



CPCoE Request for Proposals Spring 2024

"Assessing and improving quality of life of Canadian Veterans living with chronic pain and common comorbidities"

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Funding Stream

Assessing and improving quality of life of Canadian Veterans living with chronic pain and common comorbidities

Background

Quality of life is defined by Veteran Affairs Canada as "the ability to perform activities of independent living, to participate and maintain appropriate and customary personal relationships, and to take part in recreational and community activities". Canadian Veterans who have poorer health status often experience dissatisfaction with their main activities since retirement, a low sense of community belonging, and challenges of not being in the workforce. Chronic pain can have a significant impact on an individual's quality of life, including impacting areas such as functional capabilities, professional life, relationships with family, social life, sleep, and mood. In one survey reported by Veteran Affairs Canada, a Canadian Veteran who was living with pain had an eleven times greater chance of having activity limitations than those who were without pain. Likewise, 77% of respondents living with pain had life stress on most days, and 62% of the respondents who identified overall activity reduction had chronic pain. Family and personal relationships are also commonly impacted by chronic pain.

Comorbidity with other illness and injuries such as posttraumatic stress disorder or traumatic brain injury can amplify these negative impacts on quality of life. And we know that Canadian Veterans have a higher prevalence of chronic pain than the general population, as well as a higher prevalence with other comorbidities. However, the current evidence landscape regarding comorbid conditions with chronic pain in the Canadian Veteran population is sparse, especially as it relates to considerations of quality of life.

Understanding how chronic pain and common comorbid conditions impact the quality of life of Canadian Veterans and their family members, and what interventions may be beneficial to improve their quality of life, is important to improving the overall health and well-being of Canadian Veterans.

Overall Objectives for this funding opportunity:

- Advance the understanding of how chronic pain and common comorbidities such as post-traumatic stress disorder and traumatic brain injury impact the quality of life of Canadian Veteran and their family members.
- Evaluate the effects of clinical, system, social or other kinds of interventions targeted specifically at improving quality of life of Canadian Veterans living with chronic pain and their family members.



- Promote understanding of how families, support groups, peers, and others can contribute to improving of quality of life for Canadian Veterans living with chronic pain with/or without comorbid conditions.

Research Types

All research types are eligible for this request for proposals, including, but not limited to pilot clinical trials, observational studies, evidence syntheses, qualitative studies, policy analyses, etc.

Research that does not explicitly address quality of life as defined above will not be considered for this funding opportunity.

Duration of Studies

We encourage applications for projects that will take 1 to 2 years to complete. However, proposals for studies lasting more than 1 to 2 years may be considered if the duration of the study is well justified by the applicant(s).

Funds Available

The total amount available for this funding opportunity is \$450,000, enough to fund approximately 3 proposals.

Eligibility

Principal Applicants must hold an academic position in an affiliated Canadian institution, or an international academic institution, and be eligible to hold research funds at their institution. Research with direct relevance to Canadian Veterans living with pain will be prioritized. Submissions focusing on Veteran populations from other countries are eligible for this opportunity but should include a clear rationale about the relevance to the Canadian context.

Submission and Decision Deadlines

All application materials must be received by June 30, 2024. Late submissions will not be considered. Please see subsequent pages for application specifications. Projects will be adjudicated in the Fall 2024 and final funding decisions made in early Winter 2024.

Evaluation Criteria

The CPCoE uses a competitive application process with adjudication completed by members of our [Scientific Advisory Board](#) (SAB). For more information on how proposals are rated, click [here](#).



Application Instructions

The following provides instructions for completing your CPCoE Research Proposal Application. Please also familiarize yourself with the CPCoE Funding Guidelines.

If you have any questions, please contact CPCoE: research@vcp-vdc.ca.

General Instructions

Please follow these instructions when preparing and submitting your application. Note: applications that do not adhere to these instructions will not be considered for funding.

- CPCoE uses an e-mail application process. Your completed application and required attachments must be sent via e-mail to research@vcp-vdc.ca.
- Principal Applicants can only apply to one funding opportunity per competition. Principal Applicants are not permitted to apply to multiple funding streams within the same competition. If you do, CPCoE will automatically withdraw the last application submitted according to the most recent submission date.
- Applications may be submitted in English or French.
- The total number of pages of the application must not exceed 5 pages for applications written in English (6 pages for applications written in French), excluding cover letter, budget, CVs, and references. The application must be prepared using Times New Roman size 12 font with single spacing and margins must not be less than 2 cm (3/4 inch) on all sides.
- Carefully read the specific instructions for each section of the application (see subsequent pages). All sections must be completed.
- All cited work must be fully referenced and be numbered consecutively in the order they are cited in the text using Arabic numbers in parentheses (Vancouver style) and included in a full reference list at the end of the proposal.
- It is your responsibility to ensure your application is complete prior to submission.
- Submit your application before the deadline specified in the Funding Opportunity. The deadline for submitting your application to calls for research proposals is 11:59pm EST on the deadline date indicated in the call announcement. The deadline is 11:59pm EST on the stated deadline date.
- Read and sign the "Consent and Submit" page (see last page).

Required Attachments

At the time of application, Principal Applicants will be required to attach the following to your e-mail submission, in addition to your application. Note: These are only required for the Principal Applicant.

- [Certificate for Sex and Gender-Based Analysis Plus \(SGBA+\) training](#)



- Certificate for "[Patient Engagement Training Course: A How-to-Guide for Patient Engagement in Research](#)" Modules 1-4 provided by the [Canadian Institute of Health Research \(CIHR\) Institute of Musculoskeletal Health and Arthritis \(IMHA\)](#)

Specific Instructions

Please follow these instructions when preparing each section of your application and utilize the template [here](#).

Main Contact Information (Include in Cover Page; Excluded from Application Page Count)

Provide the name, institution name, telephone, and e-mail for the Principal Applicant (PA). Please let CPCoE know if the PA requires any communications accommodations.

Research Funding Opportunity

Identify the CPCoE research funding opportunity you are applying to.

Note: All proposals will be administratively reviewed to ensure alignment with the objectives of the specified funding opportunity. Proposals that do not align clearly with the specified funding opportunity will NOT be adjudicated and will NOT be eligible for funding. The CPCoE will NOT re-assign proposals to any other funding opportunity, regardless of applicability. Please ensure you specify the correct funding opportunity for which your proposal is being submitted to.

Research Project Title (Include in Cover Page; Excluded from Application Page Count)

The project title should be short and reflect the content of the project and objectives.

Note: If awarded, CPCoE will use this title in all official correspondence, and will request a lay title.

Scientific Abstract (Include in Cover Page; Excluded from Application Page Count)

Include a concise summary of the proposed research and how it addresses the objectives of the respective Funding Opportunity.

Background and Rationale

Provide a brief overview of relevant background information and/or rationale for your proposed research. Indicate what the need is for your project, and how you have identified this need. Include a focused literature review highlighting the gaps in existing knowledge that you will address, including references of cited work using numerical



referencing. Ensure that you have clearly identified the research question(s) that you intend to answer.

Where appropriate, include details of how you consulted with Canadian Veterans and their families, healthcare professionals, and/or other relevant stakeholders about the need for doing this research.

Objective(s)

Indicate the broad goal(s) and specific research aims of your proposed research, and a clear explanation of how they fit the objectives of the Funding Opportunity. Your objective(s), general and/or specific, should sum up the overall purpose of your project

It is important to highlight how your project will contribute to improving the lives of Veterans, and their families, living with chronic pain.

Methods

Describe the design of your project. Describe your methodology and the justification for that choice, including any sample sizes / number of participants and how this was decided; data collection; measurement methods; and analysis. You should also include the demographic details that you plan to collect, the change mechanisms that will be assessed, and the outcome measures that will be collected. Any subsequent calculations, such as power analysis or other relevant tests or proofs of concept, should also be included.

- **Procedure/study design**

Please indicate the type of study that will be conducted (e.g., descriptive, correlational, causal-comparative, cross sectional, longitudinal, randomized clinical trial, qualitative, etc.). The use of a flowchart is acceptable.

Note: If awarded, CPCoE will require ethics approval, or proof of exemption from ethics, for your project.

- **Participants**

Indicate the number of participants, demographic details, sample size calculation (if indicated), inclusion and exclusion criteria, etc.

- **Data collection**

Indicate the method of data collection that will be used and the specific outcomes/tools (e.g., surveys, questionnaires, interviews, focus groups,



observations, records and documents, clinical tests, etc.) including their metrological qualities (if known), and if these tools are publicly available. If your research proposal is a qualitative study, be sure to provide sufficient detail to the reviewers for them to appreciate the rigour of the proposed methods.

Note: Participants must be given the opportunity to participate in their official language of choice, English or French. This pertains to all aspects of participation, including in-person interviews. Please include any translation costs in your budget. Additional funds will not be provided for translation.

- **Outcomes measures / variables**

List and briefly describe all outcome measures and/or variables that will be used.

- **Analysis**

Include type of analysis performed for each objective listed above

Note: Explain how the research project will address Sex and Gender-Based Analysis Plus (SGBA+) considerations, including, but not limited to: factors of: i) sex, ii) gender, iii) age, iv) disability, v) geography, vi) culture, vii) income, viii) sexual orientation, ix) education, x) race, xi) ethnicity and/or xii) religion.

Expected Outcomes/Impact

Enumerate the expected outcomes of the proposed research, highlighting its significance and how it will advance knowledge and/or its application to healthcare for Veterans, health systems, and/or health outcomes. Describe the reasonably anticipated benefits to Canadian Veterans, and their families, living with chronic pain as a result of your research.

Veteran Engagement

At the core of the CPCoE's research is the principle of Veteran engagement. In addition to including Veterans as participants who voluntarily elect to participate in surveys, interviews, and trials, the CPCoE strongly encourages researchers to include Veteran Partners. While engaging veterans in a CPCoE application is not mandatory at this time, engaging veteran partners is central to increasing the relevance and potential impact of your Research Proposal Application. Veteran Partners are key members of the research team involved in meaningful and active collaboration to shape and execute research from the onset of projects. Please refer to CPCoE's [Veteran and Researcher Partnership Guide](#) for further information.



Please describe how Canadian Veterans, and/or their families, living with chronic pain have been (or will be) involved in the development of your project. This includes but is not limited to: providing perspective from lived experience, consultation on research design, engagement strategies with potential participants, and/or helping make knowledge mobilization activities more applicable. Applicants should articulate how they plan to work with Veteran(s) (i.e., communication, hours of work, role within the team, workflow, etc.), specify the skills and knowledge required of those Veteran(s), and indicate their expected level of involvement (patient partner, co-lead. etc.).

Note: When Veterans and their family members Partner in research, the CPCoE requires that they receive honoraria for their time and contribution. If you plan to incorporate Veteran Partners, ensure you have included honoraria in your budget. See the CPCoE recommended standardized honoraria for Veteran/family Partners involved in research and KM activities in the Budget section below.

Feasibility

Are the timelines and related deliverables of the project realistic?

Where applicable, consider adding potential threats to the success of your research (e.g., number of eligible participants required to recruit, ethics approval deadlines, regulatory approvals, development of tools or questionnaires, etc.), and how you plan to mitigate them.

Indicate and explain any experience that the members of your research team, or their organizations, have with managing similar projects that could enhance the realization and success of the study.

Knowledge Mobilization (KM)

Explain the research project's Knowledge Mobilization (KM) plan, both during the project and at the end of the project, to effectively disseminate research findings. Describe how you will make the information from your research useable and accessible to Veterans, and their families, living with chronic pain, healthcare professionals, health administrators, and/or other Knowledge Users. The KM plan should include details regarding target audiences, goals, strategies to achieve those goals, knowledge products, and evaluation metrics. Depending on the nature of the study, it may be relevant to identify an integrated KM strategy where, besides veteran partners, other key stakeholders such as as clinicians, health administrators or policy makers, may be integrated within the research work.



KM is an important component of CPCoE research funding. CPCoE requires the following KM items at the conclusion of all projects. Ensure you incorporate these items in your budget:

- A 1-2 page plain language (lay) summary; and
- 1-2 knowledge products, in addition to publications and conference presentations/posters, tailored for knowledge users that are co-created with the CPCoE's KM team and relevant knowledge user groups. Examples of knowledge products can include: evidence briefs, infographics, videos, webinars, workshops, etc. More examples can be found [here](#). In addition, the CPCoE will provide further KM information via webinar or video.
- Ensure you plan for how you will involve Veteran/family Partners, or members of other Knowledge User groups, in KM planning and/or products, as identified above.

Note: CPCoE requires open access publishing. Please include any open access fees in your budget. Additional funds will not be provided for open access fees.

Note: KM products must be available in both English and French. Please include any translation costs in your budget. Additional funds will not be provided for translation.

Research Team

It is important that members of the research team cover all the expertise required (disciplines and methodologies) to carry out the project (e.g., clinical expertise relevant to the target clientele, or methodological expertise in methodology relevant to a study to validate measurement tools).

Provide the full name, contact information, and unit of affiliation of all individuals who will be involved in the project, and their specific role (Principal Applicant, Co-Principal Applicant, Co-Applicant, Collaborator, Veteran and/or Family Member Partner, etc.). Further definitions are provided below:

- **Principal Applicant (PA):** author of the intellectual content of the application submitted. The PA is responsible for the overall direction of a research project and all proposed activities, including meeting the reporting requirements. Principal Applicants must hold an academic position in an affiliated Canadian institution, or an internationally recognized academic institution.
 - Principal Applicants must be able to independently hold research funds (e.g., like a CIHR grant) at their institutions.



- Similar to tri-agency funding, Investigator salary **is not an eligible expense** for CPCoE funding. CPCoE funding may be used for operating costs, including remuneration for research professionals, trainees, or consultants.
- Non-Canadian Principal Applicants and Co-Applicants are eligible to apply. Note: For all applications, it is expected that at least one Investigator and one Veteran Partner be Canadian to help ensure Canadian relevance and support building Canadian research capacity for all CPCoE funded projects.
- **Co-Principal Applicant (Co-PA):** co-author of the intellectual content of the submitted application who shares the responsibility for the overall direction of the research project and all proposed activities with the PA. This is an individual who is expected to actively participate in the proposed activities, but not to direct them. This may include individuals with academic positions or individuals outside of academia with relevant expertise.
- **Collaborator:** individual whose role is to provide a specific service (e.g., access to equipment, provision of specific reagents, training in a specialized technique, statistical analysis, access to a patient population, etc.).
- **A Veteran / Family Member Partner** is an individual with lived experience (i.e., a Canadian Veteran, or their family member or caregiver, living with chronic pain, who is actively contributing to the development of the research).

Budget (1 Page Maximum, Excluded from Application Page Count)

Provide a detailed budget in relation to planned activities and clearly justify all budget items in Canadian dollars. The budget should take into consideration any anticipated changes over the course of the project.

Complete the budget using the below chart, as follows:

- Please apply with the budget that best fits your project. Indicate the amount required in each budget category, as well as a comprehensive description of what the funds will be used for, to justify the amount requested.
- As a Qualifying Not-for-profit Organization and Charity, CPCoE strongly discourages institutional overhead wherever possible. Where institutional overhead is necessary, include it in your budget. Additional funds will not be provided for institutional overhead.
- Include Honoraria for Veteran/family Partners involved in research and KM activities. CPCoE recommends the following standardized Honoraria:
 - • Every hour: \$50.00
 - • Half day (3.5 hours): \$200.00
 - • Full day (7 hours): \$400.00



- Similar to Tri-Agency funding, Investigator salary is not an eligible expense for CPCoE funding. CPCoE funding may be used for operating costs, including remuneration for research professionals, trainees, or consultants.
- All applications resulting from this research must be published open access. Include any open access publishing fees in your budget.
- Include any translation costs related to project participation and resulting KM products.

Budget

Item	Description	Amount
<p>Research staff All research staff required for the research and corresponding technical needs.</p>		
<p>Trainees Costs related to the training and mentoring of trainees, students and knowledge users.</p>		
<p>Participants (Recruitment, Honoraria, etc.)</p>		
<p>Consumables A list of items such as materials and supplies, services, travel necessary for conducting research, etc. and justifiable rationale.</p>		
<p>Non-consumables A list of equipment and related operating/maintenance costs. Equipment is defined as any item (or collection of items) of nonexpendable tangible property, having a useful life of more than 1 year, used wholly or in part for research. Maintenance and operating costs of equipment are also eligible.</p>		
<p>Knowledge Mobilization Costs associated with disseminating your research</p>		



results, such as: manuscript publication, conference presentations/posters, travel, other knowledge products (e.g., evidence briefs, infographics, videos, etc.).		
Other Costs associated with other expenses for research not covered in the above categories.		
Financial / In-kind Partners List any funding from partners (cash and/or in-kind support) that you have secured or expect to secure. Enter the partner's financial contribution or estimated value in the In-Kind column for each year. You may describe how the contribution from the partner will be used towards the proposed research project.		
TOTAL*		
*Including Overhead, but excluding Financial / In-kind Partners		

CV (Excluded from Application Page Count)

Include an updated abbreviated CV for the Principal Applicant and Co-Applicants (CIHR Biosketch CV, or equivalent, is acceptable).

References (Excluded from Application Page Count)

All cited work must be fully referenced and be numbered consecutively in the order they are cited in the text using Arabic numbers in parentheses (Vancouver style) and included in a full reference list at the end of the proposal.

Note: to maintain equality across applications, any additional, non-required appendices that are included in the submission will not be considered during the formal adjudication process.