

## REQUEST FOR LETTERS OF SUPPORT POLICY

Section: Research	No: R-001
Initiated by: CTS Research Chair	Approved by: CTS Board of Directors
Supersedes: N/A	Date approved: April 26, 2017

### 1. Principles and Purpose

The Canadian Thoracic Society (CTS) often receives requests its members for letters of support to accompany funding applications.

The purpose of this policy is to apply a consistent approach for requests for letters of support from our members who are applying for research funding or submitting a research proposal.

CTS is committed to assisting its members to attract funding for projects that align with the CTS' strategic priorities set out in the CTS Strategic Plan. It is recognized that a letter of support from CTS adds weight to an applicant's grant submission. It should be noted that the provision of a letter of support does not automatically result in CTS playing a role in the project.

CTS will assess the impact of each request individually to determine the nature and level of support it will provide.

### 2. Definitions

There are different types of support CTS may be able to provide, for example:

**Support in principle** CTS is in favour of the proposal or project, based on the information provided. The principle, or the idea, seems good and CTS agrees with the outcome or benefit received.

**Knowledge-User** CTS is likely to be able to use the knowledge generated through research in order to make informed decisions about health policies, programs and/or practices.

**Partnership** An arrangement in which the parties agree to collaborate to advance their mutual interests. A partnership can hold either or both parties responsible for all liabilities and will only be entered into if there is significant benefit that aligns directly with CTS' Strategic Plan and available funding and capacity. How CTS will be recognized as a partner of the project (e.g. acknowledgment in a publication) is to be determined prior to entering the agreement. Clarity regarding the role of partners is to be provided along with the request.

### 3. Application

A granting agency may require in-kind contributions or matched funding to demonstrate the commitment by an organization to the success of a research project or a proposal. These contributions may be considered part of the overall budget. Letters of support provide the funding agency confirmation of the value of the contribution.

**In-kind contributions** are both non-monetary or cash equivalent resources that can be given a cash value, such as goods and/or services in support of a research project or a proposal. In-kind contributions may include: partner organization volunteer and staff time spent participating on the project; employee salaries for time allocated to the project; professional, analytical, and other donated

services; travel; use of facilities (meeting space); and dissemination of research knowledge through various means (i.e. website, membership e-bulletin).

CTS will determine the type of contribution to be provided and what resources and/or services will be allocated to the research project or proposal at the time of the request.

**Matched funding** will not be considered by CTS at this time.

**Qualification criteria:**

The following qualifications will apply:

- The Principal Investigator must be current CTS members(all categories);
- The application must be in line with CTS' strategic direction(s); and
- The application must clearly describe how CTS can best collaborate and make a contribution.

Letters of Support will not generally be provided if

- The objectives of the application do not fit within the CTS' identified goals and priorities;
- There is an ongoing expectation to continue the project beyond reasonable timeframes; or
- CTS does not have the sufficient capacity and/or resources to allocate to the project.

#### **4. Process**

The **applicant** must follow these steps:

1. Send an email to [info@cts-sct.ca](mailto:info@cts-sct.ca) as far as possible ahead of your submission deadline. Allow 4 weeks for the request to be processed.
2. Include the following information in your request:
  - a. Name of Principal Investigator, co-Principal Investigator(s), group or organization;
  - b. Grant title and name of funding agency;
  - c. A short paragraph highlighting the objectives of the grant application; explaining why CTS should enter as partner, collaborator or end-user; and how CTS will be engaged in the project;
  - d. A one-page summary of the proposed research
  - e. Name of the person and institution to which the letter should be addressed;
  - f. Any additional form(s) that need to be filled out; and
  - g. Any particular instructions and guidelines that may apply.

**CTS** will follow these steps:

3. The CTS Director of Evidence-based Clinical Practice (EBCP) will contact the Principal Investigator within two days following receipt of the email to confirm that CTS received all the information needed to produce the letter, to request some additional information, or to set up a call to discuss the proposal in more detail.
4. The CTS Director of EBCP will vet the request for a letter of support to determine if the application qualifies as per the criteria set out above. If it qualifies, the next step will be to determine the type of support CTS will provide and to specify, if required, in-kind contributions, costing and timeframes. Consultation will take place with the relevant CTS clinical assembly/committee, Canadian Respiratory Guidelines Executive Committee and the CTS Executive.
5. Once the above steps have been completed and the terms of the partnership or support have been agreed to by the CTS Executive, CTS will send the applicant by email a signed copy of the support letter on official letterhead. The letters are co-signed by the Executive Director and the CTS President or the CTS Research Chair.
6. Requests determined as unsuccessful in accordance with the above criteria will be advised accordingly.