**CIHR Project Scheme 1st Live Pilot Workshop**
**Office of the Vice Dean Research and Innovation**
**Faculty of Medicine**

***Questions and Answers***

## 1. Questions Answered During the Workshop

**Peer Review Process**

Q. At Stage 1, is there an opportunity for the reviewers to communicate with each other, especially if only one of the reviewers is a true content expert who can assess the creativity of the idea?
A. Yes, there is an opportunity for the individual panel members in the electronic phase to communicate.

Q. How many grants from Stage 1 get additional review at the Final Assessment Stage? Is there an initial triage at Stage 1, where say 50% of the grants are already decided and you only look at the other 50%?
A. The grants that are rated highly are the ones that for sure come forward. Out of the A, B, and C levels, the B grants are discussed.

Q. What is the purpose of discussing Bs when the As are automatically going to be funded?
A. There is an opportunity at the panel when you start off the process to move As and Cs into the B category for discussion. The panel members are asked whether anyone feels that one of the A grants should not be funded, or should be discussed in more detail. Similarly, if anyone thinks that some of the C grants should be discussed, they get moved up to B. So the B group includes those in the grey zone, plus any that are elected to be moved from the A or C groups. The ultimate number of grants funded is decided by CIHR.

Q. So for the B group, to make a good judgement, do reviewers have to know a priori what the cutoff is going to be?
A. The cutoff is not discussed by the reviewers per se. In the final round, it is a CIHR decision in terms of what gets funded.

Q. Is there a ranking system within the As to ensure that the top As are funded?
A. Yes. The reviewer assessments at the first stage are converted into a numerical ranking. These rankings and the discussion at the Final Assessment Stage also help to ensure that if individual reviewers receive grants of differing quality, the grants that don't "belong" as top As will ranked lower and/or discussed.

Q. How is the track record of the applicant(s) taken into account?
A. Track record is evaluated in the Expertise, Experience & Resources section of the Structured Application and by assessing the participant CVs.

Q. Which reviewer comments do applicants receive after the results are issued?
A. In the pilot Knowledge Translation competition, applicants received the first stage reviewer comments and the Scientific Officer Note from the Final Assessment stage.

Q. Can collaborators be added after the registration stage?
A. No, collaborator names cannot be changed or added after registration. The rest of the team (NPA, PA, Co-A), also must be in place and cannot be changed or added to. The names and roles provided at registration will be used to help ensure the appropriate assignment of reviewers.

Q. Since the new College of Reviewers involves Canadian reviewers, should we only suggest Canadian reviewers, or may we suggest international reviewers as well?
A. You may suggest international reviewers as well.

Q. Given the short number of characters in the application, is it possible for applicants to link to "home pages" or data repositories online to help show preliminary data and other relevant work?
A. Yes, including links to online supplementary material is acceptable.

## 2. Follow-Up Questions post-Workshop

### Peer Review

Q. Would reviewers be selected who have an application in the current competition?
A. Any investigator who is applying to the competition as a Nominated Principal Applicant or Principal Applicant is excluded from reviewing. Investigators who are listed as Co-Applicants MAY act as reviewers.

### Registration Requirements

*CVs: Please note that in the Jan. 7 workshop, we erroneously stated that CVs are not required at the Registration Stage. We apologize.* ***You will in fact need a CCV confirmation number for each applicant at registration.*** *The CVs may be updated again prior to the application stage, but to do so you will need a new CCV confirmation number.*

Q. I have already submitted one of my 2 CIHR project registrations. After hearing the discussion today I realize I ought to change my reviewer recommendations. Is there a way to do this?
A. Unfortunately, once a registration has been submitted, no changes can be made. However, applicants can send CIHR the list of suggested reviewers by email and CIHR will add these to their database for consideration.

Q. Is there a limit to the number of reviewers you can suggest?
A. No, there is no limit to the number of reviewers that you can suggest, either nationally or internationally.

Q. What is the difference between the biosketch CV and the Project Scheme Co-Applicant CV?
A. The Co-Applicant CV is significantly less detailed than the Biosketch CV and excludes sections such as Education, Recognitions, Leaves of Absence, and Research Funding History. The sections that are present are also shorter. The only information required in the Co-Applicant CV is:
Personal Information
Employment (limited to describing one affiliation relevant to the grant)
Contributions (5 most relevant publications, 5 most relevant Knowledge and Technology Translation Activities).

Co-Applicants should fill out their own Most Significant Contributions section, but this material will now be included in the application form on ResearchNet rather than in the CV. Therefore, it is not required at registration.

Q. The instructions for the Project Scheme say that to be considered under "partnered / IKTE" stream, we need to have one knowledge user identified as a principal applicant, who represents the partnered organization. Do we only need to have ONE knowledge user / partner to be considered (and the rest of our partners can be represented by knowledge users / co applicants, knowledge users / collaborators), or do ALL of our partners need to be represented by a knowledge user / partner?

A. To be considered you must have at least the following:

1. A partner **and** a knowledge user; or
2. A partner only; or
3. A knowledge user only.

In cases 1 or 3, **you MUST include at least one knowledge user as a Principal Applicant at Registration.** You can include more than one as a Principal Applicant, but not all knowledge users have to be PAs.
Partners do not need to be identified until the application stage. All of your partners (contributing cash or in-kind contributions) should be identified as Applicant Partners.

**Eligibility / Participants**

Q. Will there be 2 Project Scheme competitions in 2016?
A. Yes, CIHR has confirmed that there will be competitions, one Spring 2016 competition and one Fall 2016 competition.

Q. In the last workshop I went to they said that applicants could only apply to one competition per year. I didn't hear anything about that today - is that the rule or can you apply to both competitions per year?
A. This is no longer the case. CIHR changed this requirement. You may apply to both competitions and there is no limit to the number of applications that can be submitted.

Q. Does applying for the Foundation Scheme prevent me from applying to the Project Scheme?
A. No, you may apply to both, but if you are funded via the Foundation Scheme, you will only be able to hold the Foundation funding.

Q. Does being listed as a co-applicant on someone's project scheme grant preclude the co-applicant from holding a Foundation grant?
A. No. Foundation Scheme grant holders may participate in Project Scheme grants as Co-Applicants or collaborators. They are only restricted from holding Project grants as NPAs or PAs.

Q. May I submit a proposal on the same theme to both the Foundation Scheme and the Project Scheme?
A. Yes, you can submit proposals on the same general theme, but remember the Foundation is about your **full research program** whereas the Project is about **research projects** with defined end points.

Q. Can we add collaborators after registration? What is required from collaborators for the registration and application?
A. No, you cannot change or add collaborators after registration. CVs are not required from collaborators at either the registration or application stage, and collaborators do not need to be addressed in the most significant contributions section of the application.

Q: Is it possible to have a participant who is not in Canada? And are we allowed to send funds to international collaborators, and if that is the case, what should their role be denoted as in the grant? Co-PIs or collaborators?
A: International researchers can be included in CIHR Project Scheme as Principal Applicants, Co-Applicants, or Collaborators. International researchers cannot be named as the Nominated Principal Applicant. They can also be sent money for their research through a subgrant (on a cost recovery basis) established through the Research Services Office.

Q. I typically added collaborators on my grants that would provide a letter of support. These people would typically provide a reagent, or expertise on a particular experiment, this type of thing. How are these people to be included in the new Project Grant format?
A. Collaborators can still be included in the Project Scheme format and there is no limit to the number of collaborators. It is not clear from the instructions whether letters of support can be provided by collaborators, but this should be clear when the application form becomes available on Jan. 19. However, for those collaborators who are providing a reagent or other in-kind contributions, these individuals can be considered Application Partners (see Task 5 in Application Instructions: http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/49560.html). A signed letter of support from each partner must be provided at the time of full application (not registration).

**iKT Special Consideration**
Q. For the recent KTA grant competition, we had to have a KT science research objective (i.e., the study didn't just *involve* KT, it also *studied* KT). Is this a requirement for the iKT 'special consideration' category in the Project Scheme?
A. No. To be eligible for consideration, you only have to answer "yes" in the application form and your project must have one of the following (or more):

1. A partner **and** a knowledge user; or
2. A partner only; or
3. A knowledge user only.

In cases 1 or 3, at least one knowledge user must also be a Principal Applicant.

Q. If we are considered for the iKT category does this preclude being considered in the wider competition (i.e., do we need to be in one or the other)? Or is it like the old Priority Announcement whereby all proposals are considered for funding together and the special iKT funds would sweep up additional worthy grants that don't make the initial cut-off?
A. The new scheme is similar to the old Priority Announcement you describe. If you are eligible for iKT consideration, your grant will still be considered as part of the competition as a whole, with one difference; at Stage 1 of the review process the eligible applications may be assessed by knowledge user reviewers as well as researcher reviewers.

**Application – General Questions**
Q. Are there any letters of support allowed?
A. Letters of support are allowed (and required) for Application Partners (providing cash or in-kind contributions). It is not clear from the instructions whether letters of support can be provided by collaborators, but this should be clear when the form becomes available on Jan. 19.

Q. Are attachments really only limited to 2 pages, and can these only be figures?
Yes, the attachments are really only 2 pages and can include only figures. However, the CIHR representative confirmed at the Workshop that you may include a URL directing reviewers to additional information. (We caution that this should only involve supplementary information as reviewers are not obligated to look at it.)

Q. In the Project Scheme instructions, the words “objectives” and “activities” are used instead of project “aims.” Should investigators now refer to objectives instead of aims in their proposals?
A. To be consistent, CIHR does recommend using the terminology used within the Funding Opportunity (“Objective”). However, the use of “aim” is perfectly acceptable as well.

Q. In the Most Significant Contributions section of the Project Scheme, we are asked to limit contributions to a maximum of 5. Is this a total of 5 for *all* applicants combined, or can we include up to 5 contributions for each applicant / co-applicant?
A. Each applicant (except for collaborators) will have to complete their *own* Most Significant Contributions section (up to 3500 characters and a maximum of 5 contributions).

**Structured Application – What goes where?**
Q. Where should pilot/feasibility work go - in the background/concept/importance section or in the approach section?
A. Pilot/feasibility work should be mentioned in the following sections:
**Quality of the Idea –** briefly mention your pilot work or preliminary data as part of your rationale/basis for pursuing the current research project.
**Expertise, Experience & Resources** – elaborate on your work as part of the reason your team is ideally suited and poised to address the research question.
Pilot/feasibility work *may* also be mentioned in the other sections depending on the purpose of the work. If the work established important context for your current study and helps to show the need for further investigation, you can mention it in **Importance of the Idea.** If it helped to establish that a certain approach/methodology is feasible it can be discussed in **Approach,** either before you discuss specific aims, or in the most pertinent aim.

Q. I am planning on submitting a proposal for an RCT. There used to be standardized headings for these in the old system. I don't see those with this new application - should those still be used? If so how do you fit them into the new page limit? If not, any suggestions on how it should be structured?
A. The standardized RCT headings are no longer required. However, the old RCT sections match up fairly well with the new sections in the Project Scheme. We suggest the material can be transferred as follows:
Section 1 – The need for a trial:
**Quality of the Idea** (Problem and questions to be addressed, anticipated results)
**Importance of the Idea** (Why is a trial needed now? Relevant systematic review/search strategy; How will results of this trial be used?)
Section 2 – The proposed trial:
**Quality of the Idea** (Brief description of design, outcomes and measures)
**Approach** (detail on study design, participant allocation, inclusion/exclusion criteria, control groups, compliance, power calculations, etc.)

Section 3 – Trial management:

**Expertise, Experience and Resources**

Q. Can a full protocol be attached to the grant?

A. No. The only attachments allowed are 2 pages of figures. However, you could post the methodology online and include a URL. Our CIHR speaker confirmed that linking to online material is acceptable.

**Budget**

Q. Will there be a large grant envelope for grants like there used to be? If so how will this work with the new mechanism? Do you know what level this will be at?

A. No, there will not be a separate funding envelope for large grants in the Project Scheme.

Q. For the budget, what category should per-patient site payments go into?

A. Those costs could go under the Other category. However, as these types of costs are most common in hospital-based applications, we recommend that the investigator ask their own specific hospital research office for advice.

Q. Can co-applicants receive salary (the guidelines say we cannot pay PAs but are silent about co-A's)? If so, are there specific eligibility criteria for this and in which budget category would this fit?

A. No, co-applicants cannot receive salary, **unless** they are trainees or research associates. If a trainee is a co-applicant and is receiving a stipend or salary, that information can be listed in the trainee budget category.