

APPLICATION FORM

HOMEGROWN INNOVATION CHALLENGE™

Shepherd Phase

Submission deadline: December 20, 2022, 12pm ET

This application form is a sample only. Do not enter information into this form. Applications submitted in English must be completed using our online grants management system, which will be accessible through our website no later than September 30, 2020. Applications prepared in French must be submitted via email directly to the Weston Family Foundation. Instructions on how to submit French-language applications will be posted on our website no later than September 30, 2022. Please note that, irrespective of mode of submission, French language applications will be processed in an identical fashion to English language applications.

In the Shepherd Phase of the Homegrown Innovation Challenge, grants of up to \$1 million will be provided to ten qualified donees and their innovation teams to establish small-scale proof-of-concept for solutions that address the Challenge Statement. Work performed in the Shepherd Phase, which should lead to solutions reaching technology readiness level (“TRL”) 5 or higher, should also position applicants for the Scaling Phase of the Homegrown Innovation Challenge, which kicks off in late 2024.

Applications to the Shepherd Phase will close on **December 20, 2022 at 12pm ET**. The Weston Family Foundation will not accept any applications after this time.

We encourage you to read all the information on the Challenge website, including the FAQs, eligibility criteria, privacy policy and terms and conditions, before completing the online application form. All applications will be assessed against the posted judging criteria.

This application form will be available for completion and submission via an online portal starting in September 2022. In the meantime, this PDF version is provided to guide you in the preparation of your application.

Please note that you are able to apply to the Shepherd Phase of the competition regardless of whether you received a Spark Award in July 2022 or not. However, receipt of funding under the Shepherd Phase of the initiative is a *prerequisite* to competing in later phases of the Homegrown Innovation Challenge.

All information transmitted to the Weston Family Foundation will be treated as confidential.

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If you have any questions relating to the Homegrown Innovation Challenge, please email: challenge@westonfoundation.ca.

Section 1: Applicant Details

Eligibility to participate

- All lead applicants and co-applicants*, as well as any collaborators, confirm that you have read the terms and conditions and privacy policy and agree to these.
- All lead applicants and co-applicants, as well as any collaborators, confirm that you have read the eligibility criteria, are eligible for the Challenge now and that, should you cease to comply with the eligibility criteria, will immediately inform the Weston Family Foundation.
- The lead organization, which will directly receive funding from the Weston Family Foundation, confirms that it is a qualified donee, as this term is defined by the Canada Revenue Agency, and is based in Canada.

Applicant and organization details

Team members	Organizations	Primary contact information	Role in project	Estimated time to be spent on project (%)
Salutation:	Organization:	Address:	<input type="checkbox"/> Lead applicant*	
1. Last name:	Position title:	Phone:	<input type="checkbox"/> Co-applicant*	
First name:	Other affiliations / position titles:	Email:	<input type="checkbox"/> Collaborator	
Salutation:	Organization:	Address:	<input type="checkbox"/> Lead applicant*	
2. Last name:	Position title:	Phone:	<input type="checkbox"/> Co-applicant*	
First name:	Other affiliations / position titles:	Email:	<input type="checkbox"/> Collaborator	

If not a qualified donee, as defined by the Canada Revenue Agency, please indicate the type of organization: cooperative, partnership, corporation, sole proprietorship, limited liability company, extra-provincial corporation, public company, branch, subsidiary, higher education / research institution, or other.

* Please note that lead applicants and co-applicants must have a primary affiliation with the lead organization or some other CRA-qualified donee.

Section 1: Applicant Details (continued)

Applicant and organization details

Team members	Organizations	Primary contact information	Role in project	Estimated time to be spent on project (%)
Salutation:	Organization:	Address:	<input type="checkbox"/> Lead applicant	
3. Last name:	Position title:	Phone:	<input type="checkbox"/> Co-applicant	
First name:	Other affiliations / position titles:	Email:	<input type="checkbox"/> Collaborator	

If not a qualified donee, as defined by the Canada Revenue Agency, please indicate the type of organization: cooperative, partnership, corporation, sole proprietorship, limited liability company, extra-provincial corporation, public company, branch, subsidiary, higher education / research institution, other.

Note: Applications may be submitted by a single lead organization or by a team; however, all teams must include a lead organization, which is a qualified donee, as this term is defined by the Canada Revenue Agency, and is the only entity which will receive direct funding from the Foundation. Organizations may join or leave teams at any stage in the Challenge provided the lead organization does not change. Teams are not limited to three participants as laid out on this sample application form; teams may include as many participants as needed for the successful execution of the project.

Section 2: Demographic Information

We are committed to attracting and funding a diverse group of innovators, and to better enable this and monitor our efforts, our application process will collect some demographic and diversity information on a voluntary basis. The finalized application form will contain a variety of questions and information requests in this regard; each team member is encouraged to complete this section.

The information you share will be kept strictly confidential. You can find out more about the data we collect and what we do with it in our Privacy Policy, posted at www.homegrownchallenge.ca. None of the questions are mandatory, and the information collected will not impact the adjudication of your application.

Section 3: Due Diligence

We may use this information to undertake background checks on your organization, assess financial security and check for conflicts of interest. These checks are designed to highlight issues that could affect the integrity of the Challenge or prevent you from completing the Challenge. This section should be completed by each applicant and collaborating organization.

Section 3: Due Diligence (continued)

The following information is to be provided by collaborators (*i.e.*, participating organizations *not* defined as qualified donees by the Canada Revenue Agency). The Weston Family Foundation reserves the right to request additional information in its sole discretion.

1. Business or charity registration number:
2. Company tax number (if applicable):
3. Legally registered address of the lead organization:
4. Where is your main base of operations located?
5. When did your organization become a government-registered entity?
6. Provide a website URL for your organization:
7. How many people does your organization employ? How many employees are based in Canada?
8. Has your organization ever been convicted, been the subject of legal proceedings, been charged with a crime or regulatory violation, or been fined or censured?
 - Yes
 - No
9. During the past five years, has your organization been named as a co-conspirator in a criminal complaint or proceeding?
 - Yes
 - No
10. During the past five years, has your organization been the target or subject of any investigation undertaken by a government department or agency not in the normal course of business?
 - Yes
 - No
11. Has any prospective participant in the Challenge ever been disqualified from acting as a director or officer of a company in Canada or elsewhere?
 - Yes
 - No

Section 3: Due Diligence (continued)

12. If you replied “yes” to any of the four preceding questions, please provide details. (250 word limit)
13. Please note that, should your proposed project be recommended for funding under the Shepherd Phase of the Challenge, the Weston Family Foundation may request additional information, including, but not limited to:
 - Latest financial statements (audited and unaudited)
 - Last 12 monthly management accounts (profit/loss statements, balance sheet, cash flow)
 - Details of key financial obligations and capital expenditure for the next 12 months
 - Details of current committed financing facilities and cash at hand

The following information is to be provided by all applicants and collaborators.

14. Are you aware of any real, perceived, or potential conflicts of interest at the time of application submission, as well as any pre-existing or contemplated exclusivity arrangements or other arrangements that could limit or impact Canadians’ access to food products derived from your innovations to one or a few distributors, wholesalers or retailers, including any such exclusivity arrangements for the lead organization or any member of the innovation team?

Examples of conflicts of interest or potential conflicts of interest, may include but are not limited to: a member or employee of the Foundation being involved directly or indirectly with your institution, an agreement or contract with an affiliate of the Foundation, etc.

(Please note that any such conflicts of interest or exclusivity arrangements must be declared but will not necessarily prevent you from participating in the Challenge.)

If so, please provide details. (250 word limit)
15. Do you feel that any individuals on our judging panel (please refer to www.homegrownchallenge.ca) or subject-matter experts we may ask to review your application in confidence may have a conflict of interest in reviewing your application? If so, please provide details and/or identify conflicted referees, and our team may consider alternative reviewers. (250 word limit)
16. Is there anything else we should know about your organization that could harm the reputation of the Challenge or the Weston Family Foundation? (250 word limit)

Section 4: Your Solution

We will use this information to assess your application against the eligibility and judging criteria. We recognize that some of the information below may not yet be known; you are welcome to provide plans and estimates. At this stage, reviewers and judges will be looking for informed estimates, acknowledgement of gaps in information/resources, and credible plans to fill those gaps.

Section 4: Your Solution (continued)

1. Provide five keywords to describe your proposed innovation.
2. Describe your chosen berry and why you selected it. *(150 word limit)*
3. Provide a jargon-free summary of your proposal and how it addresses the Challenge statement. This summary should focus on the proposed scope of work and only address members of the innovation team to the minimum extent necessary. The Weston Family Foundation may use this information for communications and marketing purposes (including placement on our website) should your proposed project be funded under the Shepherd Phase. *(200 word limit)*
4. Please attach a two-page summary that lays out your vision for the implementation of your solution, once it is fully developed. This summary could include text, diagrams, tables or any other static media, which articulates how your solution will work, what it will look like, how it will function, and, importantly, how it will optimally achieve the Challenge statement. *(2-page limit)*

Criterion 1: Impact

5. To what extent (*i.e.*, by how long) is the solution likely to increase or shift the growing season of the chosen berry? Please also describe how the proposed solution will allow for an increase or shifting of the current growing season for the chosen berry, as well as which barriers to out-of-season production it will clear. *(400 word limit; this question links to criterion 1.1: Production out-of-season)*
6. In which geographic area(s) in the world might your proof-of-concept in the Shepherd Phase take place? Why? In which Canadian geographic areas do you anticipate that your completed system will be applicable? Please include any support to justify the claim. *(250 word limit; this question links to criterion 1.2: Solution is relevant across Canada)*

Criterion 2: Technological achievement

7. Please attach a technical proposal, which sets out the scope of work you plan to execute during the Shepherd Phase of the Challenge. This proposal will assist us to track the execution of your technology development and will be cross-referenced with the budget you submit herewith in order for us to ascertain feasibility. The technical proposal must contain the following sections along with any evidence you think is important. *(4-page limit; this question links to all of criterion 2: Technological achievement)*
 - **Feasibility:** explain how the technical components of your solution will work together, and how the approach described in your 2-page summary will deliver against the Challenge statement.
 - **Stage of development:** provide an overview of your innovation goals, including explanation of what technology has already been developed (and to which TRL), any pre-existing IP, what technology still needs to be developed, what needs to be procured and from whom, and a roadmap that demonstrates how your solution will reach TRL8 by end of the Challenge.
 - **Shepherd Phase plan:** details for planned activities, including key project milestones and deliverables, to occur during the Shepherd Phase and how these will ready your solution from its current state of development for optimization for farm-scale levels during the subsequent Scaling Phase of the Challenge.

Section 4: Your Solution (continued)

Criterion 2: Technological achievement (continued)

- **Risk and mitigation:** highlight any significant barriers, concerns or unknowns with your technical approach and how you will overcome these.
8. Describe the anticipated adaptability of your system and any of its components to the production of other crops (in addition to your chosen berry). If possible, provide an indicative list of these crops or crop categories (please note that you are not required to empirically demonstrate the adaptability of your solution to other crops). *(250 word limit; this question links to criterion 2.1: Adaptability of technology)*
 9. Describe any existing systems (in Canada and globally) that you're aware of that are comparable to that which you are proposing to develop. How will your system be better and more advanced than that which already exists, in terms of both the individual components and how they will function together as a complete system? *(400 word limit; this question links to criterion 2.3: Technological innovation).*

Criterion 3: Team capability

10. Provide an overview of the lead organization and all project partners (co-applicants and collaborators), and the role to be played by each member in the project. Is there any unique equipment or technology that the innovation team is leveraging or otherwise accessing in order to compete in the Challenge? Have any of the proposed team members collaborated in the past? *(500 word limit; this question links to criterion 3.1: Team capability)*
11. What skills and experience do each of the team members possess and how are these relevant to your participation and success in the Challenge? *(500 word limit; this question links to criterion 3.1: Team capability)*
12. Are there outstanding gaps in your innovation team's skill set, and if so, how do you plan to fill these gaps during the Shepherd Phase? *(250 word limit; this question links to criterion 3.1: Team capability)*
13. Please attach up to 10 team members' CVs. While you may have more than 10 team members, we ask that you only provide the CVs for key members. *(This question links to criterion 3.1: Team capability)*

Criterion 4: Commercial viability

14. To facilitate assessment of the feasibility that your complete solution will address the Challenge statement and ultimately alleviate Canada's food vulnerability, please attach a high-level strategic plan that summarizes your approach to large-scale implementation. While it is important that you employ realistic and proven models to ensure that Canadians broadly benefit from your solution in a sustainable way, please note that we do not require commercialization per se and, as such, that the relative projected commercial success of your solution or resultant food products will not influence the adjudication of your proposal.

Section 4: Your Solution (continued)

Criterion 4: Commercial viability (continued)

Your strategic plan should contain the following sections (*4-page limit; this question links to all of criterion 4: Commercial viability*):

- **Cost structure:** Please articulate all relevant cost structures, providing models where necessary, and demonstrate how the food product derived from your solution will be price competitive with foreign alternatives.
 - **Competitors:** Please briefly summarize the global landscape of direct competitors, defined as entities employing technological or otherwise novel approaches to grow berries out of season and at a lower cost. We also ask that you clearly iterate your distinct competitive advantages.
 - **Implementation plan:** Describe the steps you will take to implement your complete solution at scale and how you will ultimately ensure that Canadians benefit from your solution / system and the resultant food products without undue delay. (Please note that, while the Weston Family Foundation requires that the availability of the food product ultimately derived from your complete solution / system not be unduly limited to Canadian consumers by virtue of exclusive distribution arrangements and the like, we do not prohibit the granting of exclusive rights to the solution and related intellectual property to a single entity.)
 - **Risk and mitigation:** Once your solution fully addresses the Challenge statement, what risks may need to be overcome and what actions would you undertake in order to mitigate risk and clear barriers.
15. Describe any completed and/or planned research/consultations to verify that your technological system will meet the requirements of potential end-users (e.g., commercial producers, farmers), including its ease of use and adoption. Highlight any significant barriers to acceptance anticipated and your plan to overcome these. (*200 word limit; this question links to criterion 4.3: Grower acceptability*)
16. Describe any completed and/or planned research/consultations to verify that the berry or berries produced by your system will be attractive to commercial food procurement partners, including food retailers, distributors and wholesalers. Highlight any significant barriers to acceptance that you anticipate and your plan to overcome these (*200 word limit; this question links to criterion 4.4: Food retailer acceptability*)
17. Describe any completed and/or planned research/consultations to verify that the berry or berries produced by your system will be attractive to Canadian consumers, considering taste, quality, shelf-life, price, appearance and growing approach. Highlight any significant barriers to acceptance that you anticipate and your plan to overcome these (*200 word limit; this question links to criterion 4.5: Consumer acceptability*)

Section 4: Your Solution (continued)

Criterion 5: Environmental sustainability

18. Please describe the anticipated environmental impact of the solution you seek to develop (using relevant indicators such as GHG emissions, water use, land use and fertilizer use). Please list significant benefits, as well risks and mitigating approaches to be employed. How does the anticipated impact compare to that of current best growing practices? (250 word limit; this question links to criterion 5.1: Environmental impact)
19. What are your plans to gather evidence that demonstrates the minimal environmental impact of your system during the Shepherd Phase of the Challenge? You may wish to consider GHG emissions, water use, land use, fertilizer use, etc. (200 word limit; this question links to criterion 5.1: Environmental impact)

Optional for Section 4, Your Solution: Publications, letters of support, data and any other supporting evidence and references may be attached to your application. Please note, however, that reviewers will only spend a small amount of time reviewing optional documentation submitted.

Budget

Budgets should reflect the forecasted expenditure in the Shepherd Phase and be linked to specific activities to be undertaken. You will be asked to report against this budget at the end of the 18-month Shepherd Phase. Should the costs to complete the project exceed the allotted \$1,000,000 for this award, please indicate other confirmed or pending resources to be contributed.

Please note that grants provided under the Shepherd Phase will be provided in three or more tranches, which are linked to milestones and deliverables. You must indicate which milestones and deliverables will be achieved with each tranche of funding. The proposed budget need not necessarily be evenly distributed among the tranches.

A. Personnel costs (for total project; please add more rows as required)						
Name	Role	Estimated time spent on project (%)	Base salary	Salary support requested	Benefits requested	Total
1.						
2.						
					Subtotal	\$

Section 4: Your Solution (continued)

B. Equipment costs (for total project; please add more rows as required)				
Item	Description	Unit cost	Number of units	Total
1.				
2.				
			Subtotal	\$

C. Supplies / consumables costs (for total project; please add more rows as required)				
Item	Description	Unit cost	Number of units	Total
1.				
2.				
			Subtotal	\$

D. Other costs (please add more rows as required; note that institutional overhead costs of up to 10% of grant amount are allowed)				
Item	Description	Unit cost	Number of units	Total
1.				
2.				
			Subtotal	\$

Total request (E)	\$
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Section 4: Your Solution (continued)

F. Other funding sources	
Source (please add more rows as required)	Amount
Total	\$

G. Budget by milestone / tranche (please add more rows as required)			
Milestone	Key deliverables	Estimated timing	Amount
1.			
2.			
3.			
Total (should correspond with box E above)			\$

H. Budget justification

Please provide a brief overview of your proposed use of grant proceeds, ensuring that you articulate why the proposed budget is reasonable and conservative, as well as how line items are critical to support the proposed project. (500 word limit)

Section 5: Impact Reporting

We will use this information to help assess the impact of our program. The information collected will not have a bearing on the adjudication of your Shepherd Phase proposal.

1. How many people make up the team hoping to participate / participating in the Homegrown Innovation Challenge? If you received a Spark Award, detail how your Shepherd Phase team has changed or will change.
2. Was your team exclusively created to participate in the Homegrown Innovation Challenge?

Section 5: Impact Reporting (continued)

3. Please estimate how many years of work experience your team, as a group, has in agricultural technology.
4. Please estimate the proportion of employees that hold an undergraduate degree or higher qualification in:
 - Science or engineering
 - Other subjects
5. Have you and your team previously worked together on a problem or innovation that required expertise in the same area as the problem posed by the Homegrown Innovation Challenge (food disruption and resilience, production systems for delivering fresh fruit and vegetables out-of-season, etc.)? If yes, please provide a short explanation.
6. If the Homegrown Innovation Challenge did not exist, how likely would it be for you and/or your team to work on a project seeking to reduce Canada's dependence on imported fresh fruits and vegetables and increasing agricultural sector resilience in the country?
 - Very likely
 - Somewhat likely
 - Unlikely
 - Don't know
7. Have you and/or your team previously participated in a competition / innovation challenge?
 - No
 - If yes, did you submit a solution to be evaluated by the judges?
 - If yes, what is the highest place you've finished in an innovation challenge?
 - If no, why have you not previously participate?
8. During the most recent 3-year period did you or your team introduce to market:
 - New or significantly improved ag-tech or food innovations?
 - New or significantly improved services in relation to ag-tech innovations?
9. If yes, were these innovations developed mainly by:
 - Your team / business / enterprise group?
 - Your team / business in collaboration with other businesses or organizations?
 - Other businesses or organizations?

Section 5: Impact Reporting (continued)

10. What proportion of the innovations that your team developed during this three-year period were claimed in patent applications?
- None
 - Few (less than 40%)
 - Many (40-90%)
 - Very many (over 90%)
11. How long (years/months) have you been working on your solution prior to seeking funding for it from the Homegrown Innovation Challenge?
12. Do you consider your solution for the Homegrown Innovation Challenge to be either:
- An entirely new approach to grow berries out of season in Canada?
 - A radical adaptation of an existing approach to grow berries out of season?
 - An incremental adaptation of an existing approach to grow berries out of season?
13. Do you consider the solution you are seeking to develop as part of the Homegrown Innovation Challenge to be new to your market (*i.e.*, if taken to market, your team/organization will have introduced a new solution to the market before your competitors)?
14. How do you perceive your chances of winning the Homegrown Innovation Challenge?
- Extremely likely
 - Likely
 - Neutral
 - Unlikely
 - Extremely unlikely
15. Is there anything else you would like to add (including to clarify your answers to the above questions)?



Section 6: Declarations

You will be required to declare the accuracy and validity of your submission, confirm your acceptance of our terms and conditions, and provide signatures from all necessary authorities representing your team.