



Request for Proposals (RFP)

Open Call for Research on Dental School Admissions in Canada

1. Introduction and Background

In 2019, the Canadian Dental Association (CDA) committed \$1 million to support research on dental school admissions in Canada, with the goal of strengthening the evidence base underpinning admissions tools and processes and ensuring their continued relevance to the profession. Working in collaboration with Canadian dental schools and other partners, CDA established a national research agenda focused on predictive validity, fairness, professional competencies, and the identification of promising admissions practices.

Following pandemic-related disruptions, CDA reconvened its admissions research committee in 2025 to reassess priorities and identify opportunities for the remaining research funding. Subsequent consultations, including the 2026 CDA-ACFD Admissions Conference, reinforced the value of supporting additional research that can improve admissions for Canadian DMD/DDS programs.

Through this open Request for Proposals, CDA invites researchers to identify and propose an original project related to dental school admissions. The research topic is intentionally open and will be determined by the proponent. Proposed work must address a clearly defined admissions-related question, demonstrate its relevance to Canadian dental education, and have the potential to produce practical, evidence-based findings or recommendations.

2. Scope of Work

Proponents are responsible for defining the research question, objectives, design, methodology, outcomes, and knowledge-mobilization approach. Projects may examine any area of dental school admissions, provided that the proposed work is feasible,

rigorous, and aligned with the goal of improving admissions for DMD/DDS programs in Canada.

Potential Areas of Inquiry

Topics may include, but are not limited to:

- Validity, reliability, fairness, or utility of admissions tools and selection methods
- Applicant assessment, file review, interviews, testing, or decision-making processes
- Equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility, and barriers within admissions
- Pathway, outreach, recruitment, or applicant-support initiatives
- Applicant characteristics, professional competencies, or predictors of success in dental education
- Admissions policies, governance, standardization, innovation, or inter-institutional collaboration
- Use of technology, data, or emerging approaches in admissions
- Admissions outcomes and their relationship to academic, preclinical, clinical, or professional outcomes

The examples above are illustrative and are not intended to limit the scope of eligible proposals. Proponents may submit projects outside these areas where a clear connection to dental admissions is demonstrated.

3. Key Deliverables

- **Project Work Plan:** A detailed plan confirming the methodology, timelines, milestones, responsibilities, indicators of success, and communication approach.
- **Interim Reports:** Semi-annual progress reports describing work completed, emerging findings, upcoming activities, risks, and any proposed adjustments.
- **Interim Presentations:** Presentations to the Committee on Dental School Admissions Assessment Tools, if requested, to share progress or preliminary findings.
- **Final Report:** A comprehensive report presenting the research question, methodology, findings, limitations, conclusions, and actionable recommendations.

4. Reporting and Governance

- The successful project team lead will report to a designated CDA project lead.
- Updates will be provided to the Committee on Dental School Admissions Assessment Tools, including progress, risks, and preliminary findings.
- The researcher may be requested to attend select committee meetings to present interim findings.

5. Proposal Requirements

Interested parties should submit a proposal that includes:

- A one-page project summary
- The main proposal (maximum of 5 pages)
- An overview of the research team comprising a one-page description of the team highlighting relevant expertise and experience, plus two-page CV's or biosketches of the applicants
- The project timeline and milestones.
- The project budget.

All these materials should be submitted using 1.0 line-spacing and 12-point font.

6. Evaluation Criteria

Proposals will be evaluated based on the following:

- Relevant experience and expertise of the research team, including inter-institutional collaboration, and diversity of length and type of experience of applicants (25%)
- Methodological approach including justification for approaches proposed (25%)
- Coherence of the proposal to achieve the goal of improving admissions for DMD-DDS (20%)
- Clear indicators of success of the proposal (20%)
- Appropriateness of budget (10%)

7. Submission Details

- **Submission Method:** Please e-mail your proposal to Isabelle Gingras: igingras@cda-adc.ca
- **Questions and Clarifications:** All inquiries should be directed to Isabelle Gingras at igingras@cda-adc.ca.

8. Timeline

Milestone	Date
RFP Issued	September 1, 2026
Proposal Submission Deadline	November 6, 2026
Communication of results	January, 2027
Project Start Date	February, 2027
Interim Reports	Semi-Annual Reporting
Final Report Due	2 years after the beginning of project 9 with potential of 2 year extension)

9. Confidentiality

All information shared during the proposal process and throughout the project must be treated as confidential. Before information is shared, bidders must sign a confidentiality agreement. Internal documents will be shared after a non-disclosure agreement is executed.

10. Budget

The budget allocated for this project is estimated to be between \$50,000 and \$225,000. Respondents are encouraged to submit proposals that fall within this range and provide clear justification for the proposed costs. The final budget will be determined based on the scope of work, value offered, and alignment with the project's objectives. Proposals exceeding the upper limit may not be considered unless exceptional value is clearly demonstrated.