



Research Funding Newsletter

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KM Beyond Academia

UM academics reaching a larger audience through the Conversation Canada

As Tri-Agency research grants are supported by public tax dollars, there is a growing expectation that the general public is included in a researcher's knowledge mobilization (KM) initiatives. Gone are the days when a successful KM plan was limited to peer-reviewed journal articles and academic conference presentations; now, researchers are expected to be far more creative in their KM plans and to complement these traditional academic outlets with activities geared toward engaging a general audience. For many researchers preparing grant applications, this presents a challenge: how can I meaningfully engage a non-specialist audience in the results of my very specialized research?

*Academic Rigour,
Journalistic Flair*

Enter the [Conversation Canada](#). Launched in 2017, the Conversation Canada is a news website that aims to combine "academic rigour with journalistic flair" in order to engage the general public in research being conducted at Canadian universities. Researchers can pitch an article idea to a professional editor, who will then work with the researcher to produce a <1000-word article optimized for public engagement and social media sharing. Article pitches are directed at one of three "priority areas"—(1) timely, evidence-based analysis of

what is making the news, (2) articles explaining new research and its significance to a non-specialist audience, or (3) timeless 'explainers' of complex issues—and if accepted by an editor, researchers are assigned a word limit and deadline for filing their article.

So how effective is the Conversation Canada in reaching a general audience? Consider some analytics. In 2019, 35 UM researchers contributed 51 articles, which were collectively read a total of 746,651 times. There is, of course, a wide range in the level of engagement that individual articles attract—the least-read article attracted just 65 reads, while the most-read article attracted 297,003 reads—though the vast majority of articles published by UM researchers in 2019 had more than 2500 reads, with many in the tens of thousands.

Also, engagement doesn't necessarily end at individual reads: articles are sometimes picked up by Canadian media outlets for further dissemination via print, radio, and television. For example, speaking on his article "[Measles outbreak: why are anti-vaxxers risking a public health crisis?](#)" Dr. Gregory Mason, Associate Professor of Economics, noted that "In 10 days, I've had over 14,000 reads and I've done two radio interviews in Kitchener and Ottawa." Similarly, speaking on her article "[Venice floods: historical myths may attract the aid city needs,](#)" Dr. Roisin Cossar, Professor of History, recalled that "In less than 10 days... my analytics stated that I had more than 3,600 readers so far. The



UPDATE ON ORS DEADLINES

As of April 1st, 2020, the Office of Research Services (ORS) will take a stricter approach toward submission deadlines.

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SUBMITTING TO SSHRC?

Dr. Lisa Landrum shares her recent experience applying for a Connection Grant.

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piece was picked up by the [Winnipeg] Free Press ...and it seems, by other Post media papers, including the Vancouver Sun. It also appeared on at least six other sites, including Public Radio International." Moreover, because the articles are optimized for social media, with attractive photos and click-worthy headlines, many researchers have found momentum for their articles generated via social media shares. For example, Dr. Karine Levasseur, Associate Professor of Political Studies, noted that her article "[Why is it so hard for your doctor to apologize?](#)" amassed over 4500 unique readers, many of whom were directed from "187 Facebook shares and 20 Tweets." Given its compatibility with existing platforms and current means of sharing information, the potential of the Conversation Canada to aid researchers in their KM initiatives is enormous.

Getting Started

So how can researchers begin to realize this potential? The Conversation Canada gives several tips on how to get started on developing an article. First, researchers should avoid writing their article before pitching it to an editor. Instead, they should make use of the Conversation Canada's [pitch submission tool](#) to identify the story they want to tell, its significance for non-academic readers, and accompanying multimedia that may help to tell it. According to the Conversation Canada, the most important question for researchers to consider when developing their pitch is: *why should people care?* "If you can answer that 'why should we care' question well, it will greatly improve the chances of your pitch being accepted, and then seeing more people read and share your article, helping your work reach a bigger national and global audience." Researchers are encouraged to work with their institute's communications staff in order to get their pitch right, and to hone it further by talking to friends and colleagues outside of their area of expertise

Second, when crafting their article, researchers should take a page from the book of journalists and focus on getting their point across as clearly and concisely as possible for the casual reader:

"Work hard on the first paragraph to grab the reader's interest. Start with a short, sharp statement of the article's essential facts, in no more than two sentences. Start with what's new, relevant, or surprising. Readers want to know Five Ws: who, what, where, when, why, and sometimes how. The first few paragraphs of the article should make your main point and/or

address what questions you're exploring in the piece and why it's important."

Finally, researchers should be attentive to the tone of their article and endeavour to "write how people talk." For example, "A man should never 'disembark from a vehicle' when he can 'get out of a car.'" To aid contributors in crafting their article for a general audience, the Conversation Canada offers a "Readability Index" tool that analyzes article text based on the Flesch-Kincaid readability tests. To make their content accessible to a wide audience—including young people and those whose first language is not English—the Conversation Canada aims to set

the readability of their articles at the level of an educated 16-year-old.

These, of course, are just things to consider when getting started—if an idea is pitched successfully, researchers will have the opportunity to work with a professional editor throughout the writing process to ensure their article is prepared for maximum engagement. For further information about submission and analytics, researchers can consult [A Quick Guide to Writing for the Conversation Canada](#) and [the UM institutional page on the Conversation Canada website](#).

TOP 10 UM ARTICLES ON THE CONVERSATION CANADA

1. ["For the Love of Technology! Sex Robots and Virtual Reality"](#)
Neil MacArthur and Markie Twist
311,939 reads
2. ["Why Parents Should Never Spank Children"](#)
Tracie O. Afifi and Elisa Romano
226,756 reads
3. ["The Surprising Secret to Successful Psychotherapy"](#)
Edward A. Johnson
48,574 reads
4. ["A Year of Resistance: How Youth Protests Shaped the Discussion on Climate Change"](#)
Joe Curnow and Anjali Helferty
44,418 reads
5. ["L'épidémie de coronavirus à l'heure des médias sociaux"](#)
Jason Kindrachuk and Alyson Kelvin
36,928 reads
6. ["How We Solved an Arctic Mercury Mystery"](#)
Feiyue Wang
36,391 reads
7. ["The Resolve to Be Thinner and Fitter this Year Won't Lead to Salvation"](#)
Patty Thille
31,337 reads
8. ["Losing Children to Foster Care Endangers Mothers' Lives"](#)
Elizabeth Wall-Wieler
30,368 reads
9. ["First Ebola Antibody Treatment to Halt Deadly Virus in Primates"](#)
Gary Kobinger
29,793 reads
10. ["Les microplastiques pourraient affecter la formation et la fonte des glaces de l'Arctique"](#)
Nicolas-Xavier Geilfus
28,291 reads

ORS Deadlines

Late submissions lead to changes at the Office of Research Services

As of April 1st, 2020, the Office of Research Services (ORS) will be taking a stricter approach toward submission deadlines for research grant applications. In a memo sent to all University of Manitoba Researchers on February 7th, 2020, Dr. Digvir Jayas, Vice President (Research and International), noted the high volume of grant applications submitted annually to ORS and reiterated the importance of timely submissions:

"To provide some context, it is important to note that in the last 12-months ORS processed approximately 1500 research grants and 900 research contracts. Coordinating the timely review of this volume of grants and contracts is challenging. Especially challenging is the management of the review of grants for major competitions, e.g., CIHR Project grants, NSERC Discovery grants, and SSHRC Insight grants, where submission of up to 100 applications are received for each of these competitions, and also for the many partnership and international grant applications, where various submission platforms are used and institutional support letters are required.

Submissions received after the internal ORS deadline are an inefficient use of senior administrators' time to attend to process, due to lack of planning on the part of researchers. ORS must reorganize/re-prioritize workload to accommodate late submissions, which may require overtime. In addition, researchers who submitted within the deadlines (or early) must now wait longer for their applications to be reviewed and returned with institutional signatures in place. ORS staff must handle queries from researchers concerning ongoing status of their submissions, which can exacerbate delays even further."



In response to a continued pattern of late submissions from researchers, ORS will be implementing the following change:

Effective April 1st, 2020, an application received after the posted ORS internal deadlines—or less than 5 business days in the case of smaller competitions for which deadlines are not posted—will not be submitted to the agency involved.

For full details regarding the submission process for ORS, see [here](#).

When is My ORS Deadline?

For Tri-Agency and other large, complex grants:

10 business days before agency deadline

For smaller, simpler grants:

5 business days before agency deadline

Note: individual faculties have their own internal deadlines to obtain signatures on the FAAF. Check with your Research Facilitator or Associate Dean (Research) about deadlines for internal submission.

How Do I Submit?

1. Draft and revise grant application
2. Complete electronic **FAAF** and append your electronic signature
3. Obtain electronic signatures from your Department Head and Dean
4. Send your signed FAAF and complete application to researchgrants@umanitoba.ca
5. ORS will review your application and provide additional instructions or permission to submit



Making Connections

In July 2019, Dr. Lisa Landrum, Associate Professor in the Faculty of Architecture, opened her email inbox to some exciting news: she had been awarded a \$50,000 SSHRC Connection Grant in support of her outreach project “Canadian Architecture Forums on Education: Toward an Architecture Policy for Canada.” But the path leading up to this moment wasn’t entirely smooth or straightforward. Less than 12 months earlier, Dr. Landrum had received a rejection notice for a SSHRC Partnership Engage Grant in support of the same project, putting its future in jeopardy. I recently reached out to Dr. Landrum to discuss what it means to persevere through multiple funding competitions, and to adapt a research project in an increasingly competitive funding landscape.

Tell me about your project.

The Canadian Architecture Forums on Education involve all 12 Canadian schools of architecture in five forums over the course of one year. The forums are enabling students and academic researchers to contribute to an important national conversation on the future of architecture in Canada. The knowledge mobilized by these forums will help shape the vision and priorities of a developing national architecture policy for Canada. The initiative is supported by a SSHRC Connection Grant – Outreach Activity (\$50,000).

This project was originally submitted as a SSHRC Partnership Engage Grant, but you eventually found success with the SSHRC Connection Grant. What made you decide to switch funding opportunities?

I was convinced the initiative was important and fundable so I persisted. I also realized that the value of connectivity among all Canadian architecture students and educators outweighed the research needs of the partner, so a knowledge mobilization grant made more sense for the project. The Royal Architectural Institute of Canada (RAIC) and the Canadian Architectural Licensing Authorities (CALA) remain collaborators in the current SSHRC Connection Grant, since they are guiding the national policy initiative and providing communications support, but the outreach focus is on the academic sector.

Did you face any challenges adapting your project to a different grant program with different objectives? What was involved in reframing your project as a Connection Grant project?

As it turned out the Connection Grant was a better match for the initiative, so switching

funding streams actually helped clarify the project goals. The primary challenge was to develop a specific and viable framework for the proposed forums.

Can you share any insights on the application process for the Connection Grant specifically? What should those currently contemplating a Connection Grant application be made aware of?

Communication with collaborators is key. Finalizing details and securing commitments takes time and may require different communication strategies with different partners. I was fortunate to already have good working relationships and regular meetings with my collaborators, including directors of architecture programs across Canada, as well as with provincial professional associations and a national advocacy organization. The turnaround time between award-notification (early July) and delivering the Connection events (beginning in September, in my case) is short. So, investing time and careful thought in a detailed proposal not only strengthens the competitiveness of an application but, if successful, eases the facilitation of proposed events.

Did you utilize institutional resources when developing your project or preparing your grant application?

Yes, the SSHRC research facilitator for Education and Social Work was outstanding and certainly helped to strengthen the application with advice and questions. Erik Magnusson provided both overall structural suggestions on how best to communicate the proposal’s rationale and detailed word-smithing advice to help clarify intent with respect to the Connection Grant objectives.

This spring, researchers will receive results from the fall 2019 SSHRC funding competitions, including the Insight Grant, the Partnership Development Grant, and the Insight Development Grant. What advice do you have for those who may be unsuccessful?

Apply again! Most researchers will admit that they are not always successful with applications, and an unsuccessful application is not necessarily a reflection of the value of the research. So, consider and integrate any feedback, adjust the application as appropriate, review the proposal with a UM research facilitator, and apply again!

Where can people learn more about your project?

On the [CAFÉ website](#) and on [Instagram](#).

SSHRC FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Partnership Engage Grants

Short-term and timely support for partnered research activities that will inform decision-making at a single partner organization from the public, private or not-for-profit sector.

Value: up to \$25,000

Duration: 1 year

SSHRC deadline: March 15th, June 15th, September 15th, December 15th, 2020

Connection Grants

Support for events and outreach activities geared toward short-term knowledge mobilization.

Value: up to \$25,000 for events/up to \$50,000 for outreach activities

Duration: 1 year

SSHRC deadline: May 1st, August 1st, November 1st, 2020

Insight Grants

Long-term support for research in disciplines related to the social sciences and humanities

Value: \$7,000 – \$400,000

Duration: 2-5 years

SSHRC Deadline: October 15th, 2020

Partnership Development Grants

Initial support for the development of strategic research partnerships between post-secondary and other institutions.

Value: \$75,000 - \$200,000

Duration: 1-3 years

SSHRC Deadline: November 15th, 2020

Insight Development Grants

Initial support for research in its early stages in disciplines related to the social sciences and humanities.

Value: \$7000 – \$75,000

Duration: 1-2 years

SSHRC Deadline: February 1st, 2021

SSHRC BY THE NUMBERS 2018-2019

INSIGHT GRANTS

Total applications: 1365

Total awards: 619

Overall success rate: 45.3%

UM applications: 19

UM awards: 10

UM success rate: 52.6%

INSIGHT DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

Total applications: 1128

Total awards: 565

Success rate: 50.1%

UM applications: 11

UM awards: 6

UM success rate: 54.5%

PARTNERSHIP DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

Total applications: 148

Total awards: 70

Success rate: 47.3%

UM applications: 2

UM awards: 1

UM success rate: 50%

PARTNERSHIP ENGAGE GRANTS

Total applications: 91

Total awards: 55

Success rate: 60.4%

UM applications: 2

UM awards: 2

UM success rate: 100%

CONNECTION GRANTS

Total applications: 692

Total awards: 284

Success rate: 41.1%

UM applications: 9

UM awards: 5

UM success rate: 55.5%

UM Funding Opportunities

University Research Grants Program

Up to \$10,000 to support research at the University of Manitoba. Funds should be used to develop research to a point where Tri-Agency applications can be made.

Deadline: April 1, 2020 (established faculty); November 15, 2020 (new faculty)

UM/SSHRC Explore Grants Program

Up to \$7000 for small-scale research projects in the social sciences and humanities. Open to researchers in all disciplines related to SSHRC.

Deadline: April 1, 2020 (spring competition); November 15, 2020 (fall competition)

UM/SSHRC Exchange Grant

Up to \$750 (Canada), \$1000 (USA), or \$15000 (international) for researchers to take part in conferences of major scholarly significance in disciplines related to SSHRC.

Deadline: April 1, 2020 (spring competition); November 15, 2020 (fall competition)

University International Programs and Projects Seed Fund

Up to \$25,000 in the development of new international initiatives that contribute towards the University's International Strategy objectives

Deadline: April 1, 2020 (spring competition); November 15, 2020 (fall competition)

University Creative Works Program

Up to \$5000 for high quality creative works. Open to faculty in artistic disciplines.

Deadline: May 1, 2020

Conference Sponsorship Program

Support for conferences, with priority given to conferences hosted at the University of Manitoba.

Deadline: February 18, 2020 (for conferences in May/June/Jul/Aug); June 15, 2020 (for conferences in Sept/Oct/Nov/Dec); Oct 15, 2020 (for conferences in Jan/Feb/Mar/Apr)

University Collaborative Research Program

Up to \$25,000 to support new collaborative interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary research projects.

Deadline: November 15, 2020

University Indigenous Research Program

Up to \$25,000 to foster the inclusion of Indigenous perspectives in research and/or to seed community-based research in partnership with First Nations, Metis, and Inuit communities.

Deadline: November 15, 2020

Small Research Equipment Funding Program

Up to \$25,000 for researchers who have specific, lower-cost equipment needs required to support their research programs.

Deadline: July 31, 2020

Tri-Agency Bridge Funding (CIHR only)

Provides funding for the further development of unsuccessful CIHR Project Grants applications to ensure future success.

Deadline: April 1, 2020 (spring competition); October 15, 2020 (fall competition)

Tri-Agency Bridge Funding

Provides funding for the further development of unsuccessful Tri-Agency applications to ensure future success.

Deadline: June 15, 2020

For further information about these and other funding opportunities, including guidelines and application forms, please visit [the Internal Funding Programs website](#).

Additional funding opportunities can be located via [the Upcoming Major Funding Opportunities and Deadlines search tool](#) or the [SPIN external funding database](#).

Upcoming Events

The 2020 Horizon Global Platform Competition of the New Frontiers in Research Fund (NFRF)

A bilingual webinar will be presented and followed by a Q&A session.

Date: February 27, 2020

Time: 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. Eastern Time

The link to the session will be active here approximately one hour prior to the start time.

Meeting link – Password: **929HQfD7mqQ**

The webinar will be recorded. Presentation slides along with the recording will be made available to RGOs shortly after the session.

For more information contact: NFRF-FNFR@chairs-chaire.gc.ca.

CIHR Institute of Health Services and Policy Research Strategic Planning Town Hall

In partnership with Research Manitoba

Date: Monday March 2, 2020

Time: 3:30 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Location: Bannatyne Campus, Room 071 Apotex Centre, 750 McDermot Avenue

Registration is required to attend: <https://cihr-ihspr-strategic-plan-apotex-centre-winnipeg.eventbrite.ca>

Questions? Contact Johanne Richard at CIHR-IHSPR (jrichard.ihspr@ices.on.ca)

Workshop Series on Best Practices in Research Management

Core 1: Research Integrity Online Course

This session can be completed at any time by registering through UMLearn

<https://universityofmanitoba.desire2learn.com/d2l/login>

Optional Sessions:

Option 2: Understanding Research Ethics and Privacy Legislation (2 sessions)

Date: February 28, 2020

Time: 1:00 – 3:00 pm

Location: A474 Chown, Bannatyne Campus

Date: March 13, 2020

Time: 1:00 – 3:00 pm

Location: 100 Administration, Fort Garry Campus

Option 3: Navigating Clinical Trial and Data Sharing Agreements with Affiliate Health Institutions

Date: April 3, 2020

Time: 1:00 – 3:00 pm

Location: A474 Chown, Bannatyne Campus

For a full searchable listing of upcoming events, see the [UM Events Calendar](#).

Resources

Internal SSHRC Review Panels

The SSHRC research support team offers internal voluntary panel reviews for the major SSHRC funding competitions. These reviews are designed to help you strengthen your SSHRC proposals and give you an added advantage in an increasingly competitive funding landscape. Faculty members have found that this process provides a better review of proposals and results in stronger applications moving forward to SSHRC. While this process is voluntary, we strongly suggest you begin your proposal early in order to take advantage of these opportunities. As you plan your research and funding year, remember to leave time for participation in reviews and panels to strengthen your application. Contact your Research Facilitator for further info!

Seeking Research Participants?

The VP Research and International Office has created a page titled [Calls for Research Participants](#). The page was created for researchers (including student researchers) who are seeking research participants. If you would like to add your project to the page, email research_communications@umanitoba.ca with the title of the project and the link to the project website. The project will then be added to the page.

Mitacs

[Mitacs](#) is a national not-for-profit organization that delivers research and training programs to faculty, students, and postdocs in all disciplines. In the four years since its creation, their partnership with SSHRC has supported over 200 social sciences and humanities collaborations with not-for-profit organizations.

- ❖ [Globalink](#) - Build and strengthen your global research network - the program supports international collaborations, including travel abroad for Canadian students (at any time) and hosting international students at Canadian universities.
- ❖ [Accelerate](#) - applications accepted any time Supports research collaborations with a not-for-profit or industry partner, starts at four months at \$15,000, and can scale up as much as you need; supports cross-disciplinary projects, international collaborations, and longer-term funding for graduate students.
- ❖ [Elevate](#) – call for applications twice a year A two-year post-doctoral fellowship with customized management training and competitive funding on a project with a partner. The program is open to post-docs in all disciplines.

Mitacs is committed to supporting innovative research across all disciplines, and are pleased to share a small sample of notable projects within the SSHRC disciplines:

- ❖ [Investigating the history of French sequential photography](#)
- ❖ [Uncovering knowledge about ancient indigenous communities](#)
- ❖ [Partnering with children's gaming start-up to communicate social issues](#)

For further information, contact Yvette Shang, Mitacs representative @ yshang@mitacs.ca

Questions?

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