Connections Rules

1. Program Description

In recognition of the role of applied research in the innovation cycle OCE offers the Connections Undergraduate program to students studying in a program in one of OCE’s strategic areas in an Ontario college and university.

The new OCE Connections provides an opportunity for undergraduates in their final year in a faculty of engineering or computer science (possibly in collaboration with students from the business school or other faculties) will promote the matching of undergraduate students (preferably in teams) with an industry partner to solve a problem defined by industry and of specific relevance to the industrial participant’s needs.

2. Award criteria and funding range available

- Projects should be defined by the industrial participant with the assistance of the faculty individual responsible for the program.

- The company contribution of cash is required to at least match OCE’s contribution, plus in-kind, such as industrial supervision, etc.

- The project must relate to a relevant, industry specific, technological problem.

- The participating company must, for each project, appoint a supervisor who is willing to provide supervision, support and guidance.

- A faculty supervisor must be responsible to OCE for the program in the department. The supervisor will be responsible for seeing that students are matched to projects.

- Student project leader(s) must be appointed for each project. The students must work with the company supervisor to develop objectives, schedules and budgets for the project.

OCE reserves the right to decide whether or not an individual Connections project:

- Falls within its OCE portfolio.

- Provides the students with sufficient interaction with industry to meet the program objectives.

- OCE will provide matching funds to the cash provided by the industrial partner up to the limit set out below.

- For proposed budget estimation please use the following guidelines:
  · Up to $500 for each project involving only one student.
  · Up to $1,200 for each project to be undertaken by a team of two.
  · Up to $3,500 for each project to be undertaken by a team of 3 or more.

- Entrepreneurial projects devised and based on student ideas will be considered for funding. These will be judged on the business case put forward by the students, and
awards of up to $3,500 will be allowed towards those considered of high potential. Each project must have the support of a faculty supervisor and preferably an industrial mentor.

- An amount of between $1000-2000 will be awarded extra to the base funding available for regular connections projects, for SAE (Society of Automotive Engineers) Car projects from institutions applying to the Connections projects. The amount of the award will be dependent on the total number of projects being put forward for funding, excluding SAE projects, and a function of the cash and in-kind provided to the SAE projects in industrial sponsorship.

- Funding will be available in advance of expenditure, however, letters detailing industrial contribution cash and in kind are provided on letterhead from the industrial partners/sponsors must be provided.

- Costs associated with the identification and recruitment of industrial partners will be reimbursed up to a max of $3,000.

OCE will approve a budget based on the above guidelines and on the number of approved projects. OCE will match the industrial cash provided to each approved project, up to the limit stated in the guidelines, and with regard to overall available budget. The number of projects to be supported, and any award with respect to a capital expenditure, will be the subject of negotiations between the applicant and OCE. OCE funds are to be used to cover expenses incurred in carrying out the projects, and moneys to cover the costs of adjuncts or similar in finding, establishing and maintaining industrial partnerships for undergraduate projects.

The money is not to be spent on:

- Stipends for students or other individuals.

- Equipment which could be used for continuing research, unless with prior agreement from OCE.

3. Program Goals & OCE expectations for project content / outcomes

While the student applies their technical skills and builds a relationship with industry, they will also develop valuable essential skills such as problem-solving, relationship and team building, communication, and presentation skills. These experiences can result in a hire for the Industry partner in Ontario or serve to inspire a student to continue on in their field through graduate studies. They will also serve to introduce new constituents to the OCE research network. Quality of the application, relevance to OCE's fields of study, past performance in project and financial reporting, percentage of projects being carried out by teams, industrial involvement in the projects, and industrial enthusiasm judged by their letters of support, and industrial sponsorship, will all be taken into account.

4. Timelines
a. Deadlines for submissions - Sept. 30th for winter project term; April 30th for summer project term
b. Review process and duration – internal review and approval by Centre Program Manager over a 4 week period from deadline for submission of applications
c. Communication of Awards – Awardees will be notified by the Centre Program Manager within one month of submission of applications
d. Approx start date – start of winter or summer project term
e. Expected completion date – end of winter or summer project term

5. **Application procedure – how to apply**

A complete application consists of a letter of application, a proposed budget (both forms available on the OCE website), as well as industry letters of support for each project. Applications are to be submitted to the respective centre program manager for review and approval.

6. **Expectations for funded projects**

a. Participant contributions – private, public sector & institutions
   The industry partner is expected to match the OCE contribution by 50% in cash and 50% in-kind
b. The academic institution will submit quarterly invoices to OCE for payment. The academic institution will invoice the industry partner for their portion.
c. Reviews – Project presentations will be conducted at the end of the project term. A final report will be submitted by the project team
d. Project Closure / Foreclosure expectations – The academic institution must notify OCE Inc. as soon as possible if a project is at risk of being closed. Interviews will be conducted with all parties to determine if a substitute team can complete the project. If unable to complete, the academic institution will be responsible for any refund to the industry partner.
e. There are no extensions available for the Connections program