

True Patriot Love CIMVHR Research Initiative 2025 Invictus Games Research Legacy Project

Request for Proposals: The 2025 *Invictus Games Research Legacy Project*

Anticipated Timeline & Budget:

Application Deadline: 19 May 2024 at 11:59 pm (EST)

Notice of Award: June 2024

Estimated Project End Date: June 2026

Award Value for this RFP:

Up to \$350,000 available over 24 months

The True Patriot Love CIMVHR Research Initiative encourages researchers from relevant fields to submit project proposals to compete for access to funding to accelerate research and improve the health and well-being of Canadian military, Veterans, and their families. This opportunity has been made possible through the support of True Patriot Love and the True Patriot Love Fund. The Fund was established in January 2015 for the purposes of supporting research to discover new treatments, establish evidence-based programs, and increase access to programs and treatments dedicated to advancing the health and well-being of Canadian military members, Veterans, and their families.

Introduction to Invictus Games Research Legacy Project

There is a long history of the use of sport, recreational activities, and adventurous training, in the recovery and rehabilitation of military personnel who were wounded, have become ill or sustained an injury during, or as a consequence of their service. Film records from British Pathé newsreels show examples of World War One (WWI) amputees participating in a range of recreational sports, including wheelchair races and tug of war¹. During the same period, blind and visually impaired veterans, rehabilitating at St. Dunstan's hospital, can be seen taking part in rowing on the River Thames². The range of sporting opportunities available to serving and retired members and of the Armed Forces continued to expand during the 20th and 21st centuries to the point where the variety of sports on offer is virtually limitless thanks, in part, to the vision of military organizations and civilian charities in Canada and across the globe.

What was once seen as impossible, such as amputees taking part in scuba diving, mountaineering, skydiving and skeleton, has not only become possible but is relatively commonplace. A critical part of the offer, since Guttman's first Games at Stoke Mandeville in 1948, is the opportunity to participate in domestic and international competitive sports tournaments, including the Invictus Games, the first of which took place in London in 2014. Unsurprisingly, the Invictus Games has attracted interest from the research community with a variety of Invictus Games based research programs being undertaken since 2016³, when the 2nd Games were held in Orlando, USA. Research interest continued and an example of some of the findings emerging from a longitudinal study, commissioned by the Invictus Games Foundation (IGF) in 2018, can be found on their website⁴.

The Vancouver Whistler 2025 hybrid winter Games offers a unique opportunity for Canada and partner nations to make a significant contribution to the military sports recovery literature. It lends itself to the evaluation of several emerging trends in sports recovery, physical activity, and adventure therapy by optimizing the acute and chronic benefits associated with participating in a wider range of activities, for both competitors and their immediate social support network. For the first time in the history of the Invictus Games, winter sports have been added to the schedule and form a key component of the study to understand the impact of winter sports and environment on the Games.

Research Objectives

This Request for Proposals is seeking submissions to conduct a two-year, multi-nation, mixed method original research study to improve the experience, health benefits and well-being of competitors to inform and improve future Invictus Games.

Proposed studies are asked to include a mixed-methods, biopsychosocial design (i.e. interviews and biometric data collection, surveys/questionnaires) that aims to understand the experience, impact and challenges for those selected and not selected to the Games. In addition, the research study must address each phase of the Games, including the lead up to the Games (training), during the 2025 Invictus Games (competition), and the period after the Games.

A key focus of the research project is to understand the holistic impact of the Games, including the benefits and potential negative consequences of participation, the opportunities to support Veteran and family recovery for those who are and are not selected, and an understanding of experiences and opportunities outside of the Games to better support the military and Veteran community. To achieve this goal, research proposals should address the following areas:

- The concept/framework of recovery and the unique implications of military experience
- The incorporation of literature outside of the Invictus Games and structured sporting competitions, such as participating in outdoor sports and adventurous activities (e.g. mountaineering, skiing, air activities, surfing, etc).
- The role, impact of, and opportunities to engage in positive risk taking.
- The opportunities to learn from the IG experience to further support ill and injured Veterans.
- The understanding of opportunities for post-traumatic growth from the IG journey, as well as the potential negative consequences before, during, and after the IG for those selected and not selected to compete.
- Make recommendations for the creation, development, delivery, and maintenance of military adaptive sport programmes (i.e. implications for practice).

Eligible Applicants

Proposals must be led by at least one Principal Investigator who is an academic researcher affiliated with a **Canadian CIMVHR University Member**. Proposals from international affiliates will be considered if done in collaboration with a Canadian CIMVHR University Member. Consideration will be given to proposals that include a qualified academic, affiliated with an accredited academic institution in **British Columbia** as part of the project team. As well, consideration will be given to proposals that identify additional collaborators from an **Invictus Games Participating Nation**, including other academic institutions / research hospitals, and/or

government representation. N.B. Submissions should include a multidisciplinary team of international researchers well versed in ALL areas of expertise related to the needs of this literature review.

NOTE: CIMVHR has also developed a network of partners from the participating Nations, as well as Subject Matter Experts in areas of adaptive sport research who will volunteer their time to collaborate and provide thought leadership on IG2025 Legacy Research. All applicants, non-applicant interested parties, and IG Participating Nation SME's are welcome to volunteer on this **Research Interest Group** (RIG).

Application Deadline

Please use the CIMVHR Application Template to complete your full proposal, which can be found on our CIMVHR website at Funding Opportunities. Additional application guidelines will also be found on the CIMVHR website as an attachment and should be reviewed in detail.

Final proposals for this research contract must be submitted through the CIMVHR online portal at the bottom of the Funding Opportunities page of the CIMVHR website **on or before 19 May 2024 at 11:59 PM EST** for consideration and evaluation.

Interest in the Research Interest Group (RIG)

If you are interested in volunteering to join the Research Interest Group (RIG) to provide thought leadership around IG 2025 Legacy Research, please email Dr. Nicholas Held at njh1@queensu.ca using the subject line – **INTERESTED IN THE IG2025 RIG** and he will reach out to you with further information.

Contact

CIMVHR is available to discuss the feasibility of your proposed research prior to completing and submitting the proposal.

If you are an international academic and are interested in working with a Canadian research team, but have no connections, please email Amy Doyle at a.doyle@queensu.ca who will help to connect you.

For further information, please contact:

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