

Requesting a Letter of Support from RNA Canada ARN

RNA Canada ARN is pleased to consider requests for letters of support for funding applications and other major initiatives that align with its national mission. Because RNA Canada ARN is a charitable organization with a mandate to serve the broader Canadian RNA community, its support must be reserved for projects and applications that clearly advance that mission.

This page explains who may request a letter, what RNA Canada ARN can and cannot support, how requests are reviewed, and how much time is needed for a decision.

Who may request a letter of support?

Requests for letters of support may be submitted by members of RNA Canada ARN. Requests are first sent for triage and tracking to the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Research Funding Information & Coordination (RFIC) Committee, with the RNA Canada ARN Secretary copied on the request.

Non-members are welcome to learn about the process, but letters of support are normally issued only in relation to applications led or formally submitted by RNA Canada ARN members and reviewed through this process. This reflects RNA Canada ARN's responsibility to ensure that its name and charitable mandate are used appropriately.

What RNA Canada ARN can support

RNA Canada ARN may support applications or initiatives that are strongly aligned with its mission and that demonstrate broad community value. In particular, requests are assessed for:

- alignment with the mission of RNA Canada ARN;
- **national scope** and/or meaningful partnerships;
- involvement of a **critical mass of RNA Canada ARN members**, extending beyond a single site;
- **broad impact on trainees** and/or equity, diversity and inclusion;
- absence of unresolved conflict-of-interest concerns.

In practical terms, this means RNA Canada ARN is most likely to support:

- large-scale, multi-institutional funding opportunities;
- national or cross-provincial collaborative initiatives;
- programs that strengthen training, community coordination, or shared RNA research capacity in Canada;
- strategic initiatives that benefit the Canadian RNA ecosystem more broadly than a single laboratory or institution.

What RNA Canada ARN cannot support

RNA Canada ARN **does not provide letters of support for individual researchers outside broad or large-scale funding opportunities or initiatives.** This is an explicit part of the current policy.

As a result, RNA Canada ARN generally will **not** support:

- routine individual operating grant applications from a single investigator;
- applications that are limited to one lab, one site, or one institution without broader community relevance;
- requests that do not clearly connect to RNA Canada ARN's mission;
- requests where the applicant seeks endorsement primarily for personal or institutional benefit rather than national community benefit.

A letter of support from RNA Canada ARN is therefore **not** a general endorsement of a researcher, laboratory, company, or institution. It is a mission-based endorsement of a qualifying initiative.

How requests are reviewed

All requests are reviewed through the process established in the current policy. The RFIC Committee evaluates the request and recommends one of three outcomes:

- **Support**
- **Conditional support**
- **Decline**

The recommendation includes a brief rationale, and the Secretary maintains a registry of requests. Final sign-off is provided by the **President of RNA Canada ARN, or a delegate of the Executive Committee.** Anyone with a conflict of interest is excluded from discussion and sign-off. RNA Canada ARN also maintains a central log and archive of all requests and letters issued.

When should you apply?

To allow time for proper review, RNA Canada ARN recommends that requests be submitted **at least 4 weeks before the sponsor's deadline.**

A reasonable service standard would be:

- **4 weeks before deadline:** preferred submission date;
- **within 10 business days:** acknowledgement of receipt;
- **within 15 business days:** target timeline for decision and response, provided the file is complete;
- **less than 2 weeks before deadline:** RNA Canada ARN will try to respond, but cannot guarantee review or issuance of a letter in time.

This timing is not stated in the current policy, but it is a practical and reasonable delay to ensure fair committee review, conflict checks, drafting, and final signature.

What to include in your request

To help RNA Canada ARN assess your request efficiently, please include:

- the name of the funding opportunity or initiative;
- the deadline date;
- the name, affiliation, and RNA Canada ARN membership status of the lead applicant;
- a short description of the project or initiative;
- an explanation of how it aligns with RNA Canada ARN's mission;
- a description of the national scope, participating sites, and RNA Canada ARN members involved;
- expected impact on trainees, community building, and/or EDI;
- any known conflict-of-interest issues;
- a draft letter or key points to be addressed, if available.

Incomplete requests may delay review.

Where to send the request

Please send your request to the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Research Funding Information & Coordination (RFIC) Committee (rfic@ranacanada.ca), and copy the RNA Canada ARN Secretary (secretary@rnacanada.ca), in keeping with the current policy.

Important note

Submission of a request does not guarantee support. RNA Canada ARN must ensure that any letter issued is consistent with its mission, governance, and charitable responsibilities. For that reason, support is reserved for initiatives with clear national relevance and broad benefit to the Canadian RNA community.