

Memo

To: Associate Deans Research

Cc: Deans, Research Support Staff

From: Amir Asif, Vice-President Research & Innovation

Date: January 21, 2021

Subject: **York University Internal Process for 2021 NSERC Synergy Awards**

Please find below information regarding the 2021 competition for [NSERC Synergy Awards for Innovation](#), which recognize examples of collaboration that stand as a model of effective partnership between industry and universities.

This information should be circulated to your respective Faculty Research Offices and faculty members to ensure their familiarity with the internal nomination and review process.

Note that all institutional nominations will be reviewed by the Major Awards Advisory Committee (MAAC), which will make recommendations to VPRI on the nominations to be put forward by the university.

NSERC Synergy Awards for Innovation

Launched in 1995, the Synergy Awards for Innovation recognize partnerships in natural sciences and engineering research and development between universities and Canadian industry. Designed to honour the achievements of these collaborations and showcase the benefits of pooling resources to make the most of Canadian research excellence and industrial expertise, the Awards are judged on:

- partnership;
- effective use of resources;
- tangible benefits.

The nominated partnership must be in the natural sciences and/or engineering and be between a Canadian university professor, or group of professors, and a Canadian-based company or companies with commercial activities in Canada, such as R&D and/or manufacturing. Winners of the Synergy Awards must show effective use of human, technical and financial resources, leading to tangible commercial, social or environmental benefits with their industrial partners. Universities must demonstrate a sustained partnership.

Nominations from York can be made in the following categories, with one award presented in each category:



- **Small and Medium-Sized Companies** — A partnership with a single company of up to 500 employees.
- **Large Companies** — A partnership with a single company of more than 500 employees.
- **Two or More Companies** — A partnership with two or more companies of any size or with a consortium of companies.

The winner (principal nominee) in each category will receive a \$200,000 NSERC research grant, while the industrial partner(s) will each receive a \$30,000 voucher valid towards the cash portion of their required contribution in a new [Alliance Grant](#).

Nominations, which are **due April 15, 2021**, must be submitted by a senior executive from one of the participating organizations, such as the:

- President, Chief Executive Officer, Vice-President of Research, or equivalent of one of the industrial partner organizations; or
- President, Vice-President of Research, or equivalent from the university.

Note that there is no limit to the number of nominations for the Synergy Awards for Innovation that a university or college can put forward.

Winners will be selected by a peer review selection committee on the basis of the outstanding excellence of the partnership and its suitability for each category.

Additional details can be found at: http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Prizes-Prix/Synergy-Synergie/Index-Index_eng.asp

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI)

The nominated partnerships are expected to promote approaches that increase the inclusion and advancement of women and other under-represented groups in the natural sciences and engineering, as one means to foster excellence in research and training. NSERC requires the nominators to outline how they have considered gender equity in their nomination processes. **As such, VPRI encourages Faculties to promote this opportunity among all of its researchers, and equity seeking groups in particular, and to identify partnerships that have exemplified the promotion of women and other under-represented groups in natural sciences and engineering.**

Nominees should refer to the [Guide for Applicants: Considering equity, diversity and inclusion in your application for more information](#).

Internal Nomination & Review Process

Process Overview:

- Deans' offices are invited to submit nominations for consideration by MAAC. The internal submission deadline is **March 15, 2021**. Interested Faculties are encouraged to contact Strategic and Institutional Research Initiatives (SIRI) for advice and early feedback ahead of the internal deadline for MAAC review.
- MAAC will review nominations and provide feedback to nominees to enhance their submissions.
- The SIRI Specialist will manage the preparation of the final submission to NSERC, working with Faculty-based research support personnel and nominees.
- NSERC will adjudicate the competition and notify York University of results.

Internal Nomination Components (Email submission to SIRI Specialist Abby Vogus (avogus@yorku.ca)) by **March 15, 2021** – 1 PDF file compiled in the following order:

- Communication from Dean (or Associate Dean of Research) endorsing nomination and highlighting how EDI was considered in the Faculty's nomination process (email from Dean or ADR or signed memo)
- 6-page statement detailing the partnership, using the following headings: Background, Partnership, Effective Use of Resources, and Tangible Benefits
- Completed nomination form (minus signatures from nominator and industrial partners)

Completed Nomination Components (Email soft copy to avogus@yorku.ca no later than **April 13, 2021**). Please review [NSERC's General Presentation Guidelines](#) in the preparation of nominations. Please note that the SIRI team will coordinate York letters of support and signatures.

- Completed [Nomination Form](#) (with all signatures)
- Nominator letter of support (from a senior executive of one of the industrial partner organizations or an executive head of the university)
- Letters of support from the senior executive or executive head of all other partner organizations, including the university, listed on the Synergy Awards Nomination Form
- Concise company profile (no more than half a page) for each industrial partner
- 6 page statement detailing the partnership, using the following headings:
 1. Background
 2. Partnership
 3. Effective Use of Resources
 4. Tangible Benefits
- 1 page of references and 1 page Appendix, if needed
- Completed [Terms and Conditions Form for Nominees](#) (one for the nominee and one for each co-nominee)
- Completed [Terms and Conditions Form for Nominators](#)
- Completed and signed ORS Checklist

Timeline

Date	Milestone
March 15, 2021	Internal nominations from Faculties due to ORS
March 15	Nominees contact executive heads of partner companies to secure letters of support*
Late March	MAAC Review
Late March/early April	Feedback to nominees
April 13	Complete nomination file due to ORS
April 15	NSERC Deadline

*Even though not required by the internal deadline, nominees should reach out to executive heads of partner companies as soon as possible to secure letters of support.

Contact: Abby Vogus, Strategic and Institution Research and Award (SIRI) Specialist, Office of Research Services, avogus@yorku.ca.