

Novartis Canada launches \$500,000 funding initiative to improve health equity in Canada

Jul 08, 2024

Montréal, QC, July 8, 2024 – Novartis Pharmaceuticals Canada Inc. (Novartis) today announced the launch of a new health equity initiative, aimed at addressing health disparities and promoting equitable healthcare for Canadians. In this open call for ideas, Novartis will award \$500,000 CAD to non-profit projects focused on improving health equity in three pivotal areas: social and cultural inclusivity of care, health literacy and education, and the promotion of health support for immigrants to Canada.

Despite a publicly funded healthcare system, access to timely and appropriate care still is challenging for many individuals in Canada.¹ Novartis is committed to changing this by funding innovative ideas and approaches that challenge the status quo and improve the overall health and well-being of Canadians. Improving health equity requires reducing socioeconomic disparities, promoting culturally sensitive care, enhancing access to health services and addressing the specific needs of marginalized populations.

“Our commitment extends beyond the traditional boundaries of healthcare, and we are working with underserved groups, non-profit organizations and communities to deliver meaningful and sustainable change within Canadian society,” says Mark Vineis, Country President Novartis Canada. “By embracing the power of cross-sector collaboration, we can create a paradigm shift towards a more inclusive and equitable healthcare system for all Canadians.”

To build skills and capacity to develop the Novartis Health Equity Initiative, Novartis consulted and received training from Equity Mobilizing Partnerships in Community (EMPACT), an innovative, award-winning model of patient and community engagement housed at Women’s College Hospital, Toronto, Canada. Through a series of upskilling workshops, EMPACT instructed on key concepts and practices identified as critical to run a successful health equity-focused community investment program, and to orient and equip staff on the competencies to design an inclusive grant program. EMPACT acts as a catalyst for positive change by providing timely recommendations to projects so that they can increase health equity.

In a collective statement, the co-founders of EMPACT, scientist Dr. Ambreen Sayani and patient partner Alies Maybee, commented that, “we need to include diverse people with a variety of lived/living experiences to create meaningful change in our society.”

How to apply for funding

Novartis Canada warmly welcomes all organizations that share their passion for advancing health equity to apply for funding and is committed to uniting and leading a paradigm shift towards a more inclusive and fair healthcare system – one that benefits every individual in Canada.

To find out more information about the initiative and apply for funding, please visit <https://www.novartis.com/ca-en/esg/novartis-health-equity-initiative>. All applications must be received before 11:59 p.m. PT on September 15, 2024.

About Novartis

Novartis is a focused innovative medicines company. Every day, we work to reimagine medicine to improve and extend people's lives so that patients, healthcare professionals and societies are empowered in the face of serious disease. Our medicines reach more than 250 million people worldwide. Reimagine medicine with us: Visit us at <https://www.novartis.com> and connect with us on [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), [X/Twitter](#) and [Instagram](#).

In Canada, Novartis Pharmaceuticals Canada Inc. employs approximately 600 people to serve the evolving needs of patients and the healthcare system and invests over \$30 million in R&D yearly in the country. For more information visit www.novartis.ca.

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