

# Advancing Community-Driven Research: Introducing the CRAF Community Research Fund

The Canadian Rheumatology Association Foundation (CRAF) is pleased to introduce the CRAF Community Research Fund, a new initiative designed to empower community-based rheumatologists to lead innovative research that enhances patient care and advances the field of rheumatology.

This new program provides community rheumatologists with a streamlined pathway to manage research funding obtained from an industry partner. The CRAF will oversee and administer the funding at a lower administrative cost than usual institutional rates, maximizing the research budget by minimizing overhead, so more funding goes directly to research efforts.

This program recognizes that meaningful research does not occur only in large academic centres. Across the country, community rheumatologists are identifying trends, challenges, and opportunities in real time, particularly those that directly affect access, quality of care, and patient outcomes. The Community Research Fund provides practical support to turn these insights into action.

Eligible projects must align with CRAF's mission to improve patient care and advance scientific knowledge in rheumatology. Proposals should include clear and measurable outcomes and be led by a CRA member serving as Principal Investigator or site lead.

The administrative structure includes a 15% fee, with an additional incentive for CRA members who champion matched-giving initiatives such as Rally for Rheumatology. Those members will be eligible to have 3% of their administrative fee reinvested in the same project or a future research initiative, further strengthening community-driven innovation.

By reducing barriers and supporting community leadership, the CRAF Community Research Fund encourages more rheumatologists to participate in research, more ideas to reach the implementation stage, and more discoveries to benefit patients.

This initiative reflects CRAF's commitment to supporting excellence in rheumatology education while ensuring that promising ideas, wherever they originate, can help shape the future of care in Canada.



CRA members interested in applying can complete the online submission form and are invited to contact Virginia Hopkins ([vhopkins@rheum.ca](mailto:vhopkins@rheum.ca)) with questions or for support.



Visit the website page to learn more and apply today.

<https://crafoundation.ca/researchers/community-research-fund/>