



CIHR's Investigator Initiated Grant Programs and Peer Review Processes

**Summer Program in Aging
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Funding agencies around the world are being challenged to keep pace with a rapidly advancing research frontier and struggle to reduce the burden on applicants and reviewers.

The **objectives** of the **CIHR's Investigator Initiated Grant Programs** are to:

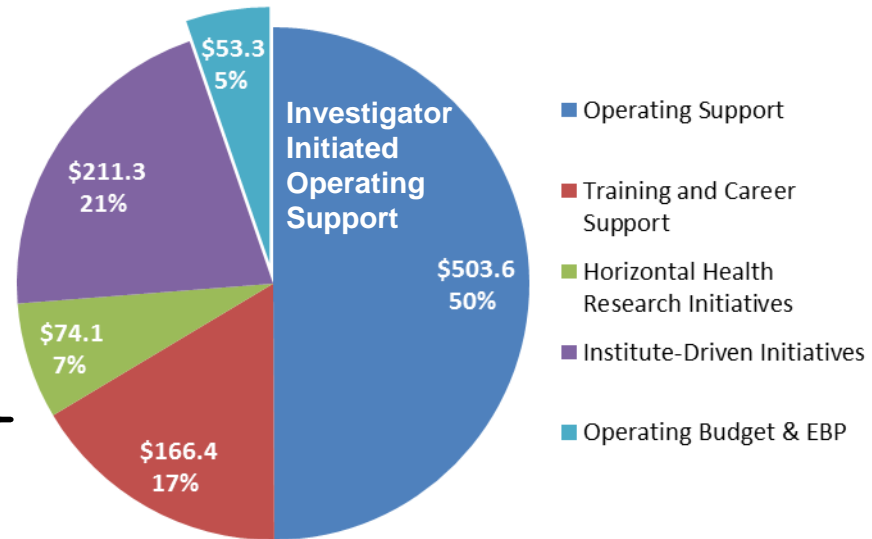
- Capture excellence across all four research pillars, from knowledge creation to knowledge translation
- Capture innovative, original and breakthrough research
- Integrate new talent to sustain Canada's pipeline of health researchers
- Improve sustainability of the long-term research enterprise

1. Two separate, complementary funding schemes :
 - Project Grants
 - Foundation Grants

2. A peer review process that includes:
 - Application-focused review
 - Multi-stage review
 - Structured review criteria
 - Remote review of applications at the initial stage(s)

CIHR Budget 2015-16 - \$1,008.6M

Recent government investments have focused on Tri-Council programs for training and horizontal initiatives.



Source: 2015-16 Main Estimates



PROJECT GRANT COMPETITION



The **Project Grant Program is designed to capture ideas with the greatest potential** to advance health research, health-related knowledge, health care, health systems and/or health outcomes.

- It supports projects with a specific purpose and a defined endpoint;
- The best ideas may stem from new, incremental, innovative and/or high-risk lines of inquiry or knowledge translation and commercialisation approaches;
- **The Project Grant Program will have two competitions per year.**

National Distribution of Applications and Affiliation of Reviewers



Based on historical modeling, most Project grant budget requests fall within a range of:

- \$50K to \$750K per annum;
- 1- to 5-year duration;
- Project grant funding levels are commensurate with need, which is expected to vary by research field, research approach and scope of project activities.

Partner Participation

- The Project Grant Program has no formal requirements for partnering, however, depending on the nature of the research project a commitment (cash or in-kind) from interested or engaged knowledge user(s) or other partners may be reasonably expected by peer reviewers.

For an application to be eligible:

- The Nominated Principal Applicant must be an Independent Researcher or a Knowledge User;
- If the Nominated Principal Applicant is a Knowledge User, there must be at least one Principal Applicant who is an Independent Researcher;
- Principal Applicant(s) must be Independent Researcher(s) or Knowledge User(s);
- Co-Applicants can be:
 - Independent Researcher(s)
 - Knowledge User(s)
 - Trainee(s)



Project Registration Requirements



The Project registration includes the following sections:

❖ Task 1: Identify Participants

All participants must remain unchanged between registration and application.

❖ Task 2: Enter Proposal information

Includes Lay Title, Lay Abstract, and Partnered/iKT Special Considerations Flag.

❖ Task 3: Complete Summary

The Summary of Research Proposal submitted at the registration stage will be used for the assignment of reviewers.

❖ Task 4: Complete Budget Information

Total amount requested from CIHR. No justification required at this stage.

❖ Task 5: Complete Peer Review Administration Information

❖ Task 6: Preview

❖ Task 7: Consent and Submit



Project Application Requirements

The Project structured application includes the following sections:



❖ **Task 1: Identify Participants**

Includes linking CCV Confirmation Number and identifying Most Significant Contributions

❖ **Task 2: Enter Proposal information**

Includes Lay Title, Lay Abstract, and Partnered/iKT Special Considerations Flag

❖ **Task 3: Complete Summary**

❖ **Task 4: Complete Application**

- Concept and Feasibility
 - Quality of the Idea (1/2 page)
 - Importance of the Idea (1 page)
 - Approach (4 ½ pages)
 - Expertise, Experience and Resources (1 page)
- References (2 pages)
- Attachments (Figures only; maximum 2 pages)

❖ **Task 5: Identify Application Partners**



Project Application Requirements

The Project structured application includes the following sections:

- ❖ **Task 6: Enter Budget Information**
- ❖ **Task 7: Complete Peer Review Administration Information**
- ❖ **Task 8: Preview**
- ❖ **Task 9: Consent and Submit**

Under **Concept**, the **Quality of the Idea (25%)** sub-criterion is intended to assess the quality of what is being proposed.

➤ **Is the project idea creative?**

- The project idea is among the best formulated ideas in its field, stemming from new, incremental, innovative, and/or high-risk lines of inquiry; new or adapted research and knowledge translation/commercialization approaches/methodologies and opportunities to apply research findings nationally and internationally.

➤ **Is the rationale of the project idea sound?**

- The project rationale is based on a logical integration of concepts.

➤ **Are the overall goals and objectives of the project well-defined?**

- The goal states the purpose of the project, and what the project is ultimately expected to achieve.
- The objectives clearly define the proposed lines of inquiry and/or activities required to meet the goal.
- The proposed project outputs (i.e., the anticipated results of the project) are clearly described and aligned to the objectives

Under **Concept**, the **Importance of the Idea (25%)** sub-criterion is intended to assess the value of the anticipated project contributions, and any advances in health-related knowledge, health care, health systems, and/or health outcomes.

➤ **Are the anticipated project contributions likely to advance health-related knowledge, health care, health systems and/or health outcomes?**

- The context and needs (issues and/or gaps) of the project are clearly described.
- The anticipated contribution(s) are clearly described, and should be substantive and relevant in relation to the context of the issues or gaps.
- The anticipated contribution(s) are realistic, i.e., directly stemming from the project outputs, as opposed to marginally related.

Project Application Requirements Feasibility

Under **Feasibility**, the **Approach (25%)** sub-criterion is intended to assess the quality of the Project's design and plan; including how and when the project will be completed.

- **Are the approaches and methods appropriate to deliver the proposed output(s) and achieve the proposed contribution(s) to advancing health-related knowledge, health care, health systems, and/or health outcomes?**
 - The research and/or knowledge translation/commercialization approaches, methods, and/or strategies should be well-defined and justified in terms of being appropriate to accomplish the objectives of the project.
 - Opportunities to maximize project contributions to advance health-related knowledge, health care, health systems and/or health outcomes should be proactively sought and planned for, but may also arise unexpectedly.
- **Are the timelines and related deliverables of the project realistic?**
 - Timelines for the project should be appropriate in relation to the proposed project activities. Key milestones and deliverables should be aligned with the objectives of the project, and be feasible given the duration of the project.
- **Does the proposal identify potential challenges and appropriate mitigation strategies?**
 - Critical scientific, technical, or organizational challenges should be identified, and a realistic plan to tackle these potential risks should be described

Project Application Requirements Feasibility

Under **Feasibility**, the **Expertise, Experience, and Resources (25%)** sub-criterion is intended to assess the appropriateness of the complement of expertise, experience, and resources among the applicants (Nominated Principal Applicant, Principal Applicant(s) and Co-Applicant(s)), and their institutions/organizations, as it relates to the ability to collectively deliver on the objectives of the project.

- **Does the applicant(s) bring the appropriate expertise and experience to lead and deliver the proposed outputs and to achieve the proposed contribution(s)?**
 - The applicant(s) should demonstrate the combined expertise and experience needed to execute the project (i.e., deliver the proposed outputs as well as achieve the proposed contribution(s)). The roles and responsibilities of each applicant should be clearly described, and linked to the objectives of the project.
- **Is there an appropriate level of engagement and/or commitment from the applicant(s)?**
 - The level of engagement (e.g., time and other commitments) of each applicant should be appropriate for the roles and responsibilities described.
- **Is the environment (academic institution and/or other organization) appropriate to enable the conduct and success of the project?**
 - Project applicants should have access to the appropriate infrastructure, facilities, support personnel, equipment, and/or supplies to:
 - Carry out their respective roles, and;
 - As a collective, manage and deliver the proposed output(s), and achieve the proposed contribution(s).

➤ **Project Biosketch CV**

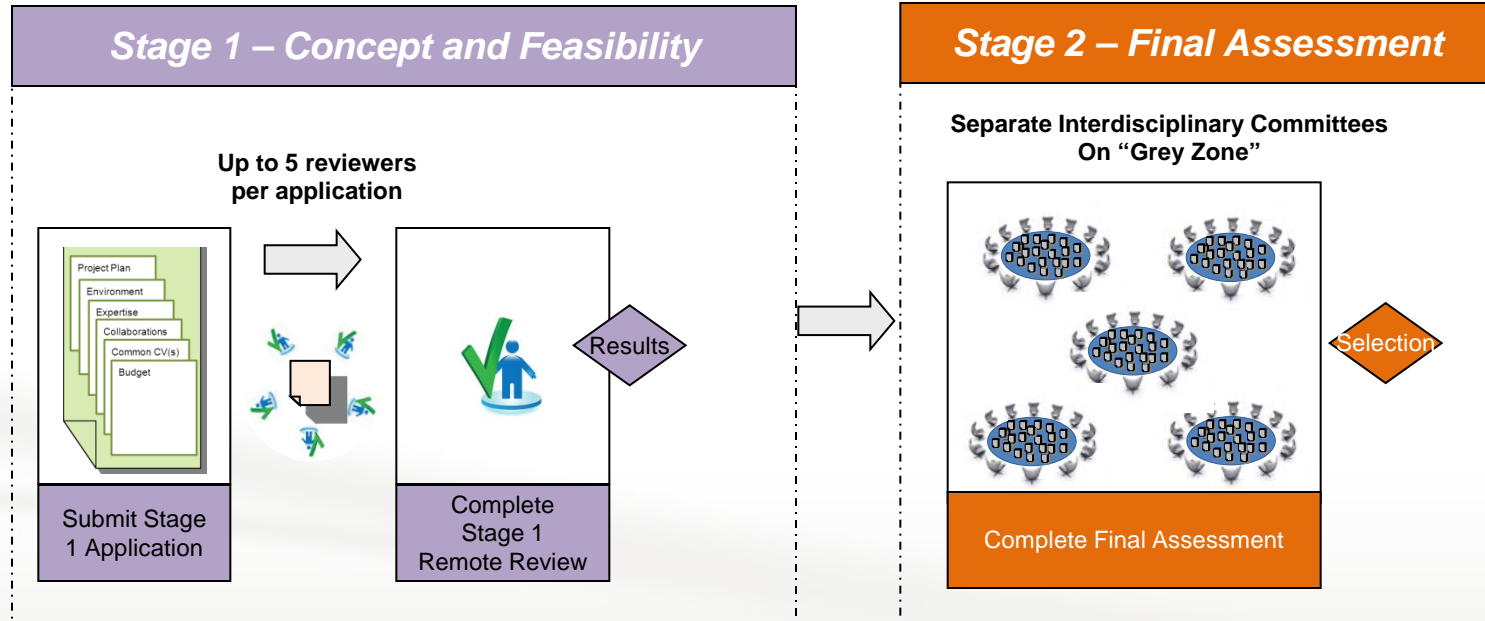
- For Nominated Principal Applicants and Principal Applicants

➤ **Project Co-Applicant CV**

- For Co-Applicants

The purpose of both the Project Biosketch CV and the Project Co-Applicant CV is to prove to reviewers that applicants have the experience and expertise required to accomplish the research project described in their application.

- All entries in the CV must be therefore directly relevant to the application.



Concept (50%)

- Quality of the Idea (25%)
- Importance of the Idea (25%)

Feasibility (50%)

- Approach (25%)
- Expertise, Experience and Resources (25%)

The committee is responsible for integrating the result of the Stage 1 reviews, with a focus on assessing applications that fall into the “grey zone” (i.e., applications that are close to the funding cut-off, and which demonstrate a high degree of variance in individual reviewer rankings).

Descriptor	Abbreviation	Definition
Outstanding	O ⁺⁺	For this sub-criterion, the application excels in most or all relevant aspects. Any short-comings are minimal.
	O ⁺	
	O	
Excellent	E ⁺⁺	For this sub-criterion, the application excels in many relevant aspects, and reasonably addresses all others. Certain improvements are possible.
	E ⁺	
	E	
Good	G	For this sub-criterion, the application excels in some relevant aspects, and reasonably addresses all others. Some improvements are necessary.
Fair	F	For this sub-criterion, the application broadly addresses all relevant aspects. Major revisions are required.
Poor	P	For this sub-criterion, the application fails to provide convincing information and/or has serious inherent flaws or gaps.

Resources available on CIHR's website:

- Funding Opportunity
- Registration instructions
- Application instructions
- Project Biosketch CV Quick Reference Guide
- Project Co-Applicant CV Quick Reference Guide
- Peer Review Manual (including adjudication criteria interpretation guidelines)
- Qs and As

