CICE
B.C. CENTRE FOR INNOVATION & CLEAN ENERGY

University of Victoria
UBC
SFU SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
UBC OKANAGAN
BCIT
UNBC

CICE 2025 University Call for Innovation

March 26, 2025

B.C. Centre for Innovation and Clean Energy (CICE)
and B.C. research-led universities

info@cice.ca

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Introduction

To grow our economy and create jobs, we need to fast-track solutions to the toughest decarbonization challenges—innovations that can scale up, be widely adopted, and exported globally. That's exactly what the British Columbia Centre for Innovation and Clean Energy (CICE) exists to do.

CICE is an independent, not-for-profit corporation that funds the development, commercialization, and scaling of made-in-B.C. climate and clean energy solutions – from Canada to the world. We unite B.C. innovators, leading corporations, governments, investors, academia, communities, not-for-profits, and Indigenous partners to advance economic prosperity, competitiveness, and sustainability through innovation. Since launching in October 2021, CICE has become a proven catalyst for early-stage investment and the scale-up of B.C.'s leading climate technologies. We've invested $38 million into 59 projects valued at over $194 million, helping local innovators build a more sustainable, prosperous future.

This application guide describes the CICE 2025 University Call for Innovation. It outlines the objectives and constraints of the university call, as well as application and evaluation processes. This document is intended to provide all university partners and entrepreneurial venture applicants an understanding of the general process and is not binding in any way.

The 2025 University Call for Innovation opportunity

Entrepreneurship programs (EPs) at the following universities have enabled the foundation of a strong entrepreneurship ecosystem in B.C.:

- **University of British Columbia**
- **University of British Columbia Okanagan**
- **Simon Fraser University**
- **University of Victoria**
- **University of Northern British Columbia**
- **British Columbia Institute of Technology**

EPs have helped launch several B.C.-based ventures by providing the necessary resources and support to scale student innovation towards commercial success. However, the pathway after graduating from an EP can be challenging. Entrepreneurs and ventures often lose momentum due to a lack of funding at a critical stage of an innovator's career.

The pathway from research, concept, validation, and establishing a venture with a commercial strategy is complex and uncertain. The uncertainty can persist due to a lack of funding for venture development that is necessary to maintain momentum for early-stage concepts on a path to commercial viability.

CICE is proud to continue its new partnerships to accelerate venture development and commercialization of climate solutions from B.C. universities by introducing a pathway to early-stage funding. CICE will lead a university call to accomplish these efforts in collaboration with B.C. universities and their respective EPs. **The entrepreneurship programs that will be participating in the CICE 2025**

University Call for Innovation include: entrepreneurship@UBC-V (UBC), entrepreneurship@UBC-O (UBCO), UVIC Coast Capital Innovation Centre (UVIC), SFU VentureLabs (SFU), BCIT Entrepreneurship Program (BCIT), and UNBC's Innovation Program (UNBC).

CICE funding

Through this university call, CICE will consider awarding non-dilutive investments to university nominated ventures. Investments will be disbursed as advanced funding and ventures are expected to detail the planned use of proceeds for such funding. **The amount of up-front funding will be $75,000 to $100,000 per venture.**

2025 UNIVERSITY CALL FOR INNOVATION REQUIREMENTS

The university call will consist of EPs from the respective B.C. universities nominating their top climate technologies or innovations, with a priority given to those that align with CICE's core focus areas for decarbonization:

LOW CARBON HYDROGEN

LOW CARBON FUELS

BATTERY & ENERGY STORAGE

CARBON MANAGEMENT

The companies will need to show a direct relationship to GHG emissions abatement from their technologies. The technology must lead to the direct removal or replacement of GHG emissions from fossil fuels with a priority on carbon dioxide (CO_2) emissions. Technologies that enable the direct abatement of GHG emissions will also be considered in this call for innovation.

How the application process works

Each university EP will have a designated application intake lead that will collect and submit all expressions of interest (EOIs). Eligibility for each nomination to the university call will depend on the requirements of each university EP. **CICE requires that all nominations align with a technology readiness ("TRL") of 4-9 and that all ventures are B.C.-incorporated companies.**

B.C. university entrepreneurial program contacts for the CICE 2025 University Call for Innovation application intake process

entrepreneurship@UBC Vancouver	Sean Lumb	Associate Director	sean.lumb@ubc.ca
UVIC Coast Capital Innovation Centre	Jerome Etwaroo	Director	icead@uvic.ca
entrepreneurship@UBC Okanagan	Kayla Cartlidge	Program Manager	kayla.cartlidge@ubc.ca
SFU VentureLabs	Todd Farrell	Program Director	todd@venturelabs.ca

UNBC Entrepreneurship Program	Mark Barnes	Support	mark.barnes@unbc.ca
BCIT Entrepreneurship Program	Vidya Vankayala	Director	vidya_vankayala@bcit.ca

EOIs will be submitted to CICE through an invitation link for each of the university EPs. **This link will be active during the application intake phase: March 26, 2025 (9am PT) – May 7, 2025 (5pm PT).**

How CICE evaluates applications

CICE will evaluate and prioritize venture nominations that:

- Align with CICE's focus on direct GHG abatement as described above,
- Are B.C.-based companies, and
- Are applying with technology and/or innovations that are at a technology readiness level ("TRL") of 4-9.

Evaluations will be conducted and supported by CICE and CICE due diligence partners. **CICE will follow up directly with all nominated ventures if further information is required for due diligence.**

CICE will conclude evaluations with a shortlist selected from the venture nominations. **All ventures will be informed whether or not they will advance to the next due diligence round by May 22nd, 2025.**

The shortlisted candidates will be invited to a final review to present their technology and/or innovation to the CICE Review Panel who may also conduct a technical and team site visit. Upon final review, those selected from the shortlisted candidates will be eligible to receive CICE's up-front funding of $75,000 to $100,000 per venture. **Funding decisions will be made in August 2025, with the expectation that funding agreements will be signed by September 2025.**

Important note to all potential venture applicants

The application process will not accept any direct applications to CICE without an EP nomination. CICE will not fund any research or ventures that are pre-incorporation.

How can funds be used?

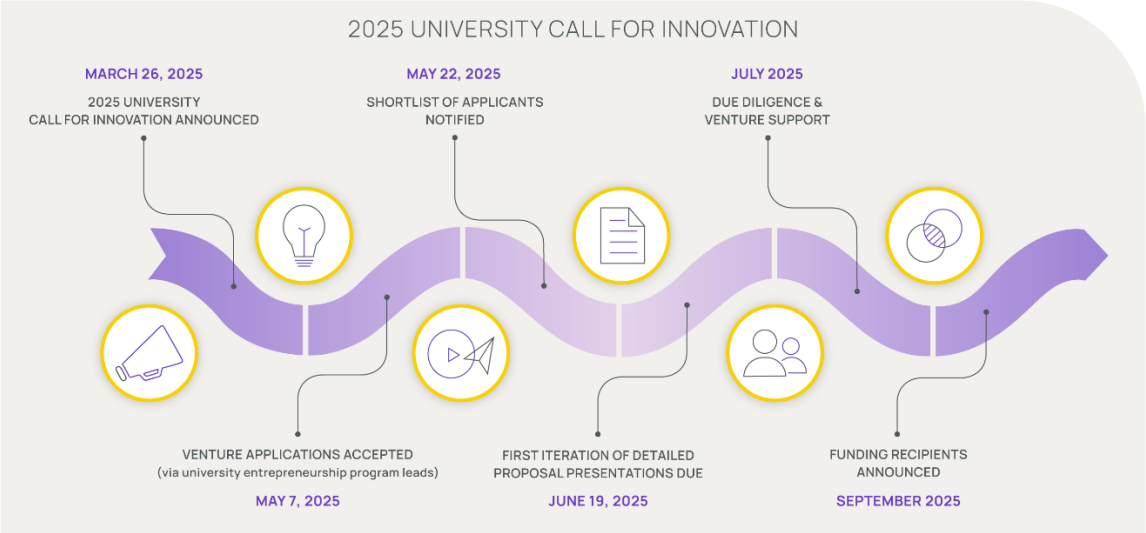
CICE funding for the university call is considered flexible funding and will be eligible to those EP nominated ventures that are selected. This up-front, non-dilutive funding will cover all start-up costs that include, but are not limited to:

- Establishment of venture
- Nominal salaries
- Workplan development
- Corporate development and fundraising

- Operating and capital expenses
- Legal and IP related costs

Use of proceeds for the funding requested will be outlined as part of the written application. The use of proceeds will help guide CICE funding decisions. As part of the conclusion of the program, **CICE will require that the funded venture provide a full commercialization plan as a milestone to complete the obligation to receive funding.**

Application process



STAGE 1: EP NOMINATION & EXPRESSION OF INTEREST APPLICATION

The expression of interest application will include a written and video component to the application process. The written component will include a short summary of the company that will highlight the description of the technology and/or innovation, the climate effect, the business opportunity, a company overview, and a use of proceeds for the funding. All applications are submitted in the same format.

Accompanying the written application will be a **video submission with a maximum length of 5 minutes**. The venture can use the video in any way they wish if it is relevant to the application. Ventures are encouraged to use this portion of the application to display qualitative advantages including but not limited to showcasing the team, showing the technology at work, or building on a written component of the application.

Video quality and production elements will not be evaluated or prioritized in the decision process. We encourage participants to refer to the evaluation criteria as guidance in preparing for submission.

The EOI application will be reviewed and assessed by CICE's internal review committee. Results from the review committee will be shared directly with ventures and a shortlist of candidates will move to the next stage of due diligence.

STAGE 2: DUE DILIGENCE

Once shortlisted ventures are informed of moving forward with their application, all applicants are subject to detailed due diligence. **All ventures will be required to sign a Confidentiality Agreement upon submitting any materials to CICE.**

Stage 2 will include the presentation portion of the application. In addition to the presentation, companies will be requested to provide audited and interim financial statements. Detailed due diligence will include a technical review of the technology or business model, a financial review of the venture including audited and interim financial statements, and a legal review of the venture. Reviews will be conducted by both external partners and the internal due diligence team at CICE.

Ventures shortlisted will be required to present the presentation in Stage 2 to a review committee which will include time for a presentation and a question and answer period after the presentation. Additional due diligence will be conducted and CICE may request a physical tour to see the technology or innovation proposed in the application. Upon full evaluation of the ventures, CICE will conclude stage 2 by communicating with shortlisted ventures on whether their application has moved to stage 3.

STAGE 3: DECISION TO FUND COMMUNICATED

Successful ventures will work with CICE to finalize any outstanding due diligence in order to move towards a **Project Funding Agreement which will identify obligations of all parties and will become a binding agreement governing the relationship between CICE and the venture**. The Project Funding Agreements will also include key milestones that will be required through the term of the agreement to facilitate the advance of funds. All ventures will be required to submit a commercialization plan to CICE as a completion milestone to meet all the terms of the Project Funding Agreement. Included alongside the commercialization plan will be the actual use of proceeds from the $75,000 to $100,000 funded by CICE. All claims of use of proceeds may be subject to an audit at any time during the term of the Contribution Agreement.

Proposal evaluation criteria

CICE will lead the intake, review, and evaluation. Ventures will be evaluated by CICE staff and subject matter experts. The following lists the seven major decision criteria which will be applied to proposals:

1. **Strategic alignment**
    - The venture shows potential for commercialization of the technology or innovation.
    - The venture has a plan for business development and commercialization and has a strong understanding of the cost requirements to get to the commercialization plan stage.
    - The technology or innovation leads to significant GHG abatement.
2. **Team strength**

- The management team has the academic, financial, and/or operational skills required for venture development.
- The management team can identify where they will need to grow and how they plan to adapt their team to meet commercialization needs.

3. **Technology viability**

    - The overall plan for technology development is realistic.
    - Barriers have been identified and plans to overcome barriers are clear and have measurable targets.
    - Regulatory, permitting, and IP ownership issues are addressed to enable technology implementation.

4. **Regulatory compliance**

    - The overall proposal is feasible within the existing regulatory frameworks in the venture's planned operating jurisdiction.

5. **Social impact**

    - Overall environmental, social, and governance impact benefits are shown, including impact on Indigenous communities and enhancement of diversity, equity, and inclusion.

About CICE

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