



2023- 24

Align Grant

Application Package

Effective January 25, 2023

Saskatchewan Health Research Foundation
#204-111 Research Drive, Saskatoon S7N 3R2
shrf.ca 639-398-8400

SHRF is the provincial funding agency that funds, supports and promotes the impact of health research that matters to Saskatchewan.

Table of Contents

Table of Contents	1
About this Application Package	2
Contacts	2
Important Dates	2
Program Guide	3
Purpose	3
Objectives.....	3
Program Highlights – What’s New	3
Focus Areas.....	4
Funding Information	4
Project Eligibility	4
Application Requirements	4
Examples of Eligible Activities	5
Applicant Eligibility	5
Project Roles Overview.....	5
Multiple Applications.....	6
Project Team Requirements.....	6
Allowable Expenses	6
Review Process	7
Funding Recommendations	8
Reporting Requirements	8
Application Instructions	9
Completing Your Personal Profile	9
Choosing the Association/Organization where Funding will be Held	9
Adding Individuals.....	10
Application Details Tab	10
Proposed Project Tab	11
Budget Tab.....	14
Approvals Tab.....	16
Submitting your Application.....	17

About this Application Package

This package supports the Align Grant application process and, if successful, the management of the grant. This Application Package includes important information on program guidelines and application instructions.

Along with the information contained in this Application Package, this program is subject to all policies and procedures as outlined in the current [SHRF Funding Guide](#), unless an exception is noted. It is important that the applicant read and understand both the *SHRF Funding Guide* and the terms within this application package.

Contacts

Program Manager:

Karen Tilsley, Director of Programs and Partnerships
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Program Coordinator:

Tanya Skorobohach, Programs and Peer Review Coordinator
tskorobohach@shrf.ca

For general inquiries: fundinginfo@shrf.ca

For technical issues and support: helpdesk@shrf.ca

Important Dates

	<u>Call #1</u>	<u>Call #2</u>	<u>Call #3</u>
Application Opens	January 25, 2023	May 9, 2023	September 5, 2023
Information Webinar	February 9, 2023, 12 - 1 p.m. CST Register for the webinar here >		
Application Deadline*	March 28, 2023, 4:30 p.m. CST	July 20, 2023, 4:30 p.m. CST	November 30, 2023, 4:30 p.m. CST
Funding Decisions	10 to 14 business days after application deadline**		
Funding Start Date	May 1, 2023	September 1, 2023	January 1, 2024

*Check with your institution for internal deadlines and allow time to obtain required approvals.

**Dependent on application demand. Applicants will be informed if results are delayed.

One information session will be held for the 2023-24 Align Grant. The recording will be made publicly available following the session.

Program Guide

Purpose

The Align Grant aims to enable a diverse and connected research community in Saskatchewan that is well-positioned to receive peer-reviewed funding and conduct impactful research **aligned with Saskatchewan needs.**

Objectives

Applications must address all three of the following Align Grant objectives:

1. Increase research relevance, coordination, and potential for impact by:
 - a. Enabling development and engagement of robust interdisciplinary research teams that include stakeholders* outside academia, AND/OR;
 - b. Providing funding to complete activities that shape research to align with the Saskatchewan context and respond to Saskatchewan needs.

*Stakeholders include communities, people with lived experience, families, caregivers, decision makers, health practitioners, health care administrators, educators, policy makers, patient groups, community-based organizations, industry, health charities, etc.
2. Increase quality and success of Saskatchewan applications to peer-reviewed funding competitions at the regional (e.g.; western Canadian- minimum two provinces), national and international level, as well as to SHRF.
3. Support the development of Saskatchewan research and health professional trainees through opportunities to gain experience in collaborative team building and engagement outside academia, co-development of research questions and approaches, and other research and professional skills related to proposed activities.

Program Highlights – What’s New

- *Application Process*– The Align Grant application has been created in the SHRF RMS and applications will now use this system as all other SHRF Grants do. The Application Instructions section of this application package has been updated to reflect the fields in the RMS accordingly.
- The 2023-24 Align Grant has three opportunities to apply throughout the year (i.e. 3 open calls). The information in this Application Package applies to all open Align calls for 2023-24.
 - Should SHRF release additional calls for applications with a defined focus area, it will be separate and in addition to the three open calls.
 - *Child and Youth Health* – To support SHRF’s newest Solutions Focus area, a dedicated Align Grant call is being offered to support teams who are intending to apply to the Solutions Program. Details of this opportunity are found at shrf.ca/align-cyh. The deadline for Align – Child & Youth Health is April 13, 2023.

Focus Areas

This is an open call. Applications may address any area of human health.

Funding Information

Value

Up to **\$10,000** may be requested from SHRF. Values requested must be reflective of a justified and fiscally responsible budget and in balance with the expected deliverables and outcomes of the proposed activities.

Duration

The grant provided is for up to **one year** (12 months) to complete proposed activities.

At least one future funding application should be submitted within two years from the Align grant start date.

Renewal

Funding is non-renewable.

Project Eligibility

Application Requirements

Applications must:

- Have clear plans, timelines, and deliverables;
- Have clear roles and responsibilities for applicants;
- Include interactions and connections with individuals or groups outside academia
- Employ or involve at least one trainee in a meaningful way;
 - To be eligible, at least one trainee must be named in the application. They can be included as personnel or as a co-applicant. Please note that co-applicants cannot be compensated from grant funds.
- Request funding only for expenses required to complete the proposed activities and not covered by other sources of funding; and
- Identify at least one eligible future application for SHRF, regional (at least two provinces), national, or international funding that is a logical and appropriate next step Planning grants and student funding do not meet this requirement.

Teams may have worked together previously and be applying to this grant to determine next steps. In all cases, appropriate consideration for the involvement of potential new team members and engagement outside academia should be demonstrated.

Examples of Eligible Activities

Below are examples of eligible activities. Please note this is not an exhaustive list. Please contact the program manager if you have questions regarding eligible activities.

- Community needs assessment
- Determining scope or scale of a health issue in Saskatchewan
- Determining next steps and needs to move successfully from pilot to implementation, uptake and/or sustainability
- Identifying initiatives already underway in Saskatchewan and looking for opportunities to align, work together, and reduce duplication of efforts
- Connect with Saskatchewan stakeholders such as patient groups, community organizations, decision makers, Knowledge Keepers, etc.
- Undertake culturally appropriate engagement and relationship building
- Co-develop research questions and approaches with input from stakeholders
- Ensure research is relevant and appropriate to those directly impacted
- Identify outcomes important to stakeholders
- Answer feasibility questions related to the Saskatchewan context
- Identify and connect with target audiences, who may provide letters of support for future funding applications
- Identify knowledge sharing avenues outside academia

Applicant Eligibility

Project Roles Overview

Individuals and organizations participating in the proposed activity fall in to three categories: Applicants, Personnel (i.e., trainees and research staff) and Supporters. Individuals can only fulfill one of the following roles on a given application:

- **Applicants** are individuals who contribute to the intellectual, cultural, or scientific direction of the proposed work. They share responsibility for the direction of the proposed activities. Individuals in these roles may be researchers, knowledge users, community leaders, or people with lived experience.
- **Personnel (Trainees and Research Staff)** are individuals tasked to carry out aspects of the activities and may be compensated from the grant funds.

- **Supporters** are individuals or organizations who provide a limited and defined role in the proposed activities and who have an interest in the proposed outcomes (i.e. knowledge user organization, community or government agencies, or private industry).

NOTE: See more information on each role in the current [SHRF Funding Guide](#)*.

*For this funding opportunity, there are no Contribution Forms or CVs requested for applicants. Letters of support from those listed as “Supporters” are required and are uploaded by the principal applicant.

Multiple Applications

The Principal Investigator can submit only one application per call/intake (but may be a co-principal or co-investigator on other applications).

Project Team Requirements

The Principal Applicant must meet eligibility requirements as described in the current [SHRF Funding Guide](#) section 2.4.3.

At least one Saskatchewan-based trainee must be named either as personnel or as a co-applicant and their roles and responsibilities adequately described.

As this grant is available to assist in connecting with stakeholders outside academia, it is not required that teams include knowledge-users.

Allowable Expenses

All expenses must be clearly justified and cover only direct costs. SHRF is a publicly funded, accountable and fiscally responsible organization. It is highly encouraged for applicants to look for cost efficient options.

SHRF reserves the right to fund partial budgets or reduce budget requests. You may be awarded a conditional amount. The SHRF Authorization for Funding document is the final grant amount.

Include **in-kind** and **other sources of funding** required to complete the proposed research in the Budget as Other Contributions (see [Application Instructions](#)).

Refer to the [SHRF Funding Guide section 2.5](#) for important spending policies which apply to all SHRF programs.

Examples of Allowable Expenses:

- Research staff salary and benefits
- Studentships
- Research allowance for co-applicants from eligible not-for-profit organizations
- Honoraria
- Culturally appropriate ceremony, gifts, etc.
- Travel to complete proposed activities
- Nourishment for meetings involving non-academics
- Supplies

In addition to policies for allowable expenses outlined in [SHRF Funding Guide section 2.5](#), the following are specific expenses NOT allowable for the Align Grant. Budgets requests that include any of the following will be reduced accordingly.

- Academic dissemination (journal articles, conference presentations, etc.)
- Activities for the express purpose of preparing the future grant proposal submission
- Equipment
 - Equipment is defined by SHRF as any item (or collection of items comprising a system) of nonexpendable tangible property used for research having a useful life beyond the original term of the project, no matter the cost
 - If you feel you have a compelling case to make an exception, please contact the program manager listed in this guide

Review Process

This year applications will be reviewed by an internal SHRF committee which will consider the following:

Quality of Proposal

- Are the objectives and expected outcomes of the proposed activities clear and well defined?
- Do the proposed activities have clear and feasible plans, timelines and deliverables?
- Is the proposed budget appropriate, fiscally responsible and justified within the proposed activities?
- Does the application embody the purpose and objectives of the Align Grant?
- Where applicable, has it addressed the focus area of the call?

Team Composition

- Are roles and responsibilities of team members well described?

-
- Does the involvement of knowledge users or people with lived experience(s), as applicable, on the team support the application goals and activities in a meaningful way?
 - Does the proposal provide meaningful opportunities for Saskatchewan trainee(s) to be involved (paid as personnel or unpaid as applicant)?

Engagement and Outcomes

- Are planned interactions and connections with individuals or groups outside academia appropriate, well-described and likely to result in useful input and/or meaningful engagement, as appropriate?
- Is the future funding application identified logical and appropriate? Are the proposed activities likely to strengthen the application?

Funding Recommendations

Funding recommendations will be given to the SHRF CEO, who will confirm that the review process was followed, funding recommendations are within the limit of the available funding and approves the funding for successful applications.

Should the amount of eligible funding requested exceed available funds for the program, the CEO may recommend cuts to individual grants and/or prioritize grants based on the committee reviews and alignment with SHRF strategic goals.

Applicants will be notified by email of the funding outcome by the results date identified.

Reporting Requirements

SHRF requires that all grants follow SHRF's compliance policies listed in the [SHRF Funding Guide](#), including completion of requested progress and impact reporting, change requests, and financial statements of account.

Successful projects will be required to complete a final report at the end date of the grant and a follow-up report one year following the end date of the grant to confirm submission of at least one peer-reviewed funding application.

Application Instructions

This section reflects the information asked in the SHRF RMS. It identifies each tab, field and how the information will be requested. Fields that are mandatory will be marked with an asterisk (*). All information is entered in the SHRF RMS and submitted electronically. No other materials should be sent to SHRF.

Completing Your Personal Profile

The Personal Profile in the RMS must be completed by the Principal Investigator prior to submitting the full application.

It is strongly encouraged that all Project Role individuals, especially co-principal and co-applicants, complete their SHRF RMS profiles, but it is not a requirement at this time. The information collected in the Personal Profile will better help SHRF understand the demographics of our applicants and guide us in ensuring that we are upholding our values and strategic direction.

To access your Personal Profile, you will need to be on the home page, where you will then see a person icon titled "Personal Profile". Click on that icon and complete all required fields, then click "Save Draft" and "Save" to confirm the Personal Profile is complete. You can change your information at any time, just make sure to "Save Draft" or "Save" after changes are made.

Choosing the Association/Organization where Funding will be Held

With the updated RMS, you can have multiple Associations/Organizations tied to one personal profile. This function gives the Principal Investigator the ability to choose which Association/Organization funding should be held at, if successful in the competition. The Principal Investigator will need to confirm that the Association/Organization they wish to apply under is eligible to hold SHRF funds.

The Association/Organization must be chosen prior to opening the application. To change from one Association/Organization to another, you will need to be on your home page. In the top right corner of your screen, you will see a building icon. When you click on the icon, a drop down of your Associations/Organizations will appear, where you can then choose the one you would like to be displayed in the application you are applying for. Once you have chosen the correct Association/Organization, the page will reload, and you can click on the Funding Opportunities to then begin the steps to start an application.

NOTE: If your organization does not appear in the drop down menu, please contact helpdesk@shrf.ca with the name and address of the organization. Once the organization is added, it can be selected from the drop down menu.

Adding Individuals

Individuals can be invited to the application as either Applicants/Investigators, Personnel or Supporters (role definitions can be found in the latest Funding Guide). To add individuals, please see the “Project Roles” instructions under the “Application Details Tab” in this section.

Application Details Tab

NOTE: The majority of information under this tab is automatically filled in based on information from the Principal Investigator’s Personal Profile. It is important to keep your Personal Profile information up to date so that it is properly reflected in the application. Listed below is the information that you will need to complete.

Principal Investigator

Pulled from the Principal Investigator Personal Profile.

Organization Information

The Organization is auto-populated from your profile. The Organization listed in this application is where funding will be held, if successful. If the named Organization is incorrect, please stop working on your application and contact SHRF at helpdesk@shrf.ca.

* Faculty/College (Or equivalent)

This field is where you can insert the faculty or college where you affiliated in your organization. Please note that this field appears mandatory, but if you are not affiliated with a faculty or college, you can skip this field and still successfully submit your information.

Department (Or equivalent)

If applicable, list the Department you are affiliated with.

* Have you had previous Align Grant Funding for this Initiative

Please answer “Yes” or “No”. No further information will be required at this time.

Project Roles

Individuals can be invited to the application at both the Eligibility (if relevant) and Application stages as either Applicants/Investigators, Personnel or Supporters (role definitions can be found in the latest Funding Guide (shrf.ca/resources)). It is important to review the Project Team Requirements section in the Program Guide section of this Application Package so that you meet eligibility requirements.

To add someone to your grant, find the appropriate Project Role that they will be holding (i.e., Applicants/Investigators) and click the Envelope button. This will open a new window, where you will click the “+” button and fill in the requested information. Once you have added all members

of your application for that role, first click the “Save” button and then the “Invite” button to send the invitation(s). Invitations will be sent by email and each individual should accept or decline the invitation. It is important that all members respond to their invitation so that you can submit your application. If you need to resend invitations, click on the Envelope icon to open the window and you will see beside the name on the left-hand side a Paper Airplane icon which you can click to resend. **NOTE:** The save button will not send the invitations. You will need to do these steps for each Project Role. Please contact the Programs Team if you have any questions at helpdesk@shrf.ca.

Applicant/Investigators

Applicant/Investigators are individuals who contribute to the intellectual, cultural or scientific direction of the proposed work. They share responsibility for the direction of the proposed activities. They are designated as Principal Applicant, Co-Principal Applicant, or Co-Applicant based on their level of leadership responsibilities and involvement. Individuals invited to this Project Role are considered Team Members and count towards the Project Team Requirements.

Personnel

Personnel (Trainees and Research Staff) are individuals tasked to carry out aspects of the research project and will be compensated from the grant funds. Individuals invited to this Project Role are not named to the grant (as they are compensated from it).

Supporters

Supporters are individuals or organizations who provide a specific service in a limited and defined role in the proposed activities, have an interest in the research outcomes (i.e., knowledge user organization) or represent private industry. Individuals invited to this Project Role are not named to the grant and do not count towards the Project Team Requirements.

Grant Writer

Grant Writer is a role that includes a variety of individuals who support the Project Team in preparing the application or completing internal review activities. They are not members of the Project Team.

Proposed Project Tab

Lay Information

In lay terms, please provide a clear and concise title and description of the proposed research. The summary should briefly explain the area of interest/problem to be solved, its relevance to Saskatchewan and the potential impact it will have. Do not include references and avoid acronyms. Both the title and/or the summary may be shared with potential funding partners, for non-scientific reviewers and/or for communications purposes.

* **Lay Title**

Maximum 50 words.

* **Lay Summary**

Maximum 250 words.

Research Activity Details

* **Application Keywords**

Provide five keywords relevant to the proposed research that may assist in reviewer selection. To add keywords, click the "Enter Application Keywords". A new window will open. Click the "+" to add each five keywords. Once that is complete, click "Save", which will populate the table. Five keywords are required.

* **Please identify all ethics and safety approvals necessary to carry out the proposed research.**

Please choose: Human Ethics (Behavioural); Human Ethics (Biomedical); Animal Care; Biosafety; Radiation Safety; Health Authority (Operational); and/or None.

* **From the drop down, please choose one of the following:**

The dropdown, please choose: Necessary ethical and safety approvals have been received (this choice will trigger a second question); Ethics has been submitted for review; Ethics will be submitted for review; or Ethics and approvals not required.

* **Does this application propose research involving Indigenous peoples?**

Choose "Yes" or "No".

* **Does your proposal address the TCPS 2 - Chapter 9 Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit and Metis Peoples of Canada and Indigenous partnering community/organizational ethical guidelines?**

Choose "Yes" or "No".

* **Geographical Locations**

Please list all geographical locations below (i.e. cities, communities, regions, etc.) where the research activities will take place and/or where anticipated research participants reside. Be as specific as possible for your proposed research. Please add each location individually by clicking the "+" button. You may list up to 10 locations.

* **Target Audience**

Please indicate up to five potential target audiences for the proposed project. Please add each target audience individually by clicking the "+" button.

Proposal

In a maximum of 3 pages, the activity proposal should include the following:

1. Project goals and objectives.
2. Detailed description of the activities you will undertake (i.e. what are you doing, why, how will you do it, and who will be involved). Provide appropriate details depending on the nature of the activity. Be sure the engagement occurring outside the academic setting is clearly evident in the project description; and
3. Address how the proposed project and related activities will:
 - a. Develop and/or engage with a robust interdisciplinary research team and collaborative connections (existing members, potential relationships, partners and supporters);
 - b. Align research plans to the Saskatchewan context (what do you know already, what do you hope to find out) and the importance to health of Saskatchewan residents;
 - c. Inform research to respond to the needs of Saskatchewan stakeholders and research knowledge users;
 - d. Provide opportunities for trainees to develop research and professional skills related to the proposed project, and;
 - e. Position the research team to prepare an eligible application within two years of the grant start date to a peer-reviewed research funding competition at SHRF, regional, national or international level.
4. Discuss how the requested funding and proposed activities fit within a larger program of research or research plan, including:
 - a. If relevant, how they build directly on activities already completed;
 - b. If relevant, how they relate directly to other concurrent funding held or applied for; and
 - c. Potential future next steps.

* Activity Proposal

The proposal can be a maximum of 3 pages in a PDF format following SHRF formatting rules found in the current Funding Guide (shrf.ca/resources). To upload your proposal, please click the upload button. You will then be able to search or drop your proposal document into the system.

Timeline

Provide a clear, visual timeline indicating project start and end dates, various steps and stages, details on activities including team members responsible, and identify milestones/indicators of success. Timeline must be within funding year parameters (see related Application Package for grant terms).

* Timeline

The timeline is a maximum 1-page PDF following SHRF formatting rules found in the most recent Funding Guide (shrf.ca/resources). To upload the Timeline, please click the upload button. You will then be able to search or drop your document into the system.

Roles & Responsibilities

* Roles & Responsibilities

For each applicant and personnel named, please outline their roles and responsibilities in relation to the proposal and timeline. The Roles & Responsibilities is a maximum 2-page PDF following SHRF formatting rules found in the most recent Funding Guide. To upload the Roles & Responsibilities, please click the upload button. You will then be able to search or drop your document into the system.

For Align and Mobilize applications that do not require CVs, a brief (one sentence) description of the team members qualifications or experience should be included alongside their roles and responsibilities to assist reviewers in assessing if the responsibilities are appropriate.

Letters of Support

* Letters of Support

Supporters named in the project roles must provide a letter of support addressing their contributions and/or interest in the project. To upload the Letters of Support, please click the upload button. You will then be able to search or drop your documents into the system.

Supplementary Materials

Applicants may upload up to three (3) additional supporting documents directly relevant to the application. The file upload is sorting by file name-ascending. To upload your supplementary documents, please click the upload button. You will then be able to search or drop your document(s) into the system.

Budget Tab

Budget information should clearly reflect the plans outlined in the project description and only list the direct costs within the funding year parameters. In the following fields and tables, clearly identify the information requested. Please see the Application Package for grant terms and maximum requested amounts. Contributions from other funding sources and in-kind contributions required to complete the work described in the application should be listed in the "In-Kind/Other Contributions Budget" excel and outlined in the Budget Justification attachment. If any proposed research activities are dependent on other sources of funding not yet secured, a

contingency plan should be clearly identified and its impact on the execution of the research addressed.

* Budget Justification

The Budget Justification can be a maximum of 2 pages in a PDF format following SHRF formatting rules found in the current Funding Guide. To upload your budget justification, please click the upload button or drag/drop document(s).

* Budget Excel Template

To complete the Budget Table, you will need to complete the Budget Excel Template, which can be downloaded from the application in the RMS. In this excel you will see there are three sheets: Budget Table; Other Contributions; and Declaration of Overlap. The amounts entered will round to the nearest dollar. Upon completion of this Template and uploading it back into the system, click "Save Draft", and it will fill in the appropriate fields for each table. If at any time you wish to make changes to one of these tables, fill in your working excel document, upload the edited file to the RMS, click "Save Draft" and the new information should appear in the appropriate table. If you have any questions regarding this step, please email the Programs Team at helpdesk@shrf.ca. To upload the Budget Excel Template, please click the upload button or drag/drop document(s).

* Proposed Work Budget Table

After you have uploaded the Budget Excel Template, click "Save Draft" to update the information in the Proposed Work Budget Table. The budget will then be auto populated into the table on the application. The budget excel and budget table will have the following categories and fields:

- 1) Personnel Costs (Salaries & benefits allocated to project)
 - a) Research Staff (excluding trainees)
 - i) Research Assistants
 - ii) Technicians
 - iii) Other personnel (specify in Budget Justification)
 - b) Research Trainees
 - i) Postdoctoral Research Fellows
 - ii) Graduate Students
 - iii) Undergraduate Students
 - iv) Clinical Students, Residents & Fellows
 - c) Research Time Release
 - i) Time release (please specify in Budget Justification)
- 2) Research Costs

- a) Professional & Technical Services/Contracts
 - b) Consumables
 - c) Non-Consumables
 - d) Honoraria & Gifts
 - e) Travel
 - f) Other (specify in Budget Justification)
- 3) Knowledge Sharing Costs
- a) Academic
 - i) Conferences (i.e. registration, printing costs, etc.)
 - ii) Publications
 - iii) Travel
 - iv) Other
 - b) Non-Academic
 - i) Events (i.e. relationship building, knowledge sharing, etc.)
 - ii) Publications
 - iii) Travel
 - iv) Other

Budget Documentation

Please attach any correspondence and/or documentation confirming important details related to the budget (i.e. Other funding support, contract arrangements, quotes, etc.). To upload your budget documentation, please click the upload button or drag/drop document(s).

Future Funding Applications

* Future Funding Applications

In the table, please provide the details of the funding you will apply for to build on the work completed through this grant. At least one eligible opportunity with a deadline within 2 years must be identified and referenced within the proposal. Please add each future funding individually by clicking the "+" button.

Approvals Tab

Organizational Approvals

Approval Page Download

Please download the Organizational Approval page and acquire the appropriate signatures (i.e. Principal Investigator, Research Office Representative). **NOTE:** For Mobilize Grant applicants from a non-profit or other organization that does not have a research office (or equivalent), we only require the Principal Investigator signature. Click the "Approval Page" button to download the document.

* Approval Page Upload

Please upload the signed document in a PDF format. To upload your approval page, please click the upload button. You will then be able to search or drop your document into the system.

Submitting your Application

Once you have completed all required fields and all invited individuals have accepted their invitations (where appropriate), you can submit your application. To do this click the “Save Draft” button and then click the “Submit” button. If fields are not complete, the system will inform you of what requires attention.