Connect with NSERC:
Community Engagement Visit
Spring 2013
Overview

• Connect with NSERC Engagement Visits:
  o Hear from you on a range of activities and programs
  o Answer any questions/address comments
• The floor is open throughout the session – ask questions or comment throughout
• Share your insight on what we are doing
Contents

1. Budget 2013
2. Program News: Research Tool and Instruments, Discovery Frontiers, Support for Mathematics and Statistics
3. NSERC’s Mandate
4. Discovery Grants – Evaluation and Budget Allocation
5. Research Portal and Common CV
6. Scholarships and Fellowships
Budget 2013: The Highlights

• Austerity budget in 2013: no cuts
• $15 million for research partnerships
• Discovery Grants and Scholarships and Fellowships programs unaffected
Research Tools and Instruments

• Broad consultation of community

• Smaller national competition with quota of applications per university based on:
  - number of NSERC-funded natural sciences and engineering researchers at institutions
  - minimum quota of two applications

• Researchers can be on more than one application

• Criteria for evaluation will remain the same
Over to you...

• Questions?
• Comments?
• Advice?
Discovery Frontiers

• Theme for current call: Exploring Big Data
• Two components:
  o NSERC, Genome Canada, CIHR and the CFI partnering on Advancing big data science in genomics research. **Deadline for Letters of Intent: May 1, 2013**
  o Digging into Data Challenge competition is sponsored by 10 leading funders from four countries (including SSHRC). **Application deadline : May 15, 2013**
Support for Mathematics & Statistics

• Collaborative and Thematic Resources Support in Mathematics and Statistics (CTRMS)

• Targeted funding for thematic resources to promote partnerships (national and international) within the mathematical and statistical sciences

• Provides a place where researchers meet, collaborate and exchange ideas
Over to you…

• Questions?
• Comments?
• Advice?
NSERC’s Mandate

• To promote and assist research in the natural sciences and engineering, other than the health sciences

• Program of research and intended objectives must be primarily in the natural sciences and engineering
  
  o Number of applications that do not clearly contribute to NSE remains high
  
  o In some disciplines, (esp. those common to both CIHR & NSERC), difficult to determine if there is an NSE or a health challenge
NSERC’s Mandate (cont’d)

Next Steps:

• Clarify wording of the existing guidelines

• Continue to involve experts in discussions on subject matter eligibility

• Ensure consistency within NSERC, recognizing that multi-disciplinary approaches are built in some programs
Over to you....

• Questions?
• Comments?
• Advice?
Discovery Grants Program Evaluation

• 5-years since 2007 DG program evaluation and International Review

• Key question: is the program achieving its 3 objectives and outcomes given changes to peer review process?

• Multiple lines of evidence: surveys, consultations, interviews, bibliometric data analysis

• International Committee to review findings
Allocation of Discovery Grants
Budget Among 12 Evaluation Groups

• NSERC requested CCA assessment in fall 2009
• CCA expert panel report: *Informing Research Choices; Indicators and Judgment* (July 2012)
• NSERC consultations on findings in CCA report
Over to you....

• Questions?
• Comments?
• Advice?
New Community Research Portal

- End-to-end system
- Single point of entry (portal)
- Phased in gradually
- Discovery Grants and Subatomic Physics Notification of Intent launched in spring 2013
Canadian Common CV (CCV)

• NSERC CCV launched April 24, 2013

• NSERC will gradually migrate all its programs to the CCV by late 2015

• NSERC CCV to replace the Personal Data Form (Form 100)
1. The excellence of the researcher(s) as demonstrated by the quality and impact of their recent research achievements;
2. The merit of their research proposal; and
3. Their achievements in, and plans for, research training.

Basic information

- Use of Discovery Grant Funds for Research Instruments and Equipment
- Discovery Grants Program description
- Discovery Accelerator Supplements Program description
- Peer Review Manual
- List of Evaluation Groups and Research Topics
- Programs Selection Committees
- Merit Indicators
- On-line Services (includes the on-line application system)
- Appeal Process

Competition results and statistics

Consultations and changes to review process

Questions and answers

- FAQ: Discovery Grants Competition
- Application information, intellectual property and funding decisions
- Grant Selection Committee Structure Review
Over to you....

• Questions?
• Comments?
• Advice?
Postdoctoral Fellowships Program Update

• Program evaluation confirmed relevance and need for PDF program

• Explore options to increase award level
  o Increase in budget is unlikely
  o Reducing the number of awards is not desirable

• Over to you...
  o Should we require a top-up from the institution/supervisor?
Postdoctoral Fellowships Program Update

• Decision notifications should be earlier - in mid-January

• **Over to you....**
  
  o Impact on deadline: June 15, August 15, September 15, October 1?
  
  o Other comments? Advice?
Postdoctoral Fellowships Program Update

- Application pressure remains an issue
  - 115 Fellowships are offered every year

- NSERC is willing to reconsider the limit of one application
Postdoctoral Fellowships Program Update

- Over to you ...
- How to manage the workload of applications and of peer review
  - How to get applications from top candidates only?
  - Should we require a top-up from the institution/supervisor?
  - Should we reduce eligibility window from two years from PhD to one year?
Scholarships Harmonization

• Benefits:
  o Simpler and streamlined process, operational efficiencies and greater flexibility
  o Better alignment across the agencies for eligibility and selection criteria
  o Use peer review resource and administrative capacity where value-added is greatest
Scholarships Harmonization: Master’s

• Agencies propose to devolve the selection of CGS-M to universities

• Implementation of an incoming model
  o Students apply to institutions where they are registered or intend to register
  o Consolidate recruitment and award decisions at the institution level
  o Portability and tenure abroad would no longer be possible at Masters’ level
Scholarships Harmonization: Master’s

- Delegation of Awards and allocation formula
  - Moving from quota of applications to quota of awards
  - Allocation based on share of awards held at institutions over the last 3 years
  - Refinements to allocation methodology in 3 years
Scholarships Harmonization: Master’s

• Over to you...
  o What quality control mechanism should be implemented to ensure adherence to high standards?
  o Should Institutions set-up a centralized review process?
  o What should the reporting requirements be?
Scholarships Harmonization: Doctoral

• Agencies will continue to manage their own component
  o Maintain national competitions; virtual reviews carried out by expert committees
• Over to you...
  o What should be the basis of a new allocation formula?
Scholarships Harmonization: Doctoral

• Agencies’ commitment: no application will fall through the cracks
• Includes PGS-D component
  o Outgoing model: students apply for a CGS-D through the university at which they are registered
  o Portability and tenure abroad will be maintained
• Over to you...
  o What should be the award level of a PGS-D?
Wrap-up

- Final questions comments?
- Further engagement visits planned at campuses across Canada
- Other suggestions, questions can be directed to connect@nserc-crsng.gc.ca
- Thank you!