Prepared by Gareth Corry, Research Partner (College of Health Sciences) on November 6, 2023

CIHR Project Grant: Basic Information

Mandate: As per CIHR's [website](), "The Project Grant program is 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. It supports research projects proposed and conducted by individual researchers or groups of researchers in all areas of health."

Award value: No minimum or maximum. The average value of UofA Project Grants in the Spring 2023 competition was $887,401/award.

Award length: Up to 5 years

Applicant eligibility: The [Nominated Principal Applicant]() (NPA) **must** be an [independent researcher]() or [knowledge user]() affiliated with a Canadian post-secondary institution and whose academic/research appointment must commence by the effective date of funding. The NPA **must** also be eligible as per the UofA's [Eligibility to Apply for and Hold Research Funding Policy]().

Content: Project Grants include the following components:

- Summary of the research project
- Detailed description of the project, including feasibility and methods
- Supporting publications
- Budget
- Canadian Common CV
- Most significant contributions
- Response to previous reviewers' feedback (if the application is a resubmission)

Application review: Project Grants are assessed by a peer review committee. Reviewers rank the application on a scale of 0-4.9. Applications are adjudicated based on two criteria: *Concept* (significance and impact of the research) and *Feasibility* (approaches and methods; expertise, experience, and resources). More information about the peer review process can be found [here]().

How to Apply

Typically, Project Grant competitions are held every Spring (March) and Fall (September). Each competition has two phases: registration and full application. Proposals are not evaluated at the registration phase; the intent during this phase is to gather information about peer review committees selected so that CIHR can coordinate reviews after full applications are submitted.

1. **REGISTRATION PHASE: Institutional review and approval is NOT required at this stage**

**A Registration must be submitted to be eligible to submit a full application.

CIHR registration deadline: February 7, 2024 6:00 pm (Edmonton time, MST)

The NPA **must remain unchanged** between registration and application. Other participants can be added, removed, or change roles between registration and application. The Project and Lay Titles can also be changed. A Common CV is not required for registration.

1. Review the [Funding Opportunity]() and Priority Announcements COMPLETELY.
2. Ensure your project fits within CIHR's mandate - consult the following resources:

      a. [What is Health Research?](#)
      b. [Selecting the most appropriate funding agency](#)
3. Assemble a team. When completing the registration, you will need to include info about team member roles (NPA, [co-applicants](#), [collaborators](#)).
4. Register as a User on [ResearchNet](#). Ensure co-applicants have CIHR PINs and [CCVs](#).
5. Choose the most appropriate [Peer Review Committee(s)](#). **This step is critical!** If you are unsure about which committee is most appropriate, contact UofA researchers who have recently served on that committee, and ask for advice.
      a. [UofA CIHR Peer Review Committee members (2017-2022)](#)
      b. [Selecting a Peer Review Committee, Providing Key Words & Preparing your CIHR Project Application](#)
      c. Stay tuned for an information session on choosing the most appropriate peer review committee. In the meantime, a recording of a previous information session on this topic can be found [here](#); the presentation slideshow can be found [here](#).
6. Submit your registration on ResearchNet before the deadline. Full registration instructions can be found [here](#).

2. FULL APPLICATION PHASE <mark>Institutional review and approval <u>IS</u> required at this stage</mark>

> **IMPORTANT: RAS internal review deadline: February 23, 2024 4:30 pm (Edmonton time, MST)**
>
> Applicants must submit the complete PDF of the application via [Researcher Home Page](#) (RHP) by the above deadline in order to receive a full administrative review by the RAS application review team. Applicants are encouraged to submit the project in RHP a few days in advance of this deadline so that department and Faculty approvals can be obtained before the application reaches RAS. Applicants should confirm any departmental and/or Faculty deadlines prior to submitting in RHP.
>
> More information about institutional approval for grant applications can be found [here](#).

CIHR application deadline: March 6, 2024 6:00 pm (Edmonton time, MST)**

**RAS will be submitting the application to CIHR via ResearchNet on your behalf. Therefore, you must submit the final version of your application in ResearchNet by 10:00 am on March 5 so that RAS can confirm that the application package is complete with no outstanding issues.

1. All application participants must complete the [Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Self-identification Questionnaire](#). Collaborators are exempt.
2. Prepare your application. Full application instructions can be found [here](#). Some notes regarding application development:
      ○ It is **strongly recommended** that you review [The Art of Writing a CIHR Application](#) before applying and refer to it during application development.
      ○ There is a **10-page limit** for applications written in English (not including references).
      ○ CIHR expects that all applicants will integrate sex and gender into their research design, methods, analysis and interpretation, and/or dissemination of findings within their research proposal, when applicable. More information [here](#).
      ○ Ask colleagues within your field to review the "science" for accuracy and clarity.
      ○ Ask colleagues <u>outside of your field</u> to review for grantsmanship. The gist of the project and outcomes should be understandable to non-experts. Engage a grant writer/editor if necessary.
3. Upload all documentation to ResearchNet, and download a single PDF document. Attach this PDF to the RES project in RHP, and submit for workflow approvals before the February 23 deadline.

4. Address any outstanding issues identified in the RAS Application Review Report. Once all issues are addressed as per the RAS application reviewer's instructions, submit the application via ResearchNet (**see note below).
5. RAS will submit the application to CIHR via ResearchNet.

**Please note the following oversights commonly identified by RAS application reviewers:
- Not attaching the nominated Principal Applicant's Certificate of Completion for the sex and gender-based analysis training modules.
- Not including team members' weekly effort.
- Not attaching previous CIHR reviewer comments if including a response to reviewer comments.
- Not completing the iKT and partner sections properly.
- Not providing CVs for the entire team.
- If engaging with an Indigenous community, not describing explicitly how you will engage with the community.

Summary of Resources

- Research Partner Network contact for CIHR programs: Gareth Corry (gcorry@ualberta.ca)
- Upcoming information sessions:
  - **Grant application figure workshop** On Wednesday, Nov 29, 2023 the Research Partner Network will be hosting a workshop on scientific figure development for health-related grant applications. All researchers planning to submit an application (new or resubmission) in the Spring 2024 Project Grant competition are encouraged to attend. Dr. Sarah Treit will discuss the elements of effective figure design, tips for improving clarity, as well as considerations and resources for creating great preliminary data figures, schematics, and diagrams for your Project Grant application. Register here
  - **Tips and advice on writing a CIHR Project Grant application** On Thursday, Nov 30, 2023, the Research Partner Network will be hosting an info session to provide an overview of the Project Grant, followed by an open discussion with experienced Project Grant applicants. Drs. Richard Lehner (Pediatrics/Cell Biology), John Ussher (Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences), and Meghan Riddell (Obstetrics and Gynecology/Physiology) will answer questions and offer tips and advice on writing competitive Project Grant applications. Register here
- Previous information sessions:
  - FROM JUNE 2023: "**Choosing the most appropriate peer review committee and peer reviewers for a CIHR Project Grant**" A recording of the presentation can be found here; the presentation slideshow can be found here.
  - FROM AUGUST 2023: "**How to write a Project Grant**" A recording of the presentation can be found here; the presentation slideshow can be found here.
- UofA Resources:
  - UofA CIHR Peer Review Committee Members
  - Recent CIHR Grants Awarded to UofA applicants
  - Selecting a Peer Review Committee, Providing Key Words & Preparing your CIHR Project Application
  - CIHR Project Grant Application Guide for Pillars 2 to 4
  - Tips for Preparing a Summary of Progress
  - Resources for Clinical Trials Projects
  - Partnered/Integrated Knowledge Translation (iKT) Projects
  - Importance of listing UofA as the Primary Affiliation on CIHR applications
  - The Use of Information and Data in Research
- CIHR Resources:
  - Project Grant – Registration Instructions
  - Project Grant – Application Instructions

- - - [Peer Review Manual - Project](#)
    - [Biosketch Quick Reference Guide](#)
    - [What is Health Research?](#)
    - [The Art of Writing a CIHR Application](#)
    - [The Top Eight Things to Do to Write Great Grants](#)
    - [How to integrate sex and gender in research](#)
    - [Acceptable Application Formats and PDF Attachments](#)
    - [And More](#)!
- Government of Canada: [Selecting the most appropriate funding agency](#)
- Check with your Faculty, department, or Institute for any other resources they might be providing.