# **MSSI Ideas Fund – Winter 2019 call for applications**

## **THE FUND**

High risk/high reward projects are increasingly seen as avenues to move fields of research forward rapidly. The MSSI Ideas Fund provides small amounts of seed funding to explore bold projects and novel ideas which, if successful, could make a significant impact on a sustainability-related challenge.

The Fund allows recipients to explore the feasibility of ideas before dedicating significant resources to flesh them out. This includes development of collaborations and production of data required to justify a multi-disciplinary grant application in the area of sustainability. Its aim is to enable development of projects to a stage where they can attract other funding, perhaps in one of our thematic research areas.

## **AVAILABLE FUNDS**

Faculty Research Awards: up to $50,000 per award ($250,000 available in total)

Student Research Awards: up to $7000 per award ($25,000 available in total)

## **ELIGIBILITY**

### **The idea/research**

**The idea or research must be bold and new, have potential to make a significant impact on a sustainability problem/challenge and align with the MSSI vision. Its nascent state or boldness should render it premature for other funding**. Previously funded projects can be viewed here  [https://www.mcgill.ca/mssi/funding-opportunities.](https://www.mcgill.ca/mssi/funding-opportunities)

Previously unsuccessful proposals will only be accepted for a subsequent competition if they contain obvious and significant developments.

### **The proposer/s**

* All lead applicants must be active McGill faculty or students. Student projects must include a named McGill faculty supervisor.
* All applicants must be MSSI Members or Affiliates (register at <https://mcgill.ca/mssi/join-mssi>). Applications that include non-MSSI members will be returned.
* Applications from groups are welcome providing that at least 50% of each group must be active members of McGill and all applicants must be either MSSI Members or MSSI Affiliates.

The MSSI is a McGill-wide initiative so particularly welcomes applications from scholars/groups/students who have not previously received MSSI funding.

### **Eligible costs**

* Materials and supplies
* Travel costs
* Conference costs
* User fees
* Community engagement expenses (e.g. workshops, community consultations etc.)
* HR compensation (stipends and salaries for students/post-docs). Note that this is not applicable for student- led applications, see below.

### **Ineligible costs**

* Building and refurbishment costs
* HR compensation for student applications

## **SELECTION CRITERIA**

Projects are evaluated on their potential for impact on a sustainability problem and their ability to become competitive for identified external funding. In line with MSSI goals, projects that take an interdisciplinary approach are viewed favourably.

The Ideas Fund Review Committee reviews the applications and makes recommendations to the Executive Committee for final approval. Proposals that ranked highly in previous competitions met the following criteria:

1. Original idea;
2. Clearly grounded in sustainability with potential for big impact if successful;
3. Explicit demonstration of the feasibility of budget and deliverables;
4. Research receives no other funding;
5. Lead applicant does not currently receive direct funding from MSSI;
6. Demonstrated potential for further funding at the end of the funding period.

Note: Proposals that move an existing idea from bench to commercialization or toward widespread adoption (innovation) should be submitted to the MSSI Innovation Fund.

### **Other criteria**

Additional space and associated costs must have been approved and allocated by the relevant department prior to application.

Where applicable, approval must have been granted by the appropriate McGill Research Ethics Board prior to application.

Successful applicants are expected to become active members of the MSSI community, present their work at MSSI events and on request, act as reviewers in future competitions.

**REPORTING REQUIREMENTS**

An update on research activities is required after six months and a short final report must be submitted one month after the funding ends.

### **Confidentiality**

All material and information submitted should be non-confidential as a high-level synopsis of funded projects may, after consultation with the awardee, be made available on the MSSI website.

Applicants are responsible for taking the necessary steps to protect the intellectual property (IP) associated with the project following McGill’s process for technology transfer and commercialization (see <https://www.mcgill.ca/research/research/ip> for more information).

## **TIMETABLE**

The review process will be completed in late March 2019 and funds will be allocated towards the end of April 2019. Work covered by the fund must be completed within one calendar year of the grant start date unless an extension has been approved by the Ideas Fund Committee.

## **TO APPLY**

Proposals should be submitted using the template found on the MSSI website. Supporting figures can be included separately from the completed template.

### **Proposal details (also see template)**

1. For each applicant on the proposal (including the faculty supervisor for student applications):
   1. Full name and e-mail;
   2. McGill faculty and department, or external affiliation for non-McGill co-applicants;
   3. Area of expertise relevant to proposal;
   4. An abridged resumé (maximum 5 pages, additional to the main proposal) highlighting relevant background, publications, patents, and collaborative research activities should be provided for each applicant.
   5. Undergraduate and graduate student applicants must also include an unofficial transcript.
2. Outline of the research proposal or idea (maximum 200 words);
3. Explicit description of its novelty (why is this a bold idea?);
4. Its relevance to sustainability;
5. The anticipated deliverable(s);
6. Project timeline and major milestones within the 1-year funding period;
7. Budget (e.g., human resources, materials/supplies, travel and auxiliary costs);
8. Additional information relevant to the proposal, such as:
   1. Its potential (socio)-economic and other benefits;
   2. Commercial product or service that could be implemented or developed through application of the research results, including reference to other applications of the product or service;
   3. Collaboration with industry related to the proposal.

### **Proposal submission**

The completed form should be named “MSSI Ideas 2019 *LastName*” where ‘*LastName*’ is the family name of the lead applicant.

The completed template, supplemental figures (if any) and resumés should be submitted in a single e-mail to mssi.mcgill.ca, copying in all co-applicants.

Non-conforming applications (including resumés greater than 5 pages in length) will be returned for modification and resubmission up to the competition closing date.

**The application deadline is 11:59 pm on March 3rd, 2019.**