



## 2008-2009 Request for Position Papers (RFPP)

---

### Position Papers in Strategic Research Areas

#### *Looking to the Future*

---

### Background

Two years ago Genome Canada launched the first Request for Position Papers, as part of its fund raising activity, and invited the scientific community to join with other stakeholders to identify Strategic Research Themes through an initial submission of Expressions of Interest (EOIs) and the writing of position papers. The involved communities then selected leaders who agreed to manage the process leading to the submission of completed position papers in the summer. The position papers were subject to an international peer review and so far, four of them have been recommended to the Board of Genome Canada for inclusion in Genome Canada's strategic research portfolio and budget submission to Industry Canada. In 2007-08 the papers recommended to be carried forward were in the theme areas of Agriculture – Plants, "*Crop genomics for a healthy Canada*" and, Bioproducts, "*Securing Canada's future bio-based economy through genomics*". In 2008-09 the papers recommended to be carried forward were in the theme areas of Agriculture – Animals, "*Aquatic and Terrestrial Animal Genomics*" and, Children's Health, "*Child Health Genomics: An Investment in Canada's Future*".

The Board of Genome Canada has agreed that a third round of this process should be initiated with the objective of defining the strategic research themes to be included in its budget submission for 2009-2010.

### Position Paper Process 2008-2009

The first step in the process will again be the submission of an Expression of Interest (EOI) by a proposed theme leader who is willing to drive the process and be responsible for delivering the position paper. It should be noted that leaders of a position paper will have to spend a significant portion of their time over a six-month period championing their proposed research theme and bringing together researchers to coordinate the writing of the position paper. Only those EOIs that clearly define a strategic research theme capable of being developed as a future funding competition, rather than a research project, will be considered as candidates for position papers. Those position

papers that were developed in 2007-2008 (see table below) will remain in the process for consideration in 2008-2009, unless Genome Canada is informed to the contrary. It is allowable for position paper leaders to step down and for another leader to be appointed.

Because submitted position papers are not published (with the exception of those that are recommended for inclusion in Genome Canada's budget submission), there is likely to be some overlap between the current themes in the pipeline and new themes proposed through the EOIs. On January 15, 2009 a Consolidation Meeting will be held in Ottawa which will include representation from each of the interested current themes and EOIs as well as from the Genome Centres to address any overlap issues and help the scientific community to reach a consensus about which themes should move forward into the development phase.

By the end of January 2009, the analysis of all EOIs should be completed and agreement reached on which strategic research themes will be developed into position papers. **No more than 10 position papers in total will be taken forward.**

A position paper is expected to be a brief, non-technical paper defining the importance of the problem(s) to be tackled, and how genomics/proteomics tools can be brought to bear to provide solutions. It must describe the current state of the science in Canada and internationally, the infrastructure and human resources capacity available in Canada, the estimated total funding required over four years and the expected socio-economic outputs, outcomes and impacts on the sector or discipline covered by the strategic research theme.

In the summer of 2009, completed position papers will be reviewed and prioritized by an International Review Committee for recommendations on which position papers should be included in the *Genome Canada Strategic Research Investment Portfolio*, a detailed investment proposal intended for submission to the federal government in the fall of 2009.

Successful position papers will provide the foundation for subsequent Requests for Applications (RFAs) in competitions for project funding.

It should be understood that researchers involved in the Position Paper Process will not be accorded any advantage over other applicants in future competitions resulting from the position papers.

## Scope

EOIs must describe strategic research themes that are national in scope, that focus on Canadian science & technology strengths, that address problems of major importance, and that will lead to socio-economic outputs, outcomes and impacts on the sector or discipline covered by the theme. They must describe how the application of genomics,

or allied ‘omics,’ research to an identified “big biological problem” is likely to provide a solution that could be translated into applications that will benefit Canadians (health, wealth and wellbeing) in the near to medium term. Themes in the areas of ethical, environmental, economic, legal and social impacts of genomics (GE<sup>3</sup>LS) research will be welcome.

Researchers are invited to propose new Strategic Research Themes in all areas of the life sciences, but note that since Genome Canada’s *Strategic Research Investment Portfolios* for 2007-08 and 2008-09 include position papers in the areas of agriculture – plants, agriculture-animals, bioproducts, and children’s health, additional Expressions of Interest (EOIs) in these areas will not be considered in this round.

### Position Papers Developed in 2007-2008

Four Position Papers from the past two rounds were recommended to be carried forward in the theme areas of:

- Agriculture – Plants, “*Crop genomics for a healthy Canada*”
- Bioproducts, “*Securing Canada’s future bio-based economy through genomics*”
- Agriculture – Animals, “*Aquatic and Terrestrial Animal Genomics*”
- Children’s Health, “*Child Health Genomics: An Investment in Canada’s Future*”

The following five position papers developed in the last cycle will automatically go forward for review:

Theme	Title of Position Paper
Ecosystem Health	Ecosystem Health and Wealth
GE <sup>3</sup> LS	Models, Methods and Metrics for Governance of Genomics Innovation in Canada
Infection, Inflammation, and Immunity	Securing and Improving the Health of Canadians through Advanced Genomic Studies of Infection and Inflammation
Personalized Health Genomics	Cardiometabolic Health Genomics: Personalized Strategies for Optimized Care and Public Health
Protein Interaction Networks	Protein Interaction Networks in Cancer and Neurological Diseases

The leaders of these position papers may choose to revise the position paper, step down as leaders or they may choose to withdraw the position paper. Funding will be made available for those who wish to revise their paper. Leaders who wish to restart the entire consultation process, including a national workshop, must advise Genome Canada by February 2, 2009.

## **Resources Available**

It is envisaged that no more than 10 Strategic Research Themes (including those from 2007-2008) that have elected to remain in the process will move to the next stage of the Position Paper Process at one time. By the end of January 2009, consideration of all EOIs should be completed and the EOI authors informed of which strategic research themes will go forward. More details about EOIs are available in the *Guidelines and Evaluation Criteria for Position Papers* available on the web site.

Genome Canada will not provide additional help in the process other than clarification of the guidelines and other administrative matters, since it will manage the peer review of the final position papers. The Genome Centres, however, are able to provide valuable advice as well as administrative support for the selected themes.

For each approved strategic research theme, funding will be made available from Genome Canada to support the process of developing each position paper. A maximum of \$15,000 for each position paper will be made available through the lead Genome Centre to be used at the discretion of the chosen theme leaders towards any direct costs related to the position paper process, with the exception of salary costs for the theme leaders. Examples of eligible costs include:

- Teleconferences
- Literature search
- Administrative support and supplies
- A writers' meeting (where there is more than one author)
- Market studies

In addition, Genome Canada will coordinate and fund a national workshop for each strategic research theme. These thematic workshops will be scheduled in close sequence and at the same location in Ottawa to assist those who may be participating in more than one workshop as well as to minimize costs. More information about the thematic workshops will be made available at a later date, but it is currently expected that these will occur towards the end of April 2009.

## **Who Can Submit?**

Genome Canada will accept EOIs from researchers from all Canadian academic institutions, government laboratories, companies, and research institutes. Scientists who may be taking up substantive positions in Canada in the near future are encouraged to consider participation in the process, but should contact Genome Canada in the first instance.

## Timeline

November 5, 2008	Release of RFPP and Guidelines
November 17 – December 15, 2008	Submission of Expressions of Interest (EOIs)
January 15, 2009	Consolidation meeting in Ottawa
End January, 2009	Decisions on new Strategic Research Themes
February 2, 2009	Deadline for 2007-08 theme leaders to request workshop
March, 19, 2009	Information Session in Ottawa
Late April, 2009	Workshops in Ottawa
June 1, 2009	Deadline for submission of Position Papers
September 3, 2009	International Review Panel meeting (Toronto)
September 24, 2009	To Board of Directors for decisions

Genome Canada may adjust the process for the identification of strategic research themes where warranted by the volume of proposals or other relevant factors. Any adjustment will be rapidly communicated through Genome Canada's website and through the Genome Centres.

## Process

### **Expression of Interest (EOI)**

Genome Canada will accept EOIs between November 17 and December 15, 2008. Each EOI must be presented on the form available at <http://positionpapers.genomecanada.ca/en/>. See the *Guidelines and Evaluation Criteria for Position Papers* available on the web site for details of how to submit an EOI.

All EOIs that satisfy the eligibility criteria will be made available to the scientific community through posting on Genome Canada's website. The web site will be an interactive vehicle for the dissemination of information to all interested individuals.

### **The Position Paper Process**

**Fact Finding:** Theme leaders should begin the process by identifying other researchers working on the proposed strategic research theme in related sectors or disciplines to ensure that the position paper will be informed by the most appropriate experts. Other research, such as literature searches or market analyses, may also be required.

**Consultation:** It is expected that theme leaders will choose to hold a national workshop and bring together interested stakeholders to elucidate the goals of the position paper and to build consensus on the actions that should be undertaken to meet these goals. Specific guidelines for the conduct of national workshops will be made available at a later date. Leaders of position papers from 2007-2008 will be able to choose whether or not to hold another national workshop.

Writing: The position paper should cover the same material as presented in the EOI, but in more explicit detail with necessary citations and include the estimated total budget over a four-year period. Papers must be submitted in English. For details on the content and format of position papers see the *Guidelines and Evaluation Criteria for Position Papers* available on the web site.

Submission: The deadline date for submission of position papers is June 1, 2009. The prioritization process will be completed by September 2009. Acceptance of the position paper by Genome Canada should not be construed as a guarantee of inclusion in Genome Canada's *Strategic Research Investment Portfolio* which will be presented to the federal government for future funding.

## **For More Information**

Consult the *Guidelines and Evaluation Criteria* for details on the process; available at <http://positionpapers.genomecanada.ca/en/>

Queries about the scope of EOIs and Strategic Research Themes should be directed to:

Dr. Michael J. Morgan  
Chief Scientific Officer  
Genome Canada  
150 Metcalfe Street, Suite 2100  
Ottawa (ON) K2P 1P1  
Tel: (613) 796-1230  
[mmorgan@genomecanada.ca](mailto:mmorgan@genomecanada.ca)