

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

**Participants**

Chair: Pierre Côté, Director General, Operations Support

<p>Members:</p>	<p>Ali Jenabian, Université du Québec à Montréal; Andrea Lawrance, Carleton University; Brenda Bruner, Nipissing University; Brian Christie, University of Victoria; Brittney Roughan, Mount Saint Vincent University; Chris Whitfield, University of Guelph; Christian Baron, Université de Montréal; Christian Beaulieu, University of Alberta; Daniel Cyr, Institut Armand-Frappier; David Litchfield, Western University; David Rose, University of Waterloo; François Boudreau, Université de Sherbrooke; Frédéric Lesage, École Polytechnique Montréal; Gerald W. Zamponi, University of Calgary; Jennifer McGrath, Concordia University; Keely Rose, The Hospital for Sick Children Kristen Baetz, University of Ottawa; Lara Boyd, University of British Columbia; Lisa Porter, University of Windsor;</p>	<p>Lori Burrows, McMaster University; Marc Pouliot, Université Laval; Marilyn Hodgins, University of New-Brunswick; Rebecca R. Pillai Riddell, York University; Robert Bertolo, Memorial University of Newfoundland; Rod McCormick, Thompson Rivers University; Roger McLeod, Dalhousie University; Sandra Turcotte, Université de Moncton; Shari Baum, McGill University; Stephen Perry, Wilfrid Laurier University; Steven Smith, Queen's University; Vicki Kristman, Lakehead University; Wendy Ward, Brock University; Yvonne Myal, University of Manitoba;</p>
<p>CARA members:</p>	<p>Joanne Simala-Grant, University of Alberta (CARA member); Christy McTait, University of British Columbia (CARA member); Deborah Zornes, Royal Roads University (CARA member); Jennifer Thurlow, Capital District Health Authority (CARA member);</p>	<p>Kate Keetch, Department of Evaluation &amp; Research Services in Fraser Health (CARA member) Lorraine Deydey, University of Alberta (CARA member); Virginie Portes, Université de Montréal (CARA member);</p>

<p>Institution staff:</p>	<p>Angela McCormick, University of Alberta;  Cecilia Kalaw, Simon Fraser University;  Cindy Faber, University of Toronto;  Deanna Pong, University of Toronto;  François l'Heureux, Université de Montréal;  Jim Woodgett, Lunenfeld-Tanenbaum Research Institute;  Leslie Copp, University of Waterloo;</p>	<p>Paul Wiebe, Health Sciences Centre;  Manisha Jalla, University of Saskatchewan;  Penny D'Agnone, University of Lethbridge;  Samar Saneinejad, St. Michael's Hospital;  Sanja Obradovic, Ryerson University;  Sean Parsons, Laurentian University;</p>
<p>Regrets:</p>	<p>Brenda Smith-Chant, Trent University  Claudia Malacrida, University of Lethbridge  Christian Patenaude, Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières;  Darcy Marciniuk, University of Saskatchewan;  Dina Brooks, University of Toronto;  Estelle Chamoux, Bishop's University;  Geoff Payne, University of Northern British Columbia;  Jeff Ollerhead, Mount Allison University;  Jennifer Walker, Laurentian University;  Lori Livingston, University of Ontario Institute of Technology;  Peter L. Twohig, Saint Mary's University;  Richard Isnor, St. Francis Xavier University;</p>	<p>Said Mekary, Acadia University;  Sébastien Normand, Université de Québec en Outaouais;  Stephen Waldman, Ryerson University;  Sunny Hartwig, University of Prince Edward Island;  Tanya Brann-Barrett, Cape Breton University;  Timothy Takaro, Simon Fraser University;  Jeremy Knight, University of Toronto (CARA member);  Judith Chaidwick, University of Toronto (CARA member);  Maria Margarita Heras, University of British Columbia (CARA member);</p>
<p>Staff:</p>	<p>Tammy Clifford, Vice-President Research;  Kelly Taylor, Director General, Program Design and Delivery;  Allison Jackson, Manager, College Recruitment, Learning and Mentoring;  Annik Poirier, Manager, Business Solutions, Competition Management and Support;  Martine Lafrance, Manager Program Design and Delivery;</p>	<p>Julie Conrad, Manager Program Design and Delivery;  Adèle Blanchard, Lead, Strategic Communications;  Gilles Leblanc, Change Management Advisor;  Richard Côté, Curriculum Development Advisor;</p>

## 1. Words from the Vice-President of Research Programs

### Words from Dr. Tammy Clifford

Although she is new in the position of Vice-President of Research Programs at CIHR, Dr. Clifford indicated that she is quite familiar with CIHR's programs and its community. She holds a PhD in Epidemiology and Biostatistics and was the Chief Scientist and Vice-President, Evidence Standards, at the Canadian Agency for Drugs and Technologies in Health (CADTH) for fifteen years. She has been involved with CIHR as a reviewer, a grantee and a member of the Institute Advisory Board. And now as a member of the executive team, she will work with the President during this ambitious and exciting time towards developing a new strategic plan.

Building on all her experiences in the academia and in the research community, she joined CIHR with the hope of shaping the future of researchers in Canada and making the health of Canadians better.

### *Question from Members*

#### **Q: Could you give a quick overview of what files/initiatives you will be overseeing and what are highest priorities?**

**A:** At this point, there are many priorities, starting with strategic planning. In her portfolio, Dr. Clifford will bring her attention to initiatives such as [SPOR \(en français\)](#), [DSEN \(en français\)](#), on the ethics front a closely engaged [Secretariat of Responsible Conduct of Research \(en français\)](#), institutes support optimization project, and to continue to deliver on our Open programs, improving our Peer Review process and building the College of Reviewers.

## 2. CIHR Update

### General CIHR Updates

#### *Federal employees as Nominated Principal Investigators*

- As a federal agency, CIHR is obliged under the Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) Policy on Transfer Payments to ensure that grant funds do not support the operations of other federal departments and do not directly benefit a federal public servant.
- This has been the TBS policy for some time, but we recently realized that CIHR's position on the issue might not be clear.
- To clarify, federal research scientists **are not eligible** to apply for grant funds in the role of Nominated Principal Applicant or have access to the grant funds.
- This restriction ensures CIHR's compliance with Treasury Board policy. In fact, CIHR has recently made amendments to the [Grants and Awards Guide](#) (en français) to this effect to ensure that the policy is clear.
- While the Treasury Board requirements do not specifically address federal research scientists who hold adjunct professor appointments at academic institutions, CIHR has made the determination that the same eligibility restrictions are warranted.

- We received some questions about this policy last year, so, for the CARA members on the call, we'll be following up with an e-mail this week, as well.

#### *Questions from Members*

**Q: Where is this now documented?**

**A:** These restrictions are documented in the [Grants and Awards Guide \(en français\)](#).

**Q: To clarify, can they serve as the NPI as an Adjunct with a University?**

**A:** No, a federal research scientists who hold adjunct professor appointments at academic institutions is not eligible to apply as the NPI.

**Q: Will it remain true that someone who is eligible to apply for a grant with CIHR cannot be paid from tri-council funds?**

**A:** This is currently being discussed as part of the [renewal of the Tri-Agency Financial Administration Guide \(en français\)](#). As per the current, [Tri-Agency Financial Administration Guide](#), if you are eligible to apply, you are not eligible to be paid from grant funds.

#### *News: CIHR Biosketch CV*

- Recognizing that the many Common CV (CCV) templates and associated requirements have been burdensome to the research community, CIHR senior management committed to reduce the number of CIHR CCV templates in use by March 31, 2019.
- In order to meet this commitment, CIHR is expanding the use of the “Project Biosketch CV” template, which is notably easier to use than the “Academic CV” and other CIHR CCV templates.
- The “Project Biosketch CV” template has been used for the CIHR Project Grant competition and has received positive feedback from stakeholders to date.
- Given the expansion of this template’s use, it will now be called the “CIHR Biosketch CV” (instead of the “Project Biosketch CV”). This name change does not affect the template itself, as all fields and information collected in this template format will remain the same, but it does reflect CIHR’s intent to use this template in most of its programs by the end of March 2019.
- So, effective January 15, 2019, the *CIHR Project Biosketch CV* will simply be called the *CIHR Biosketch CV*. This means that applicants for the Project Grant: Spring 2019 competition—as well as other competitions—will see the new template name.
- Applicants will continue to complete the *CIHR Biosketch CV* template under its new name, **with no impact to applications in progress**. This means that any information that has previously been entered and saved by the applicant within the *CIHR Project Biosketch CV* will automatically be saved as part of the *CIHR Biosketch CV*.

### *New Frontiers in Research Fund*

- As mentioned at the last UD meeting, the New Frontiers in Research Fund inaugural competition is now accepting applications from early career researchers.
- The deadline to send a notice of intent to apply is tomorrow, January 11.
- The application deadline will be February 7.
- General inquiries about the fund should be addressed to [NFRF-FNFR@chairs-chaieres.gc.ca](mailto:NFRF-FNFR@chairs-chaieres.gc.ca).
- Website for more information: [www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/nfrf-fnfr/index-eng.aspx](http://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/nfrf-fnfr/index-eng.aspx).

### *Questions from Members*

**Q: RGOs are getting very nervous as no mechanism yet for us to work on portal?**

**A:** We will follow up with the NFRF team and get back to you via email with an answer.

*Response provided by NFRF team post teleconference:* Webinars targeted to research administrators (French and English) will be offered at the end of January and will provide information on the role of RGO's and tools that will be available to them. Dates and times will be posted on the [Upcoming Webinars webpage \(en français\)](#).

**Q: Any idea how the peer review process will be organized for NFRF?**

**A:** The [Funding Opportunity \(en français\)](#) explains how the peer review will be done. We invite you to visit the web site for more information and guidance.

**Q: What specifics are being assessed for eligibility at the NOI?**

**Is the NOI for eligibility or competitive?**

**A:** We will follow up with the NFRF team and get back to you via email with an answer.

*Response provided by NFRF team post teleconference:* The NOI stage is not being adjudicated or assessed for eligibility. It is used by the Tri-agency Institutional Program Secretariat for administrative purposes only, and will inform and support the planning and management of the competition. For more information on NOI eligibility, please refer to:

- [Funding opportunity \(en français\)](#);
- [Instructions for completing the NOI \(en français\)](#);
- [Full application instructions \(en français\)](#).

**Q: How will institutions know who of their ECRs have submitted NOIs?**

**A:** We will follow up with the NFRF team and get back to you via email with an answer.

*Response provided by NFRF team post teleconference:* ECRs are responsible for communicating with their respective institution regarding an NOI submission. Institutions are in turn encouraged to communicate with their ECRs, advising them to contact their research grant office (RGO) with this information. Furthermore, it is strongly recommended that

institutions set and communicate an internal deadline for the submission of the full application.

Please note that the Tri-agency Institutional Programs Secretariat is assessing the feasibility of keeping RGOs abreast on ECR submission activity, prior to functionality being available within the Convergence Portal.

**Q: Do you have a sense as to when the next competition (i.e. for non-early career) in NFRF will be launched?**

**A:** It is not defined yet when the competition for Exploration stream and International stream will be launched.

Program Design and Delivery Updates

See slides for additional information.

*Project Grant*

- On track to release the decisions for the Fall 2018 Project Grant competition on January 23.
  - After an informal consultation with members of the research community – including UDEC – CIHR has decided to continue releasing the initial reviewer scores along with the top/bottom indicator as part of the Project Grant NOD package.
  - As you may recall, this information was released to applicants for the Spring 2018 competition. It included the usual NOD documentation, along with the initial reviewer scores (i.e., their “first impression” scores – the ones they give before the formal face-to-face discussion) and whether the reviewer felt that the application fell in the top (competitive) or bottom (non-competitive) group of their assignments.
  - Although the general reaction to receiving this extra information was positive, we do recognize that it has caused some confusion. A detailed explanation of what the full decision package means will be posted on our website by January 23.
- We are also gearing up for the launch of the Spring 2019 Project Grant competition.
  - Registration will open on January 16, and updated funding opportunity details, instructional/ learning materials, Peer Review Committee Mandates, webinar dates, and details about the available Priority Announcements will be available at that time, as well.
  - The observer program for ECRs will launch on January 16, as well. The usual process will be used for ECRs to express their interest in the program (by sending an e-mail to the Contact Centre). Details will be posted on the website (and included in our newsletter), and expressions of interest will be accepted until February 20.
- One more thing to add on the Project Grant front that may affect those of you invited to review: We are pleased to announce that we are working to establish **standing peer review committees** for the Project Grant competition.

- This means that the core membership of a committee will be recruited for a term of service (typically 3 years – or 6 competitions) instead of for a single competition. To maintain stability in membership while providing a mechanism for membership renewal, a rotational system will be established for one third of the membership on a yearly basis. The membership may also be supplemented by additional members for a specific competition, as required, based on the applications received and the expertise needed for their review. Equity, diversity and inclusion representation will be considered in building the committees.
- Peer review committee mandates will continue to be reviewed and updated.
- Eight (8) information sessions (webinars) to applicants will be held between January 23 and February 27, 2019.

#### *Foundation Grant*

- The [Stage 1 results for the 2018-19 competition](#) were released to applicants on December 18, and we posted an overview of the results online the next day.
- The Stage 2 application deadline is February 6, 2019.
- It was announced this week that [Foundation grantees originally funded as early career researchers \(ECRs\)](#) are now eligible to apply for Project Grants, starting with the Spring 2019 competition.
  - Affected grantees were informed on January 4th via e-mail.
  - We have heard feedback from the community about the need for ECRs to grow their programs of research during this critical stage of their career, and this decision reflects CIHR's recognition of some of the unintended challenges that ECR Foundation grantees and others have raised with us.
  - This decision does not extend to Foundation grantees funded as mid-career or senior researchers. These grantees are not eligible to apply to the Project Grant competition as a Nominated Principal Applicant or a Principal Applicant but may participate as Co-Applicants or Collaborators.
- Finally, this decision about ECR grantees does not affect the ongoing discussions about the Foundation Grant program overall. No decisions have been made regarding the continuation or design of the program, but CIHR's Science Council and Governing Council will continue their deliberations on this front in early 2019. We expect that there will be news to share in the early spring.

#### *Questions from Members*

**Q: Reviewer comments to the applicants need to be sent much earlier than Jan 23 which is only 5 weeks prior to the next submission date. This leaves very little time for applicants to revise their application. There is usually much more time between spring scores/reviews and the September submission date?**

**During the OOGP, the peer review comments and scores were released early January. Would CIHR please consider and discuss internally if it would be possible to provide the comments and percentile rank in early January to applicants?**

**A:** This topic will be brought forward to the UDEC for more discussions.

**Q: Will there be any more peer committee mandates updated for this round?**

**A:** Eleven committee mandates have been updated including the Behavioral Science committees, the Neuroscience committees, the Cell Biology and Cell Physiology committees. More details will be released when the Spring 2019 competition will be launched on January 16, 2019.

**Q: How do ECRs register interest in the observer program?**

**A:** Early Career Researcher interested to join the observer program, should send a request by email to the Contact Centre ([Support@cihr-irsc.gc.ca](mailto:Support@cihr-irsc.gc.ca)). Detailed instructions are provided on the [Observer program \(en français\)](#) web page.

**Q: Will Chairs and SOs also be defined term?**

**A:** Yes, the Chairs and SOs will have defined terms moving forward. We want to thank the Chairs and SOs for their patience and generosity in helping us keeping stability in previous competition.

**Q: Will all first-round non-Early Career Researcher Foundation grants holders be given access to Project at some point?**

**A:** This is part of the active discussions about the program future. More information will be available in the Spring 2019.

Other updates

*Extended University Delegate Executive committee*

- We are working on identifying potential dates for a meeting in February/March time period.
- We would like to extend the membership of the UDEC by 2 – 3 members for this committee. Interested members are invited to send an email to University Delegates inbox to self-nominate. We may also solicit some members to join. Final selection will be based on distribution of members regionally, size of institution, etc.
- To date, these are the proposed agenda items for the meeting:
  - Review of Project Grant peer review mandates,
  - Distribution of funds,
  - Use of attachments in Project Grant applications
  - Discussions on the timing of competitions, (launch dates, release of results, etc.).

**3. Adjournment**

- The next University Delegates meeting will be held on February 7, 2019.
- The Chair thanked everyone for their participation, and adjourned the meeting at 1:30 p.m. ET.