

**University Delegates WebEx Meeting  
September 5, 2019 - 12:30-1:30 pm EDT  
CIHR Room 10-219, Ottawa, Ontario  
Minutes**

**Participants**

Chair: Annik Poirier, Manager, Operations Support

Members:	Brenda Bruner, Nipissing University; Chris Whitfield, University of Guelph; Christian Beaulieu, University of Alberta; Costin Anotnescu, Ryerson University; Daniel Lajeunesse, Université de Montréal; David Litchfield, Western University; David Rose, University of Waterloo; François Boudreau, Université de Sherbrooke; Frédéric Lesage, École Polytechnique Montréal; Gerald W. Zamponi, University of Calgary; Jean-François Millaire, Université du Québec à Trois-Rivière; Jennifer McGrath, Concordia University; Kristin Baetz, University of Ottawa; Lara Boyd, University of British Columbia; Les Jacobs, University of Ontario Institute of Technology;	Lori Burrows, McMaster University; Marc Pouliot, Université Laval; Rebecca Pillai Ridell, York University; Richard Isnor, St. Francis University; Robert Bertolo, Memorial University of Newfoundland; Roger McLeod, Dalhousie University; Stephen Perry, Wilfrid Laurier University; Steve Smith, Queen's University; Sylvain Baillet, McGill University; Tania Watts, University of Toronto; Tanya Brann-Barrett, Cape Breton University; Veronica Bacher, Mount Saint Vincent University; Wendy Ward, Brock University; Yvonne Myal, University of Manitoba.
CARA members:	Jeremy Knight, University of Toronto (CARA member); Kate Keetch, Department of Evaluation & Research services in Fraser Health (CARA member);	Lorraine Deydey, University of Alberta (CARA member).
Institution staff:	Brenda Meyer-Burt, University of Saskatchewan; Deanna Pong, University of Toronto; Jim Woodgett, Lunenfeld-Tanenbaum Research Institute; Keeley Rose, Sick Kids Hospital; Leslie Copp, University of Waterloo; Nicole Balliet, University of Northern British Columbia; Oksana Moshynska, University of Saskatchewan;	Paul Wiebe, Health Sciences Centre; Penny D'Agnone, University of Lethbridge; Samar Saneinejad, St. Michael's Hospital; Sanja Obradovic, Ryerson University; Stephanie Baello, Ontario Institutes for Cancer Research; Tova Dybvig, University of Saskatchewan.

<p>Regrets:</p>	<p>Ali Jenabian, Université du Québec à Montréal;  Allison Sekuler, Research Bay Crest;  Andrea Lawrance, Carleton University;  Asaf Gilboa, University of Toronto;  Brian Christie, University of Victoria;  Brenda Smith-Chant, Trent University  Claudia Malacrida, University of Lethbridge;  Christy McTait, University of British Columbia (CARA member);  Daniel Cyr, Institut Armand-Frappier;  Darcy Marciniuk, University of Saskatchewan;  Dawn Whitworth, University of British Columbia (CARA member);  Estelle Chamoux, Bishop's University;  Geoff Payne, University of Northern British Columbia;  Heather Duncan, Brandon University;  Jeff Ollerhead, Mount Allison University;  Jennifer Walker, Laurentian University;  Lori Livingston, University of Ontario Institute of Technology;  Keeley Rose, Sick Kids Hospital;  Lisa Porter, University of Windsor;</p>	<p>Marilyn Hodgins, University of New-Brunswick;  Pat Jones, University of Alberta;  Peter L. Twohig, Saint Mary's University;  PhebeAnn Wolfram-Smith, Lake Head University;  Rod McCormick, Thompson Rivers University;  Said Mekary, Acadia University;  Sébastien Normand, University du Québec en Outaouais;  Sandra Turcotte, Université de Moncton;  Sunny Hartwig, University of Prince Edward Island  Stephen Waldman, Ryerson University;  Tarun Katapally, University of Regina;  Tim Takaro, Simon Fraser University;  Tom Chau, University of Toronto;  Vicki Kristman, Lakehead University.  Deborah Zornes, Royal Roads University (CARA member);  Jennifer Thurlow, Capital District Health Authority (CARA member);  Judith Chadwick, University of Toronto (CARA member);</p>
<p>Staff:</p>	<p>Adrian Mota, Associate Vice-President, Communications;  Allison Forsythe, Communications Strategist, Communications;  Allison Jackson, Manager, College of Reviewers;  Anne Morrow, Project Lead, Operations Support;  Corinne Guindon, Change Management Lead, Operations Support;  Chadwick Leneis, Manager, Program Design and Delivery;  Elisabeth Pagé, Assistant Scientific Director, The Institutes;  George Collier, Senior Partnership Lead, Strategic Partnership and International Relations;  Jeff Latimer, Head, Strategic Management;</p>	<p>Julie Conrad, Manager, Program Design and Delivery;  Gilles Leblanc, Change Management Advisor, Operations Support;  Manon Lechasseur, Manager, Strategic Communications, Communications;  Marina Dubois, Project Officer, Operations Support;  Nathalie Gendron, Manager, Program Design and Delivery;  Nicole Szajcz-Keller, Assistant Director, The Institutes;  Rachel Syme, Assistant Director, The Institutes;  Sandra Shimizu-Herr, Deputy CIO / Manager, Business Solutions;  Scott Woodruff, Manager, Financial Operations and Procurement;</p>

	Joanne Simala- Grant, Subject Matter Expert, Operations Support;	Tiffany Richard, Lead, Program Design and Delivery;
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## 1. CIHR Update

### **CIHR Welcomes Four New University Delegates**

- Veronica Bacher, Mount Saint Vincent University
- Jean-François Millaire, Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières
- Dr Les Jacobs, University of Ontario Institute of Technology
- Dr. Tarun Kapally, University of Regina

### **Regional Academic Visits**

- Starting in November 2019, the President of CIHR will begin visiting research-intensive universities from across the country to meet with members of the university communities through a series of structured, small roundtable discussions.
- The President looks forward to learning from their perspectives and hearing their ideas.
- These meetings will provide further opportunities for the President to visit small, medium, and large institutions in various regions of the country, to hear firsthand from the individuals charged with and engaged in leading research on their campuses.
- These meetings are part of a larger strategy to enhance and build on CIHR's existing relationships with Universities and to establish regular engagement with Vice Presidents of Research, in addition to the regular engagement with University Delegates and CARA members.
- CIHR will work with institutions to develop the details of the visits, including selecting meeting participants and topics for discussion. We are encouraging Research Offices to include university delegates in the visits.
- Anyone who has questions regarding these visits is encouraged to contact the CIHR University Delegates mailbox ([university.delegates@cihr-irsc.gc.ca](mailto:university.delegates@cihr-irsc.gc.ca)).

### *Questions from members*

#### **Q: Is the schedule for the regional visits available?**

**A:** CIHR has not fully scheduled all of the visits. There are currently three visits scheduled between November 7 and December 2, 2019. The President will begin with the University of British Columbia, McGill University, as well as the University of Toronto. Moving forward into the winter and spring 2020, the President's team will expand his visits to small and medium institutions, as well as affiliated teaching hospitals.

#### **Q: Will these visits inform the strategic plan?**

**A:** The intent of these visits is for the President to focus on larger strategies to enhance and re-build our existing relationships with Universities. While they are not part of the formal engagement plan of the Strategic Planning initiative, these visits will help inform CIHR's development of the final plan.

#### **Q: Will a representative be attending CARA West at the end of November to discuss these changes with RGOs?**

**A:** Representatives from the Tri-Agencies will be present at CARA West in Banff, Alberta (November 27-29, 2019).

## **Update on the Tri-Agency Administration Guide on Financial Administration (TAGFA)**

### ***Phase 1 – Principles Based Guide***

- The Tri-Agencies successfully completed the Pilot phase of the Principles Based Guide with the 12 participating institutions. As a result, we have been able to:
  - Share the pilot institutions' positive experiences and potential challenges in implementing the Principles Based Guide with other research institutions (via CARA/CAUBO national conferences).
  - Achieve the objectives established at the outset:
    - Validate the principles used in the Guide;
    - Assess the readiness of the administering institutions;
    - Improve harmonization across the Tri-Agencies when determining expense eligibility;
    - Reduce the administrative burden on all parties (re: post-award administration).
- Next steps involve finalizing and sharing the Guide with all Tri-Agency administering institutions and the entire research community by Fall 2019.
- Non-pilot institutions will continue using the existing Guide until it is put in effect on April 1, 2020.
- This transition period will allow Institutions to:
  - Conduct their Policy Gap Analysis.
  - Familiarize themselves with the content of the Guide, as well as with their roles and responsibilities.
  - Effectively train their own staff to understand and ensure compliance of Agency-related financial activities.
- In partnership with CAUBO, a best practices manual and other documentation will be finalized to support the transition.
- Online resources and learning materials will also be developed and made available starting Fall 2019 to support the transition:
  - Roles and responsibilities
  - Frequently Asked Questions
  - Webinars
  - Virtual Guidance tool:
    - Will provide decision support to grant holders and administering institutions related to the eligibility of expenses and use of grant funds, based on the principles and directives outlined in the Guide.
  - Train the Trainer package:
    - Will support research offices with accurately and effectively acquiring and transferring TAGFA related knowledge to one another (e.g. roles and responsibilities, financial matters, etc.), to ensure compliance of Agency-related financial activities with legislated requirements.

### ***Phase 2- Financial Monitoring Framework***

- The revised Financial Monitoring Framework is being drafted to align the monitoring approach with the new principles based approach of the new Guide.
- An update will be provided at an upcoming UD meeting.

### ***Questions from members***

**Q: If full implementation of the TAGFA is in April 2020, should those institutions who are part of the pilot continue to use the pilot guide (or should we be reverting to the former guide?)**

**A:** Yes, the pilot institutions are encouraged to continue using the pilot guide until the final version is released.

## **Programs Updates**

*See slides for additional information.*

### ***Project Grant***

#### **Fall 2019 competition**

- 2583 Registrations have been received.
  - This number is smaller than the number of Registrations that was received for the Spring Competition, which was 2948 Registrations.
- Transfer period closed on September 4. This date was extended to September 6.
- Application deadline is September 11.
- Peer reviewer recruitment is underway.
- Chair meetings are taking place on September 19 and 24 in Ottawa. Discussions will be around policy changes and the overall process of the current Project Competition.
- Committee meetings will be held from November 23 to December 12.
- Anticipated Notice of Decision date is January 22, 2020.

### ***Foundation Grant***

- The final Foundation competition has been completed.
- Applicants received their notice of decision on July 17.
- There were 28 grants approved, for a total investment of approximately \$81M.
- All successful applicants have been notified. 23 applicants have accepted their Foundation grant and one applicant has declined. CIHR is waiting for the responses of 4 applicants.
- Regarding the transition plan of Foundation grantees back into Project, CIHR will be contacting each individual Foundation Grant recipient over the next few months, beginning with the first cohort of grantees. 10 calls have already been held.

#### *Questions from members*

**Q: Is there a target of number to be funded for the next Project Grant competition (i.e. smaller number of applications might mean higher success rate)?**

**A:** The number of grants funded will depend on the budget requested by the applicants who are funded through the competition. CIHR cannot guarantee any variations in the success rate.

**Q: What is the rationale and process for awarding “top-up” awards (full term awards + PA) for the Spring 2019 Project competition? Will “top-up” awards continue in future competitions?**

**A:** The “top-up” awards are used in the Priority Announcement system for very specific areas of research. Through this mechanism, CIHR encourages individuals to address areas of research that are then funded through this “top-up”. This encourages applicants to engage into a specific research activity, and to potentially receive additional funding for doing so.

**Q: Will there be an expanded role for the ECR Observers on peer review committees this time (i.e. for the Spring 2020 Project competition)?**

**A:** Early Career Researchers will eventually play a greater role but not for this round. The College is working on how to evolve the Observer program into the Reviewer in Training program, which will get them more involved in peer review activities.

**Q: Will there be across-the-board cuts applied to the grants funded in this fall's Project Competition**

**A:** CIHR cannot quickly and easily remove across-the-board cuts and will continue with this mechanism for now. It has been at 23.5% for the past few competitions.

**Q: Any thought of re-introducing the Community reviewer to the standing review committees?**

**A:** While the Community Reviewer program had merit, CIHR has expanded to the ECR Observer and Reviewer in Training programs. CIHR is moving towards a more integrated approach by having individuals participate in the peer review process. Should you have any recommendations, please contact the CIHR University Delegates mailbox ([university.delegates@cihr-irsc.gc.ca](mailto:university.delegates@cihr-irsc.gc.ca)).

### **Awards**

- Starting with the 2019-2020 CGS D competition and as a result of the harmonization, institutions will be invited to submit their health research applications to CIHR in a process similar to that of NSERC's and SSHRC's.
- With the harmonized CGS D Program, a minimum quota of 3 per institution has been established. Quotas are based on the number of successful doctoral applicants in the past three years, and will be calculated every year to ensure accessibility.
- Applications from self-identified Indigenous applicants may be submitted beyond the institution's quota.
- Student will determine which institution will receive their applications by selecting that institution in the "Institution Paid" field in their ResearchNet application.
- It is important for institutions to set an internal institution deadline in ResearchNet (e-Approval) to:
  - Allow sufficient time to review the submitted applications as per their internal process.
  - Submit the recommended applications to CIHR via ResearchNet no later than 8:00 p.m. (ET) on November 21.
- It will be up to the institution to determine who will review and/or submit applications to CIHR. At some institutions, the Scholarship Liaison Officers will play this role.
- The Institutions must also complete and submit the List of Applications form to CIHR by email: [Awards-Bourses@cihr-irsc.gc.ca](mailto:Awards-Bourses@cihr-irsc.gc.ca).

### *Questions from Members*

**Q: Can you explicitly let us know how our quota was determined? I will be presenting in October why this procedure will unfairly disadvantage non-medical school universities.**

**A:** The formula to develop the quotas is listed on the [Quotas for the Frederick Banting and Charles Best Canada Graduate Scholarships Doctoral Awards \(CGS-D\) Program \(en français\)](#) web page. The formula to calculate an institution's quota is based on the university's average performance (i.e. the number of candidates having received awards in the last three competitions).

**Q: Why weren't we given warning of this scholarship application quota system last year? Our students apply through both our institute and our university (their choice). Now we are penalized and throttled. This is grossly inequitable and unfair for students at smaller institutions. It's an atrocious policy. So much for supporting the principles of EDI. When was the consultation as the level of understanding of how students apply for scholarships appears extremely low. Can this be re-assessed?**

**A:** Students still have a choice to apply either through the institution or university. Over the past two years, CIHR has reached out to universities, students and other academic institutions to obtain stakeholder feedback and inform our policy decision (which aligns with SSHRC and NSERC's methodology) during planned engagement activities. While a trends analysis was performed and did not reveal any negative impacts due to the introduction of quotas, CIHR would like to learn more about your concerns regarding the quota approach. You may also send your recommendations for how the formula could be modified. These will be brought forward for discussion with the Tri-Agency management committee.

**Q: We have 120 students and heard nothing. It seems this is simply a way to artificially increase success rates at no cost.**

**A:** We can assure you that this is not an attempt to increase our success rate and that CIHR will continue to monitor these over time from the applicants' institution. With respect to our engagement with students, one of the challenges CIHR has observed over time is that students often do not have natural groups or association. One of the groups consulted that would have been affiliated with your institution would have been the Canadian Association for Graduate Studies (CAGS). CIHR also presented and held workshops at annual and regional meetings.

**Q: Is the application itself changing? Is it still evaluating the PI/training environment as well as the candidate? I am not clear whether this entire process will now mirror NSERC.**

**A:** In the context of harmonizing the CGS-Doctoral program across the three agencies, the application is changing slightly as it has a common program objective and evaluation criteria – "Research ability and potential" and "Relevant experience and achievements obtained within and beyond academia". The training environment is one of the elements assessed as part of the "Research ability and potential" criterion. More details can be found at: [http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Students-Etudiants/PG-CS/CGSD-BESCD\\_eng.asp](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Students-Etudiants/PG-CS/CGSD-BESCD_eng.asp) (en français).

## **2. CCV Update**

- We are aware of the open letter addressed to Canadian Research Funding Agencies. A formal response will be issued and posted on our website once received.
- We have initiated the procurement process to develop a new grants management system, for which the CCV is in scope.
- In the interim, we are also working with focus groups to improve key aspects in the user experience of the CCV interface, as well as the reliability and stability of the system.
- Progress to date includes:
  - Replacement of many CIHR CV templates with the Biosketch;
  - Upgrade of software;
  - Transfer of CCV servers to CIHR data center;
  - Development and of new, semi-structured Knowledge User CV template.
- Updates on the CCV will continue to be provided at the monthly calls.

*Questions from members:*

**Q: As pointed out by the open letter, other agencies just allow free form CV with key info that is much simpler for users- why is this not appropriate-it would be much cheaper.**

**A:** We have considered that option and are working on the bigger Tri-Agency Grant Management solutions. Through that solution, it will be a much simpler tool.

**Q: What is the annual cost to run the CCV (staff and infrastructure)?**

**A:** We don't have the Information with us but we will share it at a later time.

**Q: I still don't understand the complexity. People just upload a PDF. It doesn't require any coding by CIHR?**

**A:** The challenge is that behind the scenes, the data from the CCV is being collected in other systems—so it isn't a matter of simply switching from a CCV to a PDF. One concern is about what would get “broken” by not collecting structured data from the CCV.

### **3. Strategic Plan Update**

- Here is a quick recap of the three phases of the Strategic Planning initiative:
  - **Phase 1:** Seeking input from May–June 2019
    - CIHR ran an online platform and received 2400 submissions. We met with all 13 of our institutes' advisory board, we had a series of roundtable meetings with 10 stakeholder groups, we had a series of Indigenous meeting and we had an all staff meeting with CIHR. We ran a survey of Canadians in partnership with Statistics Canada. Approximately 4500 Canadians participated and provided feedback on their health priorities. We also met with the Federal and Provincial Government Agencies. Based on all of these consultation, we made a report entitled, “Summary of Phase 1 of CIHR Strategic Planning Engagement.” That report is being discussed at the September Consensus Building workshop (which is phase 2).
  - **Phase 2:** Building consensus across the country
    - Invited more than 100 stakeholders to meet in Ottawa next week to discuss the results of the engagements. David Rose is representing the University Delegates
    - The report is completed and will be publicly released following the workshop. The workshop participants have been distributed a copy of the package. As soon as we have everything summarized, it will be posted on the CIHR website.
    - At the workshop our Governing Council, our Scientific Directors and Senior Executives from CIHR will be of attendance as observers. They will not be participating, but they will be listening.
    - We hope by the end of phase 2, there will be a series of suggestions for CIHR to consider as one input among a series of inputs for us to consider for our Strategic Plan.
    - Given the federal government election, we are looking at each of the platforms. Once the new government is announced, we will meet with them to align our strategic plan with their priorities.
  - **Phase 3:** Validation
    - On December 13, CIHR will hold a Health Research Summit. All of the participants from the September workshop will be invited as well as an additional set of participants.
    - We will present a series of recommendations for the community to react to.
    - Following the Submit, we will write the final Strategic Plan. Governing Council will formally approve the draft strategic plan, which will be published in June 2020, just in time for CIHR's 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

## Questions from Members

**Q: Are you publishing a list of people attending at the Stakeholders meeting in September. The University of Toronto did not feel we had adequate input into the plan to date and only in November are we getting a meeting. So we question how broad the consultation has been.**

**A:** The names of the participants have now been posted online: <http://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/51677.html> ([en français](#))

In addition, all of the Vice-Presidents of Research from the U15 were consulted in Toronto with Jeff, Adrian and Tammy. We also met with Universities Canada and conducted other engagements. The University of Toronto provided feedback through the survey. You are correct that we did not meet at your University. The President is planning a meeting with your University in the coming months.

**Q: The permission to post names should have been a requirement to accept the invitation to attend the meeting.**

**A:** In hindsight, yes we agree that would have been a good approach, however the initial plan was to post the list after the workshop.

### 4. Institute of Infection and Immunity 2021-2025 Strategic Planning Process

*See slides for additional information.*

- The Institute of Infection and Immunity (III) has gone through a transition over the last year with a new Scientific Director, Dr. Charu Kauschic.
- Our vision is to be the Canadian focal point of reference to harness research in infection and immunity.
- Our mission is to provide national leadership, to support priorities and to deliver programs to promote novel infection and immunity research. Our day to day involves identifying research priorities, establishing partnership and undertaking research initiatives.
- In order to communicate our short-term priority and to align with CIHR's new Strategic Plan and STBBI's Action Plan, III recently launched its 2019-2020 Strategic Plan, which is an expansion of our previous plan with slightly different areas of focus.
- Our first objective is to strengthen and coordinate infection and Immunity Research
  - Priority 1: Prepare and respond to current and emerging threats to health
  - Priority 2: Integrate infection and immunity knowledge in the control and prevention of chronic diseases.
- Our second objective is to ensure the application and impact of research
  - Priority 1: Support through Life-Span
  - Priority 2: Communications Strategy
  - Priority 3: Collaborations and Partnerships (maintaining our current ones and developing new ones)
- By late 2020, we will have our Strategic Plan ready for publication.
- We want to engage with our stakeholders and have put in place opportunities for the community to join the conversation.
  - A survey targeting the broader research community and general public will be launched in the next few weeks to gather perspectives on progress, performance, gaps and opportunities in infection and immunity research, and funding.
  - Engagement workshops will host (between January to March 2020) most of our consultation activities and will allow us to communicate the results from the survey. Our target is to host 12 open meetings across Canada (in Vancouver, Edmonton, Calgary, Saskatoon, Winnipeg, Sudbury, Hamilton, Toronto, Ottawa, Montreal, Quebec, and Halifax) with 50-100 participants, including academic researchers/administrators, students, trainees and regional stakeholders.

- Travel Bursaries will provide investigators, trainees and knowledge users with an opportunity to attend a Strategic Planning Engagement Workshop in winter 2020, to participate in the consultation process, and to gain familiarity with current and future CIHR-III strategic priorities.

#### *Questions from Members*

**Q: We are not in those cities but close enough to go. Please keep everyone informed.**

**A:** Absolutely. The travel bursaries are especially for individuals living in proximity of the selected cities. You are encouraged to apply.

#### **5. College Member Renewal Process**

- The College is starting an early renewal process for approximately 3,000 of its members, whose three year term is coming to an end, mid-next year. The invitations will go out in waves in September 2019, January 2020 and March 2020, to account for the high number of individuals involved. The College will continue to copy University Delegates on the list of names of individuals at their institution. Part of the renewal process is going to involve a recognition letter for member contributions to date.

#### **6. Adjournment**

The meeting ended at 1:30pm EST. The next meeting of the University Delegates will be on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2019.