## DEVELOPMENT FUNDS FOR AI-RELATED MASTER'S PROGRAMS

To address the demand for talent to advance AI-technology and its application to support economic growth and productivity, the Vector Institute, in partnership with the Government of Ontario, has been tasked with increasing the number of artificial intelligence (AI)-related master's graduates. To support universities in this endeavour, limited one-time funds may be requested to aid in developing and launching enhanced or new AI-related master's programs. The AI Master's initiative recognizes universities with demonstrable expertise in AI-related areas and master's programs that: i) meet the essential requirements for core technical AI or complementary AI-related fields[1]; and ii) prepare highly qualified graduates who demonstrate area-specific advanced knowledge, skills and competencies sought by the AI-sector.

To support universities in contributing to the achievement of the AI master's goal, an initial round of one-time funding is being made available to aid in offsetting direct costs associated with the development and first-time delivery of new curriculum components[2]. These components serve to enhance or expand existing AI-related master's programs or contribute to newly created programs that address the essential requirements and advance AI-related learning outcomes. The initial round of development funds shall not exceed $500,000 in total which is expected to support multiple AI-related programs. Primarily, the funds will accelerate completion of the activities associated with expanding an existing program or launching a new program; it is expected that departments have core faculty strength in AI and have the infrastructure in place or committed to deliver the AI-related program.
A request for one-time funds may be made at any time; however, the process for acquiring Vector recognition of the master's program as one that provides students with the skills and competencies identified by industry as essential for Ontario's AI workforce must be underway prior to or concurrent with a request for funds (see https://vectorinstitute.ai/AImasters/).

A request for development funds must include the following:
• Program details (university, program name, program director and contact information)
• Rationale for the request (the business case underpinning the request, i.e. describe how the investment will impact the quality of both the program and its graduates and project the impact on enrolment)
• Description of the newly developed curriculum component(s) and its integration within the AI-related program
• Full justification and description of each line item expense including its relationship to the development of new curriculum components and first-time delivery of new curriculum

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[1] Refer to the guidance document Guidance for AI-related Master's Programs.
[2] A curriculum component will often be a course (in-person or online) but can include various combinations of: classroom/seminar/lab-based learning, distance learning, culminating or capstone projects, summer school, faculty-supervised research projects, etc. A curriculum component could be a topic or competency that is developed as a thread through multiple courses as opposed to a stand-alone component.

components. Eligible expenses may include but are not limited to: material and content development; salaries and benefits of teaching assistants, instructors; and other support staff as may be justified; and consideration may be given to hardware (not infrastructure) and software licenses. Only direct costs associated with the AI-related curriculum components will be considered; investments extending beyond the first-delivery and capital expenditures are not eligible.

• Timeline of project and estimated completion date
• Sign-off from the program director and from the associated department head or equivalent

Vector will review requests as they are submitted, and funds approved shall be disbursed in accordance with the terms of agreement to be signed by the university and the Vector Institute.

Please submit requests for development funds to [RaiseAI@vectorinstitute.ai](mailto:RaiseAI@vectorinstitute.ai)