In this info-session:

- Overview of the Project Grant program, timelines, and eligibility
- Review of requirements for Registration
- Application components
- CIHR Peer Review process
- Assessment criteria and strategies for effective writing (Jodi Smith)
Project Grant

- Supports defined projects from all areas of health research, at any stage (from discovery to commercialization/knowledge translation).
- Designed to capture ideas with the greatest potential to advance health-related fundamental or applied knowledge, health research, health care, health systems, and/or health outcomes.

Registration Deadline:
February 6 at 7:00 p.m.
ORS submission deadline:
February 20 at 4:30 p.m.
Application deadline:
March 6
Spring 2019 funding

• $655M available from CIHR over 2 competitions + Foundation Grant
  • Approx $275M awarded in Fall competition
• $13.25M envelope available for large grants (top 2% of requests)
• Equalization of success rates for early career researchers. There will be a specific funding envelope for ECRs (not specified)
• No formal requirements for partnering (but reviewers may reasonably expect partnered projects to include an appropriate commitment)
• Total awarded grant amount in Fall 2018 competition ranged from $25k to $5.3M. Average grant size was $736K over 4.43 years. Includes across the board reduction of 23.5% to budgets. UM success rate was 19.2% - higher than national average.
Eligibility

- Nominated Principal Applicant (NPA): Independent Researcher OR Knowledge User
- Co-Applicants may also include trainees
- PA: responsibility for direction of proposed activities
  Co-Applicant: contributes to proposed activities
  Collaborator: provides a specific service (e.g. data, equipment, training, patients)
- NEW: Foundation Grantees originally funded as ECRs may apply to Project. Other Foundation Grant holders may not apply for or hold Project Grant funds. Researchers can apply to both competitions, but not with same proposal.
- Maximum of 2 Project Grant applications as NPA
- Early Career Investigators: 60 months as independent researcher as of March 6, 2019
Registration

- Registration is mandatory!
- CCV is not required at registration
- NPA must remain unchanged between registration and application. Other participants can be added, removed, or change roles between registration and application.
- Provide total budget estimate (can change at application)

- Suggested reviewers (5; not in conflict of interest)
- Reviewers to exclude (optional)
- Suggested peer review committees (2)
  - Mandatory justification for each committee selected (750 characters)
- Descriptors:
  - Descriptors
  - Themes
  - Areas of Science
  - Suggested Institutes
  - Methods/Approaches
  - Study populations/Experimental Systems
Registration, cont.

• Lay title and abstract (2000 characters)
• Research Summary (3500 characters, scientific/technical, headings required):
  • Background and Importance
  • Goal(s) / Research Aims
  • Methods / Approaches / Expertise
  • Expected Outcomes

Application will be available once Registration is completed!
Specific Project Types

• Indigenous Health Research
  • TCPS – Chapter 9 principles (at Registration)
  • May be eligible for Iterative Peer Review Process

• Randomized Controlled Trials (RCTs)
  • Applications over $250k/yr must submit to RCT committee
  • All applications with RCT as major component must consider specific RCT evaluation criteria

• Commercialization
  • Research/Technical Plan and Commercialization Plan in 10-pg attachment

• Integrated Knowledge Translation (iKT)
  • At NPI’s discretion whether to flag as iKT project, given level of Knowledge User involvement
  • CIHR will bring in Knowledge User reviewers
Equity and Diversity Questionnaire

- New as of 2018
- Mandatory for all application participants (except Collaborators)
- Application cannot be submitted until all participants have completed
- Responses will be retained for future applications
Application – CV requirements

• Principal Applicants AND Co-applicants must complete a CIHR Biosketch CV
• CV not required for Collaborators and will not be considered in application review. Collaborator role should be detailed in proposal. Collaborators are strongly encouraged to have a validated CIHR PIN, however.
• All Principal Applicants and Co-Applicants will have access to the application on ResearchNet in order to allow them to contribute to the application. Only the NPA can submit, however.
• All Principal Applicants and Co-Applicants must complete the following:
  • Enter their CCV confirmation number;
  • Complete their most significant contributions (Maximum of 5; 3500 characters)
  • Consent.
Application – Attachments

• 10-page Research Proposal
  • PDF in 12-point font, 2 cm margins, max 30 MB – for all attachments!
  • Page limit includes any charts, tables, figures, and images as well as text. Make sure text in attachments is legible without zooming.

• References
  • Should be cited within the application and use a standard format.

• Response to previous reviews (2 pgs)
  • Upload reviews being addressed as well together in a single PDF—does not count as part of page limit.
  • Do not include Notice of Decision or results letter.

• Other application materials
  • Letters of support/collaboration
  • Questionnaires and consent forms
  • Up to five publications from the past five years, relevant to proposal
  • Letter from Dean of Faculty required for pending appointments (must start by effective date of funding)
  • All documents in PDF
  • Reviewers are not required to read other application materials! Reviews will indicate whether they have done so.
Application – Budget

• Budget categories:
  Research Staff: Research Associates, Research Assistants, Technicians, Co-Applicants and Collaborators who are not independent researchers
  Trainees: Training and mentoring costs, including for knowledge users
  Consumables: Material and supplies, services, travel for research
  Non-consumables: Equipment and operating and maintenance costs
  Knowledge Translation: Dissemination including publication, travel for conferences
  Other

• Refer to Grants and Awards Guide for more details on eligible costs
• All amounts entered should be totals over the entire project, rounded to the nearest $1,000, and add to multiple of $5,000
• 1750 characters per category to justify costs
• Cost quotations should not be appended
• Partner Budget details (if applicable)
  “The expectation of the budget request is that it is a reasonable estimate that takes into consideration the needs of the research project and any anticipated changes in requirements over the term of the grant.”
Review Process

• Single-stage committee-based peer review
  • Reviewers will review applications remotely, then meet face-to-face to streamline, discuss, and rate applications.
  • Standing peer review committees are now being established for the Project Grant competition

• Be sure to review committee mandates before making selections at registration! This cannot be changed at the application stage.
  • Significant changes in current competition to former Cell Biology & Mechanisms of Disease (CBM) and Cell Physiology (CP) committees
  • CIHR will consult with committee Chairs and Scientific Officers before assigning applications.
Review Process (continued)

- Each application assigned to three reviewers (primary + 2 secondary)
- Reviewers will rate each criterion on scale of 0.0-4.9 – criteria are weighted to derive overall score
  - Concept – 25% (Significance and Impact of the Research)
  - Feasibility – 75% (Approaches and Methods; Expertise, Experience, and Resources)
- Divide into top/bottom group – some may be “streamlined out” of discussion.
- Reviewers will reach consensus score and committee will vote
- Reviewers will advise on budget but will not factor into scientific review.
Priority Announcements

Priority Announcements will provide additional funding of up to $100,000 for one year to highly-rated proposals in target areas which are not funded through the normal CIHR Project Grant review process. The Priority Announcements include:

Cannabis priority research areas:
- Cannabis edible products and concentrates
- Cannabis use and driving safety
- Cannabis for therapeutic uses in military personnel and veterans

Data science, management and stewardship:
- Research enabling the application of all four FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reproducible) Guiding Principles for scientific data management and stewardship.
- Research in collaboration with a knowledge user that supports the development of data visualization tools to maximize the real-world use of existing clinical datasets.

Human Development, Child and Youth Heath – Early Career Researchers
Musculoskeletal, Skin and Oral Health
Nutrition, Metabolism, and Diabetes
- A portion of funding will be dedicated to Clinician-Scientists
Assessment Criteria

• Criterion 1: Concept – Significance and Impact (25%)
• Criterion 2: Feasibility (75%)
  • Approaches and Methods (50%)
  • Expertise, Experience, Resources (25%)
Assessment Criteria (cont’d)
Criterion 1: Concept – Significance and Impact (25%)

• Creativity of the project:
  ▪ New, incremental, innovative, high-risk types of inquiry
  ▪ new/adapted research (or KT/commercialization)

• Sound rationale

• Well defined goals and objectives
  ▪ Goal states purpose/expected to achieve
  ▪ Objectives clearly define proposed research/activities required to meet goal
  ▪ Research outputs clearly described and aligned with objectives
Assessment Criteria (cont’d)

Criterion 1: Concept – Significance and Impact (25%)

- Advance health-related knowledge (basic science, model organisms, other discovery research; healthcare, health systems, and/or health outcomes)
  - Context of the project clearly described
  - Anticipated contributions should be relevant to issues/gaps
  - Anticipated contributions realistic (directly stem from outputs, rather than marginally related)

- Note: this criterion does not assess feasibility
Assessment Criteria (cont’d)

Criterion 2: Feasibility (75%)

• Approaches and Methods (50%)
• Expertise, Experience, Resources (25%)
Approaches and Methods (50%)

- Assesses the quality of the Project's design and plan; including how and when the project will be completed
- Appropriate approaches and methods to deliver the output(s) and achieve proposed contribution(s)
  - Methods, strategies, approaches allow successful completion of the research
  - Maximize project contributions to advance health-related knowledge
  - Research &/or KT/commercialization approaches/methods/strategies justified and appropriate
- Timelines
  - Realistic?
  - Should be appropriate for proposed activities; align key milestones with objectives
Approaches and Methods (50%) (cont’d)

• Potential challenges and mitigation strategies
  ▪ Identify scientific, technical or organizational challenges
  ▪ Provide realistic plan to address potential risks (does not have to be exhaustive)

• Please be sure to integrate gender/sex considerations into the research design (where appropriate)
Expertise, Experience, Resources (25%)

- Assess the appropriateness of the complement of expertise, experience, and resources among the applicants
- Estimate the number of hours per week (contribution) for each applicant working on the project
- Appropriate expertise and experience to lead the project and deliver output(s)
  - Describe roles, responsibilities of each applicant, and link to objectives
- Appropriate level of engagement from applicants
- Appropriate environment to successfully complete the research
  - Infrastructure, facilities, support personnel, equipment, other supplies to perform roles, and manage/deliver proposed output(s)
Points to consider

• Is more preliminary data needed? Is it clear how preliminary data supports this project as the next step?

• Do the experiments outlined clearly/fully address the research questions being posed? Will the models produce results that will accurately address the question? Why are the particular techniques being used/data types being acquired needed to address the question?

• Are the references current – is the project clearly building on the latest science? Does the literature review clearly demonstrate the basis/need for the project?
Points to consider cont’d

• Are the significance and impact on knowledge/health/healthcare clearly expressed – especially for basic science projects where there may not be an immediate translational impact?

• Do the applicants clearly have expertise using all the techniques described? Is each applicant’s role clearly described? Is there a need to bring in additional collaborator support to execute the project successfully? Is there evidence of previous meaningful collaboration among the applicants?

• Has the creativity/novelty of this research been described, and mentioned throughout the application?
Complete Summary

• Provide the following sections:
  - Background and importance, Goals/Research Aims, Methods/Approach/Expertise, Expected outcomes

• Suggestions:
  - Also include impact/significance (it is good as a concluding section)
  - Describe the creativity/novelty of your research
  - Write this section after the Research Proposal is complete
  - Spend time making the Summary concise, cohesive, and understandable (only part some reviewers will read)
  - Start the Summary with a description of the overall problem & why it is important; grab the reviewer’s attention and sell how important your research (and this project) is (i.e. why YOU should get the funding for THIS grant)
Responses to Previous Reviews

• Up to 2 pages total
• Include previous review comments that are being addressed
• Combine responses and reviews into 1 PDF document

• Address the comments thoroughly
• Use a collegial tone, explain misunderstandings
• Comments don’t always have to be incorporated, but if not, explain why
• Don’t waste space including praise or positive comments, unless you have responded to something in the positive comment.
• Include a clear reference to the comment so the reviewer knows which one you are responding to.
Other Suggestions

- Lay Summary: careful to use lay terms
- Budget: 1750 characters for each category
- Avoid jargon
- Make the grant easy for the reviewer to read and understand
  - Knowledge gap clearly identified
  - Objectives address the gap
  - Methods support objectives
  - Objective text consistent throughout the grant
  - Significance throughout the grant
Other Suggestions (cont’d)

• Be sure that you are clear on the objectives and path forward before writing
• Start writing early; multiple drafts; multiple reviewers (SME, non-SME)
• Throughout the application:
  ▪ Creativity, Significance/impact
• How your research furthers health-related knowledge
  ▪ basic science, model organisms, other discovery research; healthcare, health systems, and/or health outcomes
• Timeline: include a timeline specifying the full term and consecutive or concurrent research objectives.
• Expertise section: worth 25% so give it appropriate consideration
  • CIHR recommends mentioning expertise in the Summary although no longer required
Questions?
Discussion?