# Evaluation Criteria

**Funding Program:** Academic Start-Up Fund

**Fiscal Year:** 2026-2027

**Program Goal:** Attract and retain high-caliber, early-career researchers or researchers new to their role and accelerate the initiation of their research program that will contribute to advancing knowledge and research impact in a priority sector.

## Criteria

The application will be assessed based on the following criteria:

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| Relevance & Alignment | To what extent does the proposal align with the funding program?<br><br>To what extent is the proposal relevant within the priority and/or enabling sector? |
| Impact & Outcomes | To what extent does the proposal clearly articulate intended outcomes and measures for success?<br><br>To what extent does the proposal engage research users?<br><br>To what extent will the proposal's expected outcomes demonstrate an impact in New Brunswick? |
| Sustainability | To what extent does the proposal demonstrate that outcomes, including partner engagement, are likely to be sustained beyond the duration of the award?<br><br>To what extent does the proposal demonstrate consideration of funding sustainability beyond the duration of the award? Specifically, how their research activities and planning can lead to sustainable research program. |
| Knowledge mobilization | To what extent does the proposal outline activities to mobilize project findings inside and outside of the research setting?<br><br>To what extent does the proposal outline activities during the award period that can be understood to be key to the initiation or acceleration of a research program? |
| Capacity & Feasibility | To what extent does the researcher provide evidence of relevant skills, experience, and resources to successfully deliver the project? |

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| | To what extent does the proposal demonstrate a realistic and achievable delivery plan, considering timelines, resources, and key risks?<br><br>To what extent is the proposed budget appropriate, proportionate, and justified by the scope and scale of activities within the duration of the award?<br><br>To what extent has the hiring institution offered demonstrable support for the role? |

## Evaluation Matrix

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| 1 | **Does not satisfy the criterion** |
| 2 | **Partially satisfies the criterion** |
| 3 | **Satisfies the criterion** |
| 4 | **Strongly satisfies the criterion** |
| 5 | **Exceeds the criterion** |

## Review & Scoring Processes

This funding program uses an expert-level review. Expert-level reviewers are external subject-matter experts who hold at least a Master's-level degree or higher in their respective field.

Criteria will be scored using the above scoring rubric. Each reviewer's scores are averaged across the evaluation criteria. Averaged scores will then be converted to T-scores. The final score for each application is the average T-score across all reviewers, which is then used to rank applications. T-Scores will be ranked in order from highest to lowest.