

Volt-Age Grant Evaluation Criteria

During the review process, the review committee assigns a rating to each application. These ratings are used to create a ranked list of applications, which the Volt-Age CFREF uses to allocate funding. Funding is awarded in order of ranking until all available funds are exhausted or no additional applications meet the funding criteria.

The priority-driven peer review mechanism will use a scale of 0.0 to 5.0 to rate applications, with 5.0 being the highest possible rating. Scores are assigned in increments of 0.1 to ensure precision in the evaluation process. Reviewers are encouraged to use the full range of rating scores to accurately reflect the quality and competitiveness of each application. Ratings are assigned qualitative descriptors (see Tables below) to help guide reviewers in their rating of applications. For an application to be eligible for funding, it must receive a score of 3.0 or higher in each area.

ALIGNMENT WITH VOLT-AGE EXPECTED OUTCOMES AND GOALS	Exceptional (4.4 to 5.0)	Exceeds (3.7 to 4.3)	Meets (3.0 to 3.6)	Does not satisfy (<2.9)
1.1 Contribution to a just energy transition in Canada.	The proposed project demonstrates a significant contribution to a just energy transition in Canada.	The proposed project demonstrates a highly important contribution to a just energy transition in Canada.	The proposed project demonstrates an important contribution to a just energy transition in Canada.	The proposed project does not adequately demonstrate a contribution to a just energy transition in Canada.
1.2 Significance of the impacts of the intended outcomes on decarbonization and electrification initiatives as well as on social, economic, and/or environmental well-being in Canada.	The proposed outcomes are of exceptional importance to Canada and may also be important internationally . This research will overcome knowledge gaps to develop new and innovative policies, standards, products, services, processes, or technologies in Canada. The expected outcomes and impacts will be of the highest impact for Canadians.	The proposed outcomes are very important to Canada. This research will address knowledge gaps to develop new and innovative policies, standards, products, services, processes, or technologies in Canada. The expected outcomes will have high impact for Canadians.	The proposed outcomes are important to Canada. This research will contribute to addressing knowledge gaps to develop new and innovative policies, standards, products, services, processes, or technologies in Canada. The expected outcomes will have impact for Canadians.	The proposal does not adequately establish why the topic is important to Canada. It does not sufficiently identify how the research will address knowledge gaps related to developing new and innovative policies, standards, products, services, processes, or technologies. It does not adequately identify how outcomes will have impact for Canadians.
1.3 Diversity of the research team; interdisciplinarity in the project; inclusion of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion principles and values.	The proposal demonstrates a strong synergy among the applicants and includes a comprehensive combination of fields of study and career stages that makes it very likely that planned outcomes will be achieved. The inclusion of EDI principles and values are an essential part of the composition of the research team.	The proposal demonstrates synergy among the applicants and includes a varied combination of fields of study and career stages that makes it likely that planned outcomes will be achieved. The inclusion of EDI principles and values are an important part of the composition of the research team.	The proposal demonstrates complementarity among the applicants and includes a combination of fields of study and career stages that may lead to the planned outcomes being achieved. The inclusion of EDI principles and values are a part of the composition of the research team.	Not all applicants and fields of study are needed to achieve the planned outcomes are present. The proposal does not demonstrate a synergy or complementarity that will lead to the outcomes being achieved. The composition of the research team does not adequately include EDI principles and values.

1.4 Supports societal acceptability and social integration of new technology throughout the research process.	The proposed project highly supports societal acceptability and social integration of new technology throughout the research process in a comprehensive manner.	The proposed research process clearly supports societal acceptability and social integration of new technology throughout the research process.	The proposed research process supports societal acceptability and social integration of new technology at some points in the research process.	The proposed research does not adequately demonstrate support for societal acceptability and social integration of new technology in the research process.
1.5 Seeking to make lasting change beyond the scope of the project.	The proposal demonstrates significant potential to make a lasting change beyond the scope of the project.	The proposal demonstrates the potential to make a lasting change beyond the scope of the project.	The proposal demonstrates some potential to make a lasting change beyond the scope of the project.	The proposed does not demonstrate the ability to make a lasting change beyond the scope of the project.
1.6 Translating research to commercialization through the creation of intellectual property and nurturing entrepreneurial ventures.	The proposed project has a significant potential to translate research to commercialization and has a comprehensive strategy for the development of IP and/or nurturing entrepreneurial ventures.	The proposed project has the potential to translate research to commercialization and has a clear strategy for the development of IP and/or nurturing entrepreneurial ventures.	The proposed project has some potential to translate research to commercialization and has a strategy for the development of IP and/or nurturing entrepreneurial ventures.	The proposed project does not have the potential to translate research to commercialization and does not have a strategy for the development of IP and/or nurturing entrepreneurial ventures.

PARTNERSHIPS	Exceptional (4.4 to 5.0)	Exceeds (3.7 to 4.3)	Meets (3.0 to 3.6)	Does not satisfy (<2.9)
Organizational and Institutional Partners				
2.1 Appropriateness of the partnerships to achieve the intended outcomes.	The proposed outcomes are highly relevant to the partners' activities, and it is very likely that partnerships will contribute to planned outcomes being achieved.	The proposed outcomes are relevant to the partners' activities, and it is likely that partnerships will contribute to planned outcomes being achieved.	The proposed outcomes are related to the partners' activities, and partnerships may contribute to planned outcomes being achieved.	The outcomes are not sufficiently related to the partners' activities, and it is not clearly established that partnerships will contribute to planned outcomes being achieved.
2.2 Leveraging and inclusion of different types of partnerships and the integration of their unique perspectives and knowledge in the project.	The proposal demonstrates a strong synergy among the participants and includes a comprehensive combination of perspectives and knowledge.	The proposal demonstrates synergy among the participants and includes a combination of perspectives and knowledge.	The proposal demonstrates complementarity among the participants and includes a variety of perspectives and knowledge.	Not all participants needed to achieve the planned outcomes are present. The proposal does not demonstrate synergy or complementarity.
2.3 Appropriateness of the level of cash and in-kind contributions from each partner.	The contributions enrich the scope of the project and are highly commensurate with the partner's role and with their anticipated benefits.	The contributions increase the scope of the project and are commensurate with the partner's role with their anticipated benefits.	The contributions are suitable for the scope of the project and are somewhat commensurate with the partner's role and with their anticipated benefits.	The contributions are not suitable for the scope of the project or are not sufficiently commensurate with the partner's role and with their anticipated benefits.
Community Partners and Living Lab Host Community/ies				
2.4 There is a well-defined relationship, between the community partners and/or the Living Lab host community/ies that will host the Living Lab and at least one member of the research team	There is a clearly defined relationship with strong collaboration and tangible outcomes benefiting both parties.	A strong, long-term relationship (3-5 years) is evident, with regular collaboration and mutual benefits.	A moderate relationship (1-3 years) exists, with periodic collaboration but limited outcomes or engagement.	The relationship is developing , with minimal collaboration or interaction over less than one year.

2.5 There have been past and/or are ongoing partnership activities between the core research team and the community partners/Living Lab host community/ies.	There is clear evidence of significant past and ongoing partnership activities , including joint projects with measurable outcomes and sustained collaboration.	There is evidence of regular partnership activities , with ongoing or recent collaboration leading to meaningful engagement.	There is evidence of some partnership activities , but they are limited in scope, frequency, or impact.	There is minimal or no evidence of partnership activities, with sporadic or informal interactions between the research team and community.
2.6 The community partners' and Living Lab host community/ies' goals, needs, and priorities relate to the theme of electrification.	The Living Lab host's goals, needs, and priorities fully align with the electrification theme, demonstrating clear, direct, and tangible connections.	The host's goals, needs, and priorities show strong alignment with electrification, with several relevant and concrete connections.	The host's goals, needs, and priorities exhibit moderate alignment with electrification, with some relevant but less direct connections.	The host's goals, needs, and priorities display limited alignment with electrification, with only minor or vague connections.
2.7 The community/ies is/are open to including multiple and diverse stakeholders and partners	The host demonstrates exceptional openness , actively seeking and including diverse stakeholders and partners in all stages of the project.	The host shows strong openness , engaging multiple stakeholders and partners with a clear intention to foster diversity.	The host exhibits moderate openness , including some stakeholders and partners, but diversity efforts are limited.	The host shows minimal or no openness , with only a few stakeholders considered and limited diversity in representation.
2.8 [For Living Labs only] The Living Lab host is prepared to establish a Living Lab, including supporting the engagement of stakeholders and the development of infrastructure	The host demonstrates full preparedness , with clear plans, resources, and commitments to engage stakeholders and develop necessary infrastructure.	The host shows strong preparedness , with most plans and resources in place, and a clear strategy for stakeholder engagement and infrastructure.	The host exhibits moderate preparedness , with partial plans and some resources identified but lacking full clarity or commitment.	The host shows minimal or no preparedness , with limited plans, resources, or strategies for stakeholder engagement and infrastructure development.
Indigenous Knowledge and Respect (only if working with Indigenous community/ies)				
2.9 Research methodology for inclusion of Indigenous and traditional knowledge	The research project has a comprehensive strategy for the inclusion of Indigenous and traditional knowledge throughout the research process.	The research project has a clear strategy for the inclusion of Indigenous and traditional knowledge throughout the research process.	The research project has a strategy for the inclusion of Indigenous and traditional knowledge in some parts of the research process.	The research project does not have a strategy for the inclusion of indigenous and traditional knowledge in the research process.
2.10 Training and development of cultural context and historical understanding of Indigenous community/ies involved in the research project.	The proposal demonstrates a clearly defined and comprehensive plan for training the research team and students on the cultural contexts and history of the Indigenous community/ies involved in the project. This plan has been co-developed with of the Indigenous community partner(s).	The proposal demonstrates a clearly defined plan for training the research team and students on the cultural contexts and history of the Indigenous community/ies involved in the project. This plan involves the Indigenous community partner(s).	The proposal demonstrates a partially defined plan for training the research team and students on the cultural contexts and history of the Indigenous community/ies involved in the project. This plan somewhat involves the Indigenous community partner(s).	The proposal does not adequately establish a plan for training the research team and students on the cultural contexts and history of the Indigenous community/ies involved in the project.

COLLECTIVE GOVERNANCE	Exceptional (4.4 to 5.0)	Exceeds (3.7 to 4.3)	Meets (3.0 to 3.6)	Does not satisfy (<2.9)
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4.3 Clarity and appropriateness of the roles of the research team and partners in defining the research challenge, co-designing and implementing the research and using results to achieve the outcomes.	The proposed outcomes are highly relevant to the applicants' activities and the proposed contributions and roles strongly support the achievement of the intended outcomes.	The proposed outcomes are relevant to the applicants' activities and the proposed contributions and roles support the achievement of the intended outcomes.	The proposed outcomes are somewhat relevant to the applicants' activities and the proposed contributions and roles may lead to the achievement of the intended outcomes.	The outcomes are not sufficiently related to the applicants' activities, and it is not clearly established that the proposed contributions and roles will lead to the outcomes being achieved.
3.2 Clarity of applicants' roles and responsibilities in decision-making and implementing the research.	Each applicant plays an essential role in the research effort and demonstrates a high level of capacity to contribute to the decision-making and implementation of the research.	Each applicant plays a valuable role in the research effort and demonstrates the capacity required to contribute to the decision-making and implementation of the research.	Each applicant plays an active role in the research effort and demonstrates some level of capacity to contribute to the decision-making and implementation of the research.	Not all applicants play an active role in the research effort or demonstrate the capacity to contribute to the decision-making and implementation of the research.
3.3 Appropriateness of academic researcher's expertise, and that found with the partners, both for carrying out the planned research activities and in mentoring trainees.	The collective expertise of the participants is highly appropriate to successfully carry out the activities. The principal investigator has exceptional capabilities to manage the project, having successfully managed similar projects in the past or has clearly demonstrated the potential to do so.	The collective expertise of the participants is appropriate to carry out the activities. The principal investigator has the capabilities to manage the project, having managed similar projects in the past or has demonstrated the potential to do so.	The collective expertise of the participants is sufficient to carry out the activities. The principal investigator has largely demonstrated the capabilities to manage the project.	The application does not adequately demonstrate that the participants have the collective expertise needed to carry out the research and/or the capacity to manage the project.
3.4 Transparent and ethical management of project initiatives and goals; involvement of partners in project management.	The proposal demonstrates a comprehensive strategy to ensure that the research initiatives and goals are managed transparently and ethically. Partners play an essential role in the management and direction of the project.	The proposal demonstrates a clear strategy to ensure that the research initiatives and goals are managed transparently and ethically. Partners play a valuable role in the management and direction of the project.	The proposal demonstrates a suitable strategy to ensure that the research initiatives and goals are managed transparently and ethically. Partners play an active role in the management and direction of the project.	The proposal does not adequately demonstrate that the research initiatives and goals will be managed transparently and ethically. The role of partners in the management and direction of the project is not clear.

RESEARCH PLAN	Exceptional (4.4 to 5.0)	Exceeds (3.7 to 4.3)	Meets (3.0 to 3.6)	Does not satisfy (<2.9)
Purpose, Contribution, & Outcomes				

4.1 Clarity of the objectives and deliverables; appropriateness of the scope and size of planned activities to achieve the expected outcomes; justification for the planned expenditures.	The objectives and the deliverables are clear and comprehensive . The planned activities are highly likely to achieve the objectives and expected outcomes. The expenditures are clearly aligned with the activities and are justified .	The objectives and the deliverables are clearly defined . The planned activities are likely to achieve the objectives and expected outcomes. The expenditures are aligned with the activities and are justified .	The objectives and the deliverables are defined . The planned activities are somewhat likely to achieve the objectives and the expected outcomes. The expenditures are reasonably aligned with the activities and are justified.	The objectives and deliverables are not adequately defined or the planned activities are not appropriate to achieve the objectives and expected outcomes. The expenditures are not adequately aligned with the activities and/or are not adequately justified.
4.2 Originality of the research to address the topic and the potential for generating new scientific knowledge.	The proposal demonstrates that the topic will be addressed through exceptionally innovative research. The research has potential to contribute to a scientific breakthrough .	The proposal demonstrates that the topic will be addressed through highly original research. The research has potential for a significant advance in the field .	The proposal demonstrates that the topic will be addressed through original research . The research includes some concepts or directions that may lead to an advance in the field .	The proposal does not sufficiently demonstrate that the topic will be addressed through original research or is not well positioned within the state-of-the-art. It is not clear how the research will lead to new concepts or directions.
4.3 Extent to which the strategy to apply the research outcomes is likely to achieve the intended outcomes.	A comprehensive strategy indicates how the partners will translate the research results into application, such that the outcomes and impacts are very likely to happen.	A clearly defined strategy indicates how the partners will translate the research results into application, such that the outcomes and impacts are likely to happen.	A strategy may lead the partners to translating the research results into application, such that the outcomes and impacts may happen .	The strategy to translate the research results into application is not convincingly presented, such that the outcomes and impacts are unlikely to happen.
4.4 Extent and breath of the knowledge mobilization plan to contribute to public and institutional bodies of knowledge.	The proposal includes comprehensive knowledge mobilization activities targeted at highly diverse audiences, which make it very likely that the outcomes will contribute to the public and institutional bodies of knowledge.	The proposal includes a combination of knowledge mobilization activities targeted at diverse audiences, which make it likely that the outcomes will contribute to the public and institutional bodies of knowledge.	The proposal includes a variety of knowledge mobilization activities targeted at relevant audiences, which make it possible that the outcomes will contribute to the public and institutional bodies of knowledge.	The knowledge mobilization plan does not reach a diverse set of audiences and does not adequately demonstrate that the outcomes will contribute to public and institutional bodies of knowledge.
Work Packages & Methodology				
4.5 Appropriateness of the identified indicators and methods for monitoring progress during the project and for assessing outcomes after the project.	Indicators and methods are clearly defined and highly effective for monitoring progress and assessing outcomes.	Indicators and methods are well-defined and effective for monitoring progress and assessing outcomes.	Some indicators and methods for monitoring progress and assessing outcomes are proposed and appropriate .	Indicators and methods for monitoring progress and assessing outcomes are not adequately defined or are not appropriate.
4.6 Completeness of the data management plan throughout the data life cycle; appropriateness of the scope and inclusion of data sharing policies and ethical issues relating to partners.	An extensive data management plan is included in the proposal that addresses all stages of the data life cycle . The proposal includes strong data sharing policies and addresses all essential ethical issues relating to partners.	A clear data management plan is included in the proposal that addresses all stages of the data life cycle . The proposal includes well-defined data sharing policies and addresses most essential ethical issues relating to partners.	A suitable data management plan is included in the proposal that addresses some stages of the data life cycle . The proposal includes data sharing policies and addresses some essential ethical issues relating to partners.	The data management plan is not adequately defined. The proposal does not address necessary ethical issues and does not include data sharing policies.
EDI in Research Design				

4.7 Application of Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion principles and values in the research design.	The proposal demonstrates a clearly defined and comprehensive plan for the inclusion of EDI principles and values throughout the research process.	The proposal demonstrates a well-defined plan for the inclusion of EDI principles and values throughout the research process.	The proposal demonstrates a partial plan for the inclusion of EDI principles and values in some aspects of the research process.	The proposal does not adequately establish a plan to include EDI principles and values in the research process.
4.8 Integration of diverse perspectives and inclusive engagement with equity-deserving groups in shaping the research approach and outcomes.	The proposal includes a strong diversity of perspectives and demonstrates a comprehensive strategy for inclusive engagement with equity-deserving groups throughout the research process.	The proposal includes a clear diversity of perspectives and demonstrates a well-defined strategy for inclusive engagement with equity-deserving groups throughout the research process.	The proposal includes a moderate diversity of perspectives and demonstrates a partial strategy for inclusive engagement with equity-deserving groups in some aspects of the research process.	The proposal does not include a diversity of perspectives and does not adequately define a strategy for inclusive engagement with equity-deserving groups in the research process.
Sustainability & Resilience				
4.9 Impact of the five dimensions of sustainability.	The expected outcomes of this project have a high capacity to impact two or more of the five dimensions of sustainability.	The expected outcomes of this project have a strong capacity to impact two or more of the five dimensions of sustainability.	The expected outcomes of this project have the capacity to impact one or more of the five dimensions of sustainability.	The expected outcomes of this project do not demonstrate the capacity to have an impact on one or more of the five dimensions of sustainability.
4.10 Impact of the three dimensions of resilience.	The expected outcomes of this project have a high capacity to impact one or more of the three dimensions of resilience.	The expected outcomes of this project have a strong capacity to impact one or more of the three dimensions of resilience.	The expected outcomes of this project have the capacity to impact one or more of the three dimensions of resilience.	The expected outcomes of this project do not demonstrate the capacity to have an impact on one or more of the three dimensions of resilience.
Research Trainees				
7.1 Opportunities for enriched learning experiences for research trainees (students and postdoctoral fellows) to develop relevant research skills as well as professional skills such as leadership, communication, collaboration, and entrepreneurship.	Through an exemplary environment or cutting-edge approach , the project will provide an enriched training experience that leads to innovative and valuable skills appropriate to all levels of trainees.	Through a high-quality environment or approach , the project will provide a training experience that leads to valuable skills appropriate to all levels of trainees.	The project will provide a training experience that leads to relevant skills appropriate to all levels of trainees.	The proposal does not adequately establish that the project will provide an enriched experience for research trainees. The opportunity to develop relevant skills is not sufficiently described.