



Circular Economy Seed Funding Guideline (Revised February 21, 2020)

UBC under coordination of the Materials and Manufacturing Research Institute (MMRI), with support from the National Research Council of Canada Industrial Research Assistance Program (NRC IRAP), has launched a seed funding program to advance the Circular Economy in British Columbia (BC) through joint efforts by UBC researchers and small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). The fund will support university-industry projects that aim at encouraging circularity over the life cycles of materials and products. This can be achieved by, for example, creating a new supply chain through joint material innovation/replacement, modifying designs/processes/services to extend the useful life of current products, and adopting new business models to reduce waste and improve energy saving and reuse. The outcomes of these short-term projects are deemed to facilitate long term collaborations between academic and industry partners through other sources, e.g., Mitacs, NSERC, etc., to invoke higher impact on developing the circular economy in BC and beyond.

For an introduction/overview of key factors/areas underlying Circular Economy, please see the links/videos provided on the program webpage.

Proposal submission:

- Deadline: Round 1 is now closed. Round 2 will open in April 2020.
- Application review and funding decision will be made within about a week after submission.
- Due to limited funding, early proposal submission is highly encouraged.
- The [application form](#) must be filled out and emailed to Mahdi Takaffoli, MMRI Research Engineer, at mahdi.takaffoli@ubc.ca.

Funding availability:

- Stream 1: Maximum \$5,000 per project when a sole SME partner is involved.
- Stream 2: Maximum \$10,000 per project when two or more SME partners are involved, e.g., for building a new value- or supply-chain relationship.

Requirements:

For academic researchers:

- The lead researcher must be from UBC, either Point Grey or Okanagan Campus.
- Collaboration with academic researchers outside UBC is welcome.

For partnering companies:

- Must be a Canadian or provincially incorporated business.
- Must have less than 500 employees.
- Must be for-profit.
- Must be located in BC.



- Before starting the project (upon approval of the application), SMEs are encouraged to discuss their projects plan with their respective Industrial Technology Advisor (ITA) of NRC IRAP. If the company does not have an ITA, they need to contact one of the following NRC IRAP Client Engagement Advisors to get introduced to an appropriate ITA:
 - Kanwal Dhaliwal: Kanwal.dhaliwal@nrc-cnrc.gc.ca
 - Neil Gibson: neil.gibson@nrc-cnrc.gc.ca
 - Robert McGarry: Robert.mcgarry@nrc-cnrc.gc.ca

For projects:

- Must aim at helping companies in BC transition to circular economy and/or supporting company-led innovative solutions in materials, design, production, distribution, supply chain, service, waste management, etc. to enhance circularity in any resource areas and product sectors.
- All proposals to be eligible must clearly state:
 - What is the current state of their product/process “waste” (e.g. does it go to the landfill or cause excessive energy use?)
 - How the proposed technical solution will potentially reduce this material/energy waste through circular strategies? Without clearly explaining this criteria the applications will be rejected immediately.
 - What is the SME plan and capacity to use the result of this project in the long-run towards commercialization of the proposed technical solution?
- Must finish within 2-4 months.

Eligible costs:

- Salary cost of research assistants working in academic labs (Stream 1: max \$4500; Stream 2: max \$9500).
- Fee for the costs of using lab equipment, research tools and other facility at UBC (fixed at \$500 per project and processed centrally by the program management team).

Review criteria:

Proposals will be reviewed rigorously by NRC IRAP Industrial Technology Advisors (ITAs) and MMRI Management based upon the following criteria:

- Eligibility of the industry partner as an NRC IRAP client.
- Intellectual merit of the proposal and its relevance to circular economy.
- Clear description of the project methodology.
- Evidence for the engagement and support of the company throughout the project.
- Clear articulation of plans for continuing the project beyond the term of this fund.
- Appropriateness of the requested budget with respect to the project timeline and activities.



Reporting:

- A short technical and financial report will be due 15 days after the end date of the project (templates will be provided). Research engineers at MMRI will also work with students and faculty to create tech briefs from the projects and promote them on UBC websites.

Please direct any inquiries to:

Mahdi Takaffoli, MMRI Research Engineer

mahdi.takaffoli@ubc.ca

(250) 807-9108