



Great Lakes Higher Education Partnership Pilot Fund

**Call for Proposals: Protection and Sustainable Use of the Waters of the Great Lakes Watershed
September 17, 2021**

BACKGROUND

The Great Lakes Higher Education Consortium (GLHEC) was [launched in 2020](#) to facilitate a new era of cross-border, institutional collaboration in the Great Lakes region with a focus on three overarching priorities for strengthening the region’s long-term competitiveness and sustainability – skills and talent development, research and innovation, and entrepreneurship. The Consortium will solve real world problems to support sustainable growth and inclusive economic development and will advance a shared commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion.

The Consortium currently consists of a Secretariat run by the Council of the Great Lakes Region and six institutional members (See Appendix A). The Consortium may further expand its membership upon finalizing a governance document and completing a strategic plan later this year.

OBJECTIVES

The Consortium, with funding from the United States Mission in Canada to the Council of the Great Lakes Region, is piloting a dedicated Great Lakes Higher Education Partnership Fund and Grant to facilitate the creation of binational partnerships and programs between higher education institutions (HEIs), government, and businesses in the region.

In recognition of the 50th anniversary of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement between the United States and Canada in 2022, the first Call for Proposals from the Consortium is seeking proposals that support the formation of new collaborations, or grow existing ones, which respond to **the protection and sustainable use of water in the Great Lakes watershed as well as the broader Great Lakes mega-region.**

Ideal proposals would seek to address legacy and emerging water quality and use risks in the Great Lakes watershed and the broader region through binational projects that embrace collaborative research, student skills development and workforce development, the creation of novel water protection and conservation approaches or technologies, and/or the transformation of innovative water solutions into new Great Lakes enterprises. Ideal proposals would also seek to develop, or include, collaborations with industry, government agencies, and/or other water clusters or centres of excellence in the region.

1. Projects

- i. Up to three (3) cross-border Great Lakes higher education projects will be selected for a funding period of up to one (1) year. Proposals with the potential for sustainability beyond the initial funding period are encouraged.
- ii. To be eligible, a proposal must have one PI from each GLHEC member institution participating in the proposal. Further, each proposal must have at least two GLHEC member institutions (see Appendix A), one each from Canada and the US. Project teams may also include students, post-doctoral fellows, and professionals from affiliated innovation ecosystems and/or business schools.
- iii. To be eligible for funding, a participating Canadian HEI should be from Ontario or Quebec. Participating US HEI should be from the eight Great Lakes states, which includes New York, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Wisconsin and Minnesota.
- iv. The project type must address one or more of the following three priorities of the Consortium, with an initial focus on water protection and conservation: 1) student skills development to respond to regional workforce gaps and needs related to the Call for Applications; 2) supporting applied research focused on regionally relevant socioeconomic and environmental challenges related to the Call; or, 3) turning promising research ideas and solutions related to the Call into new enterprises through the creation of companies in the region and the commercialization of product and/or service ideas.
- v. Proposals may include, but are not limited to workshops, symposia, student and/or faculty exchanges, research seminars/presentations, doctoral training programs, collaborative teaching models, and the formation of a collaborative network in virtual or physical formats, such as affiliated incubators and entrepreneurship programs.
- vi. The proposals must comply with the Universities' policies on health, safety and international travel.
- vii. All activities in connection with a Project must be conducted in accordance with the following key principles unless otherwise agreed in writing between the Institutions:
 - a. any intellectual property, including technical information, know-how, models, drawings, specifications, prototypes, inventions and software (“**Intellectual Property**”) created in the course of a Project (“**Project IP**”) will be owned by the party who creates such Project IP, or where created jointly, owned jointly by the Institutions as tenants in common in shares equal to their respective inventive contributions to such Project IP.

- b. Background IP is intellectual property that is owned by a participating University and was conceived, created, or developed prior to commencement of a Project. Each party agrees to grant to another University a royalty free, non-exclusive, non-commercial, non-transferable license to use its Background IP that was created by a faculty member that is participating in a multi-university Project and is necessary to carry out a Project. This license will be granted for the duration of the research project and for research purposes only. Background IP shall remain the exclusive property of the granting party.
- c. Where relevant or necessary, any commercialisation activities in respect of jointly-owned Project IP (including designating the lead institution for managing any patent applications related to the Joint Intellectual Property) will be as negotiated and agreed between the Institutions as is customary.

2. Eligibility

- i. Eligibility to **submit proposals**: faculty members in continuing appointments are eligible to submit proposals.
- ii. Eligibility for **exchange activities**: faculty members in continuing appointments, and students and fellows under their supervision are eligible to participate in exchange activities.

3. Value and Duration

- i. All Projects must be completed by December 31, 2022.
- ii. Subject to applications received, the Consortium expects to make awards of maximum US\$35,000 for up to three applications.
- iii. A 1:1 cash or in-kind match from each participating institution is required, increasing the total value of each project proposal to US\$70,000. If your institution is a current GLHEC member (See Appendix A), please consult with your university's GLHEC representative for more details about match opportunities.
- iv. Funding can be used for personnel expenses for postdocs and student workers (no faculty salaries), supplies, travel, meetings and for additional expenses that are necessary to move research forward. No indirect cost recoveries (ICR) can be charged to these grants.
- v. Successful applications from binational project teams that include higher education institutions from Ontario or Quebec, as well as industry and/or non-profit partners, could be eligible for additional matching funding from Mitacs, a Canadian not-for-profit research organization that funds international higher education research partnerships focused on student skills development and solving challenges presented by industry and/or the non-profit sector. To learn more, contact Ivette Vera-Perez, National Team Lead, Account Management, at iveraperez@mitacs.ca.

4. Timeline

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| Call for proposals opens | 17 September 2021 |
| Deadline for submission of questions | 1 November 2021 |
| Deadline for submission of proposal | 30 November 2021 |
| Announcement of awards | 31 December 2021 |
| Start date of project | 07 January 2022 |
| End of project | 31 December 2022 |

5. Submission of Proposals

This is a joint call and a single application should be submitted online at <https://councilgreatlakesregion.org/great-lakes-higher-education-consortium/>

The **complete proposal** is comprised of the following elements:

- i. **Proposal Cover** that includes the names, affiliations, and contact details of all participating project team members.
- ii. A **Project Description**: maximum five (5) pages (excluding bibliography if included) that includes the following items (in alignment with the **Selection Criteria** listed below):
 - a. **Abstract** that describes the project.
 - b. **Description of the planned activities**: Description of the planned activities, rationale, and timeline. Examples of illustrative activities may include but are not limited to: seminars, short courses, visits to other institutions that carry out research/teaching activities in cognate areas, workshops, etc.
 - c. **Relevance to priorities and theme**: Description of how the activities contribute to the protection and conservation of the Great Lakes watershed or region freshwater resources through either skills and talent development, research and innovation, and/or entrepreneurship.
 - d. **Project impact**: Description of the expected academic and skills development gains, the generation of innovative ideas, and potential social/economic impact of the project as a result of the proposed collaboration and mobility (e.g., talent development, new technologies, new enterprises, etc.), and the identification of corresponding performance indicators.
 - e. **Impact of collaboration**: Description of the respective research profiles and synergies between them. Description of the new, or existing, collaboration and outcomes resulting from this project, including anticipated benefits, how the proposal furthers other active research and/or teaching projects, and how it will strengthen the competitiveness and sustainability of the Great Lakes region.

- f. **Capacity for project sustainability:** Information on how the collaboration can be sustained beyond the initial seed funding phase. For example: joint publications, joint supervision of PhD students, joint teaching, joint patent applications, joint reports to governments, joint funding applications, industry investment and partnerships.
- iii. **Proposed budget and budget narrative:** A table outlining the project budget for one year as outlined in section 3, including a breakdown of the costs by activity and by institution. The budget should also include an explanation of the amount and source of cash or in-kind matching funds.
- iv. **An abbreviated Curriculum Vitae** (maximum 2 pages) of the lead PIs.

6. Adjudication

- i. Applications are received by the Consortium’s Executive Committee and forwarded to a respective internal review committee along with a template for ranking applications.
- ii. **Selection Criteria:** The internal review committee will assess each full proposal according to the academic merit and compelling elements covered by the following criteria:
 - **Project design and rationale** (how clearly presented and justified is the design and basis for the collaboration?)
 - **Project relevance to the priority themes** (how strongly does the project respond to the theme and the priorities of the GLHEC?)
 - **Project impact** (how clearly linked are the project impact (innovation, economic, and/or social impact) to the planned activities and performance indicators?)
 - **Impact of collaboration** (how well is the proposed new, or existing, cross-border collaboration aligned with the three priorities identified by the GLHEC, with a focus on water? To what extent will the anticipated benefits strengthen collaborations between institutions and other stakeholders, as well as the competitiveness and sustainability of the Great Lakes region?)
 - **Capacity for project sustainability** (what is the extent to which future collaborations are possible as a result of the proposed activities? Does the project have the potential to scale up or to receive funding from an external source?)
- iii. Respective reviews are returned to the Consortium’s Executive Committee, and results/scores tabulated to rank proposals.
- iv. Joint Committee convenes to select up to three proposals for funding.

7. Communication of Results

Final results will be announced via email to the successful applicants by December 31, 2021.

8. Reporting After Project Completion

All awardees must, as a condition of receiving an award under this call, complete a narrative report (of between 1 and 2 pages) that describes the outcomes, nature of collaboration, project impact, trainee involvement and opportunities for future collaboration that evolved from their project. The final report will be due by December 31, 2022.

9. Information about this Call

All questions related to the Consortium and the Partnership Fund must be directed to:
Mark Fisher, mark@councilgreatlakesregion.org / 613-668-2044

Appendix A: Great Lakes Higher Education Consortium

- **Council of the Great Lakes Region (Secretariat)**

Contact: Mark Fisher, President and CEO

Email: mark@councilgreatlakesregion.org

- **University of Illinois System**

Contact: Jisu Hong, Associate Vice President, Economic Development and Innovation.

Email: jisuhong@uillinois.edu

- **McGill University**

Contact: Kalyna Kruczowyj, Senior Advisor, International Education

Email: kalyna.kruczowyj@mcgill.ca

- **University of Michigan**

Contact: Bradford Orr, Associate Vice President for Research

Email: orr@umich.edu

- **Queen's University**

Contact: Karen Samis, Director, Grants and Research Operations

Email: karen.samis@queensu.ca

- **University of Toronto**

Contact: Julia Kulik, Research Officer, International.

Email: Julia.kulik@utoronto.ca

- **University of Wisconsin**

Contact: Laura A. Dunek, JD, PhD, Senior Special Assistant for Governance and Strategic Initiatives, and Director, Academic Innovation

Email: ldunek@uwsa.edu