

**University Delegates WebEx Meeting  
August 1, 2019 - 12:30-1:30 pm EDT  
CIHR Room 10-219, Ottawa, Ontario  
Minutes**

**Participants**

Chair: Pierre Côté, Director General, Operations Support

Members:	Ali Jenabian, Université du Québec à Montréal; Brenda Bruner, Nipissing University; Brian Christie, University of Victoria; Brittney Roughan, Mount Saint Vincent University; Chris Whitfield, University of Guelph; Christian Beaulieu, University of Alberta; David Litchfield, Western University; David Rose, University of Waterloo; Gerald W. Zamponi, University of Calgary; Jennifer McGrath, Concordia University;	Kristin Baetz, University of Ottawa; Lori Burrows, McMaster University; Marc Pouliot, Université Laval; Marilyn Hodgins, University of New-Brunswick; Robert Bertolo, Memorial University of Newfoundland; Stephane Dragon on behalf of Lara Boyd, University of British Columbia; Stephen Perry, Wilfrid Laurier University; Tania Watts, University of Toronto; Yvonne Myal, University of Manitoba.
CARA members:	Deborah Zornes, Royal Roads University (CARA member); Jennifer Thurlow, Capital District Health Authority (CARA member);	Judith Chadwick, University of Toronto (CARA member); Lorraine Deydey, University of Alberta (CARA member).
Institution staff:	Brenda Meyer-Burt, University of Saskatchewan; Jim Woodgett, Lunenfeld-Tanenbaum Research Institute; Keeley Rose, Sick Kids Hospital; Leslie Copp, University of Waterloo; Nicole Balliet, University of Northern British Columbia; Oksana Moshynska, University of Saskatchewan;	Paul Wiebe, Health Sciences Centre; Penny D'Agnone, University of Lethbridge; Samar Saneinejad, St. Michael's Hospital; Sanja Obradovic, Ryerson University. Tova Dybvig, University of Saskatchewan.

<p>Regrets:</p>	<p>Allison Sekuler, Research Bay Crest;          Andrea Lawrance, Carleton University;          Asaf Gilboa, University of Toronto;          Brenda Smith-Chant, Trent University          Claudia Malacrida, University of Lethbridge;          Christy McTait, University of British          Columbia (CARA member);          Daniel Cyr, Institut Armand-Frappier;          Daniel Lajeunesse, Université de Montréal;          Darcy Marciniuk, University of          Saskatchewan;          Dawn Whitworth, University of British          Columbia (CARA member);          Deanna Pong, University of Toronto;          Estelle Chamoux, Bishop’s Univeristy;          François Boudreau, Université de          Sherbrooke;          Frédéric Lesage, École Polytechnique          Montréal;          Geoff Payne, University of Northern British          Columbia;          Heather Duncan, Brandon University;          Jeff Ollerhead, Mount Allison University;          Jennifer Walker, Laurentian University;          Jeremy Knight, University of Toronto (CARA          member);          Kate Keetch, Department of Evaluation &amp;          Research services in Fraser Health (CARA          member);          Lionel Berthoux, Université du Québec à          Trois-Rivière;          Lisa Porter, University of Windsor;</p>	<p>Lori Livingston, University of Ontario          Institute of Technology;          Keeley Rose, Sick Kids Hospital;          Lara Boyd, University of British Columbia;          Lisa Porter, University of Windsor;          Lori Livingston, University of Ontario          Institute of Technology;          Lori Burrows, McMaster University;          Nicole Balliet, University of Northern          British Columbia;          Pat Jones, University of Alberta;          Paul Wiebe, Health Sciences Centre;          Penny D’Agnone, University of          Lethbridge;          Peter L. Twohig, Saint Mary's University;          PhebeAnn Wolfram-Smith, Lake Head          University;          Robert Bertolo, Memorial University of          Newfoundland;          Rod McCormick, Thompson Rivers          University;          Said Mekary, Acadia University;          Stephanie Baello, Ontario Institutes for          Cancer Research;          Stephen Waldman, Ryerson University;          Tanya Brann-Barrett, Cape Breton          University;          Tanya Watts, University of Toronto;          Tom Chau, university of Toronto;          Vicki Kristman, Lakehead University.</p>
<p>Staff:</p>	<p>Adèle Haché-Blanchard, Lead, Strategic          Communications, Communications;          Allison Forsythe, Communications Strategist,          Communications;          Allison Jackson, Manager, College of          Reviewers;          Amanda Crupi, Manager, Knowledge          Translation Strategies, Science Policy;          Bryan Lemire, Lead, Program Design and          Delivery;          Corinne Guindon, Change Management          Lead, Operations Support;</p>	<p>Joanne Simala- Grant, Subject Matter          Expert, Operations Support;          Julie Conrad, Manager, Program Design          and Delivery;          Karine Aubry, Student, Operations          Support;          Gilles Leblanc, Change Management          Advisor, Operations Support;          Kelly Taylor, Director General, Program          Design and Delivery;          Manon Lechasseur, Manager, Strategic          Communications, Communications;</p>

	<p>Elisabeth Pagé, Assistant Scientific Director, The Institutes;</p> <p>George Collier, Senior Partnership Lead, Strategic Partnership and International Relations;</p> <p>Jason Reid, Director General, Information Management, Technology and Security, Executive Vice-President Portfolio;</p>	<p>Marina Dubois, Project Officer, Operations Support;</p> <p>Melanie Kotsopoulos, Lead, Program Design and Delivery;</p> <p>Nicole Szajcz-Keller, Assistant Director, The Institutes;</p> <p>Rachel Syme, Assistant Director, The Institutes.</p>
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## 1. CIHR Update

### **Launch of the CIHR Application Administration Guide (AAG)**

- The [CIHR Grants and Awards Guide \(en français\)](#) is being redesigned and we are finalizing a new Application Administration Guide (AAG) based on comments received through the consultations.
- Webinars will be planned to support the research community. Further details will be provided in the coming months, once the official launch date has been confirmed. We are currently planning for this fall.

### **Highlights of the New Guide**

- It does not impose any new requirements or restrictions.
- The contents are comprised of the general requirements and guidelines that pertain to applying to CIHR funding opportunities.
- Requirements related to the post-award management of CIHR grants and awards are not found in the new Guide, as these have been centralized in harmonized Tri-Agency Guides (i.e. the [Tri-Agency Guide on Financial Administration \(TAGFA\) \(en français\)](#) and the [Tri-Agency Research Training Award Holder's Guide \(en français\)](#)).
- The format of the new Guide aims to improve clarity and usability with a more streamlined and simplified layout.
- Overly prescriptive rules have been replaced by requirements and responsibilities that are higher-level, to ensure broad applicability across funding programs.
- The funding opportunity remains the key resource of information for anyone applying for funding – as it contains program-specific information pertaining to applicant eligibility, funding conditions and how to apply.
- The new Guide was developed in consultation with a focus group of The Canadian Association of Research Administrators (CARA) members and was previewed by a subset of the institutions piloting the new principles-based TAGFA – receiving positive reviews.
- We are anticipating a smooth transition to the new Guide in the coming months – with no disruptions or negative impact on the research community.

### **2019 Exploration Competition of the New Frontiers in Research Fund (NFRF)**

- The 2019 Exploration Competition of the New Frontiers in Research Fund (NFRF) was launched on July 3<sup>rd</sup>.
- Researchers at all career stages are invited to apply to the program. The first one was for early career researchers only.
- This competition has three stages:
  1. Notification of Intent to Apply (NOI) stage with a deadline of August 7<sup>th</sup>, 2019 (at 8:00 PM EDT).
  2. A Letter of Intent to Apply (LOI) stage with a deadline of September 4<sup>th</sup>, 2019 (at 8:00 PM EDT).
  3. An application stage with a deadline of December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2019 (at 8:00 PM EDT).
- This year, applications at each stage must be submitted by the Research Grants Offices (RGO). RGOs are free to set their own internal deadlines.
- Several webinars were hosted for applicants and research administrators at each stage.

Links:

- <http://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/nfrf-fnfr/exploration/exploration-eng.aspx>
- <http://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/nfrf-fnfr/exploration/exploration-fra.aspx>

### **Travel Claims**

- Friendly reminder to submit your Travel Expense Claim forms for the Annual University Delegates' meeting to the UD mailbox.

### **EDI and ECR Action Plans**

- As discussed at the Annual UD meeting, we will be sharing the Tri-Agency EDI and ECR Action Plans with you. These will be presented as soon as possible at an upcoming call.

### **Peer Review Observer Program**

- CIHR is pleased to continue to offer an Observer program for Early Career Researchers (ECR) to participate as an observer in the peer review process for the Project Grant competition.
- This program is designed as an opportunity for Early Career Researchers to observe face-to-face peer review committee meetings and gain valuable insights on the review process.
- Early career investigators are invited to apply by August 21, 2019. There will be two ECRs per committee.
- Please inform the Early Career Researchers at your institutions and encourage them to participate.
- An Early Career Researcher is a researcher who, at the time of application, has held a full time, independent research appointment, for a period of 0-5 years (60 months).

Links:

- Opportunity for Early Career Researchers: Call for expressions of interest: <http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/50206.html>
- Possibilité pour les chercheurs en début de carrière : appel de déclarations : <http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/f/50206.html>

### **Strategic Plan Update**

- CIHR is working with the health research community to develop a new strategic plan.
- This is the largest engagement we have ever done with our community.
- We have engaged extensively with the health research community, and we will continue to engage with stakeholders over the coming months.
- We are now turning our attention to analyzing all that we have heard from the community to date, including the feedback you provided at the Annual UD meeting in June.
- We are doing this with the help of CIHR staff well versed in qualitative analysis, complemented by the efforts of an expert analysis validation panel (independent researchers whose names we have posted on the CIHR website). We expect this analysis work to be completed by the end of August.
- Our next step will be to hold a consensus workshop on Sept. 10 and 11 in Ottawa, where we will work with the health research community to develop a shared sense of challenges and collectively identify potential ideas for CIHR's upcoming strategic plan.
- We will publish the names of those in attendance at this workshop, and a report will be published on our website, following the workshop.

Links:

- <http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/51508.html>
- <http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/f/51508.html>

### *Questions from Members*

#### **Q: How many peoples answered the survey?**

**A:** There were approximately 800 individuals who participated, which resulted in approximately 2400 individual survey responses, as participants could choose to respond to any of the six available surveys.

(We apologize that the number provided during the meeting was not accurate.)

## **2. Programs Updates**

See slides for additional information.

### **Project Grant**

- The Project Grant Program is now accepting applications for the Fall 2019 competition.
- As part of CIHR's efforts to ensure equity, diversity, and inclusion, and in particular, equitable access to funding for all, applications submitted in French will be entitled to an additional two pages within the Project Grant applications.
- We have gathered evidence to confirm that documents written in French require 20% more space than English documents.
- We have also learned through past surveys with applicants that Francophones are more likely to submit their applications in English even though it is not their preferred language of work.
- We anticipate that this decision will result in more French applications being submitted.
- We are taking steps with the College of Reviewers to ensure appropriate representation of Francophone reviewers.
- This provision will contribute to equity, diversity, and inclusion efforts while ensuring equitable space for applications written in either official language.
- This provision currently applies to the Project Grants Program only; however, other programs will be on boarded moving forward.
- It is important to know that if any English applications exceed 10 pages, the extra material will be removed from the application as part of the review.

### **Fall 2019 Competition**

- Registration deadline: August 14, 2019
- Application deadline: September 11, 2019
- Anticipated Notice of Decision: January 22, 2020
- Funding Start Date: April 1, 2020

### **Spring 2020 Competition**

- Registration deadline: February 5, 2020
- Application deadline: March 4, 2020
- Anticipated Notice of Decision: July 8, 2020
- Funding Start Date: October 1, 2020

## **Foundation Grant**

- The final Foundation competition has been completed and applicants received their NODs on July 16, 2019.
- There were 28 grants approved for a total investment of \$81,416,036.
- The competition results are available on the CIHR website and the full list of Foundation Grant recipients is now posted.
- CIHR is now working with the Foundation Grant holders to prepare for their transitions back into the Project Grant program. The details regarding their transition planning options are now available on our website.
- All Foundation grantees wishing to discuss their transition plan are encouraged to contact CIHR's Contact Centre to set up a call.

Links:

- Transition planning considerations for Foundation Grant holders: <http://www.cihr.ca/e/51600.html>
- Considérations relatives à la planification de la transition pour les titulaires de subvention Fondation : <http://www.cihr.ca/f/51600.html>

## **Awards & Scholarship**

- As part of Budget 2019, new funding was awarded through the federal research granting agencies to help more students access graduate studies and further improve equity, diversity and inclusion in the research ecosystem.
- This investment includes \$114 million over five years, starting in 2019-20. Of the \$114 million, CIHR received \$32 million (\$48M for SSHRC, \$34M for NSERC).
- The three agencies have also harmonized their timelines and program descriptions. The first competition of the harmonized CGS-D Program has now launched and applicants may begin preparing their applications.
- As a result of harmonization, institutions will be invited to submit their health research applications to CIHR in a process similar to that of NSERC and SSHRC.
- The number of applications that institutions are allowed to send to CIHR is based on the number of successful doctoral applicants in the past three years. This number will be calculated every year to ensure accessibility. There is a minimum quota of 3 per institution.
- Institutions are asked to submit their allotted quota of applications by November 21, 2019.

Links:

- [http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Students-Etudiants/PG-CS/CGSD-BESCD\\_eng.asp](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Students-Etudiants/PG-CS/CGSD-BESCD_eng.asp)
- [http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Students-Etudiants/PG-CS/CGSD-BESCD\\_fra.asp](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Students-Etudiants/PG-CS/CGSD-BESCD_fra.asp)

### *Questions from Members*

**Q: Do the Doctoral Awards still include research allowance?**

**A:** The research allowance stands for CIHR but not for the other two agencies.

**Q: Is the quota of 3 applications per institutions across the three agencies or is it for each agency?**

**A:** It is 3 for each agency, as long as they qualify for the program. The majority of Universities will have 3 quotas (one from each agency).

**Q: Will Planning and Dissemination Grant-ICS competition occur this fall?**

**A:** Yes, this will occur. The launch is planned for August 7, 2019.

## Priority-Driven Research

See slides for additional information.

### 3. Review Quality Assurance (RQA)

- The vision of the College is to establish a Performance Management Strategy, using the RQA process, to ensure the highest standards of review quality as well as to recognize Reviewer contributions.
- We have been piloting different tools in the CIHR Project competitions with Chairs and SOs. We are now using a tool that allows us to identify reviewer quality issues, allows us to recognize individuals for their outstanding contributions and allows us to move away from a growing “do not invite” list.
- Reviewers should be given a chance to improve and sharpen reviewer skills through supportive interventions. CIHR will only intervene with those that are extreme cases.
- The RQA tool will be made public in late August 2019. You will all receive notice once it is available.
- Individuals that have more than 2/3 low quality reviews and/or major participation / responsiveness issues are going to receive direct intervention and support.
- Individuals that have more than 1/3 but less than 2/3 of low quality reviews and/or major participation / responsiveness issues are going to receive support strategies (monitoring, learning modules). Extreme cases will be clearly defined and handled on a case by case basis.
- Review issues are compiled for the individuals that have less than 1/3 low quality reviews and/or Major participation / responsiveness issues and communicated broadly to all reviewers as an information/awareness support document.
- The New RQA Reviewer Survey tool:
  - Removes the question about re-invitation.
  - Identifies reviewers who need support and those who are outstanding.
  - Breaks down each of the RQA categories into defined assessment criteria.
  - Allows users to recommend reviewers who could perform the role of Chair, SO, or Mentor.
- We are adding a CIHR Standards of Practice for Peer Review agreement to the conflict of interest and confidentiality steps that all reviewers are asked to complete prior to reviewing for CIHR.
- This agreement will make the individual aware of expectations in terms of peer review responsibilities and reviewer performance.
- Any individual who does not agree will not be able to participate in peer review for that CIHR competition.

#### RQA – CIHR Standards of Practice for Peer Review process

- Reviewers currently consent to a Conflict of Interest (COI) Agreement on ResearchNet.
- The CIHR Standards of Practice for Peer Review text will be added to the existing Conflict of Interest (COI) functionality on ResearchNet.
- Reviewers will now have to agree to the CIHR Standards of Practice for Peer Review, which includes COI.
- Reviewers will have to agree in order to participate in CIHR Peer Review.

See slides for additional information on data.

#### *Questions from Members*

**Q: Does your process also track scientific competence?**

**A:** The guidelines and checklist of the RQA are not tracking the scientific competence of the reviewer.

**Q: What is the best way for applicants to raise concerns in regards to the peer review process?**

**A:** We have a formal complaint process. In this process, all complaints come through the Contact Center. From there, all review quality related concerns are assessed by the College.

**Q: Is there going to be a probation period for poor quality reviews?**

**A:** Reviewers will be supported and should be given a chance to improve through supportive interventions. If there are individuals that have major poor quality or participation / responsiveness issues, we may put them on a “do not invite” list. The difference is that they will be advised of this. This will be assessed on a case by case basis.

**Q: If they do not agree to the RQA policies and do not review for CIHR, will they be prevented from applying to CIHR funding?**

**A:** We will track and monitor this. We want individuals to be contributing to the ecosystem. For example, individuals that are College members and are not agreeing to the RQA policy may or may not see an impact on their ability to remain College members.

**Q: Will you tell the institutions if someone has been put on the “do not invite” list?**

**A:** We will advise the individual. However, for those who are performing in the outstanding category, their names will go to the institutions. We are trying to promote positivity.

**Q: It is important for Chairs to have input, not just scientific quality of reviewers but the ability to review broadly, and fit to the particular panel.**

**A:** Yes, the tool includes the ability for Chairs to express other considerations. If there is something around a wrong fit and it is a review quality issue, the Program Design and Delivery team will factor this into the recruitment processes.

**Q: Will there be a mechanism for applicants (or institutions) to report inappropriate reviews received by applicants?**

**A:** This process is the same as the complaint process. We invite you to report inappropriate reviews to the Contact Center.

**Q: What about the reviewing of Chairs and SO? This should be considered too.**

**A:** We are going to evolve to that.

**Q: Another issue is turnover on panels. Even if reviewers are outstanding, if the panel doesn't have some turnover, there is a perception that it is a club that is doing the reviewing.**

**A:** The standing panels were introduced recently. There will be a 20%-30% turnover in any given competition. This will ensure a “club environment” does not persist as part of the future of peer review panels.

**Q: Would there ever be thought given to dropping outliers score (high to low) in peer review committee (PRC) voting?**

**A:** This is something that has been discussed with different PRCs. It is on our radar to think about this type of question. We will keep pursuing discussion around scoring criteria.

**Q: Do you track reviewers who consistently score at edge of the rate – with a 0.5 range from consensus? This can skew results.**

**A:** We are not currently tracking that but there have been discussions to start tracking this.

**Q: I am not sure if scoring mechanisms are under discussion, but I had feedback that reviewers prefer a composite score, as environment isn't very discriminatory so they prefer to give one score that reflects their overall view rather than breaking down into 3 parts.**

**A:** This is an area that has been discussed in Awards and open Project competitions. The evaluation criteria scoring is being worked on. This will be helpful to continue discussions.

#### **4. Research Data Management Policy (RDM)**

- The policy is around the *collection, storage, preservation* and, where appropriate, *access* to data produced from a given investigation.
- CIHR has identified data, and data-intensive research as one of our strategic priorities.
- Our current strategic plan, the Health Research Roadmap II, commits CIHR to embracing the data revolution. To support this commitment, CIHR has developed and implemented a number of policies and frameworks both individually as well as in collaboration with the other Tri-Agencies. These include:
  - The Health Research and Health-Related Data Framework, released in 2017, which provides a guide to CIHR's data-related activities.
  - Tri-Agency Statement of Principles of RDM.
  - The Tri-Agency Open Access Policy.
  - The Draft Tri-Agency RDM Policy.
- The draft Tri-Agency RDM Policy include 3 pillars:
  - Institutions: Research institutions administering Tri-Agency funds will be required to create an institutional research data management strategy. This will be posted and available online.
  - Data Management Plans (DMPs): For certain funding opportunities, the agencies will require DMPs to be submitted to the appropriate agency at the time of application.
  - Data Deposit: Grant recipients will be required to deposit into a digital repository all research data, metadata and code that support journal publications that arise from agency-supported research.
- Policy development timeline:
  - The Tri-Agencies have engaged with stakeholders since 2017.
  - CIHR has been participating in various activities, such as discussion sessions, Canadian Associate of Research Administrators (CARA) and Research Data Alliance Plenaries.
  - In the summer of 2018, we launched a consultation period for Online Public Engagement.
  - We are working on the revision and validation of the policy, and on the development of an implementation strategy.
  - The launch is expected in late 2019 or early 2020.
  - There will be a phased-in implementation beginning in 2021.
- The Public Summary will be available online by mid-late August 2019.
- Themes from public consultation include:
  - Policy objectives, scope, and implementation.
  - RDM in Indigenous Research: Importance of acknowledging a need for ensuring Indigenous ownership and control of data.

- Institutional Strategies: Themes related to costs and capacity. The varying needs of large vs small institutions was brought forth.
- Data Management Plans: Concerns related to time, skills and capacity were raised, as well as questions related to the administration and review of DMPs.
- Data Deposit: Ethical, legal, commercial, and cultural considerations, the capacity challenges and the status of acceptable data repositories.
- Monitoring and Compliance: Questions around planned monitoring and compliance strategy, and concerns about costs and capacity.
- Indigenous Engagement and Considerations:
  - Over the past couple of years the Tri-Agencies have engaged a number of Indigenous organizations and leaders in dialogue related to the proposed policy requirements.
  - The revised draft policy stresses the importance of recognizing and abiding by RDM principles and protocols of distinct First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities, notably in the preamble and under each of the policy requirements.
  - The path forward includes active re-engagement with organizations and individuals; and validation of policy revisions.
  - As part of a broader strategy for Indigenous research and research training, the agencies will continue to engage Indigenous communities and leaders as we seek to support the development of Indigenous RDM protocols.
- Supporting Policy Implementation
  - Existing tools and supports
    - [CIHR Research Data Management Learning Module \(en français\)](#).
    - [CARL-Portage DMP Tool \(en français\)](#).
    - [CARL-Portage Institutional Strategy Template \(en français\)](#).
  - Ongoing & planned tools and supports
    - Webinars and information sessions.
    - Data management plan pilots before it is implemented.
    - Will work with the College for possible training to support DMP review.

#### *Questions from Members*

**Q: It is one thing for researchers to do a data dump into a repository. But another to make the data useful to others. This requires significant work pertaining to annotation. Please do not underestimate the burden that this will place on trainees and staff who collect the data.**

**A:** This is a valid point. It is on our radar.

## **5. Adjournment**

The meeting ended at 1:30pm EST. The next meeting of the University Delegates will be on September 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019.