The DHDP Catalyst Program

Deadline: Letters of Intent (LOI) due by June 18, 2021

The Digital Heath and Discovery Platform (DHDP) provides a unique and excellent opportunity to design and deliver innovative interdisciplinary training to produce skilled STEM workers for Canada's economy.

We are pleased to announce the **DHDP Catalyst Program,** a national mobilization and skill development program to engage key stakeholders, foster collaboration, share learnings and trigger new projects.

Description

This program will support the development of innovative and interdisciplinary training internships that will directly contribute to the development of highly qualified personnel through work-integrated-learning and advancement of state-of-the-art innovation, through which the benefits to the health and digital technology sector will be realized.

This initiative has three major goals:
1. Increasing AI data readiness of members to facilitate DHDP appliance deployment;
2. Develop AI specialists with appreciation of life sciences concepts and processes; and,
3. Upgrade clinical and scientific researchers' and trainees understanding of AI concepts to assist in science and health care.
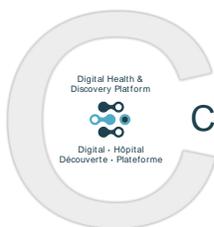
The investments by our partners, like Mitacs, in training programs, R&D initiatives, and industrial internships will also develop a deep pool of expertise, with STEM graduates that have multi-disciplinary exposure, including AI, health-related topics, as well as in some cases entrepreneurship and business exposure.

National Competition: Spring 2021

Projects will focus on the advancement of next generation health data technologies including: data access; data ingestion; data federation and AI/Machine learning with applications in cancer and neurology.

This competition supports proposals within one of the following target research areas:
1. **Advances in Cancer Therapy** – Personalizing immunotherapies for each cancer patient.
2. **Advances in Neurodegenerative Disease** – Improving early diagnosis and management.

Eligibility

Applicants must be graduate researchers working with a faculty member at any Canadian university (who is eligible to hold Tri-Agency funds) or faculty at Canadian colleges. Applications must include one Canadian partner as a collaborator or research sponsor. Applications should demonstrate an economic or productivity orientation.

Internships will be based on the Mitacs Accelerate Program funding structure of four-month internship units, each valued at $15,000. Each internship unit includes a $7,500 contribution from the partner organization, which is matched through the Mitacs Accelerate Program by another $7,500. The graduate researcher receives, for each internship unit, a minimum stipend of $10,000 and the remaining funds are used to support research costs. Projects can include multiple internship units to support longer-term collaborations, for a period of no more than three (3) years. Funds are to be provided in collaboration with Mitacs, DHDP and other funding partners, where applicable.

Application and Review Process

Each project will follow the standard Mitacs Accelerate Program funding structure with the option to build multiple researcher/professor applications for project purposes. Support for proposals will be facilitated through the DHDP Network and DHDP membership.
Applications will be reviewed in two stages:

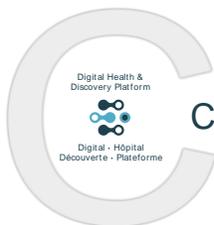**Stage 1**: Letter of Intent (LOI) submitted to the DHDP by **Friday, June 18, 2021**
*Please refer to the LOI application form for details.

LOI Evaluation Criteria

Eligible applications will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- **Innovation and originality**: originality of the proposed research question, including novel techniques/methods, as well as the potential for creating new knowledge.
- **Impact of the project on the researcher:** how conducting the project will allow AI researchers to improve their understanding of life sciences or will improve clinical and life science researchers' understanding of AI.
- **Impact of the research**: how the project contributes to AI data readiness, and to improving the health of Canadian patients with cancer or neurodegenerative diseases.

The DHDP Review Committee will select a shortlist of LOIs that will advance to Stage 2. Applicants will be notified in writing and invited to advance to the next stage: - submission to Mitacs.

Note: Formal Mitacs applications should only be written and submitted once an invitation to advance to Stage 2 has been extended by the DHDP Review Committee.

Stage 2: Selected candidates are invited to submit their full proposal to Mitacs using the Mitacs Accelerate Program proposal template (see Proposal | Mitacs). Projects will need to meet eligible research and adjudication criteria (see Mitacs-supported eligible research and adjudication criteria | Mitacs) as well as pass the external academic peer review process (managed by Mitacs). Mitacs will support applicants through this process.

All inquiries should be sent to dhdp@dhdp.ca