

The National Research Council of Canada's Industrial Research Assistance Program (NRC IRAP) is also building on its existing relationships with innovative small and medium-sized businesses to support supply challenges for innovative solutions to address urgent needs related to COVID-19. Priorities include personal protective equipment, sanitization products, diagnostic and testing products, therapeutics, and disease tracking technology.

NGen is working closely with NRC IRAP to coordinate the use of IRAP funding for technology development and procurement with NGen's own funding and industry support initiatives.

[The \\$15 million COVID-19 Challenges Procurement Program](#) will post challenges seeking near-to-market solutions from SMEs (fewer than 500 staff). Qualifying firms may receive financial support to refine and sell their product or solution. Funding will be provided by NRC IRAP, in collaboration with [Innovative Solutions Canada](#).

Challenges will be determined in line with priorities established by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), Health Canada (HC) and other federal government departments corresponding to the needs of health providers in the fight against COVID-19.

NRC IRAP and Innovative Solutions Canada (ISC) will:

- Post the PHAC and HC challenges (ISC)
- Award Phase 1 funding to successful small and medium-sized businesses to develop a proof of concept for their solution (NRC IRAP)
- Award Phase 2 funding to the firms with the best concepts so they can develop a working prototype (NRC IRAP)

The NRC, PHAC, HC or another federal department or agency will then be able to purchase the product for use against COVID-19.

NGen will work with NRC IRAP to support promising projects looking to move from prototype to production launch.

Companies with promising technology relevant to the COVID-19 challenges can register their technology or product by visiting the NRC's [website](#). NGen will also work with NRC to direct early stage technology development proposals to the NRC IRAP team where appropriate..