

**Review of SIF COVID-19 Medical Countermeasure Statements of Interest**  
**Terms of Reference: SIF COVID-19 Task Team Reviewer**

**INTRODUCTION**

On April 23, 2020, the Prime Minister of Canada announced more than \$1 billion in support of a national medical research strategy to fight COVID-19. This included \$600 million, through the Strategic Innovation Fund, over two years to support COVID-19 vaccine and therapy clinical trials led by the private sector, and Canadian biomanufacturing opportunities.

**MANDATE / OBJECTIVE**

As part of the SIF COVID-19 Task Team, you will work with committees comprised of SIF program officials, ISED industry sector reviewers, and subject matter specialists from PHAC, HC, NRC, and CIHR to support the review of Medical Countermeasures (MCM) statements of interest (SOIs) in the first phase of SIF's two-phase process. The review of the MCM SOIs will help to inform the ISED Minister's decision on which applicants to invite to the second phase of the process.

As a Task Team reviewer, your relevant knowledge and expertise will be leveraged to support the assessment process by providing input on the following elements as they relate to the advancement of medical countermeasures against COVID-19: stage of development and timeline to clinical trials and results, magnitude of potential impact of intervention on COVID-19, technical and scientific merit, costs/timelines and state of readiness, strength of proponents, source of innovation, and access to medicine and manufacturing to meet domestic demand in Canada.

**ROLE & RESPONSIBILITIES**

Each Task Team Reviewer will be assigned to a number of MCM SOIs, aligned to their relevant knowledge and expertise, along with other reviewers. For each assigned MCM SOI, Task Team Reviewers will be required to complete the following activities:

1. **Individual Assessment:** Conduct a preliminary individual assessment using the provided Assessment Grid applying judgement and giving consideration to the merit and potential of the proposal, in line with the established assessment criteria, and based on relevant knowledge and expertise. This individual assessment should be completed prior to the group consensus meetings.
2. **Group Assessment:** Participate in a group consensus meeting with other members of the Task Team assigned to the same eligible MCM SOIs to prepare a final assessment of the proposal. As part of this process, each Task Team Reviewer will be expected to engage in a facilitated group discussion, and will be responsible for making constructive and collaborative contributions to the discussion, including interventions to ensure that other members of the Task Team are well-informed in the topic/issue as it relates to their area of expertise. After the group assessment, Task Team Reviewers are expected to submit a finalized Assessment Grid for each of their assigned MCM SOIs shortly after.

An Assessment Grid will be provided to each member of the Task Team, and include assessment criteria, instructions and templates. It is expected that all members of the Task Team will be responsive to SIF

Program Officials with regards to preparation requirements, the completion of assessments, and to answer any questions required in the finalization of the assessment process.

Task Team Reviewers' considerations will be part of the assessment package provided to the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry by ISED to inform his decision on a balance of considerations. The Task Team Reviewers' considerations may also be used by SIF Program Officials to inform feedback to Applicants to enable them to come into stronger alignment with program objectives and requirements.

## **EXPERIENCE & CAPABILITIES**

Task Team Reviewers are expected to have **knowledge and expertise** related to the life sciences industry, and/or vaccines or therapeutic treatments, for which they are being leveraged to participate as part of the Task Team. Task Team Reviewers should also have knowledge that covers a pan-Canadian spectrum, including an understanding companies and other innovation intermediaries across Canada that are leaders in the life sciences industry, as well as applicable technologies and strategies that are currently being deployed by companies or could be developed/applied to advance COVID-19 medical countermeasures.

In addition to relevant subject matter knowledge and expertise, the following requirements are also expected:

- Access to a network of contacts from your department and/or relevant sector(s) on whose expertise you can draw to validate or research information as required.
- Understanding of the Strategic Innovation Fund and its objectives, including anticipated outcomes and benefits for Canada.
- Experience relating to program application and review processes, and being adaptable to participate in a variety of activities from eligibility screening, to individual and group assessments.

## **TIMELINES & COMMITMENT**

Task Team Reviewers will be expected to work remotely for approximately three or four days, beginning the week of May 5th, 2020. You may also be asked to participate in subsequent wave(s) of reviews in the coming weeks.

Task Team Reviewers should also be available to participate in teleconferences, as necessary, to finalize or provide further details about their considerations.

It would be ideal for Task Team Reviewers to also be available as the process advances in the coming weeks to support the assessment of Full Applications (Phase II) and term sheet negotiations.

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Any conflict of interest shall be disclosed to the Strategic Innovation Fund team in writing as soon as that conflict emerges (e.g., prior to accepting role as a Task Team Reviewer, on receipt of specific applications for review). Such disclosures and compliance measures shall be documented and retained for the record.