

Sharing and Access for Impact Strategy

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Strategy is to outline how we work with innovators receiving Grand Challenges Canada support to achieve two goals:

1. To help innovators achieve the greatest possible impact through sustainable, affordable, and as widespread as is appropriate, access to their innovations for the public good.
2. To enable responsible sharing of the *new* knowledge and data they generate, in a manner that enables scale and sustainability, addresses (rather than perpetuates) inequities and power imbalances, and honours the diverse needs, priorities and values of self-determination of innovators and their communities.

SCOPE

This Strategy applies to all innovators who receive funding from Grand Challenges Canada.

VISION

Our vision is to enable Grand Challenges Canada-supported innovators to achieve widespread, sustainable, and affordable access to their life-saving and life-improving innovations for those most in need, as well as to foster respectful and responsible sharing of newly created knowledge and data generated in projects we fund. We aim to do so in a manner that appropriately balances the benefits of widespread access and sharing, with the legitimate interests of innovators in pursuing sustainable scaling pathways, and the inherent right of self-determination of the communities from which innovations, knowledge and data emerge.

PRINCIPLES

In implementing this Strategy, we strive to respect and advance the following principles and goals:

- Widespread, affordable and equitable access to life-saving and life-improving innovations to achieve the greatest possible impact for underserved populations and those most in need.
- Respect for proprietary rights of innovators to ensure viable pathways to scaling and sustainability, including through commercialization.
- Timely and equitable access to knowledge and data to advance public health, scientific progress and economic development.
- The inherent right of self-determination and sovereignty of Indigenous and other communities around the world, the rights held by producers of knowledge and contributors of data, and the reciprocal responsibilities we have in honouring these rights. This means we respect the protection of Indigenous and other community knowledge and will not require it to be widely shared unless there is broad agreement from the community from whom the knowledge originates.

- The importance of responsible stewardship of created knowledge and data, to ensure the safety of individuals and communities from risks of harm, exploitation and misappropriation.
- The innovators we support consider these important principles and pursuits early in their scaling journey, and that intellectual property management, sharing and access for social impact become core to an innovator's strategy and not an afterthought.

IN PRACTICE

To the best of our ability, Grand Challenges Canada and its affiliated programs will work with the innovators we support to ensure that their projects and future scaling plans align with the vision and principles of this Strategy. We aim to do so through the following actions and practices, as appropriate to the relevant program and context.

Accessibility and affordability of innovations: Innovators funded by Grand Challenges Canada should be aligned in principle with our core goal to achieve social impact through access. All innovators will be expected to commit to strive to make their life-improving and life-saving innovations widely accessible and affordable to high-priority, end-user populations and communities of the relevant Grand Challenges Canada or affiliated program. In many of our programs, innovators will be responsible for developing and implementing sustainable plans to meet these access commitments.

We acknowledge that appropriate means of implementing these commitments will be varied, and will depend on the context of innovators and their communities. As such, Grand Challenges Canada will engage in dialogue with innovators to help ensure, to the best of our abilities, that access plans are appropriately tailored in light of each innovator's specific context, in order to promote sustainability, respect rights of self-determination, and avoid harm, exploitation or appropriation.

Intellectual property diligence: To evaluate pathways to scale and impact, Grand Challenges Canada may seek information from innovators regarding the intellectual property landscape applicable to their innovations; how any relevant third-party intellectual property rights will be accessed by innovators; and, how intellectual property rights will be managed and allocated in Grand Challenges Canada-funded projects.

Ownership and management of intellectual property rights: Grand Challenges Canada does not claim any ownership in the innovations we support, nor in the knowledge and data generated by Grand Challenges Canada-funded projects. Innovators and/or their communities will maintain ownership of intellectual property rights in their innovations, whether these innovations are pre-existing or created through Grand Challenges Canada-funded projects. Innovators should negotiate and administer their intellectual property rights in a manner that enables sustainability of their innovations at scale, while promoting access and affordability for relevant end-user populations and the communities that the innovators support. To maximize impact, where appropriate, we also encourage innovators to negotiate limited rights for others to adopt or adapt their life-improving and life-saving innovations to solve similar challenges in other contexts (for example, through technology transfer mechanisms targeting least-developed countries outside of an innovator's reach).

Grand Challenges Canada and funding partners' rights: To further the aims of this Strategy, Grand Challenges Canada may negotiate limited rights for itself and/or its funding partners in respect of the innovations we support, which may be used to remedy an innovator's inability to achieve accessibility and affordability for high-priority populations and communities. Grand Challenges Canada will take into consideration innovators' specific circumstances in negotiating these limited rights (for example, any applicable Indigenous protocols regarding access to Indigenous knowledge).

These limited rights may take various forms, depending on the context and program. For example:

- Contractual commitments from innovators to take concrete and measurable steps in furtherance of achieving affordable access
- Supply and distribution rights under affordable pricing for high-priority distribution channels in relevant territories, and/or
- Non-exclusive licenses in relevant territories to applicable intellectual property rights (including pre-existing rights, where appropriate).

An innovator's partners that own key intellectual property rights in a life-improving or life-saving innovation that we support may also be asked to provide analogous rights in some contexts (for example, where the intellectual property is essential to give meaningful effect to the innovator's direct commitments).

Rights in global health emergencies: In the event that the World Health Organization declares a Public Health Emergency of International Concern, or a country declares a more localized public health emergency, Grand Challenges Canada believes we should do what we can to address such an emergency. As such, innovators with innovations relevant to public health emergencies who receive funding from Grand Challenges Canada may be asked to grant a temporary and non-exclusive license to their intellectual property rights, for use in ensuring the public health emergency can be quickly and adequately addressed and lives saved.

Dissemination of knowledge: Innovators will be asked to share key research findings and lessons learned from their funded projects (but not patent-identifiable, sensitive or proprietary business information or trade secrets) with Grand Challenges Canada and the wider community within a reasonable time following project completion. This is typically no more than 12 months after project completion but is subject to extension in appropriate circumstances (for example, if necessary to prepare and submit manuscripts for publication or to secure intellectual property rights registrations). We encourage innovators to plan in advance for community- or partner-level reviews and approvals that will be needed to meet this dissemination timeline. Grand Challenges Canada recognizes that appropriate means of knowledge dissemination will differ, depending on the context and program, and we will work with innovators to ensure that dissemination is being achieved in a manner that respects the rights of knowledge generators and their communities, and protects individuals and communities from harm, exploitation and appropriation.

Open access publication: Where knowledge from funded projects is disseminated via peer-reviewed journal publication, articles should be immediately, openly accessible and discoverable online under a Creative Commons attribution (CC BY) license or equivalent

license, ensuring appropriate attribution of contributing authors. The financial costs of open access publication are eligible for inclusion in proposed project budgets.

Data sharing: Grand Challenges Canada believes in the importance of sharing both positive and negative research data and outcomes, and expects negative and positive research findings funded by Grand Challenges Canada to be broadly disseminated.

Innovators are generally expected to ensure that relevant aspects of their Grand Challenges Canada-funded projects are conducive to data sharing (for example, permissions to share data are included in informed consent documents, in research ethics board approvals, and in collaboration and consortia agreements). In some programmatic contexts, innovators may be asked to develop a detailed plan for data sharing. The financial costs associated with data sharing are eligible for inclusion in proposed project budgets.

Evaluation, Learning and Supports: To the best of our ability, Grand Challenges Canada and our affiliated programs will work with innovators to ensure that their projects are aligned with this Strategy. We endeavour to support innovators to implement this Strategy in the following ways:

- Timely access to pro-bono legal resources through Grand Challenges Canada's partnerships with international pro-bono organizations.
- Guidance and support as to best practices for open access publication and data sharing.
- Where possible, allowing relevant costs as eligible costs under innovators' funding agreements.
- General support from Grand Challenges Canada's team in designing and implementing scaling plans that further the goals and principles of this Strategy.
- A commitment to revisit and renegotiate terms that Grand Challenges Canada will include in funding agreements in the future, when innovator circumstances change.

Grand Challenges Canada acknowledges that our commitment to continuing to learn from the people that we work with and the Innovators we fund will be core to this Strategy's success. At all times, we welcome feedback from innovators regarding their experiences with this Strategy. This feedback can be shared directly with the innovator's Grand Challenges Canada contact, or by emailing info@grandchallenges.ca.

Grand Challenges Canada will also review project data and reports alongside occasional consultations with innovators (both past and present) to learn more about and build upon our innovators' shared experiences and collective recommendations regarding implementation of this Strategy.

This Strategy is under the purview of the Board of Directors of Grand Challenges Canada. Grand Challenges Canada will report annually on the metrics applicable to this Strategy.

MEASURING OUR IMPACT

The key performance indicators (KPIs) for success under this Strategy are the same for Grand Challenges Canada as a whole – the ability for innovations supported by Grand Challenges Canada to save and improve lives of unserved or underserved populations. Therefore, our current metrics of success are:

1. Lives saved and improved
2. Assessment of scaling status at end of the Grand Challenges Canada funding period
3. Number of open source publications
4. Number of open source repositories of data.

These metrics may change and/or be added to over time, as Grand Challenges Canada further defines what sustainable scale looks like over the long term.

To assess how this strategy enabled these outcomes, we will conduct occasional surveys and outreach to innovators to assess how our approaches enabled or inhibited our ultimate objective.

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