

2025 Application Guidelines

Competition Overview

The SickKids Proof of Principle (PoP) Grant Competition provides targeted funding and strategic support to help advance discoveries and inventions toward commercializable technologies. The goal is to enable the development of innovations with strong potential to attract investment, catalyze high-value licenses, or lead to the creation of science-based companies. All applicants will receive constructive feedback, and selected proposals will proceed to a Pitch Day event, where finalists will compete for funding.

This opportunity is open to **therapeutics/vaccines, diagnostics, and medical devices**, including software-based technologies within these categories. Other standalone software applications/tools are not eligible.

Funding Details

Applicants may request up to **\$100,000** for a project period of up to **12 months** to support work that demonstrates proof of concept, reduces development risk, or otherwise advances the technology toward translational readiness. The final funding amount will vary depending on project needs.

Funding for successful projects will be released in installments as the project progresses and meets its agreed-upon milestones.

Eligible Costs	Ineligible Costs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Project consumables Research materials Applicable service fees (e.g. core facility fees, statistical services, clinical services, etc.) SickKids personnel 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Computer and equipment purchasing Capital or overhead costs Travel Principal investigator or external collaborator salaries

Eligibility Criteria

- ☐ An invention disclosure for the proposed technology must be on file with the IP&C Office.
 - If one is not already on file, applicants should submit a new disclosure via the [Inventor Portal](#) before the SK POP application cycle closes.
- ☐ The proposed project must not already be supported by other PoP-type or industry funding.
- ☐ The technology must fall within an acceptable **Technology Readiness Level (TRL)** range based on category:
 - Therapeutics/Vaccines: TRL 2–4
 - Diagnostics: TRL 3–4
 - Medical Devices: TRL 3–4

Additional Details:

- The Principal Applicant must hold a current SickKids appointment at one of the following levels: *Technology Innovation Investigator, Scientist-track, Scientist, Associate Scientist, Senior Scientist, Senior Associate Scientist, or Project Investigator*.
- An individual may serve as Principal Applicant on only one submission per funding cycle. A Principal Applicant may be named as a Co-Applicant or Collaborator on other submissions.
- Research Associates, Clinical and Research Fellows, and Residents are not eligible to apply as Principal Applicants but may be included as Co-Principal Applicants, Co-Applicants, or Collaborators.
- There is no limit to the number of Co-Applicants per proposal.

Selection Process

The SickKids PoP Grant Competition follows a **two-stage selection process**:

- 1. Internal Review**
All submitted applications will be evaluated by a review committee comprised of subject matter experts and representatives from the Industry Partnerships & Commercialization (IP&C) Office. Proposals will be assessed for their technical merit, potential for translation, and fit with the PoP program objectives.
- 2. Pitch Day**
Applications selected from the internal review will advance to the Pitch Day stage. At this point, applicants will receive support from an IP&C Business Development representative to refine the project scope and commercialization strategy. Projects will be scored based on the following criteria:
 - Novelty and innovation
 - Potential to generate new intellectual property
 - Commercialization potential
 - Likelihood of success

Up to three projects will be selected for funding following Pitch Day.

Post-Award Requirements

During the project funding period, the successful principal applicants will be required to:

1. Participate in quarterly progress meetings with IP&C and a designated faculty representative (e.g. Roman Melnyk, Faculty Liaison for Commercialization & Innovation).
2. Submit a final progress report no later than 30 days following project completion
3. Deliver a final presentation to select Research Institute leadership

Additional Funding Opportunity: Breakthrough Fund

One or more PoP-funded projects may be selected for additional support through the SickKids Foundation Breakthrough Fund. No changes to the current application process are required to be eligible. If selected, additional engagement with SickKids Foundation donors will be required.

Acknowledgement Requirement

All publications, presentations, or media coverage related to the funded project must include the following statement: *"Funds for this research were provided by a Proof of Principle Grant from The Hospital for Sick Children."*

Application Details

June 2, 12:00 p.m.	2025 SK PoP Application Cycle Opens
July 11, 5:00 p.m.	2025 SK PoP Application Cycle Closes

Submit completed application packages here: <https://forms.office.com/r/M0jh8AhnUS>