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# Specific Priorities

## 2020 Request for Proposals

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Date of Issue: **July 23, 2020**  
Submission Deadline: **October 31, 2020, 4:00 pm PST**

### Notes

- Late or incomplete applications will not be accepted.
- All standard terms and conditions, set out in Schedules A-F, shall apply to projects funded through Research Services.
- All documents are available on the [Specific Priorities](#) webpage.

If you have any questions or would like assistance, please contact Research Services:

- Email: [resquery@worksafebc.com](mailto:resquery@worksafebc.com)
- Tel: 604.244.6300

WorkSafeBC would like to thank all applicants for your interest in our research program.

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# **SPECIFIC PRIORITIES**

## **Request for Proposals (“RFP”)**

### **I. Purpose**

Specific Priorities grants support research of relevance to WorkSafeBC, workers and workplaces to address key questions in occupational health and safety and recovery and return-to work of injured workers.

The purpose of this RFP is to solicit research proposals relating to the changing nature of work and the work environment.

### **II. Overview**

WorkSafeBC is committed to creating a province free from workplace injury or illness, and to providing service driven by our core values of integrity, accountability, and innovation. We serve approximately 2.4 million workers and 238,000 employers throughout the province by promoting workplace health and safety, supporting injured workers, providing compensation, and operating a sustainable no-fault insurance system.

WorkSafeBC’s Research Services funds research projects that provide insight and solutions for real issues faced by workplaces and WorkSafeBC. We support scientific research and knowledge sharing that contributes to:

- Improving health and safety in BC workplaces;
- Fostering successful rehabilitation and return to work of injured workers; and
- Ensuring fair compensation for people suffering injury or illness on the job.

Research Services has an annual budget of \$1.5 million for research grants. Funding is offered through four specialized funding streams, for projects that align with our mandate and research priorities.

Consult our [website](#) for more information about the program, application materials and funding conditions.

### **Funding and Duration**

Grant amounts are determined by WorkSafeBC, based on the proposed workplan and budget. As a guide, previous projects ranged from \$50,000 to \$150,000 (Canadian dollars). Project durations are one year, although exceptions may be warranted.

### **Eligibility Criteria**

To be eligible for this Specific Priorities grant, the Principal Applicant must be:

- A qualified researcher based in, or formally affiliated with, a university or other research institution. Researchers worldwide are invited to apply.

Commercial laboratories and full-time employees of WorkSafeBC are not eligible to be Principal Applicants; however, they may participate as team members or co-applicants.

### **III. Background and Research Topics**

The research issue and topics are outlined below. Applicants may further refine the topics in their proposal. It is anticipated that successful applicants will collaborate with WorkSafeBC to refine and enhance the topics and plans as appropriate.

#### **Background: Impacts of COVID-19**

The impacts of COVID-19 to BC workers, employers and the workers' compensation system are broad and diverse. COVID-19 has changed the way work is done. Including where and how workers are expected to perform their job and how they interact with the workplace.

New ways of working present new risks and challenges, while also providing new opportunities. Safe and durable return to work and recovery of injured workers requires new supports and changes to care delivery and return to work planning, while prevention approaches must adapt to new guidelines, workplaces and technologies.

WorkSafeBC is interested in research projects to address both direct and indirect impacts arising from the COVID-19 pandemic unique to occupational health and safety, injured or ill worker recovery, and safe and sustainable return to work or stay-at-work.

#### **Research Topics**

Researchers are invited to submit proposals related to:

Preventing exposure

- How can measures be best implemented to protect essential and frontline workers from workplace exposures?
- What factors improve the practicality and success of implementing exposure control plans?

Addressing the needs of vulnerable workers

- How can disproportionate effects to workers with language, social or cultural vulnerabilities be addressed? What are the influencing factors?
- What interventions facilitate successful return to work for injured workers with physical and/or mental impairments?

Working from home

- What factors are associated with healthy and safe work from home or remote work arrangements? Which factors are modifiable and can be addressed by workers and employers?
- What are the risks and opportunities of work from home for workers with musculoskeletal injuries?
- What are the risks and opportunities of work from home for workers with mental health issues?

Medical, rehabilitative and return to work interventions

- What approaches are effective for delivering health care in a pandemic or post-pandemic environment?

- What has been the lived-experience of workers recovering and returning to work from Covid-19? What factors facilitate successful recovery and return to work?
- How does fear of contracting COVID-19 at work impact return to work and what practices support safe and sustainable return to work or stay at work?

#### Post-viral fatigue

- What is the incidence of post viral fatigue and expected recovery times from COVID-19?
- How can post-viral fatigue best be addressed in the context of return to work planning?

### **Guidance to Researchers:**

- Researchers are encouraged to incorporate analyses and considerations in their proposals on sex and gender, race/ethnicity, age, and socio-economic status, among other factors of potential inequities.
- Literature or systematic review study designs should include knowledge users/practitioners as partners in the research.
- Health care studies are encouraged to investigate at the level of industry sub-sector or occupation to account for potential differences in risk. For example, exposures and outcomes may differ substantially by industry segment (e.g. acute care, long-term or extended care, and assisted living and community settings) or occupations (e.g. healthcare assistant, family physician, emergency room nurse or care home orderlies)

## **III. How to Apply**

### **Application Package**

Ensure your application package includes:

- A copy of the "Application Form" with all signatures and relevant supporting documents.
- A copy of the "Applicant Consent Form for Use and Disclosure of Personal Information" for each project team member.

All forms and application materials are available for download on our [website](#). Applicants should refer to the "Guide to the Application Form" for instructions on how to prepare an application package.

### **Submission Instructions**

The complete application can be submitted in electronic format or in original hard copy providing all signatures are included. Hard copies must be printed as a single sided document. The electronic copy may be submitted by email, or on a flash drive.

Late applications received after the deadline, either electronically or as originals, will not be accepted. The only materials that will be accepted after the deadline are ethics and biosafety certificates.

#### **Deliver packages to:**

Research Services  
WorkSafeBC  
6951 Westminster Highway  
Richmond, British Columbia, Canada  
V7C 1C6

Telephone: 604-244-6300  
Email: [resquery@worksafebc.com](mailto:resquery@worksafebc.com)