

ELIGIBLE RESEARCH

Mitacs supports university-based research projects and university-industry research collaborations through the Globalink, Accelerate, and Elevate programs. These Mitacs programs are open to researchers in all disciplines and provide support to projects in many sectors. The following list articulates the key characteristics of research and provides guidelines on the types of projects eligible for support through the Globalink, Accelerate, and Elevate programs:

Research makes a new contribution to the body of knowledge in a field

Research answers a question that has not been answered previously or otherwise makes a new contribution by developing new techniques to solve an existing problem, applying and/or combining existing techniques to solve a new problem, or analyzing new or existing data to generate new knowledge. Mitacs research proposals should be clear about the objectives and novel aspects of the proposed work.

Research is broadly applicable

Research builds on existing knowledge in a field and makes a contribution to future research when it is shared with the wider community. For research collaborations between universities and non-academic partner organizations, projects are expected to produce results of broader interest, in addition to any results that may be of interest only to the partner organization. This idea of general applicability of results that could be publishable in a peer-reviewed venue distinguishes a research project from a consulting project.

Mitacs appreciates that intellectual property (IP) is an important concern for applied research projects with industrial partners. IP concerns should be settled according to any applicable IP policies at the intern's university. From the research perspective, interns need to be allowed to publish the results of their research, but may be asked to delay publication briefly while the company files patents.

Academic research in business disciplines (e.g., accounting, marketing, operations, labour economics) that is publishable in peer-reviewed journals is eligible for Mitacs funding. Business projects that use well established, standardized methodologies for data collection are ineligible. Projects that generate knowledge of interest only to a particular company or interest group rather than knowledge that is of general interest in the discipline are also ineligible. Examples include market research, development of business plans, consulting projects, and white papers.

Research is defined by the research community

The research landscape is constantly changing, so the most reliable judge of whether a project is considered research is the research community. As such, peer review is a standard method of evaluating proposals employed by many research organizations, including Mitacs. Discipline-specific experts offer advice to Mitacs about Accelerate and Elevate research proposals. Mitacs is also supported in this role by the Mitacs Research Council (MRC).

In the context of peer review, the proposal must be clear about the methodology that will be used for data collection, identification of sources, analysis, and any other research activities in the project. This methodology must be recognized as an appropriate one in the discipline and suitable for the type of problem being addressed.

Research is publishable in a peer-reviewed venue

The results of a research project are normally reviewed and disseminated within the research community. In most fields, this means the results are publishable in a peer-reviewed journal or conference.

Mitacs does not require that the results of funded projects be published, though it is strongly encouraged. Regardless, a good test of the project's eligibility is whether it is expected that the results will be publishable in principle. Master's theses and PhD dissertations are also considered peer-reviewed academic publications, so research projects that form part of an intern's thesis or dissertation are acceptable.

In creative fields such as fine arts, architecture, and interior design, review and dissemination can include the presentation of work in a juried, refereed, or curated venue.

New research builds on previous research

A literature review is used to situate the proposed work within the discipline's existing body of research. A preliminary literature review is a required part of writing a research proposal to ensure that the proposed work is novel, that it builds appropriately on the latest work in the field, uses the most up-to-date methods, etc.

For an Accelerate internship that is part of a student's thesis work or another larger project, the intern may have already conducted a thorough literature review and does not need to spend internship time on this task. In other cases, an in-depth literature review of the specific subfield pertaining to the project can be included as a small part of an Accelerate internship. Most of the internship should be devoted to conducting new research.

Development is an intrinsic part of research in many disciplines

Development of a new artifact is often a key part of research in engineering or computer science; the "unknown" being addressed by the research project is whether the artifact in question can be successfully built. Thus, research projects consisting largely of development are considered eligible if the applicants expect to be able to publish a paper(s) based on the work.

Projects in which the intern develops novel software to answer a research question or test a hypothesis are also eligible. It is important to be clear how the results will be evaluated.

Research should be appropriate to the level of the intern or fellow

The level of research expected for an eligible project varies based on the type of intern or fellow. Frequently, undergraduate research projects are an introduction to research or a

contribution to a project led by a more advanced student. A Master's degree is also considered an initiation or familiarization to research and typically involves developing a new approach to solving a known problem or applying existing tools to solve a new problem. PhD students are expected to exhibit originality and make an important personal contribution to their field. A PhD or postdoctoral project is generally novel in at least some aspect of both the tools and the problem.