



CST T³ Grant Competition in Transplantation and Donation Terms of Reference

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I. Background

The Competition is designed to inspire and acknowledge clinical research projects with a focus on transplantation or donation. The entries will be evaluated by the T3 Review Committee consisting of members of the Research and Grants and Awards Committees, and/or Board Members of the Canadian Society of Transplantation (CST), and/or previous T3 finalists. The T3 Review Committee will choose three finalists in accordance with these Terms of Reference (“Terms”). The finalists will present their ideas at the Canadian Society of Transplantation Annual Scientific Meeting (the “Meeting”). The finalists will be ranked by the live audience including CST and non-CST members and the top-ranked finalist will receive funding from our sponsor, Astellas Pharma Canada Inc., in the amount of \$50,000. The CST will provide the receipt, processing, evaluation, and decision-making infrastructure for the Competition and will distribute the funding award.

II. Key Dates

Launch	May 22, 2026
Letter of Intent	June 12, 2026 by 11:59 PM EST
Notification of Application	Week of June 19, 2026
Application deadline	July 17, 2026 by 11:59 PM EST
Notification of Finalists	Week of August 24, 2026
Presentation by Finalists	October 27, 2026

III. Objectives and Scope

The objective of the CST T3 Grant Competition in Transplantation and Donation is to support clinical research studies aimed at improving patient outcomes. Clinical research may include studies on treatment, prevention, diagnostics, natural history, behavioral studies, health economics, epidemiology, or quality improvement. Quantitative and qualitative methodologies are included. Proposals that emphasize a patient-centred approach to research in their design and/or include a patient partner in the study team are strongly encouraged. The primary focus of the Competition is to provide seed funding to novel research studies, that will lead to larger, national-level grant funding and research programs.

Using a “TedTalk” format within a dedicated session at the Meeting, funding will be awarded to one of three finalists. The \$50,000 funding is to support a project over a 1-year duration; however, extensions may be granted upon request on a case-by-case basis.

The T3 Review Committee will form the adjudication panel that will receive and process the Letters of Intent and evaluate the submitted, full proposals. By submitting an application, the applicant expressly acknowledges and agrees to these Terms.

IV. Eligibility

A. Eligible Applicants

For an application to be considered for the Competition, the applicant must:

- be a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant, of the age of majority of their province or territory of residence.
- be affiliated with a Canadian post-secondary institution (including university, hospital or research institutes).
- Be an early career researcher (within 5 years of first academic appointment minus eligible leaves, such as parental leaves) or mid-career researcher (within 5-15 years of first academic appointment minus eligible leaves, such as parental leaves). Note, the applicant must be an independent investigator who can hold research funds at their institution. Thus, trainees/fellows/students are not eligible to apply.
- be a CST Member in good standing.
- be able to attend the Meeting to present their proposal. Note, the 3 finalists will receive free registration for the Meeting.
- if ranked first, second, or third in the Competition, agree to have their application and personal information shared in confidence with Astellas for internal documentation and auditing purposes.

B. Eligible Applications

Only one application per principal applicant will be accepted. Eligible applications will be those limited to original clinical research studies. This competition is not intended to supplement other funding sources. The funding is intended for new studies that have not been previously funded. Applications must be submitted in accordance with the requirements in Section V.

By submitting an application, the applicant represents that the application is an original, unpublished work that does not contain, incorporate, or otherwise use any content, material, or element that is owned by or subject to any rights of a third party or entity. The application will not contain any content, element, or material that violates a third party's publicity, privacy, or intellectual property rights, nor that violates any applicable federal, provincial, or local law.

Applications will be disqualified if it does not meet the requirements of these Terms.

As a condition of participation in the Competition, each applicant grants Astellas, CST, and their respective subsidiaries, agents, and partner companies, a perpetual, irrevocable, worldwide, royalty-free, and non-exclusive license to use, reproduce, adapt, modify, publish, distribute, publicly perform, create a derivative work from, and publicly displays the applicant's application: (1) for the purposes of allowing Astellas/CST and the judges to evaluate the application for purposes of the Competition, and (2) in connection with advertising and promotion of the Competition via communication to the public or other groups, including, but not limited to, the right to make screenshots, animations, and video clips available for advertising and promotional purposes.

C. Non-Eligible Submissions

Proposals including or related to the following subject matter will not be considered eligible for the Competition:

- Finalists of the T3 competition from the year prior
- Discovery and pharmaceutical research involving the scientific investigation of the etiology mechanisms, or treatment of human disease using human subjects, populations, or materials of human origin
- Clinical drug/treatment trials
- Basic bench/animal research or translational research
- Research evaluating clinical, economic, and humanistic aspects of pharmaceutical products, services, and programs to provide healthcare decision makers (e.g., Public Payers) with information for optimal allocation of healthcare resources
- Research that is unrelated to transplantation and/or donation
- Research that does not have a patient-centered focus (e.g., studies that are not aimed at improving patient outcomes, such as quality-of-life)
- Previously completed studies or studies that have received funding from another source (including government or industry sponsors)

V. Review Criteria

Letters of Intent (LOI) will be reviewed and assessed by a panel from the Research and Grants and Awards Committees and applicants will be notified that they have been selected to move to the full application.

LOIs will be evaluated for:

- 1) Fit with the call for applications
- 2) Originality of the idea
- 3) Impact

Applications that are selected from the LOI stage to move to the submission of full applications will be reviewed and assessed by the T3 Review Committee who will select the three finalists to present at the Meeting.

Full Applications will be scored from 0 to 5 using the scale below:

Descriptor	Range	Definition
Outstanding	4.5 – 5.0	The application excels in most or all relevant aspects. Any shortcomings are minimal.
Excellent	4.0 – 4.4	The application excels in many relevant aspects, and reasonably addresses all others. Certain improvements are possible.
Good	3.5 – 3.9	The application excels in some relevant respects, and reasonably addresses all others. Some improvements are necessary.
Fair	3.0 – 3.4	The application broadly addresses relevant aspects. Major revisions are required.
Poor	0.0 – 2.9	The application fails to provide convincing information and/or has serious inherent flaws or gaps.

The following criteria will be used for evaluation and scoring:

- 1) Methodology, including feasibility, and patient-centered approach
- 2) Originality of the idea
- 3) Research team, including description of patient partner(s)
- 4) Impact on patient outcomes, quality of life, field of transplantation or donation

The successful application must have the potential to improve the outcome and lives of transplant recipients in the immediate future. The chances of being selected as a finalist will depend on the number of eligible applications that are received, and the quality of the submissions.

VI. Review Process

The T3 Review Committee will evaluate each eligible application and attribute a score of 0 to 5 for each of the above-listed review criteria. The T3 Review Committee will be members of the Research and Grants and Awards Committees, and/or CST Board members, and/or previous T3 finalists.

The three applicants that receive the highest overall scores will be selected as potential finalists. In the event of a tie, the applicant that received the higher score from the judges in the category of “Methodology” (criteria #1) will be selected as a potential finalist. If there is still a tie, the applicant that received the higher score from the judges in the category of “Originality” (criteria #2) will be selected.

The three finalists will be notified that their application has been selected. The notification email shall contain instructions for confirming acceptance as a finalist, including a requirement that the applicant sign and return a Declaration of Eligibility and Liability and Publicity Release within 5 days.

In the event that a finalist has not confirmed acceptance within 5 days following the date upon which the notification email is sent, or is disqualified for any reason, the application that received the next highest total score from the judges will be chosen as the potential finalist. Applicants acknowledge that judging of this kind is by its nature subjective.

The three finalists will be invited to present their idea at a live presentation during the Meeting. The finalists must be present at the Meeting to receive the award in the Competition. Each finalist will receive 15 minutes to present their idea (10 minutes for presentation + 5 minutes for “Questions and Answers” from the audience).

The award recipient will be selected by the audience, comprised of CST and non-CST members, who will rank the finalists based on the same review criteria described in Section V. The process for ranking/voting will be communicated to the audience at the Meeting. Only the top-ranked finalist will be awarded \$50,000 CAD. The winner will be announced at the Meeting, shortly after the audience votes have been tallied.

By accepting an award, a finalist agrees that Astellas and CST, and their respective affiliates and agencies, may use their name and/or likeness for advertising and promotional purposes of the Competition without additional compensation.

VII. Application Requirements

Letter of Intent:

1. Each applicant shall include a LOI (**maximum 500 words**), including the following:
 - Study title (does **not** count towards the 500-word limit)
 - Name of Principal Investigator and co-investigators (does **not** count towards the 500-word limit)
 - Study purpose/objectives and/or description of the problem being addressed
 - Brief overview of methodology and feasibility of the team conducting the project
 - Impact on the field of transplantation or donation
2. Biosketch of the Principal Investigator (**maximum 3 pages**), which includes employment history and date of first appointment as an independent investigator

Full Application

1. Each application shall include a proposal (**maximum 1500 words**) describing the 1-year study and include the following:
 - Scope of the problem
 - Study objective(s)
 - Methodology and feasibility of the approach
 - Impact/significance on patient outcomes, transplantation, or donation
 - Anticipated timeline (this can be in a table format and **does** count towards the 1500-word limit)
 - Brief budget justification (\$50,000 budget; this can be in a table format and **does** count towards the 1500-word limit)
 - References may be included as a separate page (**maximum 1 page**) and will **not** count towards the 1500-word limit
 - Do **not** include any other tables, figures, or any additional appendices in the proposal (e.g., **no** letters of supports, questionnaires, consent forms).
2. The application should include the curriculum vitae of the primary applicant using Canadian Common CV – CIHR Biosketch format.
3. The application, together with all attachments, must be submitted as a single PDF. The file is to be named as the applicant's last name.
4. The applicant must use size 11 points or larger. Use at least 0.75-inch margins (top, bottom, left, and right) and single line space for all pages. The name of the applicant must appear in the header of each page of the application.
5. Applicants must submit their application electronically by email to admin@cst-transplant.ca. The LOI and Full Application are to be submitted by the deadlines outlined in Section II.

CST and Astellas are not responsible for any malfunction or for any late, lost, damaged, misdirected, incomplete, undeliverable, or destroyed applications due to delivery or system errors.

Applications received after the submission deadline will **not** be submitted for review. The applicant is responsible for ensuring completeness of the application.

*****Incomplete applications or applications that do not adhere to the specifications above, including word count and page limit, will be automatically disqualified without review*****

Grant Recipient Responsibilities

The following responsibilities must be assumed and carried out by the selected award recipients:

- Communication of progress updates to CST on the implementation of the proposal described in the award recipient's application.
- Willingness to present outcomes/updates on the implementation of the proposal, 1 year following the Meeting, with the specific timing/location to be determined by CST and the recipient.
- Recipients are responsible for the reporting and payment of any federal and provincial taxes that may be applicable to the receipt of the award.

Other Requirements and Conditions for Eligibility for the Competition

Each potential finalist will be required to sign and return a Declaration of Eligibility and Liability and Publicity Release and provide any additional information that may be required to process and administer the award. Potential finalists must return all such required documents within five (5) days following attempted notification of being selected as a potential finalist, or such individual will be deemed to have forfeited the award.

Each applicant acknowledges and agrees that Astellas and CST may collect, use store, share, and otherwise use any personally identifiable information provided to Astellas and CST throughout the Competition, including, but not limited to, name, mailing address, phone number, and email address, in order to administer the Competition and to publicize the awarding of the funding. Astellas will use this information in accordance with its Privacy Policy (<http://www.astellas.ca/privacy/>). CST will use this information in accordance with its Privacy Policy (<http://www.cst-transplant.ca/privacy-statement.html>).