



Preparing and submitting an application to an NSERC grant competition requires a significant amount of planning, as many competition application procedures involve two parallel and independent processes: submitting the initial application to the UofA's Research Administrative Services (RAS's) [Researcher Home Page](#) for internal evaluation and approval, and submitting the final version to the NSERC's [Research Portal](#). As such, applicants must contend with multiple internal deadlines in addition to those set by the NSERC. To help you navigate this submission process, we have prepared the following step-by-step guide.

Please note that this guide is a general overview of the submission process and that specific competitions may have slightly differing submission requirements.

### **Letter of Intent/Notification of Intent Stage**

Certain competitions, like the CREATE and Discovery grants, require you to submit a letter of intent (LOI) or notification of intent (NOI) before your full application. This LOI/NOI outlines the project for which you are requesting funding and the team of researchers who will be involved. If your project proposal is successful, the NSERC will then invite you to submit a full application.

For certain competitions, like the CREATE Grants, you must submit your LOI/NOI to RAS for internal evaluation and approval via the [Researcher Home Page](#) before sending it to the NSERC. For others, like the Discovery Grants, you may submit your LOI/NOI directly to the NSERC via their [Research Portal](#). Please refer to a competition's dedicated page or contact its assigned [Research Partner](#) for more information on its specific LOI/NOI submission deadlines and requirements, as well as for more information on preparing an LOI/NOI.

### **Full Application Stage**

Full applications to any NSERC grant competition must be sent to RAS for internal evaluation and approval via the [Researcher Home Page](#) before being submitted to the NSERC. When preparing and submitting your full application, follow these steps:

1. Prepare your application on the NSERC [Research Portal](#), but **do not click 'submit.'** This allows you to continue to work on the scientific content while your application goes through internal RAS approvals.

2. On your [Researcher Home Page](#), create a new proposal request. Ensure that your budget and scope will not change at this stage (minor text edits that do not change the budget are acceptable). Instructions for creating a proposal request can be found [here](#).
3. Download a **single** PDF copy of your complete application from the NSERC research portal and attach it to the proposal request as a single PDF attachment. Ensure that this PDF file includes **all** required forms, documents, and attachments. Do not attach multiple partially completed working documents for internal approval, as this may result in a send-back by RAS, resulting in delays.
4. Submit your proposal request through your Researcher Home Page for faculty approval. Once your faculty approves your application, it will then be sent to RAS for institutional review and approval. Note that the RAS internal deadlines refer to the date and time by which your application must be **received** by RAS, not by which it should be submitted.
5. Once RAS has reviewed your application, they will send you an emailed application review report notifying you of their decision and any required fixes/alterations.
6. Once you receive RAS approval, ensure that all attachments are correctly formatted and uploaded on the NSERC Research Portal and submit your final application by the **final version submission deadline**, typically by 10:00 am MST on the day of the NSERC deadline. This internal deadline gives RAS enough time to forward all UofA applications to the NSERC before the final competition deadline. Once you submit your application, its Research Portal status will change to “Received by Administrator.”
7. Once all UofA applications have been submitted for a specific competition, RAS will forward them to the NSERC. At that point, your application’s Research Portal status will change again to “Received by Agency.”

For more information on application deadlines and requirements for a specific competition, please refer to its dedicated page or contact its assigned [Research Partner](#).