

# AUDACE Program, fall 2020

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## Summary

<b>Competition year :</b>	2021-2022
<b>Deadline (notice or letter of intent) :</b>	September 16th, 2020, 4 PM
<b>Deadline (application) :</b>	December 9th, 2020, 4 PM
<b>Amount :</b>	Up to \$100,000 over a period of 12 months, may be spread over 24 months
<b>Duration :</b>	1 year
<b>Announcement of results :</b>	April 2021

**IMPORTANT NOTICE:** Electronic forms are available in the E-Portfolio (FRQnet ) of the applicant (FRQSC platform). More details are available in the **About FRQnet** section.

## Do you have questions?

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## Assistance informatique

**Courriel :** [centre.assistance.sc](mailto:centre.assistance.sc)  
Québec : 418 646-3669  
Ext. de Québec : 1 866 621-7084

Lundi au vendredi  
8 h 30 à 12 h et 13 h à 16 h  
(vendredis d'été : 8 h 30 à 12 h)

Les demandes d'assistance technique acheminées par courriel sont traitées en priorité.



## NOTE

In the event of a discrepancy between the English and French versions of this program, the French version prevails.

This program refers to the **Common General Rules(CGR** ), which are applicable to all programs of the Fonds de recherche du Québec. Any special terms and conditions applicable to the AUDACE program are indicated in this document, and these prevail over the CGR.

Version on June 30, 2020 subject to the approval of the ministre de l'Économie et de l'Innovation.

**In your application, you will be able to describe how the COVID-19 pandemic may have affected your training or research activities during the past few months, in order for this information to be considered in the evaluation of your application. Please refer to the document "Considering the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in the evaluation of funding applications " for further information.**

### 1. **CONTEXT**

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## 1. CONTEXT

Convinced that an intersectoral approach will open up novel research perspectives, introduce groundbreaking conceptual frameworks, cast new light on complex phenomena and provide innovative solutions to multidimensional issues, the Fonds de recherche du Québec invite members of the scientific community from all sectors (natural sciences and engineering, health sciences, humanities and social sciences, arts and literature) to address the major challenges facing Québec society, by viewing them through the prism of a truly joint, co-constructed, integrated approach.

*AUDACE* is part of significant efforts made over the last five years by the chief scientist of Quebec to foster intersectoral research through forums on research direction; periodic consultations with stakeholders from research, the public, private and political sectors and the artistic community; and by launching a wide-ranging process of reflection on creativity and intersectorality.

*Launched in 2017, AUDACE* was the first funding opportunity of the Directorate of Societal Challenges and Intersectoral Networks (DSMI) to come out of the funding programs focusing on intersectoral networking and on the advances that can be made by the cross-pollination of scientific knowledge, approaches and cultures. It is in line with the *Support for innovative research* and *Support for innovative projects* programs which succeeded one another as part of FRQSC's programming between 2002 and 2013, two funding offers that invited the community to propose projects that were out of the ordinary, innovative, and outside of the box. Drawing on lessons learned through these programs, *AUDACE* represents a firm commitment on the part of the three FRQ to support exploratory intersectoral initiatives with the potential to radically transform research and creation.

With this program, the FRQ are also seeking to restore Québec's position in the international shift toward High-Risk/High-Reward funding. *AUDACE* aims to provide researchers from the three major sectors covered by the Fonds with favourable conditions for initiating projects with a high level of risk and the potential for high impacts, be they scientific, social, economic, technological, cultural, aesthetic, etc. More specifically, Québec researchers are invited to submit proposals that:

Are in line with an **intersectoral** approach – in the sense that they involve collaboration between researchers from at least two of the three major sectors covered by the Fonds;

**Dare to break** with established frameworks and patterns of thought;

Are likely to produce radically **innovative** knowledge and have a **high potential for impact**.

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## 2. PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

### 2.1. General objective

The objective of the *AUDACE* program is to support bold research that offers a departure from traditional approaches. For the purposes of this program, "bold" refers to the ability of the researchers and their project to go **beyond the existing paradigms of their respective scientific cultures and fields of research** – theories, practices, hypotheses, methods, and even modes of thought. The FRQ also wish to encourage innovative research proposals with a high potential to transform and to produce considerable impacts, regardless of their nature (scientific, social, economic, technological, cultural, aesthetic...).

### 2.2. Specific objectives

More specifically, through this program, the FRQ aim to:

Foster intersectoral networking by funding research projects at the crossroads of disciplines and sectors;

Provide funding for projects considered risky because of their boldness and which, due to their intersectoral nature, do not fall within the scope of the regular funding programs offered by each of the three FRQ.

By "intersectoral networking", the FRQ are referring to a research and collaboration approach which, in order to shed new light on common or shared research issues, brings together researchers from disciplinary fields or research practices from at least two of the three major sectors covered by the Fonds de recherche du Québec (**Nature et technologies** – **Santé** – **Société et culture** ) to work on a research topic, problem, method or question. We are talking about going beyond the simple combination or juxtaposition of several disciplines and sectors (or even the instrumentalization of one discipline or sector by another) to resolve a problem or tackle a research topic. **From an intersectoral perspective, disciplines and sectors must firmly engage in a joint, co-created "research approach" whose mode of operation lies outside of the hierarchization of fields of knowledge.**

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## 3. ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

### 3.1 Eligibility of the project leader

The person responsible for the application (project leader) must have one of the following research statuses according to the **Common general rules (CGR)** :

- university researcher ;
- university clinical researcher ;
- college researcher.

He/she must also meet the general eligibility requirements set out in the **CGR** . A project leader who is a college researcher, with or without a PhD, must be employed full-time by a college recognized by the FRQ to manage funding or a college centre for technology transfer (CCTT). He/she may also hold a full-time or part-time position as a CCTT researcher.

Persons with the status of retired researcher may assume the role of project leader and be responsible for the application, provided they can prove that they are still active in research (publications, grants, student supervision, etc.). A letter from the university with which the researcher is affiliated must be provided, clearly indicating that 1) before retirement, the researcher was a regular professor; 2) for the term of the grant, he/she will have access to the facilities and logistical support required to carry out research activities and 3) he/she will continue to train/supervise students, where applicable.

Researchers with the research status of university researcher or clinical university researcher and who receive a salary as a contracted professor (non-tenure track position) in a university recognized by the FRQ to manage funding must attach, in the "Other documents" section of the letter of intent form and, where applicable, the application form, a mandatory document from their university certifying that they will retain this position throughout the duration of the grant.

### 3.2 Team configuration

In order to be eligible, a project must imperatively be headed by a team of at least two people (including the principal investigator) from at least two different sectors covered by different Fonds de recherche du Québec (**Nature et technologies** – **Santé** – **Société et culture** ) with the status of:

- university researcher ;
- university clinical researcher ;

college researcher .

### ***Role in the application***

#### Co-director (optional)

The principal investigator can designate one or a maximum of two 2 people as project co-director(s) in the letter of intent and, where applicable, the application. The co-director of a team must

1. work in a sector covered by a FRQ that is different from that of the principal investigator
2. have one of the research statuses listed in Section 3.1:

university researcher ;

university clinical researcher ;

college researcher.

Retired researchers and university and clinical university researchers who receive a salary as a contracted professor (non-tenure track position) in a university recognized by the FRQ to manage funding must provide a letter from their university as described in Section 3.1 confirming their eligibility. If a researcher's status cannot be validated in the absence of documents required under the program rules, that researcher will be removed from the list of team members before the letter of intent is presented to the relevance committee, or if applicable, before the proposal is presented to the scientific committee.

A project co-director shares the responsibility for the conduct of the proposed research equally with the principal investigator. As such, and if applicable, the co-director must accompany the principal investigator to the interview with the scientific committee in Phase 2 of the application evaluation. Should the project receive funding, the co-director must 1) be identified with the principal investigator as co-leader of the research project and 2) endorse the final report at the end of the grant period.

#### Co-investigator

At the application stage, team may include an unlimited number of co-investigators with one of the following research statuses defined in the **CGR** :

status 1 : university researcher ;

status 2 : university clinical researcher;

status 3 : college researcher;

status 4 : other research statuses different from statuses related to status 1, 2 and 3 mentioned above :

researcher in **a government institution recognized by the FRQ** ;

government or private sector researcher ;

person from a practice setting ;

artist ;

individual participant.

Thus, for a project to be eligible under the program rules, it must be led by a team composed of at least one principal investigator AND one co-director or co-investigator, each of whom must work in a different sector covered by different Fonds de recherche du Québec (**Nature et technologies** – **Santé** – **Société et culture** ) and have one of the following statuses as defined in the **CGR** :

university researcher ;

university clinical researcher ;

college researcher.

As is the case for the principal investigator, and for the purpose of validating their status, a co-director or co-investigator with the status of retired researcher or university researcher or clinical university researcher who receives a salary as a contracted professor (non-tenure track position) in a university recognized by the FRQ to manage funding must provide a letter from their university as described in Section 3.1. If a researcher's status cannot be validated in the absence of documents required under the program rules, that researcher will be removed from the list of team members before the letter of intent is presented to the relevance committee.

Finally, the research team may also enlist collaborators with the same research statuses as co-investigators who provide a specific expertise to the project for which funding is requested (see **CGR** section "*Definitions – Statuses and Roles*"). As a result, postdoctoral fellows may contribute to the project as collaborators. However, research professionals are not eligible to be collaborators.

### **3.3 Participation in more than one project**

A principal investigator cannot be responsible for more than one funding application or grant awarded under this program.

It is possible to have the role of co-investigator in several projects submitted or funded under this program. However, the relevance and feasibility of this type of multiple participation will be subject to evaluation.

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## **4. SUBMISSION OF THE LETTER OF INTENT**

Applicants must pre-apply by submitting a letter of intent, which will be reviewed by a relevance committee in view of the program's objectives (Section 2) and evaluation criteria (Section 6.1). Following this relevance review, those teams with the most relevant proposal will be invited to

submit a full application.

#### **4.1 E-forms**

The principal investigator must complete the letter of intent form in his/her **FRQSC E-portfolio**. He/she must first create a user account on the FRQSC website, if this has not already been done. Individuals who already have a personal identification number (PIN) have direct access to a FRQnet account and must update their profile using the **E-Portfolio** .

At the letter of intent stage, the team description must be limited to the principal investigator and a maximum of two (2) additional members with the role of co-director or co-investigator. In accordance with the program rules, they must imperatively have one of the following research statuses defined in the **CGR** :

- university researcher ;
- clinical university researcher ;
- college researcher.

If the team is composed of more than the two (2) or three (3) members already identified in the letter of intent, the project description included with the electronic form should mention this, specifying each person's contribution (see section 4.2). Where applicable, all members of the team will eventually be identified in the application form.

Any documents that are not required and which are included with the LOI will not be submitted to the relevance committee. Applicants will not be notified of any information or documents missing from the application. Any documents received after the deadline for the LOI submission, or exceeding the formats specified in these rules will not be considered.

As indicated in the **CGR** , forms may be filled out in English or French. However, the project title and summary must be written in French. This information may be used by the FRQ for promotion and dissemination purposes.

Finally we invite the research teams to consult documents available in the « Tool Box » of the program web page to make sure that they fill out the LOI E-form correctly.

Only forms completed and transmitted electronically will be accepted. The LOI E-form submission to the Fonds must be realized by the managing and employing institution of the principal investigator (PI) before the deadline specify in section 7.

#### **4.2 Documents to be included**

The applicant is asked to submit the following documents:

A three-page PDF document containing:

- a project description addressing the program objectives (section 2) and the evaluation criteria (see 6.1) ;
- a paragraph describing the project co-construction process that led the team to submit a letter of intent ;



a paragraph describing the approach that will lead to the accomplishment of the project and each member's contribution to this process.

For the principal investigator AND one or a maximum of two co-investigators or co-directors, an abridged CV of no more than 2 pages. The abridged CVs must respect the FRQ abridged CV presentation rules (**available here** ) and summarize, in the order listed:

Research sector ;

Academic training (degrees) and work experience ;

Professional activities and contributions ;

Relevant expertise and contributions pertaining to the application submitted to the FRQ.

Depending on the person's role (principal investigator, co-director or co-investigator), please refer to the corresponding section of the form to insert the **abridged CV(s)** prepared as requested.

If applicable, **a mandatory letter from the university including the information described in Section 3.1** must be provided for each member of the team with one of the following research statuses:

retired researcher;

university researcher who receives a salary as a contracted professor (non-tenure track position) in a university recognized by the FRQ to manage funding;

clinical university researcher who receives a salary as a contracted professor (non-tenure track position) in a university recognized by the FRQ to manage funding.

This letter must be attached in PDF format in the «Other documents» section of the form. If needed, a single PDF document can include several university letters.

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## 5. APPLICATION PROCESS

Only those applicants whose letters of intent receive a favourable review from the relevance committee will be invited to apply. Recommended applicants will receive an e-mail inviting them to complete and submit an electronic application form along with the required supporting documents.

Any application that does not contain sufficient information to establish its eligibility or to evaluate its scientific quality will be declared ineligible by the FRQ.

The submission to the FRQ must be done by the managing and employing institution of the

principal investigator before the deadline specified in section 7. Once the application has been submitted in the E-Portfolio of the project leader who submitted the letter of intent, the Fonds will not request any elements missing from the application. No documents received after the competition closing date will be considered. Once submitted to the FRQ the E-form is no more available.

## 5.1 E-forms

Teams invited by the Fonds to submit an application following the relevance review of their letter of intent must complete the e-form that will be made available in the **E-Portfolio** (FRQSC platform) of the project leader who submitted the letter of intent.

All team members, including those already identified in the letter of intent form, must be identified in the application form and meet one of the statuses described in Section 3.2.

As indicated in the **CGR**, forms may be filled out in English or French. However, the project title and summary must be written in French. This information may be used for promotion and dissemination purposes.

Only forms completed and transmitted electronically will be accepted.

The application form transmission to the Fonds must be completed by the PI institution before the deadline specify in section 7. Any documents that are not required and which are included with the application will not be submitted to the evaluation committee. Applicants will not be notified of any information or documents missing from the application. Any documents received after the deadline for application, or exceeding the formats specified in these rules will not be considered.

## 5.2 Documents to be included

The principal investigator is asked to submit the following documents:

A three-page PDF project description addressing the program objectives (section 2) and the evaluation criteria (see 6.1). The project description must also include the following:

- a paragraph describing the project co-construction process that led the team to submit a letter of intent;
- a paragraph describing the approach that will lead to the accomplishment of the project and each member's contribution to this process.

An abridged CV for each team member must provide in PDF format (maximum 2 pages) summarizing the following in relation to the project. The abridged CVs must respect the FRQ abridged CV presentation rules (**available here**) and summarize, in the order listed:

1. Research sector : Natural sciences and engineering, Health, Humanities, Arts and Letters ;
2. Academic background (degrees) and work experience ;
3. Professional activities and contributions ;
4. Relevant expertise and contributions pertaining to the application submitted to the FRQ.

Depending on the person's role in the research team (principal investigator, co-director or co-investigator), please refer to the corresponding section of the form to insert the **abridged CV(s)** prepared as requested.

A digital accompanying document of maximum 2 MB describing the project or its leaders. The choice of content is left up to the applicants but its duration must not exceed 3 minutes (180 seconds). The following formats are accepted:

- a video or audio recording ;

- an animated PowerPoint presentation with a maximum of 10 slides.

**This document must be identified** as follows : APPLICANT'S NAME-APPLICATION NUMBER **and sent to the FRQ at the following web address: link to the cloud**

One page of budgetary justifications.

Where applicable, an ethical justification of up to one page for the use of human subjects, human biological materials or animals.

If applicable, **a letter from the university including the information described in Section 3.1** must be provided for each member of the team with one of the following research statuses:

- retired researcher;

- university researcher who receives a salary as a contracted professor (non-tenure track position) in a university recognized by the FRQ to manage funding;

- clinical university researcher who receives a salary as a contracted professor (non-tenure track position) in a university recognized by the FRQ to manage funding.

This letter must be attached in PDF format in the «Other documents» section of the form. If needed, a single PDF document can include several university letters.

**ATTENTION : Applicants are requested to upload their accompanying documents only once to the cloud, in their final version. In case of duplicate transmission resulting from a manipulation error, the most recent version will be considered for the evaluation.**

### 5.3. Frequency of the competition

The competition is offered every year.

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## 6. EVALUATION OF APPLICATIONS

## 6.1 Evaluation criteria

In line with the program objectives, applications are evaluated according to three main criteria:

### ***Level of intersectoral integration (35 points)***

In concrete terms, intersectoral networking in research – which cannot be reduced to a merely collaborative approach – takes shape through:

The joint design and development, within the project, of research problems that engage research questions or topics common to or shared by representatives of the different sectors;

The development of an innovative methodology, adapted to each research problem and integrating approaches from each sector represented within the project;

Team composition: the project must be headed by researchers from at least two sectors.

### ***Potential for disruptive innovation (45 points)***

By "disruptive innovation", the FRQ mean significantly challenging the foundations, knowledge and practices that govern a field of research, or the approaches and methods that commonly underpin the study of a research topic. A project's potential for disruptive innovation lies in its capacity, thanks to its intersectoral focus, to go beyond the boundaries of what is known, to break with its inherited frameworks and standards in order to produce radically new knowledge of a theoretical, epistemological, methodological, aesthetic or technological nature that will transform the research field. The applicants must demonstrate that the anticipated breakthroughs of the project have a real potential for disruption.

### ***Scope of the anticipated impacts (20 points)***

For the purposes of this program, the notion of "impacts" is understood to mean "deliverables", in the broadest sense of the term. The potential impacts under this program, which must be of benefit to Quebec society, can be scientific, social, economic, technological, cultural, or aesthetic in nature.

In all cases, the impacts of the project, as envisaged, must be considerable in the event of success.

Finally, the budget estimates are analyzed by the committee, which verifies their consistency with the submitted project.

## 6.2 Application evaluation process

As indicated in Section 4 of the **CGR** , the Fonds receive funding applications, check their eligibility and submit them for scientific evaluation by a committee whose members are recognized for their skills, expertise and achievements relating to the program objectives and the applications submitted. Nonetheless, as the evaluators for this type of program come from a variety of different backgrounds, applicants are encouraged, in the documents submitted for evaluation, to present

their project in such a way as to be easily understandable in an intersectoral context.

The project evaluation process takes place in two phases:

Phase 1: analysis by the scientific committee of the submitted application and accompanying document;

Phase 2: interview with the leaders of the projects selected in Phase 1 for a presentation before the scientific committee.

The conditions governing funding decisions are specified in Section 4.5 of the **CGR** .

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## 7. IMPORTANT DATES AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE RESULTS

July 9, 2020: Launch of the call for projects. The AUDACE program rules and letter of intent e-form are made available online;

There are 2 possible dates to attend a webinar presenting the competition rules and the LOI E-form to be filled out in FRQnet. A question period will also be offered to the attendees; be register for one of these webinars held on (the content is the same for each of the dates offered):

**Monday August 18 at 9 a.m.**

**Tuesday August 24 at 1 p.m.**

September 16: Deadline for submission of letters of intent (4 p.m.) by the managing and employing institution of the principal investigator (PI) to the FRQ;

November 9: Teams shortlisted by the letter of intent relevancy review are invited to apply. The application form is made available online;

December 9: Deadline for submission of applications (4 p.m.) by the managing and employing institution of the principal investigator (PI) to the FRQ;

March 2021: Interviews with the project leaders selected in Phase 1 of the evaluation (individual evaluations) for presentation before the international committee;

April 2021: Announcement of the results.

For the conditions regarding the announcement of funding, refer to **Section 5.5 of the CGR** .

A copy of the certificate of ethics for the use of human subjects, human biological materials or animals as part of the project is required on the awarding of any grant, if applicable. Payment of the grant is contingent on the submission of the certificate and related documents, refer to **Section**

## 8. DESCRIPTION AND NATURE OF THE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The funding consists of a grant of up to \$100,000 over a period of 12 months. In the documents submitted for evaluation, the use of the funding amount may be spread over 24 months.

In accordance with the program objectives, the grant must be used to cover expenses directly related to the implementation of the project. All budget items listed in the CGR are eligible refer to Section 8 of the **CGR** .

Indirect costs equivalent to 27% of the grant amount will be paid in addition to the research grant, to a maximum of \$27,000.

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## 9. FOLLOW-UP AND ACCOUNTABILITY

In accordance with the **CGR** , the holder of a grant obtained under this program is required submit a final report, the format of which will be communicated in due course to the project leader who submitted the application.

In addition, in the interest of promoting the impacts of the projects funded under this program, teams must contribute, on invitation, to events such as forums, conferences and follow-up or transfer activities organized by the Fonds. The Fonds de recherche du Québec also encourage funding recipients to carry out knowledge mobilization activities (transfer, sharing, valorization, dissemination, etc.) for practice settings and the general public, whenever such activities are relevant in the context of their research.

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## 10. EFFECTIVE DATE

These rules apply to the 2021-2022 fiscal year.

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Latest update: May 2021



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