GenomeQuébec

Genomics Integration Program

Human Health

Request for Applications

February 2026

GenomeQuébec

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1. MISSION AND OVERVIEW

Génome Québec's mission is to catalyze the development and excellence of genomics research, its integration and its democratization. To achieve this, it supports innovative projects across various sectors in Québec through investments that maximize socio-economic benefits and position Québec as a leader in the field.

Genomics is a revolutionary technology capable of transforming lives and offering solutions with substantial economic impact. Over the past twenty-six years, Génome Québec has invested over a billion dollars, which has enabled Québec to build a critical mass of competitive expertise to harness genomics as a catalyst for positive change in the life science field.

Globally, many countries are adopting national strategies to integrate genomic medicine into healthcare systems. Genomic medicine is reshaping the way we deliver healthcare by providing faster, more accurate diagnoses, more reliable prognoses and more effective and personalized therapies. Genomics is a unique asset, driving innovation in health and improving overall quality of life.

For healthcare professionals and biotechnology firms, genomics is accelerating the development of new companion diagnostic tests and the design of more targeted therapies, supported by enhanced pharmacovigilance. Genomics serves as a key driver of economic growth, scientific and technological innovation and industrial value creation. Its applications lead to substantial cost savings for the healthcare system by reducing inappropriate, low-value and imprecise testing, accelerating turnaround times for analyses and decreasing the use of ineffective drugs.

2. THE GENOMICS INTEGRATION PROGRAM

In the midst of this revolutionary movement, Génome Québec is facilitating the adoption of genomics by user communities through its ***Genomics Integration (GI) Program***. The program offers grants from $50,000 to $200,000 per project covering up to 50% of eligible costs for collaborations between researchers based in Québec and user partners capable of implementing or commercializing research results.

The funds are intended specifically to establish a **proof of concept** with the potential to secure subsequent funding. They can also be used to implement the results of a **proof of concept** by the user partner at the conclusion of the project. To be eligible, projects must pertain to human health and include an omics technology component, such as the use of AI-driven genomics data, genetic engineering, synthetic biology, the development of new

technologies or the validation of therapeutic targets or biomarkers identified through omics sciences, to name a few.

Here are the main objectives of the program:

- To develop applied genomics technologies
- To encourage and facilitate collaborations between user communities and academia in applied research
- To stimulate the expansion of research and development activities in Québec
- To prepare and train the next generation of scientists to meet workforce needs in academic, industrial, government, clinical and financial sectors
- To promote employment and economic growth in Québec by creating attractive and stimulating positions for researchers trained in our academic institutions
- To improve communication between senior management of private corporations and the academic research environment
- To foster the implementation of omics science research programs in start-ups, academic research centres, SMEs and larger companies
- To promote the transfer of technology and knowledge to practical applications with significant impact in health
- To advocate for the use of tools derived from omics technologies in the Québec healthcare system

2.1. Eligibility

To be eligible for funding, projects must meet the following criteria:

i. Each team must comprise at least two partners with distinctive roles:

- **Academic partner:**

The academic partner must be eligible to receive funding from Génome Québec. The principal investigator (PI), affiliated with a public research institution (university, college or other institution with an explicit research mandate), is responsible for the scientific leadership of the project and the administrative management of the awarded funds. A researcher may submit only one application per program cycle in the role of project lead.

- **Non-academic partner (user partner):**

The user partner is responsible for implementing or commercializing the research results. This partner must be affiliated with non-academic partners, such as companies, industrial consortia, non-profit organizations, healthcare organizations or government departments and bodies.

Non-academic organizations, including foundations and companies whose involvement is limited to financial or in-kind contributions, are not eligible to be recognized as user partners. They can, however, provide the co-funding needed to carry out the project.

ii. Projects must lead to social and/or economic benefits for Québec: job creation, economic growth, costs savings for public institutions, social impact, improved quality of life and health, etc.

iii. Projects must take place in Québec and address a significant need clearly identified by the user.

iv. Projects must pertain to human health and include an omics or multi-omics science component or enable its application. The term "omics" encompasses genomics, proteomics, transcriptomics, epigenomics, nutrigenomics, pharmacogenomics, metabolomics, metagenomics, genetic engineering, synthetic biology and bioinformatics.

v. The user partner must demonstrate the capacity to implement or commercialize project results in their business model. This demonstration can be supported by an implementation or commercialization plan that may include:

a. A business plan;
b. Revenues derived from the use, implementation or commercialization of similar products or services;
c. Demonstrated support from potential clients or end users;
d. Participation in an incubation program or commercialization training in life sciences;
e. Planned or possible regulatory initiatives; or
f. Any other relevant information supporting the capacity for implementation or commercialization

vi. Funds cannot be used to finance projects involving new fundamental discoveries. They must be used to establish a proof of concept.

vii. For commercialization projects with corporations, the technology readiness level (TRL) must be between 2 and 5 (see TRL Guide here).

2.2. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

At Génome Québec, we understand that the quality of genomic research and the solutions it provides is greatly enriched when different perspectives and expertise are brought to work together, allowing for a variety of viewpoints and ideas. The diversity of viewpoints expands our understanding of the ethical, social and cultural considerations related to advances in bio-innovation. It also makes it possible to include the values and preoccupations of

communities concerned, promoting a more responsible application of the technologies developed.

This funding opportunity encourages teams to bring together different voices and work on EDI principles to strengthen project impact. These principles are to be applied throughout, from project deliverables to the people involved in the projects and their end users. Should EDI principles not seem relevant for a specific project, research teams are asked to explain the reasons in their application.

For more information, we recommend that teams consult the strategic plan for EDI from the FRQ, the NSERC guidelines on EDI, the evaluation criteria for this funding opportunity in Appendix A, as well as the EDI guiding principles of Génome Québec in Appendix B.

We also encourage applicants to watch this video for practical advice on minimizing the influence of biases.

2.3. Available Funding, Co-Funding and Project Term

Teams can apply for grants ranging **$50,000 to $200,000 per project**. They must secure a minimum of 1:1 co-funding, for an overall budget of $100,000 to $400,000 or more per project. Co-funding can come from the user partner, the academic partner or any source other than the Ministère de l'Économie, de l'Innovation et de l'Énergie (see paragraph 3.4.1). Contributions can be in-kind if they occur within Québec. Project terms must be 6 to 24 months.

Génome Québec funding can only be disbursed to academic partners. This funding must be used exclusively to cover the costs of activities directly supporting the objectives of the project, as outlined in the budget approved by Génome Québec, and the expenses must be incurred within the province of Québec.

2.4. Cohorts and Available Genomic Data for Health Research

CARTaGENE is accessible to all private and public health researchers. Members of the research community are welcome to contact CARTaGENE (access@cartagene.qc.ca) directly should they wish to access data for their projects.

CARTaGENE is a public platform that includes both a database and a biobank of samples from a Québec population cohort of 43,000 participants aged 40 to 69 at recruitment, with prospective follow-up (https://cartagene.qc.ca/en/index.html). Recruitment took place in two phases (A: 2009–2010 and B: 2013–2014).

Available data include health, nutrition, environmental and lifestyle information, as well as physical measurements. Biological samples were collected to generate biochemical, lipid profiles and **genomic data** (genotyping and imputation data for the full cohort, whole genome sequencing (n=2,184), transcriptomic (n=1,000), etc.). Additionally, participant data are linked to other genealogy (BALSAC), environmental (CANUE) and clinico-administrative databases (MED-ECHO, Cancer Registry, Breast Cancer Registry, etc.), which are updated annually.

3. APPLICATION AND EVALUATION OF PROPOSALS

3.1. Application Process

Both academic and user teams interested in submitting an application under the GI Program can contact Génome Québec (see section 5 for contact name) for any questions regarding eligibility and budgets.

Applications must be submitted through the Génome Québec Application Portal. To activate your account, please email Génome Québec at Integration@genomequebec.com no later than **noon (ET)** on **May 11, 2026**.

All documents required to prepare an application are available on the Génome Québec website. The deadline for submission is **May 11, 2026, at 11:59 PM (ET).**
Resubmissions are permitted once after the initial evaluation. Feedback from the review committee must be addressed in the new application, with comments to this effect provided in the special section of the form.

After the application deadline, Génome Québec will perform an eligibility check of all applications. Only eligible applications will be sent for review by scientific experts and the independent peer committee. All experts and members of the committee will sign a confidentiality agreement and be required to disclose any potential conflicts of interest.

The committee will evaluate each application based on the criteria in Appendix A and will then make recommendations to Génome Québec. Once the review process is complete, teams will be notified of the decision and receive a summary of their application's strengths and weaknesses.

Génome Québec retains the right to adjust the evaluation process if the complexity of the applications, the volume of received applications or other factors justify it. Any modifications will be promptly communicated to the research teams submitting a proposal.

3.2. Eligible costs

Eligible costs are defined as reasonable expenses that directly contribute to the objectives of the project approved by Génome Québec. A detailed description of eligible costs can be found in the Génome Québec Funding Guidelines. The main categories of eligible costs include:

- **Salaries and Benefits**
- **Consumables**
- **Third-Party Services (outsourcing)**
  Each outsourced service must be supported by a quote from the service supplier, issued in the name of one of the team members. Recourse to service providers not based in Québec must be justified based on availability, quality, timeliness or cost.
- **General and Administrative Fees**
  Must not exceed 5% of the non-administrative expenses in the budget. Indirect research costs, including institutional overhead costs, are not eligible.
- **Equipment**
  Expenses related to the purchase of small equipment or the rental of equipment, to a maximum of 25% of the total eligible expenses funded by Génome Québec. The purchase price of each piece of equipment must be $25,000 or less, excluding taxes. A quote for the equipment purchase or rental issued in the name of the academic partner must be included in the application.

Budgets should not include costs already approved for funding from other sources, unless that funding has been specifically requested to support the project and meets all other eligibility criteria.

Expenses funded by Génome Québec and costs covered by eligible co-funding must be incurred after the Notice of Award (NOA) to be considered as eligible costs.

3.3. Ineligible Costs

Ineligible costs for projects funded by Génome Québec are outlined in the Génome Québec Funding Guidelines. Here are some examples of ineligible costs under the program:

i. Salaries (employee bonuses and recognition) for the principal investigator, co-investigators and senior management of user organizations;
ii. Indirect project costs, including indirect research costs and institutional overhead expenses;
iii. Entertainment, representations and gift purchases, including costs associated with regular interactions with colleagues and staff meetings;

iv. Employee bonuses and recognition;
v. Education-related costs, such as thesis preparation, tuition and course fees;
vi. Expenses for preparing teaching materials;
vii. Basic utilities, such as heating, lighting, water, compressed air, distilled water, vacuum pressure devices and janitorial services supplied for all laboratories within research facility;
viii. Insurance premiums for buildings and equipment;
ix. Costs associated with regulatory compliance, including ethical review, biohazard or radiation safety, environmental assessments or provincial or municipal regulations and by-laws;
x. Monthly parking fees for vehicles, unless specifically required for fieldwork;
xi. Sales taxes to which an exemption or rebate applies;
xii. Laboratory relocation expenses;
xiii. Alcoholic beverages;
xiv. Incorporation fees and legal fees related to a new or spin-off company.

3.4. Co-Funding

The application must include all documentation related to co-funding, which must be at least equal to Génome Québec's contribution (minimum ratio of 1:1). To be eligible, the co-funding must be incurred during the project or as of the notice of award. Here are examples of appropriate documentation:

i. A written confirmation, such as a letter from the co-funding source, committing to provide the funds.
ii. In the case of co-funding by a funding organization, a written confirmation of the availability of funds and a notification of award (if applicable) from the institution. The documentation must clearly demonstrate that the allocated funds will be used for the eligible costs included in the project budget approved by Génome Québec.
iii. For in-kind contributions: a clear rationale and precise calculation detailing how the value was determined, along with necessary documents to substantiate the contribution (e.g., price lists, etc.). All in-kind contributions must be auditable by external experts.

Please note that the entire co-funding must be secured at the time of application for proposals to be eligible for review. Supporting documentation on the financial sustainability and capacity to provide co-funding may be requested.

3.4.1. Eligible Co-Funding Sources

Génome Québec can accept the following potential co-funding sources, which can be Canadian or foreign, as long as the expenses are incurred in Québec:

i. Institutional funds, trust funds or foundations
ii. Private companies and industrial consortia
iii. Departments and agencies of the federal government, including the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) and tri-agency programs (e.g., Networks of Centres of Excellence, and Canada Research Chairs)
iv. Departments and agencies of the provincial and municipal governments, with the exception of the ministère de l'Économie, de l'Innovation et de l'Énergie (MEIE)
v. Firms and corporations
vi. Non-profit organizations
vii. Individuals
viii. Venture capital or other investment funds
ix. Cash contributions as co-funding are preferred. However, in-kind contributions, defined as non-cash contributions that can be given a cash value, may be considered as co-funding if:
    a. The value can be reasonably determined and supported by documentation; and,
    b. The value of the contribution is based upon the fair market value of a tangible item and sufficient justification is provided. Supplier discounts are one example. However, institutional discounts generally offered to medical establishments or research facilities are not eligible as co-funding.

3.4.2. Ineligible Co-Funding Sources

i. The value of existing intellectual property (IP) transferred to a project is not considered an eligible co-funding contribution.
ii. Co-funding that is not directly related to proof of concept.
iii. Co-funding from the Ministère de l'Économie, de l'Innovation et de l'Énergie or an organization supported by the MEIE (CQDM, FRQ, CRIBIQ, MEDTEQ, etc.) is not eligible.

4. ADMINISTRATION

4.1. Conditions of Release of Génome Québec Funds

The awarding of funds by Génome Québec must meet the following minimum requirements:

i. The signed agreement between Génome Québec and the academic institution, which outlines key terms such as contributions, funding terms, termination policies, financial policies, etc.
ii. The approved budget and updated objectives and milestones in accordance with the recommendations from Génome Québec's independent peer review committee.
iii. The appropriate certifications for applications, if applicable, involving research on human subjects, human stem cells, animals, biohazards, radioactive materials or those with potential environment impacts.

4.2. Project Readiness

Partners must demonstrate that they will be able to fulfill all necessary conditions for releasing Génome Québec funds within two months of receiving the notice of award (see section 4.1 on conditions of release of Génome Québec funds).

Génome Québec reserves the right to withdraw its funding from any approved project that is not ready to receive such funding or from any project for which the signed agreements, as described in paragraph 4.1.i, have not been properly secured within two months.

4.3. Funding Management and Reporting

The funds awarded by Génome Québec will be paid to the academic institution in two stages, once all the conditions of subsection 4.1 are met.

- 90% of the funds will be released upon receipt of the signed agreements; and,
- The remaining 10% will be released once Génome Québec has received and approved the final reports.

In order to comply with the evaluation, audit, accountability and reporting requirements established by the Ministère de l'Économie, de l'Innovation et de l'Énergie, Génome Québec has implemented mechanisms to regularly evaluate all funded projects. Under this program, the mechanisms include:

- An update and report on annual metrics; and,
- A final report including:
  - A final financial report comparing actual to planned spending

- Proof of co-funding received
- A report on concrete achievements as a result of the funding
- A final report on the project's metrics

Researchers are required to participate in this process by providing the required data in accordance with Genome Québec's requirements.

5. GÉNOME QUÉBEC CONTACT

Arnaud Cheuk, PhD (he/him)
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APPENDIX A – Evaluation Criteria

To ensure the achievement of the program's objectives, applications are evaluated based on several criteria: the significance of the innovation or omics or multi-omics technology for users; the scientific excellence of the project; the project's potential to secure subsequent funding through proof of concept; the use, commercialization or implementation potential; and the socioeconomic impact in Québec. The descriptions associated with each criterion are not exhaustive.

A) General Eligibility Criteria

- The project must focus on the application of genomics or related research areas (transcriptomics, proteomics, metabolomics, bioinformatics, genetic engineering, synthetic biology, etc.).
- The project must have the potential to significantly impact human health and generate social and/or economic benefits.
- The project must involve a non-academic partner (user) and an academic partner, each actively participating in the initiative.
- The project must take place in Québec.

B) Non-academic Partner Need

The non-academic partner will provide the following information:

- Relevance, clarity and significance of the need identified by the non-academic partner with regard to its activities or operations.
- Presentation of end users or the target clients, and adequacy with the expressed need.
- Target market potential and economic, industrial or societal opportunities.
- Added value and innovative nature of the proposed omics solution, compared to existing solutions.

C) Project Description

- The scientific excellence of the project, particularly its capacity to establish a proof of concept through the use of an omics or multi-omics approach in the context of interest.
- The feasibility of key milestones, including compliance with the timeline, objectives and overall goal of the project.
- The quality of the scientific environment in which the work will be conducted.

D) Implementation or Commercialization Strategies

- Relevance and justification of the proof of concept.
- Impact of the proof of concept for the non-academic partner.
- Advancement of innovation maturity through the project.
- Post-project strategies towards commercialization or implementation.
- Prospect of additional funding for next steps.

E) Non-academic Partner Implementation of Commercialization Plan

The non-academic partner must provide the following:

- Value proposition of the innovation.
- Risk analysis of implementation and commercialization and suggested mitigation strategies.

For implementation:

- Feasibility of the implementation plan.
- Achievability of the implementation schedule.

For commercialization:

- Quality and credibility of the business strategy.
- User partner's ability to commercialize the innovation.

F) Social and Economic Benefits in Québec

- Quantifiable and realistic outcomes
- Economic benefits: value creation for the non-academic partner and the targeted sector, job creation, potential for new markets, improved competitiveness.
- Social impacts: contribution to population health, improved quality of life, speed and accuracy of diagnosis, effectiveness of care.

G) Project Management and Team Expertise

- Value and experience of team members, including their training and recent achievements.
- Prior contribution to public and private collaborative research.

H) Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

- Needs and reality of various stakeholders taken under consideration.
- Ability to demonstrate the relevance of results across diverse populations.
- Actions to promote the application of results in the community included.

- Clear, adapted dissemination strategies for specific groups and the public at large.
- Engagement of Indigenous communities (when relevant).

I) Financial Criteria

1. **Budget and financial oversight**
    a. Budgeted costs comply with the definition of eligible costs (section 3.2).
    b. Budgeted costs align with the proposed research plan and activities.
    c. Evaluation of in-kind contributions seems reasonable.
    d. Proposed budget is reasonable and justified.

2. **Co-funding**
    a. Co-funding plan aligns with the guidelines.
    b. Supporting documents provided (letters of commitment, quotes, proof of grants).
    c. Consistency between the co-funding and project objectives.

APPENDIX B – Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Guiding Principles

Génome Québec encourages the integration of equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI) into it funding opportunities. It also acknowledges that the quality of genomics research and the resulting solutions are enriched when different perspectives and expertise collaborate. Projects are expected to integrate EDI concepts and principles, foster an inclusive research environment, diversify team composition, consider or involve individuals impacted by the research, and make the findings accessible.

EDI principles are transversal and should be reflected throughout the application and incorporated into the project design. We have outlined five areas below, along with some guiding questions to assist you in addressing EDI considerations and designing concrete actions for integration into your research proposal. Some categories might not be applicable to your project.

1. Community Engagement

The active involvement of end users can help accelerate solution uptake and meaningfully impact the community. Here are some key items to consider:

a. Engagement and consultation with users and stakeholders
   i. Did stakeholders participate in the development of research questions or objectives?
   ii. Is there sufficient diversity of relevant stakeholders s?
   iii. How will stakeholders be involved throughout the project?
b. Relevance
   i. Are research questions and solutions addressing the needs of stakeholders?
   ii. Does the project have the support of the community?
   iii. Is the developed technology useful and practical for users?
c. Inclusion
   i. How will you integrate diversity during consultations (survey, meeting, round tables, workshops)?
   ii. Do you plan to consult with marginalized groups?
d. Result sharing
   i. Are the dissemination strategies of results adequate for users and communities?
   ii. Will participants have access to results and be informed of project outputs?

2. Team Composition and Environment

Building a strong research team is paramount to the success of the project. Skill, expertise and proficiency are essential, but EDI considerations can also help establish and maintain a high-performing, diverse team. Consider:

a. Creating a diverse team and inclusive environment:
   i. It is not recommended to include statistics regarding the diversity of your research team as it could be interpreted as "Tokenism" of underrepresented groups.
   ii. Do not be discouraged by international hires because of immigration procedures.
b. Adopting best practices for recruitment and human resource management:
   i. Unconscious bias training (See Unconscious Bias and Recruiting)
   ii. Following the institution's human resources policies and adhering to EDI principles for selection (criteria, postings, diverse selection committee candidates from various backgrounds, etc.)
   iii. Establishing conflict management guidelines
c. Supporting early-stage researchers, end users and interns:
   i. Provide adapted mentoring to each group
   ii. Use internship the academic institution's internship programs
   iii. Acknowledge interns and promote inclusive excellence through scholarships, competitions, etc.
d. Clarifying roles and responsibilities:
   i. Responsibility of the research design
   ii. Executing and analysis of research activities
   iii. Dissemination of results
   iv. Interaction with stakeholders
e. Training team on EDI
   i. EDI training for all your team (resources from your institution, Dimensions charter, workshops, consultants, etc.)
   ii. Ensure equity in training opportunities within the team

3. Barriers and Benefits

This section pertains to the project's experimental design and aims to refine the genomics and its ethical, environmental, economic, legal and social aspects (GE^{3}LS) portion of your proposal. The goal is to increase the likelihood of project success by:

a. Limiting unintended consequences of the innovation
b. Addressing systemic barriers (policies, procedures, practices) and proposing concrete actions to mitigate them
c. Proposing risk mitigation strategies:
   i. Identify barriers to the change of practice and ways to address them?
   ii. Manage delays impacting the research plan and team

d. Incorporating EDI elements into the research plan is essential for successful implementation. This could include, but is not limited to:
    i. Elaborating a strategy to engage a diversity of users and stakeholders
    ii. Collecting social and demographic data and analyse their disaggregation according to key identity factors
    iii. For research involving male and female animals or living organisms, including a note on disaggregated sex analysis
    iv. Carefully selecting research methodologies (participatory methods, sampling strategies, participant profiles, consultants, co-creation of collection tools, etc.).

4. Accessibility

Ensure that your research team thrives and contributes effectively to your goals by creating a supportive environment. Here's how:

a. Provide a safe, inclusive and barrier-free environment, implement accommodations (logistical, financial, technical, cultural, physical and work-life balance). Assign a specific team member to this task.
b. Manage parental and other types of leave policies and work-life or study-life balance in an equitable, transparent manner.
c. Facilitate research data access and sharing within the team, even when working in a decentralized context or within a network and address all barriers to data sharing.
d. Consider accessibility beyond the lab, including in field research, when travelling or when interacting with users and stakeholders.
e. Present research results to a broad audience, including non-experts.

5. Research with Indigenous Communities

If you plan on conducting research with Indigenous communities, you need to understand and comply with the various relevant protocols. For instance, consider:

a. Co-creation principles, including engaging with the communities and identifying their needs in order to co-create the research objectives
b. The First Nation principles of ownership, control, access, and possession (OCAP)
c. The reconciliation principles from the Government of Canada or other recommended action towards reconciliation
d. The Tri-Council Policy Statement, Chapter 9, on research involving the First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples of Canada
e. The Assembly of First Nations Québec-Labrador Research Protocols
f. Favoured methods for dissemination of results inside and outside the community
g. Intellectual property principles within Indigenous communities could differ, requiring discussions and mutual agreement on the methods to be used
h. Decolonization principles throughout the research process

Additional resources:

- BAKER Jocelyn and VASSEUR Liette "Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Accessibility (IDEA) — Good Practices for Researchers" Canadian Commission for UNESCO, Ottawa, Canada, August 2021
- Chaire pour les femmes en sciences et en génie au Québec – Ressources for Implementing Equity, Diversity & Inclusion in Research
- First Nations of Quebec and Labrador Health and Social Services Commission, UQAT, UQO, Aboriginal Peoples Research and Knowledge Network – Toolbox of Research Principles in an Aboriginal Context
- Quebec Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Network (RQEDI) — Resources
- Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada — "NSERC guide on integrating equity, diversity and inclusion considerations in research"

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