

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF AWARD

Volt-Age Impact and Living Labs Grants

By accepting the awarded Volt-Age Impact Grant or Living Lab Grant (the “Grant”), the Principal Investigator understands and agrees to abide by the terms and conditions outlined in the [Canada First Research Excellence Fund Administration Guide](#), the host university’s policies and procedures, the [Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research](#), and all relevant policies related to the responsible conduct of research from the Canada First Research Excellence Fund (hereafter, CFREF). The Principal Investigator agrees to provide true, complete, accurate information in any documents related to the Grant and represent themselves, their research, and their accomplishments accurately and in a manner consistent with the norms of the relevant field.

During the tenure of the Grant, the Principal Investigator also agrees to comply with the following terms and conditions:

General

1. The Principal Investigator is responsible for obtaining and documenting all necessary certifications, permits, licenses, ethical approval, and any other approvals required for the research and for all project activities.
2. The Principal Investigator will inform Volt-Age and any relevant institutional officials in writing of any changes in the nature of the research that may have an impact on certification or approvals, including environmental review / assessment as per Section 2.4 Agency Requirements for Certain Types of Research of the [Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research](#). Research activities requiring additional certification will not proceed until appropriate institutional and Tri-Agency approvals have been obtained.
3. In the event of any change in the eligibility status of the Principal Investigator or any of the Co-Applicant Investigators according to Tri-Agency policies, the Principal Investigator will inform Volt-Age and the institutional officials tasked with administering the Grant in writing immediately.
4. In the event of any activities, processes, or circumstances that may impact the timeline of the project deliverables, the Principal Investigator will inform Volt-Age in writing immediately.
5. The Principal Investigator will be expected to participate in Volt-Age events related to their research topic and to make themselves and their research process available to Volt-Age for documentation, presentations, and reporting purposes.
6. The Principal Investigator agrees to adhere to the [Volt-Age Code of Conduct](#) (the “Code”) in all activities related to the approved project, including but not limited to written and verbal communications, workshops, and meetings. The Principal Investigator is responsible for sharing the Code with their research team, research trainees, and all others involved in the Volt-Age-funded project, who are then themselves responsible for adhering to the Code.

Conditions for Fund Release

7. Prior to release of any funds, any compliance requirements (human ethics, health and safety, etc.) of the institute where the funds will be held must be met.
8. Upon signing the Notice of Award, 20% of the total amount awarded from Volt-Age will be released. This amount will be distributed to the Principal Investigator and Co-Applicant Investigators (for individuals at Concordia University), or Partner Institutions' Offices of Research as applicable, proportionally to what is assigned to each team member in the approved budget.
9. Funds for research trainees will be handled separately by Volt-Age directly with the Concordia University School of Graduate Studies and Office of Research as well as the corresponding departments at Partner Institutions (namely, Dalhousie University, Toronto Metropolitan University, and University of Calgary) as determined by those Institutions.
10. The remaining Grant funds will be released following the submission and review of the first annual report and revised budget (if applicable), if the following conditions have been met:

A feasibility study and community needs survey must be received by Volt-Age (<i>Living Labs only</i>)	Six (6) months from the date of the Notice of Award
All outstanding MoUs and reciprocity agreements must be received by Volt-Age	One (1) year from the date of the Notice of Award
Research partnership agreement completed and signed with all partner organizations	One (1) year from the date of the Notice of Award
All risk assessment and mitigation plans for private sector partners must be received by Volt-Age	One (1) year from the date of the Notice of Award
All Masters and PhD research trainee positions have been filled	One (1) year from the date of the Notice of Award

Use of Funds

11. Grant funds may be used only for the specific purposes for which they were awarded and only for eligible expenditures in accordance with the [Tri-Agency Guide on Financial Administration](#), the [CFREF Administration Guide](#), and any other CFREF literature, as well as any relevant Tri-Agency agreements.
12. The Principal Investigator is expected to spend Grant funds from both Volt-Age and partner organizations in a timely manner throughout the project, in line with the approved budget. Please see Appendix A for details on reporting.
13. Any variations exceeding 20% from a line in the approved budget must be promptly communicated to and receive prior approval from Volt-Age in writing before implementing any modifications (all communications must be sent to volt-age@concordia.ca).
14. In accordance with the reporting timelines (outlined in Appendix A), the Principal Investigator will provide regular reports with the complete information requested at the intervals determined by Volt-Age. The Principal Investigator agrees to adhere to the start and end dates of the project as specified in the Notice of Award letter. If the Principal Investigator wishes to extend the term of the Grant, they must contact Volt-Age and provide requested information and justifications for the desired extension.
15. The unspent balance in the Grant account at the end of each financial year can be carried over to the following year during the term of the Grant but must be reported in the annual financial report.

Any residual balance remaining in the Grant account after the Grant end date will be automatically returned to Volt-Age and re-assigned to other activities.

Research Trainee Recruitment and Volt-Age Cohort Research Trainees

16. The Principal Investigator and each co-Applicant Investigator is responsible for engaging the number of research trainees that are indicated in the approved budget.
17. For Masters and PhD students, the priority is to fill student positions at Concordia University from Volt-Age Cohort candidate pool managed by Volt-Age and Concordia's School of Graduate Studies. Principal Investigators and Co-Applicant Investigators based at Concordia have direct access to the Volt-Age candidate pool, which provides an opportunity to connect with individuals already interested in working with Volt-Age. Team members may use this resource to identify and recruit new candidates for student positions under their supervision. If there are no students in the Volt-Age Cohort candidate pool that meet a project's research needs, it is the responsibility of the team member to identify an eligible and suitable student.
18. Existing students, meaning current students at Concordia and partner institutions in the same level (Masters or PhD), cannot be moved into unfilled research trainee positions unless they meet the eligibility conditions: a) have completed less than one year of their studies and their current project has ended; or b) already recruited through a Seed Grant project. Overall, new students must constitute a minimum of 80% of the recruited students for the project.
19. Post-doctoral fellow (PDF) opportunities to fill research trainee positions at Concordia University will be posted on the Volt-Age and School of Graduate Studies webpages. It is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator to provide all necessary information to create a posting for each PDF position.
20. Co-Applicant Investigators at Partner Institutions must recruit research trainees through their own university systems.
21. All research trainee positions for Masters and PhD students must be filled within one year of the date of the Notice of Award. Post-doctoral fellow positions must be filled within the first two years of the date of the Notice of Award.
22. The Principal Investigator and Co-Applicant Investigators must ensure research trainees attend Volt-Age events, such as workshops, training, and conferences. Volt-Age reserves the right to communicate directly with Volt-Age Cohort research trainees.
23. It is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator to ensure that activities and opportunities proposed in the project's Training Plan take place over the course of the project. Reporting on the Training Plan offered to Volt-Age Cohort research trainees may be required and must be completed if requested by Volt-Age.

Security

24. In accordance with the [National Security Guidelines for Research Partnerships](#), the project team awarded, led by the Principal Investigator, must ensure that potential risks are identified, a risk mitigation plan is devised, and all risk mitigation measures are implemented as outlined. Within one year of receipt of the Notice of Award, the Principal Investigator must ensure that risk assessment and mitigation plans have been submitted. Volt-Age reserves the right to terminate the Grant if these guidelines are not duly respected.
25. By accepting this Grant, the Principal Investigator agrees to follow the [Government of Canada Policy on Sensitive Technology Research and Affiliations of Concern](#) and must notify the research unit of

their university if the research area is included amongst the [Sensitive Technology Research Areas](#). If this is the case, the Principal Investigator and Co-Applicant Investigator(s) (if applicable) must attest that they are not affiliated with or receiving funding or in-kind support from a university, research institution, or laboratory on the [Named Research Organizations List](#).

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

26. The integration of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) practices into research activities and efforts to foster a more inclusive and equitable research environment are essential. The Principal Investigator will work with the Volt-Age EDI team to ensure that (1) their research team and research trainees participate in EDI training that will be tailored and provided by Volt-Age, (2) that the research process integrates EDI principles, and (3) that there is openness and flexibility amongst the research team to adapting research approaches and activities to strengthen EDI outcomes.
27. As a condition to the commitment to advancing EDI within the research project, the Principal Investigator agrees to report on key EDI metrics (e.g., representation of underrepresented groups, inclusive research methodologies, mentorship initiatives) as part of the regular reporting schedule, following the templates to be provided by Volt-Age and providing comprehensive information about the project's EDI initiatives including challenges, lessons, outcomes, and suggestions. This data is vital for enhancing our collective understanding of EDI best practices and continuing to support evidence-based approaches to EDI.
28. All Volt-Age researchers (including Principal Investigators, Co-Applicant Investigators, academic collaborators, and research trainees) will be invited to participate in an annual, voluntary survey that supports Volt-Age's ongoing efforts to refine and advance EDI practices and facilitates reporting to CFREF. Participation in this survey is strongly encouraged as it contributes valuable insights into the collective endeavour to enhance EDI within the research community.

Communication

29. The Principal Investigator is responsible for ensuring that all members of the research team follow the requirement to acknowledge CFREF's and Volt-Age's support in all communications (verbally and in writing) with regards to the Grant. For publications, this can include a line under an Acknowledgements section that states *"This research was undertaken thanks in part to funding from the Canada First Research Excellence Fund, awarded through the Volt-Age initiative at Concordia University"* Additional materials for communication are available upon request to volt-age@concordia.ca and a package of materials will be provided by the Volt-Age Administration.
30. The Principal Investigator commits to transparently disclosing information about activities and achievements resulting from Volt-Age sponsored initiatives to Volt-Age. Volt-Age reserves the right to communicate this information with the public through various means, including through social media platforms, newsletters, or publications, during the entirety of the Grant period, subject to the confidentiality and obligations in the related agreements with partners.
31. The Principal Investigator is encouraged to share materials highlighting Volt-Age-related research achievements, including news and media coverage, public and scientific events, presentations, and advertising and recruitment where agreements allow. These contributions help to further publicize the impact of Volt-Age funded research and foster greater community engagement.

Intellectual Property

32. The Principal Investigator must consult with the Volt-Age Administration and the Office of Research before engaging with private partners and proposing potential intellectual property frameworks.
33. The Principal Investigator, Co-Investigator(s), the university(ies), and the partner organization(s) agree to abide by the intellectual property terms and conditions outlined in the [CFREF Administration Guide](#).
34. All parties involved in the research project will enter into a research partnership agreement that clearly specifies the intellectual property arrangements and the obligations of each partner organization including but not limited to intellectual property rights, publications, confidentiality and indemnification. The Volt-Age research partnership agreement template will be used, and ownership of intellectual property will be based on inventorship.

Partner organization(s)

35. A Memorandum of Understanding (“MoU”) must be signed for each partner organization listed on the grant application for a funded project within one year of receipt of the Notice of Award, detailing a partner organization’s committed cash and in-kind contributions. A Reciprocity Agreement must be submitted for each Indigenous partner listed on the grant application within one year of receipt of the Notice of Award. The full release of funds for the project is contingent on these agreements being signed and these documents being submitted on time.
36. Up to five additional contributing partners may be added to the Grant within one year of the receipt of the Notice of Award. The same documents (signed MoU or reciprocity agreement) must be submitted for these additional partners, also within one year of receipt of the Notice of Award. If additional partners are added, an updated budget that includes contributions from new partners must also be submitted within one year of receipt of the Notice of Award.
37. *For Living Labs only:* The Principal Investigator is responsible for ensuring that a feasibility study and survey of community needs, goals, and priorities are completed and submitted within six months of receipt of the Notice of Award.
38. The Principal Investigator is responsible for ensuring that all partner organization(s) fulfill their commitment to the project, both cash and in-kind, as approved. Volt-Age requires detailed documentation and proof of existence and valuation of both cash and in-kind contributions from partners. Acceptable forms of proof include official receipts, third-party valuation reports, and signed declarations confirming the delivery and operational status of in-kind contributions. Volt-Age reserves the right to request additional documentation or conduct its own verification to ensure the legitimacy and value of cash and in-kind contributions. All documentation must be submitted and verified in order for remaining funds to be released.
39. It is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator to ensure that all necessary documentation and proofs of cash and in-kind contributions are submitted to Volt-Age in a timely manner.
40. The Principal Investigator must notify Volt-Age immediately (volt-age@concordia.ca) of any change in the status of a partner organization in the Grant. These changes may include but are not limited to the following: contact name at the organization, buy-out / change of ownership and subsequent change of name of the organization, withdrawal from the project, or adjustment of cash/in-kind support.

Data management

41. The Principal Investigator is tasked with ensuring that open data related to the project are shared following the principles of openness and transparency, while also protecting sensitive information and following accepted guidelines for ethical research practice, including the [Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans](#). The Principal Investigator is responsible for safeguarding non-open access data – such as personal, confidential, or otherwise restricted information – by storing it securely and, if applicable, pseudonymizing the data. Such data must not cross international boundaries without explicit consent from the data subjects.
42. The Principal Investigator must coordinate with its institution's services to store all Volt-Age program-related files and data on secure university servers with appropriate backup and redundancy measures. Servers for storing data should be based in Canada and be compliant with cybersecurity best practices.
43. It is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator to include comprehensive metadata with shared data, adhering to established metadata standards. This ensures consistency, clarity, and usability of the data across the research community.
44. The Principal Investigator must ensure that any shared code, inputs, and metadata follow established best practices and standards. This includes promoting code readability, documentation, and the use of version control systems to track and share developments.
45. Volt-Age reserves the right to request data from the Principal Investigator and Co-Investigators for reporting purposes.

Termination of support

46. Volt-Age reserves the right to terminate support at any point if: it finds that progress is unsatisfactory; the partner organization(s) support falls to a level substantially lower than the amount stated in the grant application or is withdrawn completely, and the Principal Investigator cannot find a suitable replacement partner organization; there is a determination by the Government of Canada of an unacceptable national security risk related to the research due, to the Principal Investigator, Co-Investigator(s), and/or the partner organization(s); the Principal Investigator, Co-Investigator(s), and/or partner organization(s) are subject to criminal investigations, indictments, or convictions which are related to or have an impact on the research; or if termination is necessary to comply with federal laws, regulations, policies, or national directives.
47. If a Grant is terminated early, Volt-Age will make efforts for the orderly phase-out of the project to ensure minimal disruptions, especially for research trainees.
48. Volt-Age adheres to the Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research and the CFREF Administration Guide and follows Concordia University's research policy. Any breach of policy must be reported to the fund holder's Office of Research and follow that institution's protocols.

Appendix A

Reporting requirements

The Principal Investigator, on behalf of their research team, will be required to submit the following reports:

- **Quarterly progress reports** (due in August, November, and February of each year)
- **Annual progress reports** (due in May of each year, starting in 2026)
 - Including information on EDI, intellectual property, disclosures, partners organisation engagement, project progress, knowledge mobilization, and other indicators to facilitate CFREF reporting
- **Annual financial reports** (due in May of each year, starting in 2026)
 - Financial reports must be completed and signed by the Principal Investigator and their institution's Financial Officer. Details of cash and in-kind contributions must be provided.
- **Final project report** (due at the end date of the Grant period, as indicated in the Notice of Award letter, including an assessment of the project's overall impact and innovation)

Templates for reports will be provided a minimum of two months in advance. Additional information may be requested by Volt-Age as deemed necessary. All reports submitted to Volt-Age may be shared with the Tri-Agency and/or published. Volt-Age reserves the right to collect additional data via surveys, interviews, and other means to monitor progress, outcomes, and impacts.