

Last Updated: August 18, 2026

Canadian Liver Links – Hepatology Initiative Grant Terms of Reference

1) Purpose

To establish a transparent, fair, and collaborative project funding application process among Canadian hepatology organizations, administered by the CASL Executive Committee, to support Canadian hepatology research, knowledge translation, education dissemination, quality improvement, and strategic initiatives with national impact.

2) Objectives

- Use a portion of the net proceeds from the annual Canadian Liver Meeting (CLM) in financially profitable years to fund and distribute project grants among Canadian hepatology organizations, with the goal of advancing shared national priorities, collaborative initiatives, and strategic objectives that benefit hepatology practice, research, and education across Canada.
- Catalyze high-impact, Canada-wide hepatology projects that advance patient care, health systems, education, and research capacity.
- Encourage interdisciplinary and inter-organizational collaboration across CASL affiliates and relevant partners.
- Ensure a rigorous, unbiased review process of applications including an independent external reviewer (e.g., from the CAG Research Office or equivalent) to promote fairness and mitigate conflicts of interest.
- Promote equitable access to funding opportunities across regions and disciplines in hepatology.
- Foster efficient knowledge translation and measurable outcomes.

3) Scope & Definitions

- **Eligible Project Types:** Education (CME/CPD, curricula, workshops, digital learning), research (clinical, translational, health services), quality improvement/implementation science, data infrastructure, guideline/consensus development, patient engagement initiatives.
- **CASL Affiliates/Partner Organizations:** Canadian hepatology related societies, networks, and institutional partners who are actively involved in CLM will be able to apply (individually or in partnership) for the grant

- **Interdisciplinary Collaboration:** Active participation from **≥2 distinct disciplines** (e.g., hepatology, surgery, nursing, pharmacy, epidemiology, public health, patient partners, Indigenous health).
- **Independent External Reviewer:** At least two expert reviewers with no material conflict of interest, ideally nominated by or sourced (i.e., the CAG research office or equivalent), who participates in the evaluation and adjudication process.

4) Governance

- **Sponsor & Administrator:** CASL Executive Committee ("CASL Exec").
- **Grant Secretariat:** CASL secretariat responsible for competition logistics, communications, and documentation.
- **Review Panel:**
 - CASL Exec members
 - CASL Research Committee Chairs
 - CASL Education Committee Chairs
 - Independent external reviewer
- **Decision Authority:** CASL Exec, informed by panel scoring and discussion, with external reviewer participation.

5) Funding Scope & Duration

- **Grant size:** CAD \$10,000–\$60,000 per initiative (subject to CASL annual conference outcome).
- **Duration:** 12 months from award date
- **Number of awards:** Determined annually based on envelope, merit and portfolio balance.
- **Eligible costs include:**
 - materials/supplies,
 - data access,
 - research coordinator,
 - participant engagement,
 - evaluation (honorarium or software costs),
 - travel strictly directly and exclusively related to project execution,
 - copyediting,
 - graphic design fees,
 - translation fees,
 - publication fees (open access encouraged)
- **Ineligible costs:**
 - organizational overhead,

- salaries for tenured faculty.

6) Applicant & Institutional Eligibility

- **Lead applicant:** A member in good standing of CASL for the past three years who actively participates in the annual Canadian Liver Meeting; must hold an eligible appointment at a Canadian institution capable of administering funds.
- **Team composition:** Must meet interdisciplinary criteria and, if required, multi-affiliate collaboration. Include appropriate patient/public partners and EDI considerations as relevant.
- **Multiple submissions:** Recommended to submit one funded project per cycle unless otherwise approved.
- **Geographic equity:** Teams should consider representation across provinces/territories as appropriate to project aims.

7) Competition Timeline

- **Launch / Call for Proposals:** September 2026
- **Full application due:** December 4, 2026
- **Review meeting & applicant presentations:** January 2027
- **Funding decisions communicated:** Early February 2027
- **Project Announcement:** CASL Award Ceremony at CLM
- **Project start date:** Dependent upon applicants

8) Application Package

The proposal should be up to three pages (not including references), with a maximum of 3 additional pages for figures or tables.

The proposal of the project or activity should include a clear description of:

1. Overall purpose and objectives
2. The relevance to CASL mandate
3. The expected output (e.g., consensus plan, partnerships, stakeholder input, KT products/education)

Suggested sections of the application may include, if relevant:

- Statement of Objective(s),
- Description of Team Expertise and Advancing CASL Mission
- Brief Review of Literature and Background Information,
- If Relevant (for research applications)
 - Hypothesis(es),

- Design and Methodology,
- Analysis of Data,
- Anticipated Timeline,
- Impact, Future Research, Knowledge Translation, Training, Mentorship
- Budget

In addition to the 3-page proposal, the application must include:

- A copy of a CIHR Academic Common CV for the Principal Applicant.
- The names of 3 CASL Members that you suggest as potential reviewers for your application (Please contact us at casl@hepatology.ca if you require assistance with this). We will consider these names as either potential external reviewers or members of our peer review committee; however, we cannot guarantee that these individuals will be selected.

The completed application must be received by CASL no later than 11:59pm PST on December 4, 2026.

9) Scoring Criteria

- **Importance / Relevance (20 points)** - Assesses alignment with CASL's mandate, significance of the issue, and importance of the proposed activity.
- **Project Concept & Quality of Proposed Activity (20 points)** - Evaluates whether the planning or dissemination activity is logically structured and well-justified.
- **Methods & Feasibility (20 points)** - Focuses on feasibility within timeline, robustness of methods, and appropriateness of planned engagement.
- **Team Expertise & Partnerships (15 points)** - Evaluates the capability of the team, appropriateness of collaborations, and fit for the proposed activity.
- **Dissemination / Knowledge Translation Quality (15 points)** - Assesses the strength, clarity, and potential impact of dissemination outputs.
- **Budget & Resource Justification (10 points)** - Evaluates clarity, appropriateness, and proportionality of the proposed use of funds.

Category	Points
Importance / Relevance	20
Concept & Activity Quality	20
Methods & Feasibility	20
Team & Partnerships	15
Dissemination/KT Quality	15

Resource Justification	10
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11) Funding Agreements & Financial Administration

- **Payment Process:** Funds administered from CASL to the awarded affiliate under CASL agreement terms.
- **Payment schedule:** 100% of funds to be paid upon receipt of invoice from affiliate
- **Re-allocation:** No further funds will be administered following initial payment
- **Unspent funds:** Must be returned or reallocated per CASL decision.

12) Reporting & Knowledge Translation

- **Final report:** Within 60 days of end date (outcomes, outputs, impact, finances).
- **Knowledge Translation or Publication:** Presentation at a CASL scientific meeting/webinar and submission of a public-facing summary for CASL website/newsletter or publication (e.g. the *Canadian Liver Journal*)

13) Branding & Acknowledgement

- Use CASL logo/acknowledgement and partner logos per brand guidelines in outputs, presentations, and publications.