



PÔLE MONTRÉALAIS
D'ENSEIGNEMENT SUPÉRIEUR
EN INTELLIGENCE ARTIFICIELLE

> SUPPORT FOR NEW COLLABORATIVE PROJECTS 2024-25
FROM PIA CEGEPS AND UNIVERSITIES

TOWARD RESPONSIBLE USE OF GENERATIVE AI
TOOLS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

PROPOSALS PRESENTATION GUIDE

September 2023

TABLE OF CONTENTS

GENERAL INFORMATION _____	2
WHO CAN SUBMIT A PROJECT? _____	2
THEMES AND EXPECTED RESULTS _____	2
ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS _____	4
EVALUATION CRITERIA _____	4
FUNDING _____	5
PROJECT PRESENTATION _____	5
TIMELINE _____	6
INFORMATION REQUESTS _____	6
APPENDIX 1 – LIST OF PIA MEMBER INSTITUTIONS _____	7
APPENDIX 2 – DEFINITIONS _____	7

GENERAL INFORMATION

The *Pôle montréalais d'enseignement supérieur en intelligence artificielle* (PIA) was originally an initiative of Montréal's CEGEPs and universities, supported by the Ministry of Higher Education, to provide a concerted response to the educational challenges presented by developments in artificial intelligence. PIA brings together Montréal's institutions of higher learning, i.e. 12 CEGEPs and 7 universities.

At its inception, the mission of PIA was to increase the capacity of the Montréal CEGEPs and universities to rapidly develop and adapt AI-related training offerings in collaboration with interested partners. However, in the fall of 2021, at the request of the Ministry of Higher Education, all regional clusters (such as PIA) had to refocus their activities on the ministerial objectives for success in higher education. These objectives relate to the accessibility of higher education, particularly for under-represented groups, the fluidity of training pathways and harmonious transitions in higher education, and attracting young people, especially girls, to IT-related study programs. While focusing on these objectives, PIA retains AI as an important theme and field of action.

PIA wishes to support four structuring projects, with up to \$60,000 allocated per project.

WHO CAN SUBMIT A PROJECT?

Projects submitted must propose a collaboration of a team involving at least one CEGEP and one university, both PIA members (a list of member institutions can be found in appendix 1).

The team proposing the project may include organizations from outside the PIA network, such as other educational institutions or companies. There is no limit to the number of partners. Other financial contributors to the project, partners or institutions, can be added to the PIA contribution.

Each project must have obtained the support of the management of every partner institution, as stipulated in the proposal presentation form and as specified later in this guide.

THEMES AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES

The three themes of this call for projects arise from discussions held at the University of Montréal, involving nearly 130 participants from PIA CEGEPs and universities, at a day of deliberation on "Artificial Intelligence, Student Success, and Integrity in Higher Education". On that day, the participants came together to reflect on a shared and structuring issue: how to regulate the use of AI systems in higher education.

The idea for the day goes back to the fall of 2022, when Open AI made its conversational agent ChatGPT available to the general public, prompting a variety of expressions of concern as well as interest in education circles around the world.

The aim of the day was to encourage critical reflection and stimulating interaction among participants, in order to collectively draw up general recommendations for the use of generative AI tools, such as conversational agents, in higher education. The deliberations have since led to the publication of a report concluding with nine proposals for action addressed to the Ministry of Higher Education, to universities and CEGEPs, and to any other organization or group with the capacity to implement them.

The projects that PIA wishes to support must fall under one of the following three themes. They are all based on the recommendations presented in the report [Toward Responsible Use of Generative AI Tools in Higher Education: Summary of the Discussions of the Day of Deliberation on “Artificial Intelligence, Student Success, and Integrity in Higher Education”](#), available on the PIA website.

THEMES	OBJECTIVES	ISSUES
AI technologies adapted to the needs of teaching and learning	Making generative AI technologies available to as many learners and teachers as possible.	Québec and Montréal are internationally recognized as centers of AI expertise and innovation. Leaders are to be found in all PIA member universities and some CEGEPs. This is the context in which PIA was created. An element that emerged from the discussions on May 31 is that this expertise should contribute to the development of AI tools tailored to the needs of teaching and learning.
Measures to support learning and student success	Develop and implement learning and success support devices such as personalized tutors, tailored help for individual students, AI systems that can be used in academic management, for example, student success support.	AI technologies are rapidly being developed and disseminated to the public. In this context, the need for tools and support for teachers and students emerges just as quickly.
Creation of easy-to-use pedagogical tools (such as activity banks, concise guides, infographics, etc.)	Responding to the collective need for accessible pedagogical or didactic tools and developing the skills to use them in teaching and learning contexts.	The challenge of democratizing and making AI tools accessible goes beyond simply making them free or easy to use. We also need to develop the skills to use them, to have a shared understanding of them, and to make informed, deliberate, autonomous and responsible use of them.

The projects supported must have a measurable impact over the duration of the program, in line with the quantitative indicators used by the Ministry of Higher Education:

- *Number of high school students affected*
- *Number of CEGEP and university students affected*
- *Number of other participants affected*
- *Number of educational institutions involved*
- *Number of other organizations involved (e.g. research centers, companies)*

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Projects must be submitted using a form provided for this purpose. Certain terms used in this guide and in the form are defined in appendix 2 below.

To be eligible, a proposal must meet the following conditions:

- ◇ Involve members of at least one CEGEP and one university that are PIA members
- ◇ Designate a project managing institution
- ◇ Have the support of the management of each educational partner institution
- ◇ Submit an allocation formula for the project requiring a financial contribution of no more than \$60,000 from PIA.
- ◇ Have a minimum duration of one year and a maximum of 18 months, between the months of January 2024 to the end of June 2025
- ◇ Fall into at least one of the three themes presented in the previous section

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Each project proposal meeting the eligibility requirements described in the previous section will be subject to the evaluation of an independent jury according to the following criteria:

RELEVANCE — 30%

- ◇ The needs, issues and innovative aspects of the project are clearly defined.
- ◇ Expected results and the way in which they are to be measured are clearly described, taking into account the results indicators defined by the Ministry of Higher Education.
- ◇ The project takes into account the ethical dimensions of the new tools and technologies, for example by adopting the principles set out in the [Montréal Declaration for a Responsible Development of Artificial Intelligence](#).
- ◇ The contribution of the project to the strengthening of equity, diversity and inclusion is clearly demonstrated.
- ◇ The project promotes cooperation and collaboration between CEGEPs and universities.

QUALITY OF THE PROJECT — 40%

- ◇ The proposal is based on educational, scientific, or technological knowledge mastered by the members of the project team.
- ◇ The proposed approach is based on recognized practices or methodology for the topic(s) selected.
- ◇ The roles and responsibilities of the project team members and the project management methodology are well defined.
- ◇ If the project includes external collaborations, the contribution of these partners is clearly described and a letter of support is attached to the application.
- ◇ The deliverables are verifiable, and the implementation schedule demonstrates the quality of the project planning.

PROJECT BENEFITS — 30%

- ◇ The benefits of the project for the target audience (teaching staff, students, etc.) are clearly demonstrated. If possible, the number of people expected to benefit directly is explained.
- ◇ Priority is given to activities whose impact extends beyond the managing institutions and partners, and whose benefits or results will be felt for a number of years, or even have a strong potential for long-term continuity.
- ◇ The impact of the project on the responsible use of AI tools in higher education in Montréal is clearly demonstrated.
- ◇ The proposal includes an action plan for promoting or disseminating the deliverables within the network of PIA institutions (and beyond, where appropriate). The proposed tools encourage the appropriation and leveraging of the proposed innovation by the educational community.

The jury will be appointed by the PIA steering committee. It will recommend the best project to the steering committee, which will make the final decision, taking into account the maximum funds available.

FUNDING

PIA provides for funding of up to \$60,000 per project over a maximum of one and a half years. Proposals must present an allocation formula that does not require a financial contribution greater than this amount for a period running from spring 2024 to June 2025 at the latest.

The full amount of the grant will be paid to each accepted project in January 2024.

PROJECT PRESENTATION

To submit a project, applicants must use a dedicated form which can be downloaded from the PIA website: www.poleia.quebec.

TIMELINE

Steps	Dates	Actions
1.	Week of October 2, 2023	<i>Launch of the call for projects</i> ◇ <i>Publication of the Proposal Presentation Guide and Form</i>
2.	November 16, 2023, at midnight	<i>Deadline for submitting applications by email</i> ◇ <i>Projects are addressed to bpage@poleia.quebec</i>
3.	Week of November 20, 2023	<i>Project evaluation and recommendations from jury</i>
4.	Week of December 4, 2023	<i>Sending refusal and acceptance letters and preparation of contracts</i> ◇ <i>Followed by the public announcement of the projects selected, of the institutions having obtained financial assistance and the other partners associated with each of the projects.</i>
5.	January 2024	<i>Payment of the grant amount (up to \$60 000)</i>
6.	June 2024	<i>Submission of a progress report</i>
7.	June 2025	<i>Submission of final account statement (financial report and activity report)</i>

INFORMATION REQUESTS

For further information, please contact Christian Stahn, project coordinator, at cstahn@poleia.quebec, or Benoit Pagé, PIA director, at bpage@poleia.quebec.

APPENDIX 1 — LIST OF PIA MEMBER INSTITUTIONS

PIA brings together nineteen higher education institutions on the Island of Montreal.

CÉGEPS	UNIVERSITÉS
Collège Ahuntsic	Concordia University
Cégep André-Laurendeau	École des Hautes études commerciales Montréal
Collège de Bois-de-Boulogne	École Polytechnique Montréal
Dawson College	École de technologie supérieure
Cégep Gérald-Godin	McGill University
John-Abbott College	Université de Montréal
Cégep de Maisonneuve	Université du Québec à Montréal
Cégep Marie-Victorin	
Cégep de Rosemont	
Cégep de Saint-Laurent	
Vanier College	
Cégep du Vieux Montréal	

APPENDIX 2 — DEFINITIONS

These definitions refer to certain terms used in the application form.

MANAGING INSTITUTION	<i>The institution managing the project is the trustee of the PIA grant.</i>
PARTICIPANTS	<i>Participants shall be the individuals who carry out the project. They shall also take part in a community of practice activities and agree to present findings at an official PIA activity or event designated by PIA.</i>
EXTERNAL PARTNERS	<i>External partners shall be representatives from organizations and companies other than the 19 PIA member institutions (12 colleges and 7 universities).</i>