



Research on Age-related Macular Degeneration (AMD Program)

Program category: Research grants

Letter of intent: **August 31, 2015, 4:30pm**

Application deadline: **December 1, 2015, 4:30pm**

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**For any questions related to the VHRN AMD
research priorities:**

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**All documents referred in blue are available on the internet (link) or
in the toolbox of the program web page on the FRQS website.**

The objective of this funding program, in partnership with the Antoine-Turmel Foundation (ATF) and the FRQS Vision Health Research Network (VHRN), is to develop knowledge in the age-related macular degeneration (AMD) area to better treat, rehabilitate, and even cure patients with AMD. In order to reach these goals, this program favors the development of a critical mass of Québec researchers in AMD as well as the positioning of Québec as a global leader in this area by using strategic and structuring approaches.

By becoming a member of the VHRN, the awardees of this AMD program will have access to all resources developed by the network (common infrastructures, databases, tissue banks, etc.).

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

Priority themes	This program is entirely dedicated to AMD research in all its forms (fundamental, clinical or translational research, epidemiology/public health, and rehabilitation). Any research methodology that would have the potential to help improving the knowledge on AMD is eligible.
Objectives	The main objectives of this program are to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop better treatments for patients with AMD • Reduce significantly the disease course • Delay the start, or even prevent, the disease • Develop rehabilitation's programs for patients with advanced illness to allow a better life with AMD



APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

Conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project's team must include one Principal Investigator (PI) and co-investigators having the status of independent researcher as defined in Annex 1c of the Common General Rules, and working in a university or an institution in the health and social services network; a minimum of 2 co-investigators is required • Including young researchers among the co-investigators is strongly encouraged • The PI must demonstrate that he/she will devote a sufficient amount of research time to the project to ensure its success • Multidisciplinarity, intersectoriality and complementarity of skills of the research team will be considered as an asset <p style="text-align: center;">Postdoctoral trainees cannot apply to this program as PIs or co-investigators.</p>
Professional corporations	<p>Clinical researchers must prove that they are members in good standing of the professional order governing them in Québec, have a valid license to practice in Québec and have professional liability insurance.</p>
Multiple applications	<p>Researchers may only submit one application to this program as a PI. Researchers may submit several applications to this program as a co-investigator.</p>
Affiliation, citizenship and residence	<p>The principal investigator and the co-investigators must:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be affiliated with a Québec university • Be Canadian citizens or permanent residents as defined in section 2.1 of the Common General Rules and domiciled in Québec <p>Collaborators may be from outside Québec. However, no funds will be transferred outside the province.</p>
Ethics	<p>PIs and co-investigators must comply with the ethical regulations as defined in section 5.3 "Research Ethics and Conformity" of the Common General Rules</p>
Basic training in research ethics	<p>Basic training in research ethics is mandatory for all FRQS awardees when their research project involves human subjects.</p> <p>The term "research project involving human subjects" applies when the research project involves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Living human subjects • Cadavers, human remains, tissues, biological fluids, gametes, embryos or fetuses, cells or genetic materials • Personal information on file. Personal information is defined as information that enables a person to be identified <p>Awardees must successfully complete levels 1 and 3 of the Online Tutorial in Research Ethics set out by the <i>Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux</i> (MSSS).</p> <p>Following the awarding of the grant by the FRQS, PIs and co-investigators must complete the training and provide to FRQS the proof of their successful completion of the program before receiving the first payment of their grant.</p>



REQUIRED DOCUMENTS – LETTER OF INTENT

Transmission of the documents via the FRQS website only	
Principal investigator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Letter of intent electronic form • Canadian Common CV , Funding CV version for the FRQS (updated) • Detailed contributions (attachment required through the FRQS Electronic Portfolio on the Canadian Common CV page) , consult the Guidelines for the CV attachment available in the toolbox <p>Only researchers whose letters of intent are selected will be invited to submit a full application (see the Evaluation section).</p> <p>FRQS will send by email a confirmation of the acceptance or rejection of the letter of intent of each candidate.</p>
Co-investigators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canadian Common CV , Funding CV version for the FRQS (updated) • Detailed contributions (attachment required through the FRQS Electronic Portfolio on the Canadian Common CV page) , consult the Guidelines for the CV attachment available in the toolbox

REQUIRED DOCUMENTS – COMPLETE APPLICATION

Transmission of the documents via the FRQS website only	
Principal investigator	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete application electronic form • Canadian Common CV , Funding CV version for the FRQS (updated) • Detailed contributions (attachment required through the FRQS Electronic Portfolio on the Canadian Common CV page) , consult the Guidelines for the CV attachment available in the toolbox • Letter of support from the administrators of the institution or university department in which the research will be carried out (for the PI only) • Letter of support from a collaborator or a partner, if applicable • For a clinical PI: a letter from the director of the clinical department or the dean of the faculty specifying the number of hours for which the applicant will be released from his/her clinical obligations to carry out the research project • A copy of the <i>Certificat de selection du Québec</i>, the permanent resident card, or the work visa if applicable
Co-investigators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Canadian Common CV , Funding CV version for the FRQS (updated) • Detailed contributions (attachment required through the FRQS Electronic Portfolio on the Canadian Common CV page) , consult the Guidelines for the CV attachment available in the toolbox



- For a clinical co-investigator: a letter from the director of the clinical department or the dean of the faculty specifying the number of hours for which the applicant will be released from his/her clinical obligations to carry out the research project
- A copy of the *Certificat de selection du Québec*, the permanent resident card, or the work visa if applicable

RESEARCH LOCATION

Choice of research location	An FRQS centre or group, an institution administered by the Ministère de la Santé et des Services sociaux (MSSS) or a Québec university.
Change of research location	<p>The FRQS assumes that the applicant will conduct his/her project at the same institution or university that initially endorsed the application throughout the entire grant period.</p> <p>Applicants who wish to change their research location must submit by email an official request to the FRQS. The request must detail the reason(s) for the change and describe all possible consequences on the research project.</p> <p>University or institutional authorities must notify the FRQS in writing once they have approved the change of location.</p> <p>The acceptance of the new applicant in their new research centre or university department must also be done in writing to the FRQS by the director.</p>

TERM OF THE GRANT

Term	1 year, with the possibility of renewal for one additional year
Effective date	May 1, 2016

AMOUNT OF THE GRANT

Amount	Up to \$50,000 for one (1) year
Conditions for renewal	The renewal of this grant will be possible by submitting an application for renewal. These applications will be evaluated within the AMD program regular competition.
Indirect research costs	The grants awarded under this program are eligible to receive an additional amount to cover indirect costs of research of the institutions. However, the FRQS is not responsible for the amounts paid by its partners. The details on indirect costs of research reimbursement will be available at the time of the grant.



ELIGIBLE EXPENDITURES

Eligible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Salaries for research assistants • Remuneration of resource persons who are vital to the project • Remuneration of students (master and Ph.D.) and postdoctoral fellow only. However, in case of renewal of the grant, these students will not be eligible for a second year of funding and will have to apply to provincial and national competitions for subsequent funding • Exceptionally, expenses to acquire equipment are eligible, conditional upon adequate justification in the proposal (maximum of \$6,000) • Research material (including purchasing and housing for animals) and all other expenses required to carry out the research project, conditional upon adequate justification in the proposal • Equipment or platform user fees • Fees and reimbursements of travel expenses for research human subjects • Participation to conferences (up to 3% of the grant amount)
Non eligible	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remuneration of the PI, co-investigators, and collaborators • All indirect expenditures related to layout organization or reorganization, facilities leasing and maintenance or the indirect costs covered by the host institution • Funds must not be transferred outside of Québec

EVALUATION

Letter of intent	<p>The letter of intent is used to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine the applicants' eligibility • Assess the relevance of the application • Establish a peer review committee with relevant expertise <p>Only applicants whose letter of intent has been considered eligible will be invited, by email from the FRQS, to submit a complete application.</p>
Complete application	<p>The applications will be evaluated by a peer review committee composed of experts from clinical and scientific institutions chosen by the FRQS according to the rules in effect for the constitution of review committees (See the evaluation grid for more information).</p> <p>Representatives from the Antoine-Turmel Foundation and VHRN may sit on the evaluation committee as observers without the right to vote.</p> <p>In addition to answering the specific objectives of the AMD program, the teams should pay particular attention to the strategic and structuring aspects of their research projects. These two aspects will be the guiding principles for the evaluation of the projects.</p>



By **structuring**, it is meant that the projects will have to consolidate and accelerate the development of Québec AMD research by:

1. mobilizing the available resources in the AMD community
2. raising awareness and involving the different actors (researchers, clinicians, decision makers, non-profit organizations, partners, and patients) who can facilitate the AMD research and the implementation of the results

The recruiting and the development of a critical mass of scientists in AMD Québec research will also have a structuring impact.

The **strategic** aspect is related to the approach used by the researchers and the efforts and resources they will utilize to optimize their chances to reach the objectives of the program. New funding, public or private investments, and partnerships with the industry are examples of leverage effects resulting from a project. Visibility and impact at the international level, and consolidation of key collaborations are other examples.

The other evaluation criteria for the complete application will be:

Research project

- Originality and coherence of the project
- Clarity of the objectives

Research team

- Scientific quality of the researchers
- Complementarity of the researchers' expertises
- Scientific achievements (publications, development of structuring initiatives, visibility in Canada and/or internationally, etc.)
- Role in training young scientists

Networking/Partnerships

- The research project described measures ensuring a mesh with members of the local research community, national and international decision-makers and / or practice settings
- Financial or non-financial partnerships will be considered as an asset

Feasibility

- Scientific and technical feasibility
- Realism of the timeline and relevance of the monitoring indicators

Short term benefits

In the short term, how will this project allow meeting the objectives of the program?

- Project impact in terms of acquisition of knowledge and skills
- Project impact on the development of new concepts and models, instruments, approaches and methods, the final goal being to better treat or rehabilitate patients with AMD



Knowledge transfer

- Proposed strategy (ies) to ensure that research results are used in the development and/or implementation of:
 - better treatments
 - better tools for rehabilitation or prevention
 - better programs
 - new practices or care policy for patients with AMD.

Budget

- Adequate budget justification in the proposal

RESEARCH OUTCOMES AND KNOWLEDGE TRAFERT

Submission of reports and presentation

In accepting the grant, the applicants agree to submit scientific and financial reports at the end of this grant, by the deadlines determined by the FRQS. In the case of the renewal of a grant for one additional year, mid-term progress reports (scientific and financial) will also be requested.

The results of all funded projects will have to be presented to the VHRN annual meeting.

Use and dissemination of the results by partners

Applicants authorize the partners to use final report and published research outputs (scientific publications, conferences, symposia, conventions or e-publication) for reproduction, translation, execution or public extension purposes through whatever means or for any other non-commercial purposes, provided there is no infringement of copyright law.

APPLICANT'S AGREEMENT

In submitting an application, the applicant must:

- Comply with the obligations outlined in the [Common General Rules](#), the [Policy Regarding Open Access to Published Research Outputs](#) of the FRQS as well as the terms and conditions stipulated in this program
- Submit additional files linked to the grant, if requested by the FRQS
- Comply with the ethics and integrity standards outlined in the FRQS document [Standards en éthique de la recherche et d'intégrité scientifique](#) and in the [Policy for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#) of the Fonds de recherche du Québec
- Authorize the FRQS to retain and use the personal and scientific information included in the application documents, in keeping with the terms outlined in the document [Accès aux documents et protection des renseignements personnels](#) and provided that the people who are granted access to the information respect its confidentiality



HOST INSTITUTION AGREEMENT

The host institution will provide:

- Functional laboratories and research facilities as well as basic equipment required to carry out the research project
- An environment respectful of the ethics and integrity standards outlined in the FRQS document [Standards en éthique de la recherche et d'intégrité scientifique](#) and in the [Policy for the Responsible Conduct of Research](#) of the Fonds de recherche du Québec.

PARTNERS

Antoine-Turmel Foundation and FRQS Vision Health Research Network