Inter-University Research Network (IURN)
Guidelines and Application for Funding

Application Deadline: May 6, 2022

Deadlines

Online applications activated: March 24, 2022

Application deadline: 4:30 pm, May 6, 2022

Communication of funding decisions: June 10,2022

Background and IURN Priorities

1.   Closing the Achievement Gap
IURN is committed to supporting projects that close the achievement gap in education. The achievement gap refers to disparities in academic performance between particular groups of students related to systemic inequities that result in unequal access to learning opportunities, achievement, and benefits.

The achievement gap in the Nova Scotian context is evident in the underachievement of many African Nova Scotian and Mi'kmaq learners, as well as learners experiencing poverty in comparison to the wider Nova Scotian student population. Achievement gaps are reflected in grades, standardized test results, course selection, and high school and post-secondary completion rates, among other measures. The Province of Nova Scotia has made strides in identifying achievement gaps, particularly in relation to math, literacy, and high school and post-secondary completion.

2.   Supporting Research Partnerships
IURN will prioritize funding projects that engage partnerships with local organizations, community groups, regional centres for education/regional school board and schools. Priority will be given to collaborative research teams with representation from university faculty, public school teachers, students, and community members.

3.   **Drawing on Local knowledge**

IURN will prioritize supporting projects with a strong focus on generating local knowledge within a community context. Priority will be given to research proposals demonstrating a connection to place with potential to provide research evidence that will inform teaching and learning practices in Nova Scotia schools.

4.   **Maximizing Impacts**

IURN will prioritize funding for research projects that clearly demonstrate potential impacts for teacher practice, student learning, engagement, and well-being.

Eligibility

Funding through the IURN is open to research teams affiliated with a post-secondary institution or non-for-profit education organization that conduct work in Nova Scotia to further the understanding of the achievement gap and of strategies to improve student achievement and well-being. Research teams may consist of university faculty, teachers, students, and community members as co-researchers to increase the potential for impact on teacher practice and student learning (Knowledge Translation).

Applicants who are currently in receipt of IURN funding may apply to extend funding for an existing project if they are able to demonstrate that the initial phase of work has been completed.

Funding Details

Funds from the grant must be applied directly to the costs of carrying out the research. One of the members of the research team's host institution(s) must provide for administrative and overhead costs.

Schedule of Rates

- Research Assistants: $20.00 per hour (maximum). During the academic year, student research assistants may not be asked to work more than 8 hours per week. For full-time work during the summer, student research assistants will also receive 11.5% in lieu of benefits.
- Meals: $40.00 per day (maximum)
- Accommodation: Any reasonable rate for single accommodation
- Meterage: $0.42 per km

Grant Payments

Following receipt of all required ethics or board approvals, a one-year Letter of Agreement (LOA) will be signed between the host university or organization and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development (EECD). Funding of successful research grants will be made in two payments, with the first installment paid upon the grantor's receipt of two signed copies of the LOA. Subsequent payments will be contingent upon detailed progress reports and the assessment by the IURN Steering Committee that reasonable progress is being made.

The IURN may withhold further funding if a study is not moving forward as outlined in the proposal, or not following planned expenditures. Any changes to budget, timeline, and methodology need to be approved in writing by the IURN Steering Committee at least one month in advance of the implementation of the changes.

The final payment will be made at the completion of the project when all reports and accompanying paperwork have been submitted to the committee and the research findings have been shared with educational partners.

Ongoing/Long-term Research Projects

Initial Year of Funding

Research funding provided by the Nova Scotia Department of Education and Early Childhood Development is allocated for one year. The IURN Steering Committee recognizes that some projects may require more than one year to complete. Applicants proposing multi-year projects must clearly identify in the "Timeline/Milestones" section of the application how the research fits into a long-term strategy. In this case, the research should be presented in a phased approach with clearly identified deliverables within the initial year of funding. Applicants proposing long-term research programs are encouraged to pursue additional partnerships and sources of funding.

Project Extensions and Expansions

To request an extension of time to complete an existing study, contact Patrick Kakembo at:
Patrick.kakembo@novascotia.ca

Project Proposal Information

The written project proposal (maximum 4 pages) must include the following:

1. **Introduction**—background, context, framing proposed project

2. **Purpose of research**—goals and significance of the proposed research

3. **Research methodology**—how the researcher team will collect data (observation, interview, consideration of schools, grades involved, etc.), including steps to be taken to ensure confidentiality of all subjects

4. **Data analysis procedures**—how the research team will analyze and interpret data

5. **Project timeline/milestones –** clear timeline by month/year

6. **Knowledge mobilization (communication) plan-** clear articulation of how the findings will be communicated to teachers, communities, and other educational partners in accessible language and format.

7. **Measure of impact –** clear plan for how impact of the project will be measured and understood

8. **Credentials and capacity of research team** – why the research team is the right mix of people to see project through to completion

9. **Alignment with IURN Priorities:** Clear articulation of how the project will address each priority:

   - Closing the achievement gap
   - Supporting research partnerships
   - Drawing on local knowledge
   - Maximizing impacts

Evaluation Criteria

Applications will be assessed according to the following criteria:

- **Purpose of research**
- **Research methodology and data analysis strategy** is suitable
- **Feasibility** of the proposed research, including a timetable for completion and an assessment of resources needed to complete the project
- **Communication strategy** is clear and achievable
- **Impact potential**
- **Credentials/capacity** of the research team to undertake the proposed course of study
- **Completeness** of the application (including appropriateness of budget information; see Funding section below)
- **Alignment of proposed research with IURN Priorities**
  - **Closing the achievement gap** with the potential to further understanding of the achievement gap and of strategies to improve student learning, achievement (priority may be given to projects that have a focus on improved student learning, engagement, and well-being).
  - **Supporting Research partnership** that demonstrate a commitment to engaging in collaborative research embedded in practice
  - **Drawing on local knowledge** within context of Nova Scotia schools
  - **Maximizing Impacts** by clearly outlining a plan to communicate findings (knowledge translation plan), including building the capacity of partners through collaboration with public school teachers and administrators as co-researchers

Submitting your Application

The following information must be submitted by email (Rhonda.Feener@novascotia.ca>) attachments or postmarked by **4:00 p.m.** on **May 6, 2022**:

1. **Inter-university Research Network funding application**
2. **Abbreviated Curriculum Vitae**—maximum 4 pages (include areas of expertise and recent publications)
3. **Written Project Proposal**—maximum 4 pages (see "Project Proposal Information" below)
4. **Current criminal record check and Child-Abuse Registry check**—if required
5. **Copy of current ethics review committee approval**—if available

Project Completion

Principle investigators may be asked to make a presentation to the IURN steering committee on their research. The project will be considered complete when all reports and accompanying paperwork have been submitted to the committee. The final report, including a copy of research findings shared with educational partners, must be submitted both in hard copy and electronic formats to the IURN Steering Committee Chair. Once the project is complete, the investigator is welcome to apply for a new IURN grant.