



Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services

Application Guidelines

**For Research into Police Responses to
Sexual Violence & Harassment Against
Aboriginal Women and Girls**

2015-2016

INTRODUCTION

In March 2015, Premier Kathleen Wynne released “It’s Never Okay: An Action Plan on Sexual Violence and Harassment”, which includes 13 commitments to raise awareness, prevent and better respond to sexual violence and harassment in the province of Ontario. For a copy of the Action Plan, please visit: <http://docs.files.ontario.ca/documents/4593/actionplan-itsneverokay.pdf>.

One commitment included in the Action Plan is to “develop tools and identify best practices to support a compassionate and sensitive response from law enforcement authorities to encourage more survivors to report sexual assaults”.

In response to this commitment, the Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services (MCSCS) will fund original research projects to identify **key issues** in reporting of sexual violence, which includes sexual assaults, and harassment by victims/survivors to the police as well as **best practices** for police investigations and responses to better support victims and survivors. Note, research must be focused on Aboriginal women and girls.

MCSCS is now seeking proposals from academic institutions interested in undertaking this research and subsequently developing a report outlining research findings.

Evidence-based research and findings may be used to inform future policy development, pilot projects, program development and evaluation.

SCOPE OF RESEARCH AND FUNDING

Research proposals must address **at least one** of the following topics:

**Note: you can submit up to three research proposals; one for each topic.*

a) Reporting, Responses and Support Services:

- Current practices (e.g., anonymous reporting, third party reporting, etc.) and issues related to reporting (i.e., why Aboriginal women and girls are not reporting to the police).
- Police interaction and responses to victims/survivors of sexual violence and harassment with a specific focus on Aboriginal women and girls. This may include the relationship between the police and other support services (e.g., police service policies and procedures, multi-disciplinary sexual assault response teams, etc.); and,
- Evaluate supports for Aboriginal women and girls that have been a victim/survivor of sexual violence and harassment, including identifying the role of the police in various models (e.g., Sexual Assault Centres). This may include conducting a formal evaluation of existing models, examining the literature on effective supports for victims and/or conducting a jurisdictional scan to identify completed evaluations of these support systems and their outcomes.

b) Preventative Efforts:

- Police efforts to pro-actively address sexual violence and harassment against Aboriginal women and girls, including targeted programs, training/education or initiatives implemented by police or through police partnerships with other organizations and service providers (e.g., Violence Against Aboriginal Women groups, educators, victims' services agencies, health/social services, etc.).

c) Investigative Practices:

- Current practices and issues with investigative practices into incidents of sexual violence and harassment against Aboriginal women and girls, with a specific emphasis on addressing identified challenges and special circumstances (e.g., identified trend of "unfounded charges", family/acquaintances versus stranger assaults); and,
- Current training, best practices, unique or innovative training/educational approaches that have generated positive outcomes in investigations and convictions.

Note, all of the research and findings must focus on issues and best practices that are specific to Aboriginal women and girls

Research Methodology

The research process should focus on obtaining primary research, including engagement with the following groups to gather original information and perspectives:

- Municipal and First Nations police services and the Ontario Provincial Police;
- Agencies, organizations, and other service providers that partner with police to deliver prevention initiatives and provide services to victims; and
- Aboriginal victims/survivors of sexual violence and harassment.

Secondary research should include, but not be limited to, a national and international jurisdictional scan related to the research areas as well as a literature review to assess the effectiveness of these practices and considerations for local applicability and to identify best practices.

DELIVERABLE & TIMELINES

The successful applicant will be required to provide preliminary findings to MCSCS throughout the study and at interim meeting(s) as required (exact timelines will be confirmed in the contractual agreement).

Following the completion of research, the successful applicant will be required to submit a final report to MCSCS detailing their findings, including both primary and secondary research findings, and recommendations (if any). Additionally, a subsequent presentation will be required highlighting key findings in the report.

Specifically, the report must include the following components related to the research topic:

- Prevalent/systemic issues facing Aboriginal women and girls;
- Best and/or promising practices applicable to Ontario (e.g., province-wide, northern/rural and First Nations communities);
- Opportunities for change (e.g., identifying gaps, inefficiencies, etc.);
- Recommendations and implications; and,
- Lessons learned.

All research must be completed by August 31st, 2016.

Please note it is anticipated that MCSCS will notify the successful applicant(s) of its funding decision at the end of February 2016. Please take this into consideration when planning for your research project.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS AND ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

All applications submitted by the deadline will be reviewed and assessed by a Review Committee. The Committee's primary mandate will be to review and evaluate applications based on the requirements.

Please review the assessment criteria outlined below. It provides important details about all of the components that must be addressed in your application. Please note that you are only required to complete Part A (Experience and Expertise) once but you can submit up to three Research Proposals (Part B), depending on the number of research topics you are applying for.

Assessment Criteria

PART A – EXPERIENCE AND EXPERTISE (total points = 30)

**Part A only needs to be submitted once regardless of how many research topics you are seeking funding for.*

All applications submitted to MCSCS must outline the following:

1) Experience and expertise in conducting research and developing high-quality research reports (15 points).

- ✓ Education background of project sponsor.
- ✓ Number of years of experience conducting research and evaluations.
- ✓ Demonstrated experience conducting primary research.
- ✓ Demonstrated experience conducting secondary research.
- ✓ Demonstrated experience developing research reports (please include if you have any published work).

2) Experience engaging with the policing community and expertise in conducting research on police practices (4 points).

- ✓ Provide two examples of relevant work experience that you or a team member has working with the policing community and/or conducting research on police practices.
- ✓ Describe the role, a brief synopsis, including scope of the project or engagement, type of research conducted (e.g., methodology, sampling method, sample size, etc.), challenges, limitations to findings and key outcomes.

3) Experience engaging with victims or victim advocates and expertise in conducting research on sexual violence and harassment (4 points).

- ✓ Provide two examples of relevant work experience that you or a team member has engaging with victims or advocates of sexual violence and harassment and/or conducting research on sexual violence and harassment.
- ✓ Describe the role, a brief synopsis, including scope of the project or engagement, type of research conducted (e.g., methodology, sampling method, sample size, etc.), challenges, limitations to findings and key outcomes.

4) Demonstrated understanding of specific issues facing Aboriginal women and girls (4 points).

- ✓ Provide two examples that highlight your work experience engaging with Aboriginal women and girls. Describe your role, a brief synopsis, including scope of your engagement, type of research conducted (e.g., methodology, sampling method, sample size, etc.), challenges, limitations to findings and key outcomes.

5) Capacity to deliver during the proposed timeframe, including organizational research supports/infrastructure (3 points).

- ✓ Provide a brief explanation detailing how you will be able to meet the project timelines. Include a list of staff that will be assigned to the research project, their role (e.g., project lead, researcher, etc.) and qualifications.
- ✓ Identify any additional resources available to assist with undertaking this project.

PART B: RESEARCH PROPOSAL (total points = 30)

**All applications must include one research proposal for each of the research topics that you are submitting for funding. Research topics are outlined under the "Scope of Research and Funding" section on pages 1 and 2.*

- ✓ Research topic;
- ✓ Research question(s) and proposed methodology (10 points);
- ✓ Engagement/outreach strategy (10 points);
- ✓ Timelines and associated activities (6 points); and,
- ✓ Budget (please use the template provided) (4 points).

LENGTH OF APPLICATION

Part A – Experience and Expertise must not exceed **5 pages**. Additionally, each Research Proposal (Part B) must also not exceed **5 pages** (excluding the budget sheet). Additional pages will **not** be reviewed.

Also, please do not include any additional attachments or website addresses as part of your response. They will also **not** be reviewed.

CONTRACTUAL AGREEMENT

As a requirement of providing the funds, the academic institution will be required to enter into MCSCS' form of a funding agreement. Funds will be released after the agreement is signed. The project funds must be used for the purposes described in the application and according to the terms of the agreement.

Standard government procedures regarding grants will be followed. The funding agreement will outline:

- Purpose for which the grant will be used;
- Commitments to be undertaken or specific activities to support the proposal;
- Interim and final reporting requirements and dates;
- Performance measures; and
- Funding disbursement schedule.

Note, while it is anticipated that any research findings and end products will belong to the researcher/academic institution, it will be a condition of funding that any resultant research and report is provided under licence to MCSCS for the Ministry's use as it may determine. Details will be confirmed in the contractual agreement.

APPLICATION SUBMISSION

An electronic version of your completed application form, including the research proposal(s) and budget sheet(s) must be submitted to MCSCS in their **original format (NOT a scanned version) by email**. Please submit them to Emily.Jefferson@ontario.ca.

In addition to the above, please scan the **signed copy** of the completed application form application and submit it by email to Emily.Jefferson@ontario.ca.

APPLICATION DEADLINE

Completed application form, proposal(s) and budget sheet(s), must be received by **4:00 p.m. EST on January 19th, 2016**. Submissions that are late or incomplete will not be considered.

MCSCS CONTACT

If you have any questions about the application process, please contact Emily Jefferson at (416) 212-3557 or Emily.Jefferson@ontario.ca.