



Island Health Research Patient-Oriented Research Team Assist Awards 2025

OVERVIEW

The BC SUPPORT Unit Island Centre, part of the [Island Health Research Department](#), supports Patient-Oriented Research (POR) which is done in partnership with patients, answers research questions that matter to patients, and aims to improve health outcomes and experiences. Learn more about the [Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research \(SPOR\)](#).

As part of our commitment to facilitating relationships between patients, researchers, healthcare providers, decision-makers, and other interest holders, we invite applications for **Patient-Oriented Research (POR) Team Assist Awards**. Funding is provided by the [BC SUPPORT Unit](#). For the purpose of this award, “patients” are defined broadly to include anyone with lived experience of a health condition, including informal caregivers, family, and friends.

Island Health’s Research Facilitation team offers free services including:

- **Research navigation:** supporting the development of multi-disciplinary teams and connecting researchers with health system leaders and decision-makers.
- **Patient engagement:** assisting with engagement planning, recruitment of patient partners, and their onboarding and orientation.
- **Knowledge translation:** Ensuring end-users are meaningfully involved throughout the research process to improve relevance and impact.

Reach out to us at researchfacilitation@islandhealth.ca to schedule a meeting with a member of our team. We’d be happy to discuss your project, budget, and application, and explore how we can help move your work forward.

OBJECTIVES AND AWARD DETAILS

The POR Team Assist Awards provide support for early-stage, pre-grant activities that will help teams develop or strengthen POR projects aligned with health system strategic priorities. *Not sure if your expense is eligible? Need help thinking through your budget? Let’s meet to discuss:* researchfacilitation@islandhealth.ca

These awards are designed to:

- **Support** the formation of new multi-disciplinary POR research teams or strengthen existing ones
- **Promote** collaboration amongst relevant interest holders
- **Reduce** barriers to meaningful patient engagement
- **Empower** patients to help identify and prioritize research questions
- **Enable** teams to submit strong POR applications to future funding opportunities

Teams may request funding for expenses such as:

- Planning and coordinating of POR team meetings
- Hosting engagement opportunities (e.g., catering, honoraria, materials)
- Renting meeting space for public forums or workshops
- [Compensating](#) patient partners, caregivers, people with lived experience and/or clinicians for their time
- Compensation for students for their contributions to coordination, support, or facilitation
- Accessibility or cultural support services to enable inclusive participation

**Additional funds may be available for projects that engage with Indigenous communities or projects that focus on rural and remote regions.*

ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

To be eligible, proposed activities must:

- Involve patients, family members, caregivers, or people with lived experience as partners
- Include (or plan to engage with) Island Health clinicians and/or decision makers
 - *We would be pleased to support connections to Island Health, please reach out to researchfacilitation@islandhealth.ca*
- Address patient-identified priorities (i.e. what matters most to patients)
- Aim to improve healthcare experiences or outcomes
- Priority will be given to projects that address health system priorities (see priority research areas below)

Additional requirements:

- The Project Lead and/or Co-Lead must be based in British Columbia and be affiliated with Island Health or another Vancouver Island-based host institution
- All funds must be spent on activities within the [Island Health region](#)

Priority Research Areas

Activities that align with the priorities below are preferred. However, topics that are outside of these priorities will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

- I. Improve the Experiences Quality and Outcomes for the People We Serve**
Examples of priority populations include seniors (including LTC and home and community care enhancements),, patients needing surgery
- II. Improve the Experience, Health & Well-Being of all People at Island Health**
Enhancing access to primary care services and rural and remote health care services

III. Increase Health Human Resource Capacity & Adapt to Changing Workforce Needs

Addressing capacity issues in acute hospitals and improving access to care

IV. Improve Population Health and Wellness, Reduce Health Inequities

Addressing knowledge and service gaps related to Indigenous cultural safety and anti-racism, as identified by Indigenous community members, mental health and substance use care

Click [here](#) to review Island Health's strategic priorities.

HOW TO APPLY

To apply, complete a brief application form located [here](#).

You will be asked to provide:

- Contact information
- Project title and 250 word written summary OR short video (maximum 3 minutes)
- Type(s) of support the team is seeking
- Amounts of funding requested

When to apply:

Applications are accepted on a rolling basis and will be reviewed monthly by the Research Facilitation Team at Island Health. To be considered for a given month, applications must be submitted by the 15th, will be reviewed by the end of the month and notification of the outcome will occur within one week of the review date. Funds must be used within **six months** of receiving notification of award.

2025-2026 Schedule:

| 2025 | Submission Deadline | Review Period | Notification By |
|-----------|---------------------|-----------------|------------------|
| August | August 15 | August 16–31 | September 7 |
| September | September 15 | September 16–30 | October 7 |
| October | October 15 | October 16–31 | November 7 |
| November | November 15 | November 16–30 | December 7 |
| December | December 15 | December 16–31 | January 7, 2026 |
| January | January 15 | January 16–31 | February 7, 2026 |
| February | February 15 | February 16–28 | March 7, 2026 |

SCREENING AND EVALUATION PROCESS

- 1) Initial screening:** The research facilitation team will confirm that applications meet eligibility criteria. A staff member may follow up with questions if clarification is needed before moving to scoring.
- 2) Scoring:** Applications will then be reviewed using a points system. There can be no zero scores in any category, and projects must score at least a 10/15 to be eligible for funding.

Scoring Criteria (15 points total): 0 = Not at all, 1 = Somewhat, 2 = Mostly, 3 = Completely

| Category | Description | Points |
|--|---|--------|
| Patient Involvement | Clearly outlines how patients, caregivers, or people with lived experience will be meaningfully engaged. | 0–3 |
| Relevance to Patient Priorities | Addresses an issue that patients have identified as important or includes plans to determine those priorities through engagement. | 0–3 |
| Health Impact | Demonstrates a clear link to improving health outcomes or healthcare experiences through research. | 0–3 |
| Feasibility | Activities are realistic, achievable within 6 months, and align with a proposed timeline and budget. | 0–3 |
| Alignment with Strategic Priorities | Connects clearly to one or more Island Health strategic priorities. | 0–3 |

QUESTIONS?

Need help applying? We're here to support you. If you would like help with your project plan, budget or application, email researchfacilitation@islandhealth.ca to book a meeting with us!

Island Health acknowledges the homelands of the three Indigenous families on and around Vancouver Island: the Kwakwaka'wakw, Nuuchahnulth, and Coast Salish peoples. We are committed to addressing the ongoing impacts of colonialism and Indigenous-specific racism, and strive to decolonize research and promote cultural safety and humility. We welcome diverse ways of knowing, and seek to advance equity, diversity, and inclusion for all. Above all, we believe meaningful research must foster respectful relationships that put people first.