1. What is the process for reviewing and awarding the Catalyst Grant?

Applicants submit proposals through REDCap

Administrator* reviews all applications for COIs and de-identification

Reject applications that do not meet criteria

Administrator* sends de-identified applications to 3 reviewers

3 reviewers score the proposals based on posted criteria: Originality and Impact, Quality, Equity Lens, Feasibility, and Future Opportunities

Key contact* sends the emails

Other applicants are notified that they will not progress in the process (no comments given)

Up to 6 applications invited to present at Dragon’s Den + receive comments from the 3 reviewers

Key contact* sends the emails

IEC members + content experts + 3 initial reviewers invited to sit on Dragon’s Den panel

Dragon’s Den panel receives written proposals to read and assess ahead of time

Dragon’s Den presentations open to all C-GCH members. Panelists score written proposal + presentation based on posted criteria: Originality and Impact, Quality, Equity Lens, Feasibility, and Future Opportunities. All scores are new – initial scores from paper review are not carried forward

Top 2 scoring applicants awarded Catalyst Grant

*the administrator and key contact are members of the I&E committee without any COIs

2. Is it possible to use external reviewers?

In the past, the I&E Committee has attempted to use external reviewers from outside of the C-GCH for the blinded first review; however, we did not receive rigorous nor timely scores/responses. Using reviewers from within the C-GCH community ensures that those involved are committed to providing rigorous reviews that lead to the selection of a successful project.

This year, we will also look to engage a C-GCH alumni in both blinded first review and the Dragon’s Den, where appropriate and feasible. When creating the Dragon’s Den panel, we will continue to seek additional content area experts from the broader SickKids and University of Toronto community.

Further, as we will continue to use internal reviewers, we are committed to ensuring that they have no direct conflicts of interest (as defined by CIHR) with any proposals they are reviewing. If a conflict is identified, an alternate reviewer will be selected.
3. **Who is eligible?** Are applications from external applicants encouraged? Are I&E Committee members eligible?

Anyone is eligible! While the Principal Applicant on the Catalyst Grant must be a staff member, fellow, or student at SickKids, external applicants are encouraged to use this opportunity to leverage existing collaborations, establish new partnerships, or in some cases, rekindle relationships with former collaborators within the SickKids community. If you want to apply, but are not directly affiliated with the C-GCH or SickKids, we encourage you to identify internal collaborators.

For research projects, a PI will also need to be identified. We encourage you to collaborate early on in the process, so that all co-applicants are involved in the design of the proposal. Please see the [2021 Catalyst Grant Guidelines](#) for further details.

I&E Committee members are also eligible to apply for the Catalyst Grant. If they apply, they are not allowed to participate in any meetings or reviews related to the Catalyst Grant for the same year/cycle in which they applied. These rules apply regardless of their contribution to the proposal - primary applicant or co-applicant.

Co-applicants from external organizations are welcome and encouraged.

4. **How is the integrity and independence of the process ensured?**

There are numerous ways we ensure integrity and independence of the process:

- **The first round of review is completely blinded.** All possibly identifiable information is removed by the designated administrator prior to disseminating the proposals to the reviewers. The reviewers are asked to skim each proposal and identify any conflicts of interest that may have been missed by the administrator. If a conflict of interest is identified, the reviewer will not review that particular grant application.

- **Bias is minimized at every step.** All reviewers and Dragon’s Den panelists are required to read materials to identify conflicts of interest published by CIHR and the Government of Canada in order to reduce bias as much as possible. They also make an attestation that they will aim to eliminate their bias (sub-conscious and conscious) throughout the process.

- **Standardized scoring criteria are used throughout the process.** There are 5 areas that are used for adjudication both during the first round of blinded review and the Dragon’s Den. Details on each of these criteria are available to all applicants prior to submitting the application. Please refer to the Appendix in the 2021 Catalyst Grant Guidelines for more information.

- **Standard operating procedure (SOP) was established and is followed each year.** The I&E Committee wrote a Catalyst Grant SOP that is followed every year. The outlined procedures ensure that if I&E Committee members apply for the Catalyst Grant, they will not be involved in adjudication process for the respective cycle. In 2019, the I&E Committee conducted an evaluation of the Catalyst Grant process. All changes made based on that evaluation, and subsequent annual evaluations, will be updated in the SOP as needed.
5. **What is the purpose of the Dragon’s Den?**

The Dragon’s Den is a critical part of the selection process. It offers not only the opportunity to present the application in a different modality (i.e. in the format of a presentation, as opposed to a written proposal), but also allows for the panel and C-GCH members to ask questions which can serve to deepen the understanding of the application. The format of the presentation is at the discretion of the applicant; however, most applicants use this presentation to pitch their project afresh. Applicants presenting at the Dragon’s Den should be prepared to respond to a range of questions and demonstrate the robustness of the application.

The application scoring process is restarted at this stage based on the individual scores assigned by panel members, although the same 5 scoring criteria is used. All panel members will have reviewed the written applications in advance. (See Question 1 for more information on the full selection process).

The Dragon’s Den also offers a unique professional development opportunity, particularly for junior applicants, and supports C-GCH engagement.

6. **Where can I find the scoring criteria?**

The scoring criteria can be found in the [2021 Catalyst Grant Guidelines](#). Please refer to the Appendix for a full description of the criteria.

7. **I have a question not answered here. Who can I contact?**

For more information, eligibility and application details, visit: [www.sickkids.ca/gchcatalystgrant](http://www.sickkids.ca/gchcatalystgrant)

Should you have any questions regarding the 2021 Catalyst Grant, please contact: [global.catalyst@sickkids.ca](mailto:global.catalyst@sickkids.ca).