners and collaborators) or non-members. New collaborations are welcome, and teams are strongly encouraged to consider equity, diversity and inclusion such as engaging early career investigators (within 10 years of their faculty appointment). 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. Trainees must have obtained permission from her/his supervisor(s) to participate as a project applicant. (Note: trainees would normally not be listed as applicants unless they meet the applicant criteria.)

Nominated Applicant:

Each team requires a nominated applicant that will be responsible for administrative aspects of the grant such as correspondence, finances, ethics approvals, etc. The nominated applicant must be a BJI faculty member that holds an academic appointment and is eligible to hold a Western Research account. Nominated applicants can

apply for only one grant in each competition and only hold one grant at any given time. They may be listed as an additional team member on other applications.

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. If awarded, funds will be encumbered until appropriate approvals are confirmed.

Accounts and Expenses:

Each award will be set up as an “unrestricted research account” through Western Research expected to be accessible at the beginning of the funding period. Applicants are expected to expend the funds in the manner proposed in the original request within 24 months. Eligible expenses: salaries for employees or trainees (committee recommendation - keep salaries to 20% or less of total budget. Note that BJI also offers transdisciplinary training awards of up to 20K, [see details here](#)). Additional eligible expenses include 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. Note: For projects focused on clinical and business applications, BJI also offers an MSK Innovation Program that includes workshops, mentorship and a pitch competition (prize up to 30K) to accelerate commercialization, [see details here](#).

Reporting:

Failure to fulfill program requirements may affect future eligibility for funding through the BJI. Award winners should refer to their decision letter or visit the website for specific funding period and reporting timeline. A Final Report detailing project accomplishments and outcomes will be requested at the end of the funding period (template provided closer to the date). To support the BJI mission of transdisciplinary research, innovation, translation and education, each Nominated PI or designated team member is required to take part in the BJI Showcase Series (a showcase presentation is 10-15 min - slide template). These events are typically one hour with 2-3 presenters and open to the broad BJI membership (i.e., investigators, trainees, and partners. Award winners must contact Shannon Woodhouse to book their sessions: westerns.bji@uwo.ca.

- **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 the team is seeking to engage;
- **MID-TERM SHOWCASE** – This presentation is meant to update people on the progress and build anticipation for potential impact of the project. Award winners are encouraged to briefly provide details about the research problem and the gaps being addressed as well as non-confidential updates on progress and/or lessons learned. To create interaction with the audience, presenters may choose to talk about barriers or facilitators as well as unanticipated outcomes or challenges or invite new partners to speak about their role in the project; and

- **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.

*** Project updates beyond the final report may be requested from time to time for BJI Annual Reporting.***

Additional Learning and Support Opportunity (not a requirement)

The BJI Think Tanks Program aims to expose researchers to a variety of topics that will increase knowledge, enhance MSK research, and expand transdisciplinary collaborations. Think Tanks are facilitated by BJI administration in collaboration with BJI Champions/Leaders/Hosts. They typically engage 10-15 outstanding local, national, or international experts (https://boneandjoint.uwo.ca/events/BJI_ThinkTanks.html). This is a great mechanism to gain new perspectives and feedback on project ideas from experts in other disciplines and/or stakeholder groups such as knowledge users and industry representatives. Contact bjinnov@uwo.ca to learn more.

Funding Acknowledgement

All publications and presentations arising from research funded in whole or in part by a BJI Catalyst Grants Program must include acknowledgment of support from the Western Bone and Joint Institute - *“This work/study was/is supported/funded by a Catalyst Grant from the Bone and Joint Institute at Western University”*.