Discovery Horizons & Tri-Agency Interdisciplinary Peer Review Committee

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Tri-Agency Interdisciplinary Peer Review Committee (TAIPR)

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- Launched as a pilot in 2021, TAIPR is now a regular feature of the participating gateway funding opportunities as of 2024.

- TAIPR supports research across disciplines pertaining to two or more of the (1) social sciences and humanities, (2) natural sciences and engineering, and (3) health and wellness, and that clearly articulates interdisciplinary approaches.

- Applicants must direct their proposals to the agency-specific funding opportunities responsible for the dominant component of their research.

Key Dates for 2025-2026

NSERC Discovery Horizons – Letter of Intent, 16 June 2025   *Natural science and engineering focused projects

CIHR Fall Project Grant – Registration, August 2025   *Health focused projects

SSHRC Insight Grants – Full Application, 1 October 2025   *Social sciences and humanities focused projects

SSHRC Insight Development Grants – Full Application, 2 February 2026   *Social sciences and humanities focused projects

CIHR Spring Project Grant – Registration, February 2026   *Health focused projects

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NSERC's Discovery Horizons Program

Objectives

1. Answer Natural Sciences or Engineering (NSE) research questions that are best addressed through interdisciplinary approaches

2. Advance NSE disciplines through cross fertilization and new ways of thinking about:

    - research questions, ideas and frameworks;

    - approaches and methods;

    - platforms, tools and infrastructure;

    - people, partners and trainees

3. Provide leading-edge NSE training for highly qualified personnel (HQP) in interdisciplinary research environments

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NSERC's Discovery Horizons Program

- Supports individual and team-based investigator-initiated projects, for up to 5 years ($50K to $100K per year and commensurate to the size of the research team)

- Total Discovery Horizons budget $5M over 5 years (10-20 awards)

- Eligible proposals must meet **both following criteria**:

  - Have a primary objective to advance knowledge in the NSE

  - Integrate or transcend disciplines in ways that would significantly benefit from peer review with a tri-agency interdisciplinary committee

- Submit to the agency that is responsible for the **dominant research discipline(s) or area(s)**. *Selecting the appropriate federal granting agency*, and the *Addendum to the guidelines for the eligibility of applications related to health*

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Eligibility

Applicants, Co-applicants and Collaborators

- The applicant and any co-applicants must all be **eligible to hold NSERC funding**.

- Only one Discovery Horizons application, as either an applicant or co-applicant, per competition cycle.

- **Novelty:** Policy on Sensitive Technology Research and Affiliations of Concern

- **Important reminder:** Researchers **must choose** between applying to Discovery Horizons or Discovery Grant, depending on the nature of the research.

- Collaborators contribute to the execution of research activities but do not have access to grant funds, can be located in Canada or abroad.

- Co-applicants and collaborators can be added/removed at LOI or application phase.

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Application procedure

Letter of intent (LOI) – Due June 16th 2025

- LOI is mandatory and includes a **brief summary** (2500 char) and responses to the **four criteria**.

  - Explain how this project would benefit from being assessed by a TAIPR committee, as opposed to a joint review by <u>NSERC's Discovery Grants</u> evaluation groups (1000 char)

  - Demonstrate that the interdisciplinary approach is essential to achieving the project goals

  - Demonstrate that the interdisciplinary elements are integrated and inseparable (i.e., not sub-projects that could be reviewed on their own merit) (1000 char)

  - Describe how the interdisciplinary approach significantly enriches HQP training (1000 char)

- Must indicate if the application will involve Indigenous Peoples and communities

  - Applicants should review the additional guidance documents found on the <u>NSERC website</u>

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Review process of the LOIs

- Program Fit Advisors will assess and identify a limited number of LOI applicants who will be invited (in August) to submit a full application

	High	Medium	Low
Does the project require interdisciplinary tri-agency review for fair assessment?	Project includes clear elements outside the expertise of NSERC's Discovery Grants peer review committees	Some elements of the project may be on the borders of NSERC's Discovery Grants peer review committees	All elements of the project fit within the expertise of NSERC's Discovery Grants peer review committees
Is the interdisciplinary approach essential to achieving project goals?	Project goals could not be achieved without the interdisciplinary approach	Interdisciplinary elements add value but project goals could mostly be achieved without them	Project goals could be achieved without interdisciplinary elements
Are the interdisciplinary elements integrated and inseparable?	The interdisciplinary elements could not be addressed in separate sub-projects that could be reviewed by different agencies	Interdisciplinary elements are included but potentially separable	Project could readily be divided into separate proposals that could be reviewed by different agencies
Does the interdisciplinary approach significantly enrich HQP training?	Training opportunities are novel, due to fully integrating expanded interdisciplinary perspectives and development opportunities	Training opportunities include some interdisciplinary perspectives and development opportunities	Training opportunities are standard, and do not integrate expanded interdisciplinary perspectives and development opportunities

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Application procedure

Full application – Due October 20th 2025

- Selected applicants will be invited to submit a full proposal and will receive further guidance on application requirements with that invitation.

    o Invitations will be sent out mid-August.

- Full applications will need to address the selection criteria listed below, in a ten-page (max) research proposal:

    o **Merit of the proposed research**
    o **Anticipated outcomes**
    o **Record of the applicant(s)**

- **Important reminders**
    o Must choose between DH and DG depending on nature of research
    o **Narrative CV**. Check NSERC DH application webpage for update this summer.
    o Policy on Sensitive Technology Research and Affiliations of Concern

The Policy on Sensitive Technology Research and Affiliations of Concern (STRAC)
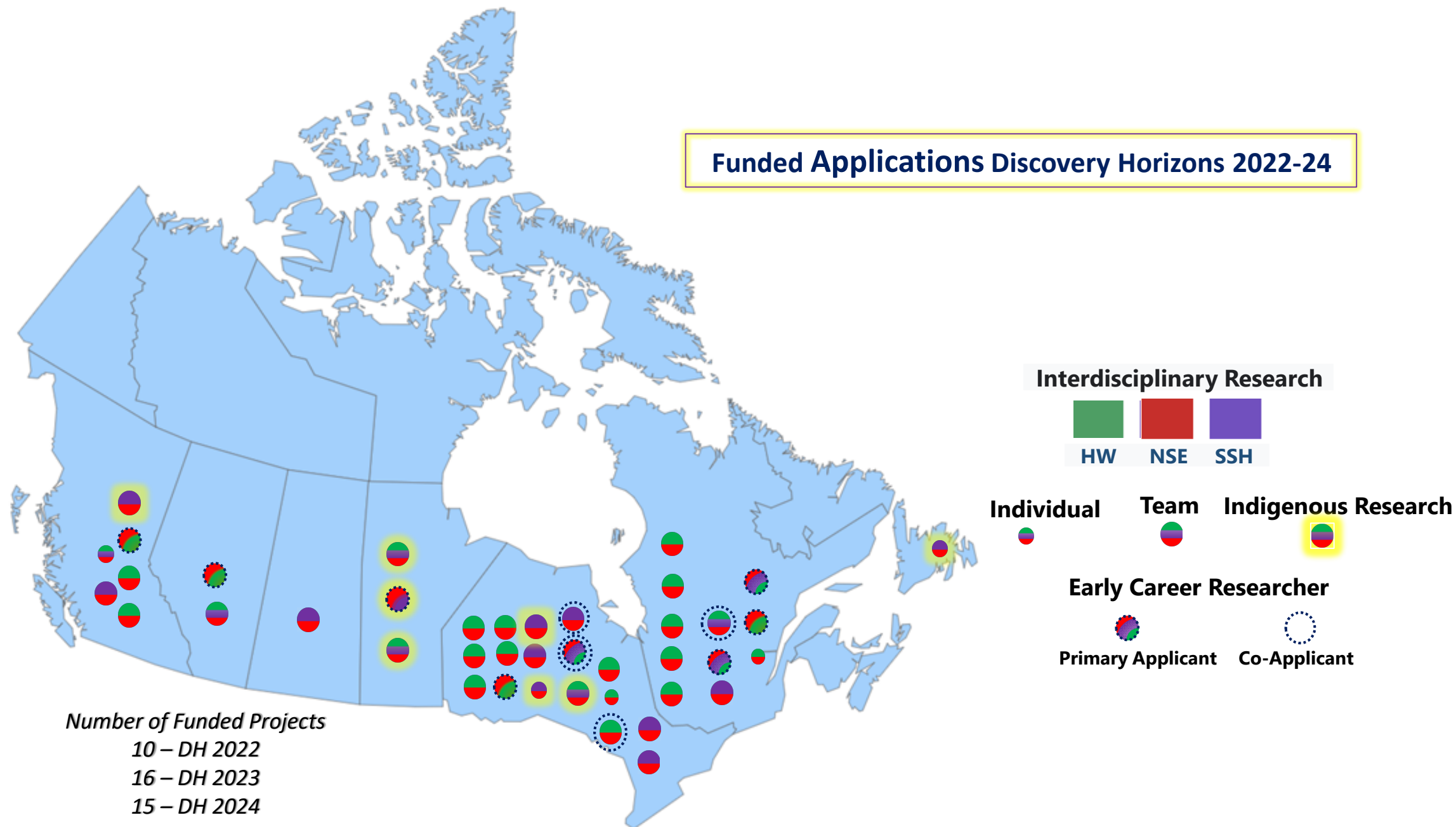
Overview of the STRAC Policy:

- On January 16, 2024, the Government of Canada announced the <u>Policy on Sensitive Technology Research and Affiliations of Concern</u> (STRAC Policy).

- The policy operates using two lists that **must be used in conjunction** — a list of <u>Sensitive Technology Research Areas</u> (STRA) and a list of <u>Named Research Organizations</u> (NRO).

- The granting agencies and the CFI are implementing the policy in harmonized manner, starting with funding opportunities launching as of **May 1st, 2024**.

- At the application stage, applicants will be asked to identify if the research supported by their grant will aim to **advance a STRA.** If it will <u>not aim to advance a STRA</u>, no action is required.

- If the grant aims to **advance a STRA**, researchers with named roles (applicant, co-applicants, collaborators) on the application must complete **attestation forms** to certify their compliance. In addition, for the duration of the grant, no researchers involved in activities supported by the grant can be affiliated with, or in receipt of funding or in-kind support, from an **NRO.**

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Discovery Horizons (DH)

	2022	2023	2024[C]
Number of LOIs received	842	410	81
Number of LOIs invited	64	58	43
Number of applications	55	50	33
Number of awards	10	16	15
Success rate[A]	18%	32%	45%
DH budget[B]	$4,757,857	$6,959,487	$5,524,730

A – Success rate from application stage.
B – Total funding for the duration of the grant (3-5years)
C – Eligibility change, applicants must choose between DH and DG

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Funded Applications Discovery Horizons 2022-24

Interdisciplinary Research

HW NSE SSH

Individual **Team** **Indigenous Research**

Early Career Researcher

Primary Applicant **Co-Applicant**

Number of Funded Projects
10 – DH 2022
16 – DH 2023
15 – DH 2024

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Awards

- **Orbital and surface risks from rocket bodies: Physical challenges, interdisciplinary solutions**; Boley, Aaron from UBC (Team of 2)

- **A mechanistic computational framework for modelling a pandemic and socio-economic response against new virus variants**; Wan, Richard from University of Calgary (Team of 5)

- **Restoring the volitional control of a paralyzed lymb using patient-controlled spinal cord stimulation**; Ioro-Morin, Christian from Université de Sherbrooke (Team of 5)

- NSERC - Research Grants Competition - Results TAIPR- 2023

Contacts

Questions

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Thank you!