

Internal Grants for Research Opportunities (iGRO)

iGRO Round 6 - Call for Proposals

1. Call for Proposals

Program Overview and Definitions

The Fleming College Internal Grants for Research Opportunities (iGRO) program features an internally funded and administered grant to support small applied research projects. Through iGRO, a modest amount of funding is available for Fleming College faculty to pursue new applied research initiatives with an external partner and provide training and experiential learning opportunities for student researchers.

Because it is anticipated that more applications will be received than there is funding available, awarding of funds will be based on specific criteria being met in the application, including demonstration of the importance of the research, value to student researchers, and the ability to create positive outcomes (economic, social, environmental and/or health benefits).

We are anticipating two iGRO competitions in 2025:

- Round 5: Call for proposals in the winter semester with projects beginning in either the summer or fall semester.
- Round 6: Call for proposals in the fall semester with projects beginning in the winter semester.

Generally, *applied research* means research and development activities directed at solving a specific challenge faced by an external partner. The outcomes of the project should benefit the external partner directly. At Fleming, all applied research is carried out by faculty or researchers with students working under their guidance, in collaboration with a committed external partner who is at arms-length from the college.

In addition to bringing benefits to the external partner, applicants are encouraged to demonstrate how the proposed project will lead to future opportunities such as: building applied research capacity in schools, departments, and/or faculties; enhancing student training and research opportunities; and developing relationships with external partners, especially those that could lead to larger, externally funded projects and longer-term research relationships. **Research activities related to curriculum development, pedagogy, academic credit and/or credentials (e.g. Masters or PhD thesis research) are not eligible for iGRO funding. The iGRO program is not intended to fund in-class projects (capstone projects, credit for product, applied projects, etc.).**

iGRO Round 6 Application Timeline

Call for Proposals Opens	Monday, September 8, 2025
Notice of Intent (NOI) Deadline	Friday, October 17, 2025 Friday, October 31, 2025
Fully Signed Application Deadline	Friday, November 21, 2025 Monday, November 24, 2025
Funding Decisions Announced	Friday, November 28, 2025
Project Start Date	Monday, January 5, 2026
Project Length	Two semesters

Funds Administration and Dissemination

Funding available: \$10,000

Fleming College's Office of Applied Research and Innovation (OARI) will be responsible for selecting the proposed project that will be funded, as well as the disbursement and administration of the funds. The release of funds is conditional on continued employment at Fleming and submission and approval of activities by the researcher's Dean and Chair, the College's Research Ethics Board and Animal Care Committee (if applicable), and/or any other regulatory bodies or organizations (if necessary).

Funds may only be used for activities as described in the approved project proposal. If the Project Lead wishes to use funds for activities other than those described in the proposal or wishes to make changes to the allocation of funds within the approved budget (i.e. move between approved categories), they should speak to the Executive Director of Applied Research and Innovation to obtain approval in advance. OARI must approve all expenditures.

2. Applications

Notice of Intent (NOI)

The first step for those interested in the iGRO program is the submission of a NOI. **The submission of a NOI is mandatory**; however, everyone that submits a complete and eligible NOI will be invited to submit a full application. The following must be demonstrated in the "Summary of Project Objectives" on the NOI:

- Description of how the project would create benefits to the community and/or an external partner or external organization.
- Description of how students will be involved (if applicable).

The purpose of the NOI is to alert the OARI and your Dean or Chair of your intention to pursue applied research and iGRO funding, therefore submission of the NOI is required. If you have any questions about the NOI, OARI can provide advice/feedback. NOIs submitted after the due date will not be accepted.

Full Application Selection Criteria

Funding decisions will be based on the merit of the full application and the alignment with the selection criteria.

It is expected that successful applications will demonstrate the following:

1. **Students:** an opportunity for student training and hands-on learning.
2. **Expertise:** research team skills and experience aligned with the project needs.
3. **Partner:** relevance and importance to an external partner or sector.
4. **Benefits:** clear positive outcomes and benefits of the project.
5. **Timeline:** clearly defined and realistic deliverables and timelines.
6. **Budget:** clearly defined and justified budget.
7. **Research Results:** process required to fully realize the results of the project, including clearly articulated plan to utilize/disseminate the research results and opportunities for future/ongoing engagement.
8. **New Leadership:** preference will be given to applications led by faculty who have not previously served as a Project Lead on an OARI-supported project.

Student Involvement

Applicants are encouraged to involve students in the iGRO research project through paid student research assistant positions. Student involvement is not a requirement for iGRO projects but applications that include a paid student researcher component will score higher in the selection process than those that do not.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

Creating an equitable, diverse and inclusive research environment at Fleming is essential to our ability to respond to research challenges posed by external partners. Considering EDI in applied research projects makes the outcomes more relevant to society.

Applicants to the iGRO are encouraged to build diverse, equitable research teams and must describe EDI considerations, if any, considered in their research projects. If there are no EDI considerations, an explanation is required; if EDI considerations are not applicable for a specific topic, this will not affect the eligibility of an application if a clear justification is provided.

Participant Eligibility

Each iGRO application is to be submitted by the Project Lead. An individual may be listed as a Project Lead on only one application per round of the iGRO; however, they may be included as a research team member on other applications.

The iGRO is open to Fleming College faculty (full- or part-time). Because the program is intended to foster new research opportunities, bring research into new areas, and provide opportunities for faculty who have little-to-no research experience, faculty associated with the Trent/Fleming School of Nursing or the CAWT, CIAP or CAMIIT are not eligible. Members of the project team listed as research team members may include other Fleming staff, such as Technologists.

While there is no limit to the number of projects that a researcher may have funded through the iGRO, in alignment with the program goal of stimulating new research activity, preference will be given to those who have not been previously engaged in OARI-supported applied research activities, particularly faculty who have not yet had the opportunity to serve as a Project Lead.

Project Eligibility

An external industry or community partner is necessary. Partners must be at arms-length from the College, the Project Lead, and any other participants in the research team. Partners can be from any sector and can be a for-profit company or non-profit organization. Partners must be based in Canada.

iGRO supports only **new projects and research initiatives**. The OARI can help researchers and external partners identify other potential sources of funding to continue an existing project. Researchers are encouraged to begin working with OARI as soon as possible if they believe additional funding will be required to support the project once the activities proposed in the iGRO application are complete.

The iGRO project should lead to future opportunities such as: building research capacity in schools, departments, and/or faculties; enhancing student learning and research opportunities; and developing relationships with external partners, especially those that could lead to larger, externally funded research projects and longer-term relationships. Research activities related to curriculum development, pedagogy, academic credit and/or credentials (such as completion of a graduate degree) are not eligible. The iGRO program is not intended to fund normally occurring in-class projects such as capstone projects, credit for product, applied projects, etc.

Research activities should address a challenge of direct relevance to an external partner and include some or all of: (a) systematic inquiry, (b) documented capturing of data or information, and (c) analysis that leads to some solution, tool, or deliverables related to the challenge.

iGRO is not intended to fund projects at any of the College's existing applied research centres (CAWT, CAMIIT, CIAP).

Project Duration

The duration of iGRO Round 6 projects is two semesters, beginning in January 2026 (Winter semester).

Faculty are not to work on project work during their regular vacation period. Applicants should ensure that any projects proposed to extend to multiple academic terms or years (through other funding) have the support of their Dean.

3. Funding

Available Funding

The maximum iGRO award for a project is \$10,000. Projects of a lesser value will be considered on an equally competitive basis. It is intended that only one project will be funded during each round; however, OARI may decide to provide iGRO funding to more than one project, including cases where the projects achieve a combined budgeted total of \$10,000 or less. Again, the intention is to fund only one project at this time, and the highest rated application will be funded first. There is no requirement for external partners to contribute cash to the project.

Use of Funds

iGRO funds may only be used for the direct costs of research associated with the project and must comply with Fleming's policies and procedures. It is highly recommended that applicants work with the OARI to develop their iGRO budgets, to ensure appropriate calculations and eligibility of proposed expenditures. The following expenses are eligible under the iGRO:

- Backfill costs for full-time faculty release
- Part-time researchers
- Student research assistants
- Software, small equipment, or supplies not available at Fleming (to a maximum of 50 per cent of the project budget).
- Books, resource materials and other documents not available at Fleming
- Travel (not to exceed \$500 total).

If an application is received that requests funds for ineligible items, the application will be considered, minus the ineligible expenses. Overhead is not an eligible expense.

4. Necessary Approvals

Department Approval

All submissions of full applications must be approved by the applicant's Dean and Chair **prior to submission**. Applications received without Dean and Chair approval by the submission deadline will be considered incomplete and will not be reviewed. **The OARI is not responsible for collecting signatures on your application.** Applicants are encouraged to work with their Dean and Chair early in the process, and ensure they leave sufficient time to secure approval prior to the application deadline.

Research Ethics Board (REB) Submission and Approval

Any research that involves living human participants or their data (including human biological materials, human embryos, fetuses, fetal tissues, reproductive materials and stem cells) must undergo REB review and approval prior to project initiation. While ethics approval is not required in advance of proposal submission, all successful applicants who have proposed a project that requires REB approval must secure that approval. Delays in submitting your REB application may result in delays in starting your project.

Animal Care Committee (ACC) Submission and Approval

Any research that involves animals (all non-human living vertebrates and higher invertebrates as defined by the Canada Council on Animal Care (CCAC)) must undergo ACC review and approval prior to project initiation. While ACC approval is not required in advance of proposal submission, all successful applicants who have proposed a project that involves animals must secure that approval. Delays in submitting your ACC approval application may result in delays in starting your project.

5. Reporting Requirements and Knowledge Dissemination

It is expected that the Project Lead will provide regular updates to the OARI throughout the project. OARI will provide the Project Lead with a brief final report form; the form is to be completed and submitted within one month of completion of the funded activities.

Results from the final report may be used to promote Fleming applied research. Projects will also be presented at the annual Applied Research Expo. It is expected that a representative from the project team will attend/participate in the Expo to display their project.

6. Application Submission and Review Process

NOI Submission

A completed NOI must be submitted by email to Laura Coles (laura.coles@flemingcollege.ca) with the subject line "iGRO Round 6 NOI" before the posted deadline. Confirmation of receipt will be provided within one business day. Full applications will not be accepted without an accepted NOI.

Application Submission

The completed application, including all required approvals and attachments, must be submitted by the applicant by email to Laura Coles (laura.coles@flemingcollege.ca) with the subject line "iGRO Round 6 Submission" before the posted deadline. Confirmation of receipt will be provided to the applicant within one business day.

Confirmation of receipt does not confirm eligibility of applicant or application completion.

Application Checklist

A complete application must include the following:

- ☐ completed application form (all sections, **including all signatures** and adhering to any word limits); may be submitted as a PDF document
- ☐ completed budget spreadsheet (utilizing the iGRO Excel template; link can be found on the OARI website)
- ☐ CV/resume for all researchers involved
- ☐ **optional:** appendices, not to exceed two pages total (exclusive of CVs); any appendices that exceed the limit will not be reviewed

Review Process

The OARI iGRO review committee will review, score, and rank all applications and make recommendations as to which project(s) should be funded. Final funding decision will rest with the Executive Director, Applied Research and Innovation. Applicants will be notified of the funding decision by Friday, November 28, 2025.