

Equine Guelph Research Competition Announcement: Fall 2026

This is the annual announcement of the Equine Guelph Research Competition, for one or two year projects beginning in 2027. Proposal submission is in two stages with a Letter of Intent (LOI) and a Full-Proposal stage.

The following deadlines will apply for this year's competition:

- Friday, October 9th: LOI due
- Monday, November 9th: Full proposal due
- Mid-December: Announcement of competition results, save for any funding withheld for the OMAFA competition.

These deadlines have been chosen for the following reasons; 1) announcing the results in December will allow faculty to leverage the funds through summer student and graduate student stipends 2) faculty will be able to submit and have AUPs approved before the Spring semester

The LOI is to facilitate peer-reviewer recruitment and solicit industry support letters for any Grayson Jockey Club grants. Note: **only faculty who submit a LOI are eligible for submitting a full proposal to the EG competition.**

Information on the EG research Committee assessment criteria and peer-reviewer rubric are included below in the Appendix.

Funding Partners:

Ontario Racing Industry:

- Horse Improvement Program (through Ontario Racing)
- Horsemen's Benevolent Protective Association (HBPA)
- EP Taylor Endowment Fund

Estate of Donna Moore Research Fund:

- Research projects focusing on health and welfare that may not be rated highly from the "racing industry priorities scale" will be considered if the focus is on "welfare", including nutrition, genetics, behaviour/training and other related equine welfare issues.

NEW FOR 2026: Please indicate in your LOI and Full Proposal whether you are applying for funding for either: the Ontario Racing Industry, OR the Estate of Donna Moore Research Fund. This can be done within the body of your email submission.

Stage 1: Letter of Intent (LOI). Deadline – Friday, October 9, 2026 (11.59 pm).

- Submit the following information to email address: **houlahan@uoguelph.ca**
 - Scientific Abstract, see below for detailed format
 - Lay Abstract
 - Minimum 3 suitable content specialist peer-reviewers with their full name, affiliations, address, phone number and email address. An external peer reviewer is defined as an expert in the field relevant to the proposal that is not at the University of Guelph, nor has been an academic supervisor, recent student, or recent collaborator of the primary investigators on the proposal.
 - If justified, list of peer-reviewers NOT to contact with justification
- Detailed Scientific Abstract guidelines (Max. 3500 characters including spaces)
 1. Title
 2. Rationale: description of the problem and the need for the research being proposed.
 3. Hypothesis/Objectives
 4. Experimental Design and Methods
 5. Preliminary Data
 6. Expected Results
 7. Potential Impact for Equine Health
- Format document as follows:
 - 2 cm margins
 - Legible font, size 12 preferred
 - Submit as **PDF file**

Stage 2: Full Proposal. Deadline – Monday, November 9, 2026 (11.59 pm).

- Submit the following information to email address: **houlahan@uoguelph.ca**
 - *One merged PDF file of the following documents:*
 1. Complete proposal PDF including budget with attachment of negotiated costs of facilities (HSC, RSS) where appropriate, and project milestones
 2. Curriculum Vitae (CV) and funding support of all PI and Co-Investigators see below for details.

Documents relevant to ethical review (AUP or IACUC documents) can be pending at the time of Full Proposal submission but will need approval before funds are released to successful applicants.

NOTE: A total of approximately \$400,000 is available for this competition, and to support OMAFA Tier I applications. Cash support of successful OMAFA grant will be subtracted from the available funds and the remaining funds will be allocated according to the ranking within the EG competition. **Please indicate in your email submission if you also intend on submitting an OMAFA proposal, and if so, please include your OMAFA proposal's budget.**

Schedule of Dates: Fall 2026 competition

<u>Date</u>	<u>Item</u>
September 19th, 2026	Call for Equine Research Proposals
October 9th, 2026	LOI deadline. PDF submission to houlahan@uoguelph.ca
November 9th, 2026	Full proposal. PDF submission to houlahan@uoguelph.ca
December 2026	Announcement of results

CV and funding support detailed guidelines

- **CV** (two-page limit per individual): For each principal investigator and co-investigator, provide the following information:
 1. Name
 2. Position/role on this project
 3. Current position (title, name, and address of institution)
 4. Education/training (degrees, institution, year of graduation, field of study)
 5. Previous positions and honors (include membership on any advisory committees)
 6. Selected peer-reviewed publications (include titles, all authors, and complete reference)
- **Current and pending support** (no page limit): Other financial support for principal investigator and co-investigators. Please include all financial support (e.g., federal, nonfederal, commercial, institutional) currently available in support of the investigator's research program. Overlap, whether scientific, budgetary or commitment of an individual's effort greater than 100 percent, is not permitted. Current and Pending Support format:
 1. Project Number: If applicable, include a code, grant ID or other identifier for the project.
 2. Source: Identify the agency, institution, foundation or other organization providing support.
 3. Title
 4. Summary: Provide a brief statement of the overall objectives of the project, subproject or subcontract.
 5. Annual Costs: In the case of an active project, provide the current year's budget. For a pending project, provide the proposed budget for the entire project.
 6. Overlap: Summarize any potential overlap with the proposed project regarding the science, budget or committed effort.

EG Research Committee Terms of Reference sections relevant to the review and funding process of new proposals. These are what the EG Research Committee will look at:

5.3.7

Review Meeting of whole Committee to review new Proposals, Final and Annual Reports and make recommendations. This is a meeting of the whole Committee including Resource and Temporary members. The review processes are as follows:

- Final Reports are evaluated for completeness, and whether the outcomes stated in the Proposal have been met. All Voting members vote, with a majority necessary for approval.
- Annual Reports are evaluated on the achievement of milestones stated in the Proposal. All Voting members vote, with a majority necessary for approval. Approved Reports receive funding for the next year.
- Research Proposals are evaluated by the Voting members. There are three criteria for assessing each Proposal:
 - (1) its relevance to the priorities identified by each industry and OMAFRA, or to the current state of the equine industry,
 - (2) the quality of the science as evaluated by the external peer reviewers, and
 - (3) that the researcher and research team have appropriate qualifications, expertise to conduct the research, and have been productive under prior funding, as documented in a resume submitted with the Proposal.

All Voting members score all Proposals on these criteria and a ranking is generated from the combined scores. Recommendations for funding are made based on the ranking of each Proposal and its relevance to each Funding Agency's interests and priorities. There is no voting in this procedure.

The final recommendation for funding by any given Funding Agency is at the discretion of the representatives of that Agency.

A preliminary budget of the distribution of funding among continuing projects and successful Proposals is determined during the course of the meeting, and checked after the meeting.

5.3.8.

Approval of recommendations by Funding Agencies. Within 1 week of the meeting, the preliminary budget for the distribution of funding is communicated to the Industry co-Chair, Voting and Administrative resource members. This is the responsibility of University co-chair, assisted by staff of the Administrative resource member. The Voting members have the responsibility of taking the preliminary budget to their

respective Agencies for approval. Approval of the Funding Agencies is reported back to the University co-Chair, who initiates the process for transfer and releasing funds.

Funding Agencies may reject the recommendations for funding specific projects. In this case the amounts recommended for allocation are not included in the research budget of Equine Guelph, and are not transferred to Equine Guelph or to the relevant project

Equine Guelph Research Committee

Research Proposal Rubric - Estate of Donna Moore Research Fund

The following rubric is intended to assist members of the Equine Guelph Research Committee in assigning a score to a submitted research proposal. The decision on a final score is entirely at the discretion of the Committee Member; however, we encourage Committee Members to consider the following proposal elements when deriving their final score and to utilize the full scoring range.

Project Title:
Primary Investigator:

1. Novelty/Potential Impact, and Methodology

0-1	2-3	4-5	SCORE:	0.0
Project has minimal or tangential connection to equine welfare or education.	Proposal includes a moderate focus on equine welfare or education.	Proposal's central focus is clearly on advancing equine welfare or education; outcomes suggest a clear, direct impact.	Comments: Enter your comments here	

2. Scientific Merit, Purpose and Methodology: (Consider comments from Peer-Reviewers)

0-1	2-3	4-5	SCORE:	0.0
There are serious concerns with the project's purpose , or contribution to the scientific body of work. Significant revision is necessary before a future resubmission.	There are minor concerns with the project's purpose , and/or its contribution to the scientific body of work. Researcher should address these concerns prior to receipt of any funding or consider submitting this again in the future with revisions.	Proposal clearly describes the purpose of the study. Research topic is novel, and/or would contribute to or build the scientific overall body of work in support of equine welfare .	Comments: Enter your comments here.	
Methodology is insufficiently detailed or inappropriate for the stated purpose of the research.	Methodology is outlined, but not clear enough to fully describe the process. More detail is necessary to clarify.	Methodology is logical and scientifically sound. Methods are clearly outlined, including potential barriers/risks.	SCORE:	0.0
			Comments: Enter your comments here.	

3. Budget/Timeline (Consider comments from Peer Reviewers)

0-1	2-3	4-5	SCORE:	0.0
There are serious concerns with the project's budget . Budget is Insufficiently justified and/or disproportionate or unclear. Significant revision is necessary before a future submission.	There are minor concerns with the project's budget. Budget may be reasonable but lacks detail and may require clarification or revision.	The proposal's budget is appropriate and reasonable for such a study. Budget is detailed and well-justified and has reasonable scope.	Comments: Enter your comments here.	
There are serious concerns with the project's timeframe . Timeframe seems unrealistic or not explained. Significant revision is necessary before a future submission can be submitted.	There are minor concerns with the project's timeframe . Timeframe may be reasonable but lacks detail and requires further explanation. Milestones are identified but may require clarification or revision.	The proposal's timelines and milestones are appropriate and reasonable for such a study. Timeline is clearly laid out, is realistic, detailed, well-justified and has reasonable scope. Milestones are clearly identified for the duration of the project and it is reasonable and achievable in the timeframe provided.	SCORE:	0.00
			Comments: Enter your comments here.	

OVERALL SCORE: 0.00

20-25: Project is of a high industry priority. The proposal has strong scientific merit, and the budget/timeline are reasonable for the project's scope. Funding is strongly recommended, and should be prioritized.

12-19: Project is of a moderate industry priority, and/or there are minor concerns with scientific merit, budget, or scope. Funding may be recommended (provided it is available, once other projects are considered). Researcher is encouraged to consider feedback from peer-reviewers and committee. Researchers may be required to address any concerns prior to any final decision on funding or before commencing work.

Less than 12: Project is of a low industry priority, and/or there are major concerns with the proposal's scientific merit, budget or scope. Funding is not recommended at this time. Researcher is e

Equine Guelph Research Committee

Research Proposal Rubric - Racing Industry Funding

The following rubric is intended to assist members of the Equine Guelph Research Committee in assigning a score to a submitted research proposal. The decision on a final score is entirely at the discretion of the Committee Member; however, we encourage Committee Members to consider the following proposal elements when deriving their final score and to utilize the full scoring range.

Project Title:
Primary Investigator:

1. Novelty/Potential Impact, and Methodology			
0-1	2-3	4-5	SCORE: 0.0
Proposal does not address a pressing research priority for the Ontario racing industry or is not related to current industry objectives or has limited relations to current objectives. Research into this field is unlikely to provide tangible benefits in either the short or long term.	Proposal addresses a minor priority for the Ontario horse racing industry. Research into this field would likely provide modest dividends in short or long term. Or, it is related to industry objectives but is not fully described.	Proposal clearly is related to and addresses a critical research priority for the Ontario horse racing industry. Research into this field would likely provide immediate dividends , either short or long term. Or, this research would build on an important area of research that has had some work done on it already.	Comments : Enter your comments here.

2. Scientific Merit, Purpose and Methodology: (Consider comments from Peer-Reviewers)			
0-1	2-3	4-5	SCORE: 0.0
There are serious concerns with the project's purpose , or contribution to the scientific body of work. Significant revision is necessary before a future resubmission.	There are minor concerns with the project's purpose , and/or its contribution to the scientific body of work. Researcher should address these concerns prior to receipt of any funding or consider submitting this again in the future with revisions.	Proposal clearly describes the purpose of the study. Research topic is novel, and/or would contribute to or build the scientific overall body of work.	Comments : Enter your comments here.
Methodology is insufficiently detailed or inappropriate for the stated purpose of the research.	Methodology is outlined, but not clear enough to fully describe the process. More detail is necessary to clarify.	Methodology is logical and scientifically sound. Methods are clearly outlined, including potential barriers/risks.	SCORE: 0.0 Comments: Enter your comments here.

3. Budget/Timeline (Consider comments from Peer Reviewers)			
0-1	2-3	4-5	SCORE: 0.0
There are serious concerns with the project's budget . Budget is Insufficiently justified and/or disproportionate or unclear. Significant revision is necessary before a future submission.	There are minor concerns with the project's budget. Budget may be reasonable but lacks detail and may require clarification or revision.	The proposal's budget is appropriate and reasonable for such a study. Budget is detailed and well-justified and has reasonable scope.	Comments: Enter your comments here.
There are serious concerns with the project's timeframe . Timeframe seems unrealistic or not explained. Significant revision is necessary before a future submission can be submitted.	There are minor concerns with the project's timeframe . Timeframe may be reasonable but lacks detail and requires further explanation. Milestones are identified but may require clarification or revision.	The proposal's timelines and milestones are appropriate and reasonable for such a study. Timeline is clearly laid out, is realistic, detailed, well-justified and has reasonable scope. Milestones are clearly identified for the duration of the project and it is reasonable and achievable in the timeframe provided.	SCORE: 0.00 Comments: Enter your comments here.

OVERALL SCORE:	0.00
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20-25: Project is of a high industry priority. The proposal has strong scientific merit, and the budget/timeline are reasonable for the project's scope. Funding is strongly recommended, and should be prioritized.

12-19: Project is of a moderate industry priority, and/or there are minor concerns with scientific merit, budget, or scope. Funding may be recommended (provided it is available, once other projects are considered). Researcher is encouraged to consider feedback from peer-reviewers and committee. Researchers may be required to address any concerns prior to any final decision on funding or before commencing work.

Less than 12: Project is of a low industry priority, and/or there are major concerns with the proposal's scientific merit, budget or scope. Funding is not recommended at this time. Researcher is encouraged to consider feedback from peer-reviewers and committee.