

There is a persistent gap in women's cardiovascular health scientific knowledge and clinical care. Globally, one in three women will die because of heart disease and stroke. Heart attacks, and other cardiovascular disease often go undetected in women due to different clusters of symptom presentation compared to 'classic' symptoms in men. The Libin Cardiovascular Institute's goal is to close this gap for women's cardiovascular health research, training and care and improve health outcomes for women.

As part of the Libin Cardiovascular Institute's ongoing commitment towards advancing women's cardiovascular health, the Institute is supporting the development of collaborative research projects within identified research priority areas in women's cardiovascular health. The goal of this call is to catalyze collaborative, innovative, multi-disciplinary projects within the women's cardiovascular health initiative, by incentivizing Libin members to establish new and strengthen existing collaborations.

Eligible research areas will include the top 10 research priority areas identified in the Modified Delphi Process undertaken across 2022-2023. These include:

- 1) Sex specific causes and consequence of leading cardiovascular diseases in women
- 2) The natural history of shifts in sex steroid hormones (menarche, menstrual cycle, menopause, and exogenous hormones) across the life cycle and impact on cardiovascular health and disease in women.
- 3) The impact of pregnancy and negative outcomes of pregnancy on cardiovascular health and disease in women.
- 4) Culturally tailored cardiovascular disease (CVD) prevention strategies to reduce CVD in women from groups at heightened risk.
- 5) Policies to assess and report sex-specific medication efficacy, side-effects, and risk/benefit profiles for new and existing drugs.
- 6) Sex and gender-specific protocols for evaluation of possible cardiovascular disease.
- 7) Sex and gender-related cardiovascular risk factors in younger women to improve prevention, risk assessment, and treatment options.
- 8) Cardiovascular health of Indigenous, First Nations, Inuit, and Metis women.
- 9) Inclusion of Black and women of colour in cardiovascular health and disease research.
- 10) Role of gender (e.g., identity, roles, relations, and institutionalized gender) in women's cardiovascular health.

It is expected that the projects will be collaborative, and multi-disciplinary by involving more than one lab group, and research focus (i.e, pregnancy, or arrhythmia) in their application. Collaboration outside of the Cumming School of Medicine, and the University of Calgary are strongly encouraged. Each project should also employ a SGBA+, and social determinants of health approach to data collection and analysis. Projects should also consider strategies to include and mitigate risks for the following populations in their research:

- First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities
- Racialized Canadians
- Individuals within the LGBTQ2S+ community

# Women's Cardiovascular Health Initiative

Research Priorities Catalyst Grant 2023

For research involving Indigenous communities please ensure you are familiar with [TCPS2 Chapter 9](#), [OCAP](#) and the ethical requirements to work with Indigenous communities. [The Indigenous Research Support Team](#) at UCalgary has training resources and provides consultations for proper processes and wise practices for engagement with Indigenous communities.

## Award Terms:

Principal applicants must be a Research or Clinical member of the LCI and hold a faculty appointment at the University of Calgary. Trainees are eligible to be co-applicants, but not principal applicants.

This award will be adjudicated by a panel including researchers, clinicians, stakeholders, and people with lived experience. The application deadline will be December 15<sup>th</sup> 2023, with the notice of award occurring in early February 2024. As a condition of support, there is an expectation that each supported project will culminate in a submission for a major external award (CIHR, Heart & Stroke, etc.) within 12 months of the NOA. In addition, successful applicants will be required to submit progress reports, and a final report to the LCI. Failure to submit report or meet goals will result in loss of eligibility for future awards/support. In addition, funds may be taken back by the LCI if these award terms are breached including failure to demonstrate reasonable progress, or inappropriate use of funds.

## Adjudication:

The award committee will broadly follow CIHR review guidelines, with specific instructions on alignment with the Libin strategic plan and vision, and the identified priority areas.

- Alignment of project with research priority areas and women's CV health.
- Focus on collaborative research
- Strength of research team and infrastructure.
- Ability to secure external funding after catalyst support
- Appropriate incorporation of women's health, and/or sex and gender throughout the application.

## Available funds and period of support:

Application Teams may request up to \$25K which can be used across a 24-month period following the NOA. Teams may apply for one 12-month, no-cost extension; however, success will be contingent on study progress and/or challenges.

## Eligible and Ineligible Expenses:

Catalyst funding may be used to support direct research costs including research equipment, minor equipment (<5K), materials and supplies, collaboration development, and study personnel (including trainee salary support). Funds may also be used to support knowledge translation and mobilization activities, including open access fees for publication. Funds may not be used for infrastructure support (i.e. construction/renovation, large office furniture (>5K), or large lab equipment (>5K).

## Application:

Applicants will submit an application which includes a brief project summary (1-2 pages), statement of alignment with identified research priorities, roles of applicants, budget, and applicant CCV Biosketches. In addition, all applicants must submit proof of completion of one of the CIHR Sex & Gender Modules. Detailed requirements can be found on the application form.

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We encourage you to participate in the LCI grant review process, including Test your Concept and Internal Peer Review. If you have any questions about this process or would like to engage in the planning or administration of project development, please contact Lauren Drogos ([lldrogos@ucalgary.ca](mailto:lldrogos@ucalgary.ca)).