

## Theme 1 (Biomedical) CIHR Foundation Mock Stage 1 Application Discussion

### Discussion Notes – Comments from Participants

May 14, 2014 1:30-2:45pm

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JSG = Comments attributed to Joanne Simala-Grant, Director, Grant Assist Program (Health Sciences)

Question: What about applying to the Foundation competition in teams (ie. with Program co-Leaders)?

Answer (JSG): We are aware of 75 individual from the UofA who are eligible to apply to the September 2014 Foundation Competition. Of these, we anticipate approximately 4-5 applications with two Program co-leaders. It is difficult for most individuals to apply to the Foundation Competition with others, as the Program Leaders will need to wrap up their Program of Research with the other Program Leaders. The problem is created as Program Leaders are not permitted to apply for other open funding from CIHR. CIHR has indicated that Foundation Scheme teams should clearly demonstrate synergy and previous experience co-managing programs of research. If a team applies for a Foundation Grant, only one Program Leader needs to be eligible. However, if team members apply separately, each need to meet the eligibility criteria.

Question: How does CIHR define “expert”?

Answer: A term expert has replaced what has been known as Co-Investigator, Collaborator, Partner, or Knowledge User. Experts can be brought into a Foundation Program at any point during the award. Program Experts do not provide a CV.

Comments from discussants:

- The application seems to be driven by track record with an emphasis on “looking back” at historical accomplishments, rather than looking forward.
- The application seems less detailed than expected.
- We have to write for both expert and non-expert reviewers.
- JSG: The Stage 1 application is to be reviewed by individuals with research expertise related to the application. In contrast, Stage 3 review occurs through interdisciplinary panel. While the stage 3 review is a review of reviews, the stage 3 reviewers have access to the Stage 1 application.
- There seems to be repetition in Part 2B (Significance of Contributions) and Part 2C (Productivity). It is difficult to avoid repetition in these parts because the applicant is addressing similar bullet points. Part 2B and 2C are very similar for a basic scientist but for Theme 3 and 4 researchers these sections would be very different.
- Should there be just enough information in the application to find the publication in the CV (ex. when referring to publications, just use a number) or should the application be able to stand alone (ex. write out which publication it refers to)? There may not be enough space to write out publications in full, however, the group felt that the application should stand alone as the reviewer may not want to constantly refer to the CV when reviewing. It was thought that maybe what is most important should go in the actual application vs. relying on the reviewers to find the information within the CV.

Comments from discussants on the Foundation CV:

- There seems to be overlap between the Significance of Contributions section (~1/2 page in the application) and Most Significant Contributions in Foundation CV (most relevant - up to 5).
  - o The group suggested that maybe the Most Significant Contributions referred to the applicant's whole career while the Significance of Contributions could be used to discuss contributions relevant to the proposed Program of Research. However, it was noted that is not what the instructions for the Most Significant Contributions state.
  - o It was suggested that if applying as a team, the Most Significant Contributions section could refer to each individual applicant's contributions, while the Significance of Contributions and Productivity could comment on the team's contributions.
  - o It was suggested that the Most Significant Contributions section in the CV could be more personal to show character while the Significance of Contributions in the application could discuss impact, translation, etc.
  - o Note that the Significance of Contributions should also include information about training/mentorship and this could be approximately 1/2 of the allotted space.

Question: If a New Investigator, how could one speak to training of HQP?

Answer from

discussants: Could discuss the plan to train and recruit HQP as the program grows. Frequently this is seen in NSERC Discovery grants when New Investigators discuss training/mentorship. Also make sure to discuss the training that has been done.

Comments on New Investigators applying to the Foundation Competition:

- New Investigators will be compared to New Investigators.

Comments for Mid-career investigators

- Applicants should be very clear about stating how long their lab has been up and running. Do not make the reviewers calculate but specifically state how many years.
- Consider writing as if you were applying for tenure.

Question: At many of the Program Vision Meetings, comments were made that the applicant should address the bullet points from the Stage 1 Application Requirements in their Stage 1 application. Do you think this was achieved in the mock application and what are strategies to address the bullet points?

Answer: Yes, it was easy to find where the text addressed the bullet point. It was good to see an echo of the CIHR language from the Stage 1 Application Requirements in the application. Suggest trying to use keywords from bullet points throughout the application.

Question: At NSERC, translation to industry is important. Is this important at CIHR?

Answer: It is important to show translation to medical practice but less important to show translation to industry.

Question: In basic science, is there any advice on how to address health outcomes?

Answer: In the mock application, the importance of basic science was stressed through a quote from Alain Beaudet (CIHR President). The connection with basic science to health outcomes can be difficult to make. At Stage 1 the application will be reviewed

by experts and peers so they will understand that this connection is difficult. However, this may be tricky to communicate as it is important to note that the application will be reviewed by an interdisciplinary panel at stage 3.

Question: To show translation, is it important to show IP, companies, patents, etc?

Answer: It is important to frame any industry partnerships as improved health care and outcomes and not focus on the financial benefits.

Question: When will the Peer Review Manual for the Stage 1 applications be released?

Answer (JSG): Hopefully by the end of June. GAP-HS may host a workshop to discuss what the new peer review system means from an applicants' perspective.

The group would like GAP-HS to provide a 1-2 page highlight document based on the CIHR Foundation Peer Review Manual, as Foundation Peer Review Manual will be a lengthy document.

Question: What feedback have you received re: the asynchronous review?

Answer (JSG): Feedback from the asynchronous review of post-doctoral fellowship applications was mixed. Some reviewers felt that other reviewers would not engage in the chat. With the Foundation, there is to be a virtual chair (similar to who chairs the current OOGP panels) who would moderate discussion. CIHR will also monitor and moderate.

Question: How does an applicant determine how much funding to ask for?

Answer: One idea is to look at how much open funding an applicant has, and add a bit more. It is not clear whether an applicant can/should ask for a different amount each year.

Question: What kind of Summary page should be used for registration? Stage 1 or Stage 2?

Answer (JSG): Would be inclined to use a Stage 1 application summary, then whatever work is done can be used in Stage 1.