

Water Research Centre (WRC) LOI Experience and Others

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Our Research and LOI



Dr. Bipro Dhar

Bioenergy and resource recovery from waste/wastewater, microbial electrochemical technologies, anaerobic digestion/fermentation, environmental biotechnology, circular economy



Dr. Rasha Maal-Bared

Environmental microbiology, biological wastewater treatment, emerging contaminants

WRC LOI: Synergistic Integration of Oxygenic Photogranules and Nanobubbles for Wastewater Treatment Process Intensification

Partners: EPCOR and NGT Canada Inc.

PI: Dr. Rasha Maal-Bared, **Co-PI:** Dr. Bipro Dhar

Outline

1. What has worked well?
2. What has been tricky?
3. What would you do differently/what advice would you give to new applicants?

What has worked well? What has been tricky?

LOI template and submission process

- Clear LOI template structure
- Word template was better than the Google Form used in the second round
- If NSERC Alliance is the primary target for matching funds, maybe a shorter version of the NSERC template can be used to save time in the later stage
- Option for supporting documents can be included
- Standardized budget template (Excel spreadsheet)

What has worked well? What has been tricky?

LOI Timeline

- 45 days to prepare the LOI, which is reasonable.
- However, when you consider developing
 - ✓ a strong research proposal,
 - ✓ coordinating with collaborators and industry partners,
 - ✓ Planning a realistic budget and matching funds,
- It may be quite challenging, particularly when applying for the first time. Maybe an option for a one-to-one meeting with the research admin or at least one webinar would be helpful, particularly for ECRs. Specifying priority areas for each LOI call might be helpful.

What has worked well? What has been tricky?

Evaluation and Feedback

- Constructive and clear feedback provided.
- Adequate time provided for revisions.
- Providing a clear rubric would be more helpful (quality of proposal, team excellence, TRL, implementation pathways, etc.)

What would you do differently/what advice would you give to new applicants?

- Identifying and refining the ultimate objective
 - EPCOR-specific issues versus shaping the future of water research and management
- Project should focus on real operational challenges or industry needs, even if TRL is low
 - Distinguishing if application potential or novelty are more valued
 - Balance between inter/multidisciplinary vs. feasibility (clear scope, practical milestones/deliverables within the budget)
- The challenge of on-site training opportunities, access and clarity on future opportunities with partners

What would you do differently/what advice would you give to new applicants?

- Opportunity to gain a better understanding of operational challenges and what success looks like
 - Stronger explanation of how project components integrate (how success depends on their coordination?)
- Network building and learning how to interact are critical and sustainable benefits
 - Creating events to help build relationships before the LOI stage.
 - ECR will need help identifying partners and how to interact with them.
- Clear success metrics, expected deliverables and implementation plan
 - Constructing a Go/No-Go chart
 - Understanding the limitations of technologies and processes requires failing fast sometimes
 - Communicating outcomes as a team in the right platforms

THANK YOU!



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