

# Insight Development Grants 2020 Committee Guidelines

The [Insight Development Grants](#) funding opportunity was launched in November 2010 as part of SSHRC's [Insight program](#). Insight Development Grants proposals are expected to respond to objectives put forward in the call for proposals for the [Insight program](#).

Insight Development Grants support research in its initial stages. The grants enable the development of new research questions, as well as experimentation with new methods, theoretical approaches and/or ideas. Funding is provided for short-term research development projects, of up to two years, proposed by individuals or teams.

The [SSHRC Manual for Adjudication Committee Members](#) provides information on policies, principles and procedures for adjudicators. Please read this manual thoroughly, before reading these guidelines. The purpose of these guidelines is to provide practical information specific to the adjudication of Insight Development Grant applications.

Within the Insight Development Grants funding opportunity, funding is available for two distinct categories of scholars: emerging scholars and established scholars.

This funding opportunity supports high-quality research projects by **emerging scholars** to develop new research questions and/or approaches. Such projects may build on and further the applicant's (or team's) graduate work and/or represent a continuation of their overall research trajectory.

Funding for **established scholars** provides support to explore new research questions and/or approaches that are distinct from the applicant's previous/ongoing research. Research projects should be clearly delimited and in the early stages of the research process. Insight Development Grant funding is not intended to support ongoing research for established scholars.

## 1. Important Milestones

Deadline to Apply	Applications Available	Chairs briefing	Calibration Meetings	Adjudication Committee Meetings	Results Typically Available to Administering Organizations
February 2	Late March	Early April	Early-Mid April	Early May	June

## 2. Reading Applications

The applications are available in SSHRC's Extranet site. Members will receive an email inviting them to access relevant committee-specific information.

Members are asked, prior to adjudication, to familiarize themselves as much as possible with all applications received to the committee; however, each member will be assigned a limited number of applications that must be reviewed in detail as a reader.

## Reader Assignment

In order to have access to applications, members will be asked to identify any conflicts of interest with applicants, co-applicants and collaborators on applications that will be reviewed by the committee. Program officers will then assign each application to **two readers**<sup>1</sup>: Where possible, Reader A is the committee member whose area of expertise is closest to the subject of the application; Reader B is often a non-specialist. Program officers will complete Reader assignment in early April.

Members are also asked to refer to an [online training module](#) as a guide to address the potential for unconscious bias in merit review. As biases may exist to different degrees in the merit review process, the short module promotes an understanding of unconscious bias, how it can affect merit review, and ways to mitigate biases of different kinds. Developed by CIHR, NSERC and SSHRC, the module is part of the agencies' commitment to equity, diversity and inclusion.

### 3. Assessing Applications

The Challenge, Feasibility and Capability evaluation criteria (see [Table 1](#)) in conjunction with the scoring grid (see [Appendix 1](#) - Scoring Grid) are used by adjudication committees to evaluate Insight Development Grant applications.

Committee members are provided with an evaluation form (see [Appendix 2](#) - **Insight Development Grants Reader Evaluation Form**).

Readers should use this form to 1) rate each of the evaluation sub-criteria, 2) provide an overall score for the three criteria and 3) take brief notes about their assigned applications. Using this form will facilitate the committee discussion as readers will be asked to provide a rationale for their score. This form is for personal use only and is not submitted to, nor is it forwarded to the applicant. Finally, readers are asked to submit their score for each of the three criteria (Challenge, Feasibility, and Capability) for all assigned applications a few days in advance of the meeting.

The following table indicates where to locate the appropriate information in order to assess each sub-criteria as well as additional information to take into consideration when evaluating an application.

Table 1 - Sub-criteria and Additional Information

☰ ☱	Sub-criteria	Additional Information	Modules
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<sup>1</sup> Change for 2020 IDG adjudication only to lighten member workload during the COVID-19 crisis.

C.F.	Sub-criteria	Additional Information	Modules
	For established scholars: relevance of the proposal to the objectives of the funding opportunity	For established scholars, the proposed research must be distinct from the applicant's previous/ongoing research. A failing score should be given to this sub-criterion and to the Challenge criteria if the distinction is not clear enough.	Detailed Description
	Originality, significance and expected contribution to knowledge	For emerging scholars, the proposed research may build on and further the applicant's (or team's) graduate work and/or represent a continuation of their overall research trajectory.	Detailed Description
	Appropriateness of the literature review		Detailed Description; References
	Appropriateness of the theoretical approach or framework		Detailed Description
	Appropriateness of the methods/approach		Detailed Description
	<a href="#">Quality of training and mentoring</a> to be provided to students, emerging scholars and other highly qualified personnel, and opportunities for them to contribute	Specific roles and responsibilities of students and research assistants, including how their duties will complement their academic training.	Roles and Training of Students
	Potential for the project results to have influence and impact within and/or beyond the social sciences and humanities research community		Expected Outcomes

	Sub-criteria	Additional Information	Modules
Feasibility – The plan to achieve excellence (20%)	Appropriateness of the proposed timeline and probability that the objectives will be met		Detailed Description
	Expertise of the applicant/team in relation to the proposed research		SSHRC CCV
	Appropriateness of the requested budget, justification of proposed costs, and, where applicable, other financial and/or in-kind contributions	The availability or anticipation of funding from another source, while considered generally beneficial, is not obligatory, and the appropriateness of other sources depends on the specific needs of the project.	Funds Requested from SSHRC and Funds from Other Sources
	Quality and appropriateness of knowledge mobilization plans, including for effective dissemination, exchange and engagement with stakeholders within and/or beyond the research community where applicable		Knowledge Mobilization Plan
Capability – The expertise to succeed (30%)	Quality, quantity and significance of past experience and published and/or creative outputs of the applicant and any co-applicants, relative to their roles in the project and their respective stages of career	Refereed publications, including books, chapters of books and articles; reviews by the applicant/co-applicant, or published reviews of his or her work; research results from previous research grants; awards from SSHRC or other sources.	SSHRC CCV
	Evidence of other past knowledge mobilization activities (e.g. films, performances, commissioned reports, knowledge syntheses, experience in collaboration/ other interactions with stakeholders, contributions to public debate and media), and of impacts on professional practice, social services and policies, etc.	Research reports, papers presented at scholarly meetings or conferences, and other forms of written scholarly expression or participation in public discourse and debate; academic awards and distinctions (especially in the case of those applying as emerging scholars).	SSHRC CCV
	Quality and quantity of past contributions to the development of training and mentoring of students, postdoctoral researchers and other highly qualified personnel		SSHRC CCV

## *Important Notes Regarding Assessment of Applications*

### 1. Revisions to Previous Application Module:

If this module is completed, it must be taken into consideration while assessing the application and SSHRC CCVs of the applicant and co-applicant(s).

### 2. Research training:

SSHRC considers **research training** to be a key priority. In evaluating the application against the Challenge criteria, the committee must take into consideration, where appropriate, the nature and extent of the training and how it will complement the students' own academic training. For more information, please consult SSHRC's [Guidelines for Effective Research Training](#).

### 3. Evaluation of Capability:

This is primarily based on the contributions to research that the applicant and co-applicants, have made within the last six years, while considering any **special circumstances or career interruptions** that may have delayed or interrupted their research careers. This information is available in the "Leaves of Absence and Impact on Research" section of the SSHRC CCV. Members should also evaluate each applicant's **overall research contribution in relation to, or measured against, the stage of the applicant's research career.**

Committee members should take into account the type of organization with which the researcher is affiliated. A researcher affiliated with a **small institution** that does not have a graduate program in his or her area of expertise will necessarily make different contributions to student training than a researcher from a large institution that offers an extensive and well-established graduate program.

For applications from **research teams**, committee members must evaluate the team's overall capability in light of each member's role in the project, placing more weight on the achievements of those with more central roles. The applicant's achievements should form an important component of the evaluation of the team, as this person is responsible for the planning and co-ordination of the entire research project. If the adjudication committee determines that the applicant is not responsible for, or equipped to exercise, the leadership of the research team, the committee may lower the score assigned for Feasibility. Members should refer to the "Roles and Responsibilities" section of the application for information on the planned roles and responsibilities of team members.

### 4. Evaluation of budgets:

Committees are asked to adhere to the principle of "Minimal Essential Funding", which requires members to carefully examine budgets and cut expenses which are deemed to be inflated. Committee members should not hesitate to ask their program officer about expenses which do not appear to fall squarely within the policy guidelines. For further information, members may consult the [Tri-Agency Financial Administration Guide](#).

Committee members are expected to come to the adjudication meeting ready to discuss the budgets. In order to ensure the efficiency of the committee deliberations, readers are asked, during the evaluation of their assigned proposals, to identify any expenses found to be excessive and to be prepared to suggest particular items to be cut. Each committee has a budget envelope. Budget envelopes for each committee are calculated prior to the adjudication meetings and are based on a target success rate.

Committees have the latitude to deviate from the target success rate to a certain degree; that is, there will be a designated ceiling. During the adjudication meetings the budget envelope is displayed in the committee spreadsheet with a column indicating the amount of the envelope left to be allocated.

Should a committee's budget reductions result in a success rate above the target range, additional funds will be returned to the global budget envelope and redistributed among all committees by way of an amalgamated relative rank-ordered list.

Note that applications will automatically fail on the Feasibility criterion if the committee deems that the budget should be reduced by 50% or more. In addition, a committee may assign a failing score on the Feasibility criterion if it deems that 30 % or more of the proposed budget is either not appropriate or not sufficiently justified.

### *Research-Creation Applications*

SSHRC welcomes applications involving [research-creation](#). Applicants submitting research-creation projects are given the opportunity to include support material with their applications. See SSHRC's [Guidelines for Research-Creation Support Materials](#) for details. Members serving on a Research-Creation adjudication committee should refer to [Appendix 3 Research-Creation](#), for additional guidelines specific to their review task.

## **4. Prior to Adjudication Meeting - Preliminary Scores**

### *Preliminary Scores*

Readers are asked to submit their preliminary scores for each of the three evaluation criteria for all assigned applications by a date agreed upon in advance with the Program Officer (see section [3. Assessing Applications](#)). Members are provided with a simple Excel sheet for this purpose. It is very important that this date be respected.

Once all preliminary scores have been submitted, they are compiled to establish a preliminary ranking of applications per scholar type: Emerging Scholars and Established Scholars. This preliminary ranking determines the order of discussion of the applications during the adjudication meeting. It is normally provided to committee members before the meeting accompanied by statistics that indicate each member's scoring trends.

Prior to the meeting, members should review the applications for which there is a significant discrepancy between their scores and those of the other reader.

## **5. The Adjudication Meeting**

The adjudication meeting is described in detail in the [SSHRC Manual for Adjudication Committee Members](#).

An initial version of the preliminary rank-ordered spreadsheet will be made available on the committee's Extranet site. During the meeting, updated versions will be saved on the Extranet so that members can view them at strategic points in the process.

Committees discuss Emerging and Established scholars separately starting from the highest ranked to the lowest.

Given the challenges of working remotely this year, a number of changes have been made to streamline the adjudication process in order to allow us to complete it in a timely manner:

- The adjudication meetings will take place via teleconference rather than videoconference given the heavy demand on the secure government videoconferencing software and its resultant instability, as well as SSHRC's staff lack of access to computer equipment and technical support from home.
- For applications ranked initially in the top 25%, only budgets will be discussed unless the application is flagged for discussion.
- Applications ranked initially in the bottom 30% will not be discussed unless flagged for discussion.
- Applicants will receive their scores on the 3 evaluation criteria. Committees will not be required to fill out evaluation forms, whether an application was discussed or not.

Your program officer will provide you with information regarding the scheduling of the teleconferences and any necessary weblinks.

## Appendix 1 - Scoring Grid

Committee members must assign a score to each of the three evaluation criteria (Challenge, Feasibility and Capability).

The weighting of the Insight Development Grants evaluation criteria is as follows:

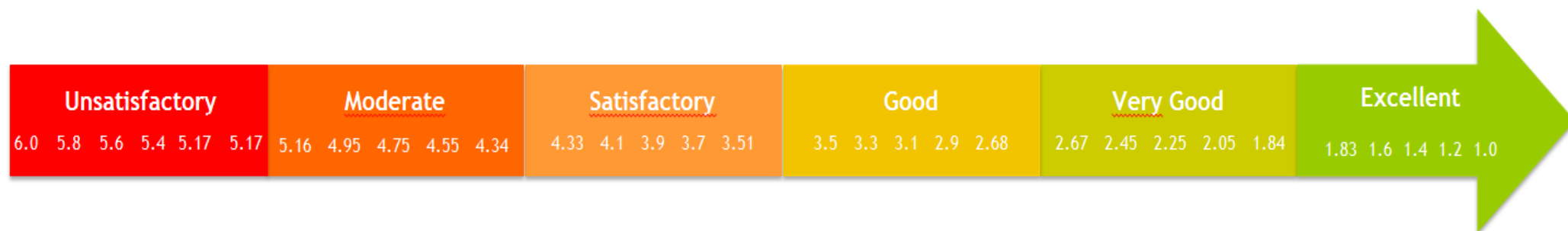
- Challenge (50%)
- Feasibility (20%)
- Capability (30%)

SSHRC will consider all applications that receive a minimum rating of **Moderate (5.16)** or better for each of the three criteria as recommended for funding. If the nature of the research proposed is such that an element mentioned in this table is not necessary, it should not be taken into account in the evaluation of the proposed research. If a committee member's rationale for assigning a score to a particular application differs significantly from what is prescribed in the table, he or she must be prepared to briefly explain their reasons when reporting on the application at the committee meeting.

When assigning a score to the Capability criteria, committee members should take into account the **applicant's and co-applicants' stage of career, institution size and any special circumstances and/or career interruptions**, as appropriate.



## Insight Development Grants 2020 Committee Guidelines



Criteria	Unsatisfactory (6.0 - 5.17)	Moderate (5.16 - 4.34)	Satisfactory (4.33 - 3.51)	Good (3.5 - 2.68)	Very Good (2.67 - 1.84)	Excellent (1.83 - 1.0)
Challenge (50%)	Proposal has no probability of significant contribution to the field. There are serious shortcomings in one or more critical elements.	Proposal has low probability of significant contribution to the field. A weak research proposal that lacks more than one compelling element.	Proposal may contribute to the development of the field. An average research proposal that lacks one compelling element.	Proposal is somewhat original and may contribute to the development of the field. At least two elements could have been better described/developed.	Proposal is original, innovative and will contribute to the development of the field. One element could have been better described/developed.	Proposal is extremely original, innovative and at the forefront of the field. All elements are appropriate, clearly defined and up-to-date.
Feasibility (20%)	Objectives are unclear and there is a low probability of achieving success. There are serious shortcomings in one or more critical elements.	Objectives are identified but there is a low probability that they will be met. Concerns exist regarding at least two elements.	Objectives are identified but the committee has doubts that they will be met. Concerns exist regarding one element.	Objectives are defined and it appears likely that they will be met. At least two elements could have been better defined/developed.	Objectives are clearly defined and it is highly likely that they will be met. One element could have been better described/developed.	Objectives are explicit and clearly defined, and there is confidence that they will be met. All elements are appropriate, well justified, coherent and realistic.
Capability (30%)	Poor quality of published and/or creative outputs and/or rate of publication. Past contributions appear to have had little impact within or beyond the field. Little to no evidence of knowledge mobilization activities, development of talent and experience in collaboration. Potential to make future contributions is doubtful.	Low quality of published and/or creative outputs and/or rate of publication. Past contributions appear to have had low impact within the field or beyond the field. Lack of evidence of knowledge mobilization activities or development of talent and experience in collaboration. Potential to make future contributions appears to be low.	Fair quality of published and/or creative outputs and/or rate of publication. Past contributions have had some impact within the field. Some evidence of knowledge mobilization activities, development of talent and experience in collaboration. Potential to make future contributions appears to be fair.	Good quality of published and/or creative outputs and rate of publication. Past contributions have had some impact within and possibly beyond the field. Evidence of knowledge mobilization activities, development of talent and experience in collaboration. Potential to make future contributions is good.	Very good quality of published and/or creative outputs and rate of publication. Past contributions have had a considerable impact within and possibly beyond the field. Ample evidence of knowledge mobilization activities, development of talent and experience in collaboration. Potential to make future contributions is high.	Excellent quality of published and/or creative outputs and rate of publication. Past contributions have had a significant impact within and beyond the field. Abundant evidence of knowledge mobilization activities, development of talent and experience in collaboration. Potential to make future contributions is excellent.

# Insight Development Grants 2020 Committee Guidelines

## Appendix 2 - Insight Development Grants Reader Evaluation Form

**Committee Member:** Last Name, First Name - Reader X

**Applicant Name:** Last Name, First Name

**Application Title:**

**Part 1: Instructions:**

This form is intended for your personal use to capture your notes for the adjudication meeting. It will not be made available to the applicant. Referring to the legend below and the evaluation grid in Appendix 1 of the IDG Guidelines for committee members, please assess each of the sub-criteria below by placing an X in the appropriate box (applications must receive an overall rating of moderate (5.16), or better, on each of the three criteria to be recommended for funding).

**Part 2: Legend**

<b>N/A</b>	Not applicable
<b>U</b>	Unsatisfactory
<b>M</b>	Moderate
<b>S</b>	Satisfactory
<b>G</b>	Good
<b>VG</b>	Very good
<b>E</b>	Excellent

**Part 3: Challenge - The aim and importance of the endeavour (50%)**

Sub-criteria (No specific weighting assigned to each sub-criterion)	N/A	U	M	S	G	VG	E
For established scholars: relevance of the proposal to the objectives of the funding opportunity							
Originality, significance and expected contribution to knowledge							
Appropriateness of the literature review							
Appropriateness of the theoretical approach or framework							

Sub-criteria (No specific weighting assigned to each sub-criterion)	N/A	U	M	S	G	VG	E
Appropriateness of the methods/approach							
Quality of training and mentoring to be provided to students, emerging scholars and other highly qualified personnel, and opportunities for them to contribute							
Potential for the project to have influence and impact within and/or beyond the social sciences and humanities research community							

**Part 4: Feasibility - The plan to achieve excellence (20%)**

Sub-criteria (No specific weighting assigned to each sub-criterion)	N/A	U	M	S	G	VG	E
Appropriateness of the proposed timeline and probability that the objectives will be met							
Expertise of the applicant/team in relation to the proposed research							
Appropriateness of the requested budget, justification of proposed costs, and, where applicable, other financial and/or in-kind contributions							
Quality and appropriateness of knowledge mobilization plans, including for effective dissemination, exchange and engagement with stakeholders within and/or beyond the research community where applicable							

**Part 5: Capability - The expertise to succeed (30%)**

In the case of a research team, evaluate the strength and suitability of each team member’s research achievements (**do not include collaborators**). In your evaluation, address the following criteria while considering the **applicant’s or team member’s stage of career and any career interruptions and/or special circumstances**.

Sub-criteria (No specific weight assigned to each sub-criterion)	N/A	U	M	S	G	VG	E
Quality, quantity and significance of past experience and published and/or creative outputs of the applicant and any co-applicants, relative to their roles in the project and their respective stages of career							
Evidence of other past knowledge mobilization activities (e.g. films, performances, commissioned reports, knowledge syntheses, experience in collaboration/ other interactions with stakeholders, contributions to public debate and media), and of impacts on professional practice, social services and policies, etc.							
Quality and quantity of past contributions to the training and mentoring of students, postdoctoral researchers and other highly qualified personnel							

**Part 6: Comments**

Briefly describe the proposal’s strengths and weaknesses in relation to the above criteria.

**Part 7: Overall Scores:** Please enter your score for each criterion (Challenge, Feasibility, Capability) in your Reader’s scoring sheet.

Challenge 50%	Feasibility 20%	Capability 30%

## Appendix 3 - Research-Creation

### ADJUDICATION COMMITTEE: ROLE AND FUNCTIONING

#### 1. Composition of the Adjudication Committee

The Insight Development adjudication committees are multidisciplinary peer review committees that bring together experts from various disciplines and universities grouped by discipline or by area of study, as appropriate. They reflect a broad range of expertise in various fields, as well as an appropriate regional, linguistic and gender balance.

#### 2. Description/Definitions

An artist-researcher is defined as an individual whose work involves research and the creation of works of art. Their work should include the training and mentoring of students and/or postdoctoral researchers. Individuals holding grants must be affiliated with an [eligible Canadian institution](#).

Research-creation: An approach to research that combines creative and academic research practices, and supports the development of knowledge and innovation through artistic expression, scholarly investigation, and experimentation. The creation process is situated within the research activity and produces critically informed work in a variety of media (art forms). Research-creation cannot be limited to the interpretation or analysis of a creator's work, conventional works of technological development, or work that focuses on the creation of curricula. The research-creation process and the resulting artistic work are judged according to SSHRC's established merit review criteria.

Fields that may involve research-creation may include, but are not limited to: architecture, design, creative writing, visual arts (e.g., painting, drawing, sculpture, ceramics, textiles), performing arts (e.g., dance, music, theatre), film, video, performance art, interdisciplinary arts, media and electronic arts, and new artistic practices.

#### 3. Eligibility/Relevance

Applications may be submitted by researchers, artist-researchers, and mixed teams of artists and researchers.

All applicants and participants must meet the eligibility criteria specific to their category as well as the Insight Development Grant funding opportunity objectives. Professional artists may participate, as research collaborators, as consultants and/or professional service providers or participants. If artists are involved as paid consultants or participants, the fees should be in accordance with the principal investigator's institutional requirements. Applicants should also consult artists' representation agencies such as the Canadian Artists' Representation /Le Front des artistes canadiens (CARFAC), l'Union des artistes or Actors' Equity, etc. for more detailed information regarding artists' fees.

Proposals that do not meet the definition (e.g., do not involve research that is set directly and actively *within* a creation process) will be considered not "relevant" for Research-Creation. However, this does not render them ineligible for the selected funding opportunity. Such applications will be redirected to the selected group or, if relevant, to the priority area committee for adjudication. Proposals that focus on the creation of curriculum are not

eligible, though it is understood that research-creation can lead to improved curricula and that this may serve as a method of disseminating research results.

As a general rule, research-creation involves a sustained, reflective research activity set directly and actively *within* the creation process itself, not simply research *about* the creation process, nor creative work involving minimal scholarly investigation. Proposals should contain, simultaneously, a developed scholarly apparatus and an integral connection to contemporary literary/artistic practices.

The proposed research-creation plan must address clear research questions, offer theoretical contextualization within the relevant field or fields of literary/artistic inquiry, and present a well-considered methodological approach. Both the research and the resulting literary/artistic works must meet peer standards of excellence and be suitable for publication, public performance or viewing.

#### 4. Adjudication and Evaluation

##### a. Instructions given to the applicants:

In the application instructions, applicants have been asked to identify their proposals as a 'research-creation' proposal based on the definition SSHRC has provided. They are required, to include, in the one-page attachment, a website link to provide up to 3 samples of their work, or excerpts of their work, (e.g., images, audio, video, written material, etc.) that illustrate their qualifications and/or the nature of their proposed research-creation.

Applicants are also informed that: *Reasonable efforts will be made to view or listen to support material; however, due to technical challenges, SSHRC cannot guarantee that the samples will be accessed. Please consider that reviewers will have limited time per application to view, read or listen to samples of work.*

##### b. Instructions for committee members:

Committee members should consult the Manual for Adjudication Committee Members for general guidelines and principles as well as the additional information provided in this document.

As members of the adjudication committee, you should be able to access the support material by following the exact URL indicated in the one-page section of the application called 'Research-Creation Support Material.' In this same section, applicants should have provided, titles, dates of creation/production, and a brief context for the works presented. They should also have explained why they are including these items and how they relate to their proposed project. Applicants are cautioned that 'reviewers will have limited time per application to view, read or listen to samples of work'. Therefore, please use your own discretion in deciding the amount of time you wish to spend reviewing these websites.

When provided, this support material should be taken into consideration as part of the evaluation. Creative outputs should be evaluated according to established disciplinary standards as well as creative and/or artistic merit. The categories of research and creative activity will vary across disciplines and institutions.

Indigenous Research: Applicants who conduct Indigenous research, while coming from diverse cultural traditions, are committed to respectful research involving both Indigenous and non-Indigenous perspectives. This understanding of Indigenous research represents a shift away from research *on* and *for* Indigenous Peoples, to research *by* and *with* Indigenous Peoples.

All research involving Indigenous Peoples must be undertaken in accordance with the 2nd edition of the [\*Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans, Chapter 9: Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples of Canada\*](#).

Ethics Review Board: If the proposed research involves human beings as research subjects, the applicants should consult the [\*Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans\*](#) and submit the proposal to their institution's research ethics board. However, creative activities are not always subject to a review.

Article 2.6 Creative practice activities, in and of themselves, do not require REB review. However, research that employs creative practice to obtain responses from participants that will be analyzed to answer a research question is subject to REB review.

Application Creative practice is a process through which an artist makes or interprets a work or works of art. It may also include a study of the process of how a work of art is generated. Creative practice activities do not require REB review, but they may be governed by ethical practices established within the cultural sector.

## 5. Artistic merit

SSHRC encourages the adjudication committees to broadly apply the Challenge, Feasibility and Capability evaluation criteria. Members may assess the research and artistic quality of the applicant's work as demonstrated in the support material; the research and artistic merit of the proposed activities, including the process and strategies; the creative and artistic interest of the proposed collaborators; the clarity and relevancy of the proposed methodology and research questions to be studied; the contribution of the proposed activities, processes and strategies in attaining the objectives of the present proposal. Members serving on the Research-Creation adjudication committee will receive additional guidelines specific to their review task.

## Appendix 4 - Guidelines for Effective Knowledge Mobilization

These guidelines are intended to help applicants and grant holders incorporate knowledge mobilization activities into their SSHRC-funded research, to maximize the impact of social sciences and humanities research.

The Guidelines for Effective Knowledge Mobilization are informed by the 2013 Evaluation of Knowledge Mobilization Funding Opportunities and by SSHRC's continued efforts to promote knowledge mobilization in its programs, funding opportunities and corporate activities. SSHRC is, for example, currently engaged in knowledge mobilization activities through its Imagining Canada's Future initiative.

These guidelines will help grant applicants determine the following:

- To whom should research results be communicated?
- How is the process of communicating research results best mapped?
- How will the proposed knowledge mobilization activities advance the stated research goals?
- Will interactions with knowledge users be fed into research design?
- How will interactions be sustained beyond the life of the project?

Applicants' use of these guidelines will also enable SSHRC's merit reviewers to more effectively evaluate the knowledge mobilization activities described in funding applications. The guidelines also serve as a resource, when advising prospective applicants, for postsecondary institutions and partnering organizations involved in research and related activities.

### What is knowledge mobilization?

Knowledge mobilization is an umbrella term encompassing a wide range of activities relating to the production and use of research results, including knowledge:

- synthesis;
- dissemination;
- transfer;
- exchange; and
- co-creation by researchers and knowledge users.

Please see [SSHRC's definition of knowledge mobilization](#).



## Knowledge mobilization and merit review at [SSHRC](#)

All SSHRC research grants and scholarships are awarded through an independent merit review process designed to ensure the highest standards of excellence and impartiality. When evaluating grant proposals as a whole—and Knowledge Mobilization and Expected Outcomes modules, in particular—merit reviewers apply criteria that specifically refer to knowledge mobilization activities.

### Defining “appropriate research users”

Applicants should determine the most appropriate users of their research outputs, both at the outset and throughout the life of their project.

When identifying appropriate research users, applicants should do so in light of the project’s theme, research questions, overall goals and expected results. Researchers should address the following questions—even in cases where the audience is strictly academic:

- Who stands to benefit from this research?
- Which audiences will be involved, and how?
- How will the audiences benefit from being involved?
- What is the best way to communicate with these audiences?

SSHRC encourages its funding recipients to disseminate research knowledge in both official languages, whenever feasible and/or appropriate.

Most SSHRC grant applications contain a mandatory Knowledge Mobilization module. This module provides applicants an opportunity to provide a compelling rationale that will convince merit reviewers that the project will address the appropriate target audiences, and that its overall reach is both sufficient and appropriate. Knowledge mobilization plans are evaluated in relation to other elements of the proposal, particularly when assessing the project’s feasibility and its potential for impact within and beyond the social sciences.

### Outcomes and impacts

Applicants should consider the following when describing how they will maximize the results of their research, and how they will ensure their results’ sustainability:

**Outputs** are the first set of short-term results most researchers typically see (e.g., number of publications, presentations, event attendees, new partners added to a team, or new stakeholders and/or research users contacted or added to networks).

**Outcomes** (also called “results”) include all activities undertaken as a result of new insights. Outcomes may include: the number of people in various target audiences that use the research findings, the number of students trained, new capacities created, policies

developed, business strategies formulated, etc. Outcomes may be either foreseen or unforeseen, direct or indirect, intended or unintended.

**Impacts** are long-term outcomes or effects that take the form of changed thinking and behaviours. Impacts are reflected through such indicators as, e.g., global economic performance, competitiveness, public service effectiveness, new products and services, employment, policy relevance, learning skills enhancement, quality of life, community cohesion, and social inclusion.

Most SSHRC grant applications include a mandatory Expected Outcomes module. This module provides applicants an opportunity to outline the project's expected outputs, outcomes and impacts. The applicant should present plans and/or indicators of success. For example, applicants might indicate that, by the end of the first year, the researcher will have had a specific number of meetings with key stakeholders and/or presented at a specific number of conferences. Expected outcomes are evaluated in relation to the other parts of the proposal.

### Turning research into outcomes and impacts

Once an applicant has determined as many of the potential research users as possible, and outlined the project's potential outputs, outcomes and impacts, they must determine the most effective ways to connect with the users.

Researchers must ensure that their proposed ways of reaching potential users are both appropriate and sufficient. While it is not possible to provide an exhaustive list of methods, media may include: books, refereed journal articles, data warehousing, social media, websites, films, plays, videos, exhibits, festivals, funding mechanisms, media coverage, op-eds, public service announcements, pamphlets, policy papers, reports, knowledge syntheses and workshops, or conferences and other events. As a general rule, the broader the means used, the broader the impact. Using [open access](#) publication platforms is another effective way of increasing the visibility of research results.

The summative evaluation of SSHRC's knowledge mobilization funding opportunities identified the following best practices:

- Meetings with knowledge users are an effective vehicle for forging strong and lasting connections.
- When building relationships with organizations, build links across multiple levels, from frontline/program/policy staff to executives.
- To produce knowledge mobilization products that meet users' needs, researchers can use or repackage existing materials, or develop new ones, in concert with the users and their identified needs.
- Larger projects typically employ a project co-ordinator. The use of knowledge brokers, who have specific skill sets, can be effective.

- Ultimately, the more proactive and multifaceted the approach researchers take with users, the more successful and durable the relationship.
- Successful projects often adopt more than one outreach medium in their knowledge mobilization plan.
- At the outset of their project, applicants should develop indicators to gauge the success of their knowledge mobilization plan. Examples include: citation indicators, the number of newsletter/blog subscribers, and the number of recommendations to policy-makers that have been adopted.

### **Applying for a SSHRC grant**

Applicants should address the Feasibility and Capability criteria in the Knowledge Transfer section of the online Canadian Common CV form, as well as the Research Contributions section of the SSHRC CV, by capturing the full range of their past experience in knowledge mobilization activities within and beyond academia.

SSHRC's merit reviewers are encouraged to weigh the full range of contributions when deliberating on relative merit.

## Appendix 5 - Guidelines for the Merit Review of Indigenous Research

### Purpose

SSHRC has developed these guidelines to ensure that the merit review of Indigenous research upholds SSHRC's [principles for merit review](#). These guidelines are intended to supplement the [SSHRC Manual for Adjudication Committee Members](#), but might also be used by applicants, external reviewers and the postsecondary institutions and partnering organizations that support Indigenous research.

### Context

[Indigenous research](#) is defined under the Definitions of Terms on SSHRC's website.

Since the early 2000s, SSHRC has promoted research **by and with** Indigenous Peoples, having recognized its potential to increase knowledge and understanding about human thought and behaviour, past and present, and to help create a better future.

The Guidelines for the Merit Review of Indigenous Research further ensure that Indigenous research incorporating Indigenous knowledge systems (including ontologies, epistemologies and methodologies) is recognized as a scholarly contribution and meets SSHRC's standards of excellence. The guidelines are also designed to encourage that Indigenous research be conducted with sensitivity, and only after consideration about who conducts the research and why and how it is conducted. The guidelines complement information contained in the second edition of the *Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans* (TCPS2), and, in particular, [Chapter 9: Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples of Canada](#).

These guidelines are relevant for Indigenous and non-Indigenous researchers who conduct Indigenous research.

### Merit Review Measures in Place

For applications related to Indigenous research, SSHRC ensures that:

- external assessors, either Indigenous or non-Indigenous, have experience and expertise in Indigenous research; and
- when the volume of applications warrants it, adjudication committees are in part or entirely composed of members having community research experience and expertise in Indigenous research.

SSHRC may solicit external assessments from experts in fields of inquiry relevant to the applications, to aid the adjudication committee in making its decisions.

### Key Concepts for the Merit Review of Indigenous Research

**Indigenous or traditional knowledge**, according to Chapter 9 of the TCPS2, "is usually described by Indigenous Peoples as holistic, involving body, mind, feelings and spirit" (p.108). Indigenous knowledge is rarely acquired through written documents, but, rather, a worldview adopted through living, listening and learning in the ancestral languages and within the

contexts of living on the land. Engagement with elders and other knowledge holders is acknowledged as valued and vital to knowledge transmission within the context of Indigenous Peoples living in place. Both Indigenous knowledge content and processes of knowledge transmission are, thus, embedded in the performance of living, including storytelling, ceremonies, living on the land, the use of natural resources and medicine plants, arts and crafts, singing and dancing, as well as engagement with the more than human world.

**Reciprocity** is considered an important value in Indigenous ways of knowing, in that it emphasizes the mutuality of knowledge giving and receiving. In the context of research, and, more specifically, SSHRC's evaluation criteria, the emphasis on a co-creation model should result in reciprocity in the form of partnerships and collaborative practices, which can include: identification of research objectives and methods; conduct of the research; ethical research protocols; data analysis and presentation; and transmission of knowledge. It also recognizes that access and benefits are, thus, integrally connected.

**Community**, in the context of Indigenous research, can refer to places or land-based communities, as well as thematic communities and communities of practice. Furthermore, community-based, community-initiated and community-driven research can involve varying degrees of community engagement; the research outputs will be negotiated taking into account the interests of relevant Indigenous community members.

**Respect, relevance and contributions** are important considerations in the merit review of Indigenous research. Applications should demonstrate that the proposed research identifies and respects relevant community research protocols and current goals, as well as the contributions to and from the community that are likely to emerge or are in place. A respectful research relationship necessitates a deep level of collaboration and ethical engagement. This may include engaging with existing, distinctive research processes and protocols for conducting ethical research reviews in the community; learning within language and/or traditional knowledge systems; collaboratively rebuilding or revitalizing processes that have been displaced or replaced; and/or codeveloping new processes, based on the community's expressed interests. Finally, this level of collaboration and engagement may also require additional, targeted consultative or review processes.

The following points are intended to assist committee members when reviewing Indigenous research proposals.

Committee members evaluating research grant applications should use the following list of considerations in relation to the specific evaluation criteria used in assessing grant proposals (i.e., Challenge, Feasibility and Capability).

Committee members evaluating applications for fellowships and scholarships should use the following list of considerations in their review of proposed programs of study or programs of work, as well as in their general assessment of a candidate's academic capability. While some of these considerations relate more strongly to aspects of SSHRC's grants programming, they also offer relevant guidance for the review of proposals for doctoral and postdoctoral support.

**1. Challenge—The aim and importance of the endeavour:**

- Given the emphasis placed on lived experience, both written and oral literature are appropriate forms of knowledge for consideration. Examples of oral literature can include interviews or personal encounters, or traditional teaching with elders.

- Theoretical framework and methodology may be combined. For example, in storytelling, the stories represent in some instances both theory and method, a way of explaining phenomena or illustrating how behaviour or actions contribute to living in a good way.
- Community involvement and the co-creation of knowledge, as appropriate, are considered essential, especially in data interpretation. In this context, the co-creation of knowledge could include interpretative approaches that are jointly developed, reviewed and confirmed by and with community members or their community-delegated organization.
- Where appropriate, priority should be given to Indigenous students and postdoctoral researchers when training opportunities are offered.

## **2. Feasibility—The plan to achieve excellence:**

- The research should address the needs of each partner, if applicable, and demonstrate how the research meets these identified needs.
- The application should demonstrate how outputs will be made available to, and potentially used by, Indigenous Peoples and other stakeholders, with community benefits configured into the research outputs. Examples of outreach may include: websites, videos, presentations, artistic or community exhibits, performances, or festivals.
- The availability and nature of organizational or administrative infrastructure varies from community to community. This aspect should be considered in the structuring of the research in ways that acknowledge and maximize the contributions of a community partner organization.
- Where required by the funding opportunity, the leveraging of cash and/or in-kind support from host institutions and partners can include social capital, an asset that may emphasize social and familial relationships and networks and may affect the cost of research. Furthermore, linguistic capital, the ability to engage in the community with the ancestral language(s) of the community and a national language of Canada, can also be considered as a contribution.
- Expectations about the management and governance of the coproduction and outputs of knowledge and related support, during and beyond the award, should be outlined.

## **3. Capability—The expertise to succeed:**

- The career and academic stages, as well as the rates of research and publication contributions, of applicants and team members need to be reviewed with respect to the following considerations:
  - Indigenous scholars may have had to start their academic path later in life, or have had interruptions.

- For some scholars, there are expectations that they significantly contribute to and engage with their home community.
- Applicants' accountability to their postsecondary community is also important, as demonstrated by Indigenous scholars providing support that could include providing student support, teacher training, committee work, and cultural sensitivity training to non-Indigenous scholars; and contributing to the incorporation of Indigenous knowledge systems, language, culture and experiences into their postsecondary institutions, including through the creation of associated programs.
- In the Special Circumstances section, reviewers should take into account the degree of difficulty in an applicant's career as a useful measure of merit, especially where they have succeeded in overcoming career obstacles.
- The relevant experience of Indigenous scholars should take into account the life/knowledge journey of individuals.
- Collaborators who are considered to have a strong role and community connection should be regarded favourably in the review of Indigenous research. In particular, elders and community-based partners need to be recognized and respected in terms of their contribution of knowledge assets.