

WORKERS COMPENSATION BOARD OF MANITOBA

**GUIDELINES FOR COMPLETING
A NOTICE OF INTENT**

RESEARCH AND WORKPLACE INNOVATION PROGRAM

*Funding occupational health research, training and education
and innovative workplace solutions*

CLOSING DATE

MARCH 27, 2018

1. Introduction

Prospective applicants under the Scientific Research Funding Stream of the Research and Workplace Innovation Program (RWIP) must initially provide a Notice of Intent (NOI) to the WCB on or before the closing date: **March 27, 2018, by 4:00 p.m. CST.**

An NOI typically provides an abbreviated description of the proposed study and precedes a full Scientific Research application. **An NOI is a pre-requisite for applications in the Scientific Research Funding stream.** The WCB will not consider a full Scientific Research applications unless it receives an NOI by the closing date specified above.

Applicants are expected to use the downloadable template provided on the WCB webpage for the RWIP when completing an NOI. The NOI must be submitted in Word format.

The link to template for the Notice of Intent may be accessed [here](#)

2. Information to Include in the NOI

The NOI should be brief and include the information below:

- Working title of proposed study/research project;
- Scientific Research Priority selected for the project;
- Brief description of proposed study/research project;
- Study disciplines applicable to the proposed study/research project;
- Information on the principal applicant/s and co-applicant/s to include: name, title, host institution, business mailing address, telephone number, email and other contact information;
- Brief description of WCB data if the applicant intends to use WCB data in the proposed study/research project. The link to the WCB's current Injury Statistics may be accessed [here](#)

- Indicate if a similar NOI has been submitted to the RWIP in a prior Call for Applications; and
- Provide the names and contact information of two (2) peer reviewers.

3. Number of NOI Submissions

A principal applicant may submit more than one NOI in the same annual Call for Applications. A principal applicant may also be a co-applicant in an NOI submitted by a different principal applicant in the same annual Call for Applications.

4. Preliminary Review of NOI

The WCB will conduct a preliminary review of all NOI. The criteria for the WCB's preliminary review of a NOI include but are not limited to the following:

- The NOI is within the RWIP mandate;
- It addresses one of the 2018 Scientific Research Priorities;
- The proposed study would result in practical outcomes for the WCB and its stakeholders; and
- The principal applicant/s co-applicant/s do not have a history of default with RWIP funding previously.

The WCB will invite applicants to submit a full Scientific Research application if it is determined that the NOI would likely to lead to high-quality research on a topic that is within the WCB's Scientific Research Priorities for 2018 or within the overall mandate of the RWIP.

If an NOI does not pass the WCB's preliminary review, the principal applicant will be advised by Bruce M. Cielen, Manager, Research and Workplace Innovation Program, not to submit a full Scientific Research application.

An NOI is not required for applications submitted under the Training and Education funding stream or the Workplace Innovation funding stream.

An NOI must be submitted electronically **via email** to: Bruce M. Cielen, Manager, Research and Workplace Innovation Program at Email: bcielen@wcb.mb.ca by **March 27, 2018 by 4:00 p.m. CST.**

5. Scientific Research Priorities: 2018 RWIP Call for Applications

The WCB has identified two Scientific Research Priorities for applications submitted under the Scientific Research Funding Stream of the RWIP. The purpose of the Scientific Research Priorities is to provide applicants with guidance in developing their research proposals and improve the relevance and practicality of the research to the WCB and its stakeholders.

The WCB's Scientific Research Priorities for the 2018 Call for Applications

Timely, Meaningful and Sustainable Return to Work/Stay at Work

This Scientific Research Priority for the 2018 Call for Applications under the Research and Workplace Innovation Program (RWIP) is consistent with the WCB's commitment to promote the value of Return to Work (RTW) and supporting best practices in RTW. Under the WCB's Five Year Plan RTW includes helping workplaces increase the effectiveness of their RTW programs, delivering RTW training, and ensuring the WCB provides quality services that assist workers to return to meaningful and productive work as soon as medically fit after an injury and illness.

Examples of potential research topics under this Scientific Research Priority may include studies that:

- ❖ Explore the interrelationships between prevention, early intervention and RTW to identify practices that support successful RTW outcomes in Manitoba workplaces;
- ❖ Investigate the effect on claim duration of RTW practices for specific industry sectors that would reveal and provide evidence for the barriers, facilitators and related issues of RTW and/or stay at work; and
- ❖ Identify and examine best practices for RTW and disability management programming in Manitoba, including the development of leading indicators and predictive factors of successful RTW.

The WCB's Scientific Research Priorities for the 2018 Call for Applications

Assessment, Screening, Monitoring and Control of Physical, Chemical and Biological Exposure Agents in the Workplace

This Scientific Research Priority is carried over from 2017 to reflect the recent establishment of SAFE Work Manitoba's Prevention Strategy on Occupational Disease and Illness. This Strategy will use four tactics to strengthen occupational disease and illness prevention in Manitoba workplaces:

- ❖ Monitoring workers' exposures to physical and chemical hazards.
- ❖ Identifying exposure levels and effective safety controls based on evidence from the monitoring.
- ❖ Educating and building awareness among all Manitobans about occupational disease and illness prevention.
- ❖ Strengthening partnerships to prevent occupational disease and illness.

Examples of potential research topics under this Scientific Research Priority may include studies that:

- ❖ Evaluate and review existing tools that assess and monitor toxic exposures;
- ❖ Identify deficits in the assessment of workplace exposure hazards; and
- ❖ Develop practical tools that are cost effective and easy to use for risk assessment and mitigation strategies in the workplace.

Other Topics within the RWIP Mandate

The WCB will continue to accept applications under the Scientific Research funding stream that are within the mandate of the RWIP but which do not address Research Priorities 1 and 2 above.

6. Identification and Selection of Peer Reviewers

Although the RWIP reserves the right to determine which experts are the most suitable to review a Scientific Research application, the applicant submitting the NOI must identify **two peer reviewers** who are qualified to review the Scientific Research application and who would not be in a conflict of interest with the principal applicant/s or co-applicant/s.

A peer review is an evaluation of scientific, academic or professional work by experts working in the same field. In general, a peer review assesses the originality and quality of a Scientific Research application received under the RWIP's annual Call for Applications.

The link to the Criteria for the Peer Review of Scientific Research applications may be accessed [here](#)

7. Important Factors to Consider when Identifying and Selecting Peer Reviewers in the NOI

Factors that should be considered in identifying a peer reviewer include but are not limited to the following:

- The peer reviewer should have expertise in the relevant fields and disciplines identified in the NOI to successfully undertake an evaluation of the proposed study;
- The peer reviewer should be impartial. The peer reviewer is expected to produce an independent and unbiased evaluation of the Scientific Research application;
 - An impartial reviewer would typically be a person in the same academic arena with whom the applicant has **no** on-going or anticipated research collaboration in the near future.
- The peer reviewer should not have a Conflict of Interest with the principal applicant/s or co-applicant/s in undertaking an evaluation of the proposed study;

- To avoid Conflict of Interest when identifying a peer reviewer, the principal applicant should take into consideration the following:
 - The individual identified should not be a principal applicant or co-applicant in any other NOI and Scientific Research application submitted in the current year's Call for Applications;
 - The principal applicant must ensure that the agreement from each peer reviewer identified in the NOI must be obtained prior to submitting their names on the NOI.
 - The individual identified should not be from the same academic department, research institution, union or company;
 - The individual identified should not have had research collaboration, or co-authorship with the principal applicant/s or co-applicant/s within the past three years, or has one proposed in the immediate future;
 - The individual identified has not had a professional association as a student, postdoctoral fellow or supervisor with the principal applicant/s or co-applicant/s in the past three years;
 - The individual identified should not have a close personal or business relationship with the principal applicant/s or co-applicant/s; or,
 - The individual identified should not have had long-standing scientific or personal differences with the principal applicant/s or co-applicant/s.

Other Considerations in Selection of Peer Reviews

The WCB Manitoba makes every effort to ensure, not only that its decisions are fair and objective, but also that they are seen to be so. Therefore, a peer reviewer identified in the NOI should avoid any actions that might give the appearance that a conflict of interest exists or could reasonably be viewed as affecting the evaluator's objectivity.

The WCB's processes are intended to ensure the highest standards of integrity in the selection and evaluation of applications in the Scientific Research funding stream. The established processes also ensure efficiency in the administration of this phase in the funding process.

The WCB advises that the principal applicant/s or co-applicant/s identified in an NOI should be the same in the full application when it is submitted under the Scientific Research funding stream. When there are changes the WCB should be informed before the closing date for the submission of the full Scientific Research application.

8. Process after Preliminary Screening of a NOI

When an NOI passes the preliminary screening, the WCB will contact the peer reviewers identified in the NOI to confirm their willingness to peer review the full Scientific Research application.

In situations where the peer reviewer identified in the NOI is unable to undertake the peer review of the full Scientific Research application, the WCB will contact the principal applicant to request names of alternate peer reviewer/s.

9. Timeframe to Peer Review a Scientific Research Application

The review of a Scientific Research application is to be undertaken during the period May 22, 2018 to June 26, 2018.

Peer reviewers will be provided with the full Scientific Research application, evaluation criteria, evaluation format and guidelines for completing the review shortly after the WCB receives the full Scientific Research application.

10. Other Information for Peer Reviews

- Peer reviewers will be requested to sign a statement of confidentiality and conflict of interest; and
- The WCB offers an honorarium of \$150.00 for each peer review.

If you have any questions or difficulties completing the NOI you may contact Bruce M. Cielen, Manager, RWIP at Email: bcielen@wcb.mb.ca or Tel: (204) 954-4650 or toll-free 1-855-954-4321