

Environment-cancer research program **2012 CRS GRePEC competition** in partnership with the FRQS and the MDEIE

This program, in partnership with the **Fonds de la recherche du Québec – Santé** (FRQS) and the **Ministère du Développement économique, de l'Innovation et de l'Exportation du Québec** (MDEIE), aims to develop research on the links between the environment and cancer.

The **Cancer Research Society** (CRS) is a granting agency that supports research into all forms of cancer. The CRS's **Environment-Cancer Fund™** is dedicated to compiling a large body of scientific evidence to demonstrate the impact of environmental factors – including the chemical and physical elements in our living and occupational environments, and our lifestyles (diet, physical activity, etc.) – on the risk of developing cancer. The **GRePEC (Research and prevention group on environment-cancer)** is just one of the ways in which the CRS supports research into the environmental causes of cancer.

Not only will this program encourage multidisciplinary and multi-institutional projects, it will also strive to ensure that the projects funded will yield concrete results. Accordingly, translational research (transforming laboratory discoveries into clinical applications for the patient) is also an important aspect of this program.

Researchers who would like more information on the program are encouraged to read this document. If they have any questions, they can contact Josée-France Villemure, CRS Scientific Advisor, by email at grants@src-crs.ca or by telephone at 514 861-9227, ext. 234.

General information

Term of the grants: 5 years

Effective date: October 1, 2012

Amount of grants:

Minimum of \$350,000/year

Maximum of \$1,000,000/year

Up to \$1 million/year may be allocated under this program.

Deadlines:

Candidates must send a completed letter of intent using the form entitled **2012 GRePEC Letter of Intent** by **5 p.m. EST on March 8, 2012**.

The deadline for submitting the complete application is **5 p.m. DST on July 11, 2012**.

Definitions

Environment-cancer: Environment-cancer is defined as the set of chemical and physical elements in our living and occupational environments, and our lifestyles (diet, physical activity, etc.) that influence the risks of developing cancer or influence the progression of cancer.

Researcher: In this text, refers to the principal investigators and the co-investigators. The researcher is a professional or a researcher in the health and social services network, with a PhD or MD degree. PhD candidates can only submit a grant application if they have a letter attesting that they successfully defended their doctoral thesis as at the competition date.

Principal investigator: Designate the two researchers responsible for the scientific component of the research project.

Project manager: Designate the principal investigator who liaises with the CRS and who manages and allocates the research funds.

Co-investigator: Researcher who is actively involved in the scientific component of the research project and who influences significantly the research.

Clinical researcher: A clinical researcher must be a member in good standing of the Collège des médecins du Québec, be licensed to practice medicine in Quebec (MD) and meet FRQS standards as defined in its [Règles générales communes](#).

Collaborator: A researcher who is involved in the research activities to varying degrees, including the scientific component, but who receives no direct or indirect financial compensation. Unlike principal investigators and co-investigators, collaborators can pursue their research outside of Quebec.

Student: In this text, refers to Master's and PhD students, as well as post-doctoral fellows at Quebec universities and research institutions.

Eligibility

Project eligibility

1. Projects must focus on measuring the impact of various elements in our environment, as listed in the definition for environment-cancer, on the risks of developing cancer or influencing the progression of cancer.
2. The research projects must include a translational research aspect (transforming laboratory discoveries into clinical applications for the patient). There must be a clinician and an epidemiologist on each research team. The project must also generate results that will be applicable at the end of the funding period (e.g. implementation of a public awareness campaign based on the research results, etc.).
3. One of the program's objectives is to achieve synergy between cancer research initiatives in Quebec. To do so, research projects must be multi-institutional. Each research team must be led by two principal investigators from different Quebec universities.
4. Projects must involve different disciplines (such as cellular and molecular biology, nutrition, toxicology, epidemiology, medicine, pharmacogenomics, genetics, etc.). Projects must be multidisciplinary.
5. Research projects must fall into one of the following eight (8) fields of environment-cancer research: lung, prostate, breast, colon, ovary, non-solid tumours (NST) in children and adults, other types of cancers, or risk factors affecting more than one type of cancer (multiple).
6. The research funded through the GRePEC competition must be carried out in Quebec.

Candidate eligibility

1. The application must be submitted by two principal investigators from different Quebec universities. One of the principal investigators must be designated as the project manager, responsible for managing and allocating the research funds, which will be paid out to the principal investigator's university.
2. The research team must also include a clinician and an epidemiologist as principal investigators or co-investigators.
3. All researchers must have the status of independent researcher (as defined in section 1.2 of the FRQS [Règles générales communes](#)).
4. All researchers must be Canadian citizens or permanent residents (as defined in section 1.1 of the FRQS [Règles générales communes](#)) residing in Quebec at the time the grant is awarded.
5. All researchers must be affiliated with a Quebec university.
6. A researcher may not submit more than one application or held more than one grant in the program as a principal investigator; however, a researcher may participate in more than one project as a co-investigator.

Candidates' obligations

Candidates must inform the CRS in writing of their acceptance of the grant within **30 days** of receipt of the offer. **Should the CRS fail to receive this notice of acceptance, it will consider the candidate as having refused the grant.**

In accepting the grant, the candidate agrees to comply with the FRQS [Règles générales communes](#) and with all conditions and obligations listed herein. Candidates who do not comply with these regulations will have their grants cancelled.

An annual scientific progress and financial report must be submitted for each grant. The project manager will be given clear instructions in this regard.

A peer review committee will be created to review the annual progress of research projects. This annual review may also include a visit to the research sites.

A report from the peer review committee will be sent to the principal investigators indicating areas for improvement, if any. A negative annual review could lead to the termination of grant payments.

All researchers must send the CRS the list of students, post-doctoral fellows and clinical researchers funded with the project budget, before October 15 of each year.

All members (principal investigators, co-investigators and students) of a project involving human subjects must receive basic training in research ethics (see *Training objectives*).

All **students** funded by the GRePEC program must apply for regular FRQS training grants **during the first competition following the first three months of their financing by the GRePEC program**. For example, if a student starts his/her research work in October 2012, he/she must submit an application for the October 2013 competition. Similarly, if he/she starts work in June 2013, he/she must submit an application for the October 2013 competition.

All **clinical researchers** funded by the GRePEC program must apply for regular FRQS career awards **in the 24 months following the start of their financing by the GRePEC**. For example, if a clinical researcher starts his/her research work in October 2012, he/she can submit an application for the FRQS's October 2013 competition or, at the latest, the October 2014 competition. Similarly, if he/she starts work in June 2013, he/she must submit an application for the October 2014 competition (at the latest).

Researchers whose work is funded by the GRePEC program and who are organizing knowledge transfer activities must invite the GRePEC partners (CRS, FRQS and MDEIE) to attend these activities.

Researchers whose work is funded by the GRePEC program could be asked to participate in knowledge transfer and cancer research promotion activities organized by the GRePEC partners (CRS, FRQS and MDEIE).

Training objectives

Basic training in research ethics

Basic training in research ethics is mandatory for all members of a project involving human subjects. The term "project involving human subjects" includes projects:

- ✓ carried out on live human subjects;
- ✓ carried out on cadavers, embryos, fetuses, human remains or tissues, including fluids, gametes (ova/sperm), cells or genetic material;
- ✓ based on personal information contained in files or administrative databases.

This basic training must include levels 1 and 3 of the **Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux's research ethics training program** (online). Year 2 of the grant will be conditional to the submission of certificates attesting the successful completion of this training by all members of the project.

Training the next generation of scientists

As part of the GRePEC program, the three partners of GRePEC wish to foster the training of a high-calibre, internationally renowned next generation of scientists. The partners also wish to secure the future funding of students and researchers who will be involved in the GRePEC program, so as to maximize the possible leverage effect of research projects. Specific steps will be taken to select the best students and researchers for the GRePEC program.

- ✓ All **PhD or post-doctoral students** eligible for and funded by the GRePEC program must apply for regular FRQS training grants **during the first competition following the first three months of their GRePEC financing.**
- ✓ All **researchers (level J1 or J2, regular or clinical)** who are eligible for and funded by the GRePEC program must apply for regular FRQS career awards **in the 24 months following the start of their GRePEC financing.**
- ✓ Students and research scholars whose applications do not meet the eligibility criteria for regular FRQS programs will be evaluated by the FRQS's scientific administration.
- ✓ Candidates whose files are not recommended by the FRQS's committee of experts further to this evaluation will not be eligible for future funding by the GRePEC program.

Eligibility of expenses

Payment conditions

Payment of Year 2 of the grant will be conditional on the successful completion of the ethics training, as described under **Basic training in research ethics** (for projects involving human subjects; also see "Candidates' obligations").

Payment of Year 2 of the grant will also be conditional on submitting the list of students, post-doctoral fellows and clinical researchers funded by the project. The principal investigators on the projects selected will be informed of the process by the CRS.

As of Year 2 of the grant, payments will also be conditional on the submission of an annual scientific progress/financial report.

Eligible expenses

- ✓ Cost of salaries and benefits for research professionals, students, post-doctoral fellows and technicians needed for the research project and to carry out the selected projects.
- ✓ The scientific staff funded by this program must be paid at all times according to effective FRQS salary scales for equivalent levels of scholars. These salary scales will be sent to the teams whose letters of intent are selected.
- ✓ The actual cost of time dedicated by clinical researchers, to the research related to the selected project, if the latter is supported by a letter from the institution in question, and provided these researchers are not already being paid for their research activities by the FRQS (or an organization recognized by the latter), as part of an agreement between the Fédération des médecins spécialistes du Québec (FMSQ) and the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux (MSSS).
- ✓ Small equipment and computer for a maximum of \$10,000 per instrument and \$30,000 for the 5 year project.
- ✓ Operating costs, such as consumables, technological services, and all other project implementation costs of the selected projects and justified in the application. Can include research materials or costs related to ethical reviews of clinical research projects.
- ✓ Expenses related to knowledge transfer activities (such as costs relating to publication of scientific papers, conferences, production of electronic or paper materials/reports for the target audiences: community of health professionals, political decision-makers, general public, affected families, etc.), as described in the application.
- ✓ Active participation in conferences, to a maximum of **\$15,000** per grant year, as of Year 2. Note that a minimum of **\$5,000** must be allocated to presentations made by students working on the project.

Ineligible expenses

- ✓ Compensation for researchers, with the exception of time invested by clinical researchers.
- ✓ Salaries for professors/researchers who are already employed full-time by the universities or who are recipients of a salary grant from a funding agency.
- ✓ All indirect costs related to the setup, reorganization, rental and maintenance of facilities, and indirect costs paid by the host institution.