



**Grant-in-Aid (GIA) Indigenous**  
**2027 Competition Supplemental Guidelines**  
*(June 30, 2026)*

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>A. SPECIFIC PROGRAM INFORMATION</b>	<b>3</b>
A.1 Purpose and Objective	3
A.2 Eligibility	4
<b>B. HOW TO APPLY</b>	<b>5</b>
B.1 Registration	5
B.2 Application Submission Deadline	5
B.3 Self-Identification Confirmation	5
B.4 Application	5
B.4.1 Submission Checklist	5
B.4.2 Application Form	6
B.4.3 Competition Results	8
<b>C. GENERAL INFORMATION</b>	<b>9</b>
C.1 Contact Information	9

## 2027 Grant-in-Aid Indigenous

### A. SPECIFIC PROGRAM INFORMATION

Overview Table - Grant-in-Aid	
Competition Launch Date	June 30, 2026
Application Submission Deadline	September 17, 2026 – 3:00pm ET ( <i>Registration closes at 12:00pm ET</i> )
Official Notification Date	May 2027
Grant Start Date	July 1, 2027
Grant Value	Up to \$400,000.00 CAD for up to four (4) years ( <i>\$100K for 1-yr project / \$200K for 2-yr project / \$300K for 3-yr project/ \$400K for 4-yr project</i> )
Application Procedures	See Section <b>B</b> for instructions on How-To-Apply
Contact	Email: <a href="mailto:research@heartandstroke.ca">research@heartandstroke.ca</a>

**! Applicants are expected to carefully read the instructions and comply with the requirements outlined in this guideline document. These supplemental guidelines outline the requirements for the GIA-I, in addition to the general guidelines for the [Grant-in-Aid](#) program.**

#### A.1 Purpose and Objective

As part of the [Grant-in-Aid \(GIA\) research program](#), the Indigenous Research Stream (GIA-I) supports Indigenous-led (First Nations, Inuit, and/or Métis) heart and/or brain health research that is grounded in Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Doing to advance and generate Indigenous knowledges, data and approaches.

This Stream responds to longstanding barriers in health research funding systems by creating space for research priorities, methodologies, timelines, measures of success, and knowledge mobilization approaches that are defined with and by First Nations, Inuit, and Métis Peoples. The GIA-I aims to provide dedicated funding for Indigenous-led heart and brain health research that emphasizes Indigenous self-determination, Indigenous data sovereignty, community governance, relational accountability, and Indigenous knowledge systems.

In the context of this research program, Indigenous health research is defined as any field or discipline related to health and/or wellness that is conducted by, grounded in, or engaged with, First Nations, Inuit, or Métis communities, societies or individuals and their wisdom, cultures, experiences or knowledge systems, as expressed in their dynamic forms, past and present. Regardless of the methodologies or perspectives that apply in a given context, researchers who conduct Indigenous research, whether they are Indigenous or non-Indigenous themselves, commit to respectful relationships with Indigenous Peoples and communities.<sup>1</sup>

For the purposes of this Stream, Indigenous-led research means research in which First Nations, Inuit, and/or Métis researchers, communities, organizations, or governing bodies hold meaningful leadership and decision-making authority throughout the research process.

The GIA-I offers support for projects in cardiovascular or cerebrovascular research that are Indigenous-led and culturally grounded, community-driven, and committed to upholding the sovereignty and wisdom of Indigenous Peoples throughout the research process. This support may be provided to successful GIA-I Applicants (“Applicants”) for a maximum of four (4) years. GIA-I funds may only be used to support research conducted in Canada. All grants become tenable July 1 following the announcement of the competition results.

Research proposals must advance Indigenous knowledge systems, practices, and approaches that reflect the lived experiences, values, and worldviews of Indigenous Peoples. Proposed research must be grounded in Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Doing through appropriate, culturally responsive research methodologies and practice. Western approaches may be included in ways that complement Indigenous approaches. Research must be distinctions-based where appropriate, recognizing the distinct rights, governance structures, histories, geographies, knowledges, and priorities of First Nations, Inuit, and Métis

<sup>1</sup> <https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/50340.html>

Peoples. Pan-Indigenous approaches should be clearly justified and grounded in the communities, organizations, or partners involved.

Up to three (3) GIA-I grants are anticipated to be funded in this competition.

## **A.2 Eligibility**

In order to be eligible to apply for the GIA-I, Applicants must meet both the standard GIA criteria and the following GIA-I criteria:

- a. Principal Applicant (“PA”) and (if applicable) Co-Principal Applicant (“Co-PA”) must either self-identify as Indigenous (First Nations, Inuit and/or Métis) or provide evidence of having meaningful and culturally safe engagement with Indigenous Peoples, or both, and have a full-time academic or faculty appointment (i.e., at minimum, at the Assistant or Clinical Assistant Professor level) at an eligible Canadian institution at the time the application is submitted.
- b. An Indigenous Lead (“IL”) who is an Indigenous Elder and/or an Indigenous Knowledge Holder<sup>2</sup> must be involved and identified on the application (See General Information) if the PA or Co-PA do not meet the requirements of an IL. An IL is considered an equal partner to the PA on the application.
- c. The application must align with the purpose and objective of the GIA-I
- d. If the PA and/or IL are deemed ineligible, the entire application will be withdrawn from the competition. There will be no appeal process for applications deemed ineligible.
- e. The host institution/University (“Host Institution”) is the institution or organization that is responsible for receiving and administering the Grant on behalf of the Recipient. It will be the home institution of the PA. Documentation of support for the PA and the application by the Host Institution shall be required as part of the full application process.

**! Should any significant changes occur from the time of submission to official decision letter notification, Heart & Stroke reserves the right to withdraw that application from the competition. Misrepresentation of any content by Applicants may result in cancellation of the grant or award.**

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<sup>2</sup> A Knowledge Holder (also known as a Knowledge Guardian) is an Indigenous person, regardless of age, who possesses the Indigenous cultural knowledge necessary for the proposed research project or activities, as recognized, validated, and authenticated by the Indigenous community.

## B. HOW TO APPLY

Please see GIA guidelines for full instructions in addition to below.

### B.1 Registration

Applicants must complete a registration for the funding opportunity using the Heart & Stroke's electronic grant and award management system [CIRCULink](#) before accessing and submitting the application. Note that **registration for the competition closes three (3) hours prior to the submission deadline**. Heart & Stroke strongly encourages Applicants to **begin the registration process as early as possible**, and well in advance of the application submission deadline to ensure timely completion.

Applications will be completed online using Heart & Stroke's online portal, [CIRCULink](#). A detailed [CIRCULink User-Guide](#) to assist in navigating the system is available, and all Applicants are **strongly encouraged to review it in advance of starting an application** to optimize user experience.

**By submitting an application, Applicants understand that the information provided may be shared with funding partners for the purpose of eligibility, relevance, peer review and/or funding decisions.**

### B.2 Application Submission Deadline

It is the Applicant's responsibility to ensure that a completed application is submitted via [CIRCULink](#) no later than **September 17, 2026 - 3:00pm ET**. [CIRCULink](#) will **NOT** allow submissions after this deadline. Any applications attempted or submitted by email or mail will **NOT** be accepted. There will be no appeal process for late submissions.

### B.3 Self-Identification Confirmation

All Applicants are required to answer a **Self-ID Confirmation** question as a part of the online application e.Form in [CIRCULink](#) to confirm eligibility to the program. Please note that given that this Funding Opportunity requires that projects be Indigenous-led, selecting "No" or "I prefer not to answer" may prevent the application from being considered eligible.

Additionally, PA, co-PA (if applicable), and IL who identify as Indigenous will be required to complete a [Self-Attestation](#). The information provided may be reviewed by a committee of community members to confirm that an Applicant(s) meets the self-identification eligibility requirements as outlined in this Competition Guideline. If an application is deemed not to meet this eligibility requirement, Heart & Stroke reserves the right to remove the application from the competition. Heart & Stroke will inform those that are removed due to ineligibility.

### B.4 Application

#### B.4.1 Submission Checklist

Applicants must complete and submit all application requirements listed below via [CIRCULink](#) by the specified deadline date. Applicants may submit the application in English or French. Use the Application Checklist below to confirm that you have completed all application components required to be uploaded to [CIRCULink](#) as part of this competition.

Due to conflict of interest, letters of support from Heart & Stroke are not permitted as part of any application to any Heart & Stroke research competitions.

Application Checklist	Submission Method
Registration and Profile Setup	<i>CIRCULink – Fillable Fields</i>
Application e.Form (all sections)	<i>CIRCULink – Fillable Fields</i>
Research Proposal	<i>CIRCULink – Mandatory Attachment</i>
Budget Justification	<i>CIRCULink – Mandatory Attachment</i>
CIHR-Sex and Gender certificate, PA (including Co-PA, if applicable)	<i>CIRCULink – Mandatory Attachment</i>
Principal Applicant's BioSketch (including Co-Principal Applicant, if applicable)	<i>CIRCULink – Mandatory Attachment</i>
Indigenous Lead's BioSketch, if applicable	<i>CIRCULink – Mandatory Attachment</i>
Self-Attestation documentation for PA, co-PA and IL, if applicable	<i>CIRCULink – Attachment (mandatory if applicable)</i>
Co-Applicant(s) BioSketch, if applicable	<i>CIRCULink – Attachment</i>
Letter(s) of Collaboration, if applicable	<i>CIRCULink – Attachment</i>
Signatures Page Form	<i>CIRCULink – Mandatory Attachment</i>

### B.4.2 Application Form

This section is to help guide Applicants through the Application e.Form components which differ from that of the GIA application on [CIRCULink](#). Applicants are strongly encouraged to review each section requirement to ensure accurate completion of application prior to submitting.

**! All application components listed below are required for a submission to be considered complete. Incomplete submissions will result in the application being withdrawn from the competition, without appeal.**

#### Applicant Information Section

**Principal Applicant.** The PA is responsible for the intellectual direction of the proposed research and assumes administrative and financial responsibility for the grant. Applicants must either self-identify as Indigenous (First Nations, Inuit or Métis) or provide evidence of having meaningful and culturally safe engagement with Indigenous Peoples and/or working in a good way with Indigenous communities or both, complete required information fields, confirm their career stage, and indicate if there is a Co-Principal Applicant, Indigenous Lead, Co-Applicant(s) and/or Collaborator(s).

**Co-Principal Applicant.** A Co-PA shares the responsibilities for the intellectual direction of the proposed research with the PA, however administrative and financial responsibility for the grant lies with the PA. For applications involving Co-PA's, Applicants must complete required information fields related to the Co-PA.

**Indigenous Lead.** The IL is an equal partner with the Principal Applicant, and is responsible for the Indigenous intellectual direction of the proposed research. An IL is defined as an Indigenous Knowledge Holder (also known as a Knowledge Keeper or a Knowledge Guardian) and is an Indigenous person (First Nations, Inuit or Métis), regardless of age, who possesses the Indigenous cultural knowledge necessary for the proposed research project or activities, as recognized, validated, and authenticated by the Indigenous community. The IL possesses a track record of meaningful and culturally safe engagement with Indigenous communities and/or working in a good way with Indigenous communities in addition to the following:

- May or may not have a full-time academic or faculty appointment and/or significant academic experience
- Must have significant knowledge and experience in Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Doing, methodologies, and/or worldviews (e.g. Elder, formal or informal community leader, Knowledge Holder, healer)
- Must have meaningful connection to/relationship with communities involved in the research project (where applicable)
- Are eligible to receive remuneration or honorarium through the funds available in this research grant (not available to individuals with Academic appointments)

**Co-Applicant(s).** A Co-Applicant is a researcher who contributes substantially to the intellectual content of the research. *Only if applicable*, Applicants must complete required information related to all Co-Applicants.

**! BioSketch: A BioSketch form must be completed and uploaded for the PA, Co-PA, IL and all Co-Applicants named on the application via CIRCULink. It is the responsibility of the PA to ensure those named on the application use the Heart & Stroke form to enter their information for all applicable categories. Please refer to the [BioSketch Instructions](#), [BioSketch Template](#) and [BioSketch Exemplar](#).**

**Collaborator(s).** A Collaborator provides a special service (such as access to equipment, provision of specific reagents, training in a specialized technique, statistical analysis, access to a patient population, etc.) but is not involved in the overall intellectual direction of the research. *Only if applicable*, Applicants must complete required information fields related to all Collaborators.

**It is required to provide [Letter\(s\) of Collaboration](#) from all Collaborators listed on the application. Each letter is required to be no more than two (2) pages; any additional pages will be removed.**

### **GIA-I BioSketch Instructions Section**

In addition to standard BioSketch requirements, the PA and Co-PA (if applicable) to the GIA-I must also include:

- Evidence of having meaningful and culturally safe engagement with Indigenous Peoples and/or working in a good way with Indigenous communities
- Evidence of relationship to the Indigenous peoples and communities that will be engaged in this project (if applicable)

If the IL does not have a full-time academic or faculty appointment and/or significant academic experience, please only complete relevant sections of the BioSketch (i.e. Name, Language Skills, Personal Statement, Activities, Additional Information). Ensure that the following information is included:

- The IL's role(s) within their community (i.e. knowledge holder, Elder, healthcare worker)
- The IL's connection to/relationship with communities involved in the research project (where applicable)
- All experience relevant to the role you will hold as the Indigenous intellectual lead of this research project (including knowledge and experience in Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Doing, methodologies, and/or worldviews)
- Evidence of having meaningful and culturally safe engagement with Indigenous Peoples and/or working in a good way with Indigenous communities (if not previously detailed)

If the PA or co-PA (if applicable) will also be filling the role of IL, ensure all IL-specific information is included in BioSketch.

PA, co-PA and IL who identify as Indigenous may include information from Self-Attestation Personal Declaration in BioSketch, where relevant, as the Self-Attestation Personal Declaration will not be provided to reviewers.

### **Project Information Section**

In addition to standard inclusion requirements for the GIA program, research Proposals must:

- Propose heart and/or brain health research that is grounded in Indigenous Ways of Knowing and Doing to advance and generate Indigenous knowledges, data and approaches. Indigenous leadership should be evident in the development of the research questions, governance structure, methodology, interpretation of findings, knowledge mobilization, and use of results.
- Projects must demonstrate how they will respect Indigenous self-determination and support Indigenous communities, organizations, and/or Peoples to define research priorities, guide research processes, govern data and knowledge, and determine how finds are interpreted, shared, and used.
- GIA-I research proposals are expected to describe how Indigenous Data Sovereignty and Indigenous Data Governance will be respected throughout the research lifecycle. This includes how decisions will be made about data collection, ownership, control, access, possession or stewardship, storage, interpretation, sharing, and future use, in accordance with the expectations of participating Indigenous communities, organizations, or governing bodies. Applicants must also describe which governance and data principles guide this work (i.e. the First Nations Principles of Ownership, Control, Access, Possession (OCAP®), National Inuit Strategy on Research (NISR), The Saskatchewan Métis Health Research and Data Governance Principles®, or local/community-specific protocols).
- Applicants should clearly articulate the anticipated benefits of the research for participating Indigenous communities, organizations, or populations, including how the project may support community priorities, capacity strengthening, health service improvement, prevention, policy change, knowledge sharing, or culturally grounded wellness approaches.
- Where appropriate, project timelines and budgets should reflect the relational work required for Indigenous health research.

## Self-Attestation Section

**Self-ID Confirmation.** Indigenous self-attestation is required for the Principal Applicant, Co-Principal Applicant and/or Indigenous Lead (where applicable) applying to this funding opportunity. The information collected may be reviewed by a committee of community members to confirm that an Applicant meets the self-identification eligibility requirement as outlined in the Competition Guidelines. Please refer to "[Self-Identification Confirmation](#)" for further details.

Self-attestation of Indigenous identity can be provided through **one** of the following options:

### Option A – Official Documents

Applicants may submit official documentation to support their claim of Indigenous citizenship or membership in an Indigenous collective. Applicants should consult the [Directive on the Tri-Agency Policy on Indigenous Citizenship and Membership Affirmation \(Section 6.1\)](#) for details on the variety of supporting documentation that will be accepted as part of this process.

### Option B – Personal Declaration with Supporting Documentation or Letter of Reference

To support individuals not in possession of official documentation as mentioned under **Option A**, applicants may submit a statement outlining their existing lived experiences and ongoing relationship to a legally recognized and inherent Indigenous community (including the specific name of the community), Nation or People. Additionally, applicants are required to submit supporting documentation or a letter of reference; for details on the information that must be included, consult the [Directive on the Tri-Agency Policy on Indigenous Citizenship and Membership Affirmation \(Section 6.2\)](#).

### Option C – Institutional Attestation

Applicants from Institutions with an existing policy on Indigenous citizenship or membership that aligns with this competition guidelines may opt to request their institution submit a statement to the effect that the individual applying for funding has met its own verification or affirmation standards, in lieu of **Options A** or **B**. Applicants should consult the [Directive on the Tri-Agency Policy on Indigenous Citizenship and Membership Affirmation \(Section 6.3\)](#) for details on the requirements for Institutional Attestation.

### Personal Declaration.

Principal Applicant, Co-Principal Applicant and Indigenous Leads (where applicable) are required to confirm their eligibility by completing a self-attestation within the application including a Personal Declaration outlining existing lived experiences and ongoing relationship to a legally recognized and inherent Indigenous community (including the specific name of the community), Nation or People (limit: 5,000 characters – approx. 1 page).

**⚠ Any falsification of claim regarding Indigenous Self-Identification will be considered a serious violation and will result in appropriate consequences including, but not limited to, the revocation of the award, recovery of disbursed funds, and temporary/permanent disqualification from future competitions, depending on the severity of the breach and the specific circumstances involved.**

## Peer Review Details Section

**Review Committee.** Applications will be assigned to a dedicated review panel for the GIA-I. Therefore, there is no opportunity to select a panel which best corresponds to the application from the SRC Committees listed in the GIA guidelines.

### B.4.3 Competition Results

Early notification regarding the likelihood of funding will not be provided as part of this competition. Applicants will be advised of any changes to program milestones via email.

Official decision letters will be sent to all Applicants by May 2027, or an update on the status of notifications will be provided to Applicants via email before that date, with a public announcement posted at a later date on the Heart & Stroke research website.

## C. GENERAL INFORMATION

### C.1 Contact Information

**For any questions or concerns, the preferred form of communication is email.** Your email will go to a research email inbox which is accessed by multiple research team members and is the best way to get a timely response.

Heart & Stroke can provide general guidance but cannot confirm eligibility and/or relevance of your research topic during the application process. Final determination on eligibility and/or relevance can only be made on receipt of the full application and after the application deadline.

#### Research and Science Department

**Email:** [research@heartandstroke.ca](mailto:research@heartandstroke.ca)

**Website:** <https://www.heartandstroke.ca/what-we-do/research/for-researchers>

**! Please note this EMAIL ACCOUNT is only monitored from 9am-5pm ET, Monday to Friday.**