



# ARNET RESEARCH GRANT APPLICATION GUIDE

Please read this guide in full before completing and submitting your grant application through the online application portal.

We acknowledge that this guide was developed on lands where the many First Nations, Métis and Inuit who have lived in and cared for these lands for generations. We are grateful for the traditional Knowledge Keepers and Elders who are still with us today and those who have gone before us.

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## Background

### Who We Are

The Alberta Registered Nurses Educational Trust (ARNET) was established in 1984 as a Canadian provincial charitable organization where we have, for over 35 years, provided educational support for Alberta registered nurses.

### Where We Are Going and What We Have Learned

In 2022, we developed a research funding program to support nurses conducting research. It is well recognized that nurses **bring a unique and valued lens and are critical drivers of research into practice.**

To ensure our research funding program met the needs of nurses conducting research, in 2021, we undertook an environmental scan of nursing research funding (details available upon request). Three main barriers to nurses participating in research emerged:

1. Funding opportunities for nursing research and the community of nurse researchers is fragmented.
2. The major national health research funders (e.g., the Canadian Institutes of Health Research) are generally not seeing nurses apply for funding.
3. Clinical scientists are the named principal investigators on the majority of clinical health research funding grants when compared to nurses.

The environmental scan also identified that nurses may face challenges in:

- Designing orderly research projects.
- Writing clear research proposals; and
- Conducting rigorous quantitative analysis.

### ARNET Principles for Research Grant Funding

Based on the identified nursing research barriers and challenges, we created the ARNET Principles for Research Grant Funding that will guide our approach to all funding opportunities.

- ✓ **Reduce barriers** – We engage in processes that promote timely and agile access to research funds.
- ✓ **Responsiveness** – We are current in our understanding of research that meets the health care needs of Albertans
- ✓ **Partnership** – We work synergistically with key stakeholders who ensure disbursement of funds through sound, ethical and rigorous methods; partnerships include working with in-kind contributions as matching funding
- ✓ **Funding Flexibility** – We flex funding disbursement dollars with each request
- ✓ **Sustainability** – We participate in activities that help us grow and sustain research funds (i.e., share impact stories, patient engagement-oriented research, etc.). Direct and relevant clinical impact is clear.

## ARNET Research Grant Application Details

### Deadlines

<b>Application Intake:</b>	Continuous until September 30, 2024, or until funds are exhausted.
<b>Notice of Decision:</b>	Four (4) weeks from submission of application.

### Description

The ARNET Research Grants are designed to fund high impact, patient-focused health research projects led by registered nurses working in Alberta based organizations. These Research Grants have been established through donor investments and with partnerships with individuals, businesses, and organizations across Alberta. Our research program fund activities are two-fold: disbursement of research grants and fund growth for sustainability.

These grants aim to “fill the gap” for nurse researchers rather than replicate the funding already available from other large research organizations. As such, support may be used for\*:

- Full scale research that requires Research Ethics Board (REB) approval
- Knowledge Mobilization (extension of full-scale research or stand-alone request) – spread and scale
- Program Evaluation & Quality Improvement project evaluation (do not necessarily involve REB but have supervisory approval)

*\*This is not an exhaustive list, and we encourage interested applicants to reach out directly to the ARNET Office if you have questions regarding the appropriateness of their research projects to access these funds. ARNET contact information is located at the end of this guide.*

### Research Areas

This funding opportunity will support projects relevant to the following research areas:

- **ARNET Funding Pool:** will support a diverse range of health research that can demonstrate meaningful impacts on patients and/or their families. These will be high impact, patient focused research projects that can demonstrate and established partnership with a health system partner.
- **Calgary Health Foundation (CHF) Pool:** will support research with direct impacts on
  - the health and wellbeing of vulnerable populations\*; or
  - the health and wellbeing of women; or
  - the health and wellbeing of seniors; or
  - mental health; or
  - gastrointestinal health.

*\*Vulnerable populations who are at a higher risk of poorer health outcomes including but not limited to those experiencing houselessness, racialized groups, and those who are economically disadvantaged.*

### Funds Available

Up to \$15,000 over one year for each project funded. ARNET allots a finite amount of funds each year for research grants. There is no deadline and applications are accepted from the

competition launch date until funds are exhausted. The grants are non-renewable. All decisions on funding are final.

### Eligibility to Apply

- The Principal Investigator (PI) or Co-Principal Investigator (Co-PI) must be a Registered Nurse (RN) or a Nurse Practitioner (NP) conducting research with
  - a nursing team or
  - an interdisciplinary team or
  - on their own.
- The PI or Co-PI must be at the early or mid-point of their career\* who is:
  - A frontline RN interested in conducting research **or**
  - An RN working in a Clinical Practice Lead and/or Consultant role.
- The PI or Co-PI must be conducting research at an Alberta based organization
- For applications to the Calgary Health Foundation pool, either the PI or Co-PI must be located in a Calgary Health Foundation facility.

*\* Early career is defined as a researcher within five years of the date of their first independent research project. Mid-career is defined as a researcher who, at the time of application, has conducted their first independent research project 5-15 years ago. Recognizing the impact of life circumstances can have on career trajectory, considerations around eligible absences will be made. Graduate students (Master's and PhD) research projects are not eligible for this grant. Graduate students can consider applying for an ARNET scholarship. Please contact ARNET directly if you have any questions about eligibility.*

**Note:** The premise and reminder of our mandate is that we support early to mid-career researchers and frontline (nursing) clinicians – those who do not have ease of access to funds to support research activities. ARNET sees the level of research conducted are where researchers and clinicians are already situated or have close connections, ease of accessibility and positive impact to those clinical areas of focus.

**Note:** Multiple submissions in one fiscal year are not permitted to the Research Grant Program. This limit is currently in place as ARNET focuses on growing nursing research capacity however this could be revisited as the program expands.

### Allowable Costs

ARNET will further guide nurse researchers on types of items/activities that qualify for support as we continue to develop this program and understand trends and needs. Allowable costs include but are not limited to:

- Research assistants
- Transcription services
- Gift cards for participants
- Printing costs
- Equipment, software
- Manuscript publication fees for open access publication
- Literature search – library support
- Statistical support

**Note:** ARNET does **not** fund post doctoral salaries or stipends or honorariums for site recruitment. Conference presentation and travel costs are not eligible. RNs can apply for educational grant funding for conference registration fees.

## How to Apply

### Step 1: Read about ARNET’s Research Grant Opportunity

Does your research project align with ARNET’s identified researcher gap and principles? Are you eligible to apply for ARNET Research Grant funding? Please carefully read the information in this guide to inform your decision to apply.

*If you have any questions regarding eligibility or project alignment, we encourage you to contact the ARNET offices directly. ARNET contact information is located at the end of this guide.*

### Step 2: Complete an Online Application

The grant proposal will be submitted online via the Smarter Select portal. Please insert the relevant components of your grant proposal as requested in each section of the application. We suggest you copy/paste your text from a word processing document for ease of review and adherence to word count limits noted within the application. The following application components are required for submission via our electronic application form.

**Note:** For ease of review, please use 11-point font and single line spacing for all attachments

#### Applicant(s) Information

- **Identify Participants** (please see Eligibility for more details):
  - PI and Co-PIs contact information (name, appointment, address, email)
  - Early career nurse researcher from academic setting
  - Mid-career nurse researcher from academic setting
  - Front line RN/NP or RN/NP working in a Clinical Practice Lead and/or Consultant role.
- **Alberta Organization Information** – Name, area, position.

#### Proposal Information

Heading	Description	Maximum Word Count
<i>Lay Summary</i>	to be read by non-expert reviewers and, if funding secured, used in social media campaigns and reporting. Please avoid using jargon and ensure the summary is understandable to the public.	250 words approximately half a page
<i>Type of Research Project</i>	choose from new research, pilot study, knowledge mobilization project, program evaluation, quality improvement, other	one line/entry
<i>Need/Problem Statement</i>	to identify the gap in knowledge your research will address and specify how this aligns with current needs (gaps) identified by Alberta Health Services [AHS]	100 words
<i>Research Objective(s)/Question(s)</i>	objective(s)/question(s) must be best answered through the type of research project identified. It must be feasible for	100 words

Heading	Description	Maximum Word Count
	the objective(s) / question(s) outlined to be met/answered within the term of the grant	
<i>Research Description</i>	include hypotheses, methods, procedures, research environment, identification of barriers and facilitators	500 words approximately 1 page
<i>Research Evaluation</i>	include a project timeline indicating outcomes or deliverables	100 words
<i>Dissemination Plan</i>	provide information on how you will share your research results with, for example, in your professional communities or how you will facilitate implementation of new evidence into practice	100 words
<i>Impacts</i>	Please explain, in language understandable by the general public, how is this project going to contribute to your RN practice area, contribute to your scholarship and RN professional practice and any other relevant impacts	250 words

**Note:** Any research proposal including research conducted by, grounded or engaged with Indigenous (First Nations, Inuit or Métis) communities, societies or individuals must have a team member who self-identifies as Indigenous (First Nations, Inuit or Métis) and/or provides evidence of having meaningful and culturally safe involvement with Indigenous Peoples. As well, respect for Indigenous data governance, by applying the First Nations [Principles of OCAP®10](#), and/or the [CARE Principles](#), or other principles of Indigenous data governance as appropriate.

### Budget Justification

Heading	Description	Maximum Word Count
<i>Budget Justification</i>	please justify how these funds would be used.	250 words approximately half a page
<i>Disclosure of Funding Sources</i>	if applicable, please list all other funding sources for this project and how would ARNET funds contribute to the completion of your project. Please note that supplemental funding is encouraged however not required. If the project is not supported by other funding, please indicate "none"	250 words approximately half a page

### Attach Other Application Material

Please upload attachments as PDFs

Heading	Description	Maximum Word Count
<i>Evidence of Access to Practice Setting</i>	provide a letter confirming you have access to practice setting (i.e., direct connection to clinical practice) and that your project is approved and supported by your Institution. This letter of support should come from an individual who is responsible for approving your work duties such as, but not limited to, a supervisor, senior manager or leader.	one (1) page

Heading	Description	Maximum Word Count
<i>Other Attachments</i>	if relevant, please attach ethics approval certificate and <u>up to two additional letters</u> of support from your Institution, relevant stakeholders, etc.	one (1) page per letter

### Step 3: Submit Application

Once you submit your online application for the ARNET Research Grant, you will receive an email confirmation. The application will be assessed for eligibility and relevance by the ARNET Executive Director who will reach out directly if more information is needed. If deemed relevant and eligible, the application will proceed to Peer Review.

### Step 4: Peer Review of Application

This grant will be assessed by ARNET Peer Review panel that may include nurses, researchers, policy makers, people with lived or living experience (PWLE) and other relevant stakeholders. Peer reviewers are expected to uphold best practices of peer review including adherence to confidentiality, disclosure of any real or perceived conflict of interest, and a commitment to adjudicate fairly and constructively.

Applicants can receive aggregated reviewer comments upon request. Recognizing that ARNET is a small organization with few staff, there may be delays in responding to these requests.

Please allow ARNET staff four (4) weeks from the date of submission to communicate the results of your grant application. All decisions on funding are final.

### Step 5: Notification of Results

If funded and if applicable, ethics approval for the proposed study is required if the work will use human/animal subjects and/or confidential records. Before fund disbursement, evidence is required of ethical clearance by a duly constituted ethics review committee or other body associated with the institution(s). Proof of ethics approval, such as a certificate, must be included.

ARNET will work with PI and/or Co-PI to understand the context and guidelines of the project to determine the most efficient process for disbursement of funds (i.e., direct disbursement to researcher, disbursement through a central organizational / institutional body). T4As will be issued for all research grants \$500 or more.

If not funded, the PI and/or Co-PI will receive an email and letter letting them know they were not funded. All decisions are final.

### Step 6: Outcome Reporting

ARNET is committed to maintaining a sustainable research fund to ensure the ongoing support and build the capacity of outstanding nursing led research. In order to secure ongoing financial commitments, ARNET, and other partners, need to report on the impacts of this funding. As such, successful grant applicants are asked to provide ongoing communication before, during and at project completion.



## Mid-Point and End of Grant Reporting

Specifically, at the mid-point and endpoint of the project, ARNET requests that the PI and Co-PI submit a progress and end of grant report, respectively. These reports can each be a maximum of two (2) pages and can be a combination of paragraph and bullet point text. This should include the below and any additional relevant information:

- Project milestones and how these were successfully achieved;
- Challenges encountered and how these were or will be overcome;
- Contributions to practice area and professional practice, indicating any new impacts not in the initial application;
- Identification any future studies or activities; and
- Lay abstract (250 words, maximum) that can be disseminated to stakeholders including but not limited to the general public, the ARNET and/or partner Board(s) of Directors, and policy makers that summarizes in non-technical language the project and impacts.

Completion of these reports in a timely manner is on the onus of the PI/Co-PI and should be sent via email to ARNET. ARNET staff may reach out to request these reports if they are not received. In the event that the funded project is funded for a short period of time, the mid-point report may be waived.

## Communication of Impact

Showcasing your research work at various stages is not only a way ARNET can raise donor awareness but raise community awareness and advocate for your work potentially leading to broader impact.

Funding recipients may be asked to present their project to the ARNET and/or partner Board(s) of Directors and/or the general public and must consent to having their project shared via social media platforms. Frequency and type of communication will be determined against the project timeline and coordinated with PI/Co-PI

## Acknowledgment of ARNET Investment

Any publication, oral/poster presentation or other knowledge mobilization activities should acknowledge ARNET's investment in this way "*Funding for this project is provided by the Alberta Registered Nurses Educational Trust (ARNET) Research Grant.*"

## Additional Information

Please visit our ARNET Research Grant FAQ document for more details.

## Contact Information

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