

**University Delegates Meeting  
September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022 – 12:30-1:30pm (EDT)  
Meeting Minutes**

**Chair:** Adrian Mota - Associate Vice-President, Research Programs (Operations)

**Moderator:** James Waring – Interim Director General, Operations Support

**1. CIHR Updates**

The Chair acknowledged the departure of Dr. Brian Christie as the University Delegate from the University of Victoria and thanked Dr. Christie for his many years of contributions. The Chair also welcomed Dr. Nathan Lakowski as the new University Delegate for the University of Victoria.

The Implementation of multifactor authentication within ResearchNet was presented for discussion. Several suggestions were provided by UD members regarding methods of authentication, along with feedback regarding how researchers will be impacted by the system change.

The Chair thanked the members for their valuable input.

**2. Project Grant Competition Update**

***Fall 2022 Project Grant Competition - Important Dates:***

Application Deadline	September 14, 2022
Release Notice of Recommendation (NOR)	January 18, 2023
Anticipated Notice of Decision (NOD)	February 1, 2023
Funding Start Date	April 1, 2023

The Chair provided an update on the upcoming Fall competition deadlines and explained that peer review will continue to remain virtual for the Fall competition. There are nearly 2300 registrations, which is consistent with the past two competitions.

**3. Early Career Researcher (ECR) Pause The Clock**

The Chair shared a recent update regarding the status of ECR extensions that had been brought in as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. As research activities start to return to normal, at least to some extent, CIHR will not further extend the time window. This means that CIHR is returning to the tri-agency's standard definition of an ECR: "A researcher within five years of the date of their first independent research-related appointment." Applicants are encouraged to contact CIHR's Contact Centre to request an extension to their ECR status; requests will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis.

**Q. What does a case-by-case definition mean?**

In evaluating applicants' requests for an extension to their ECR status, CIHR will consider individual circumstances, including disruptions to researchers' productivity due to illness, leave, and COVID-19.

**Q. What counts as a leave?**

We know that there are many reasons why a researcher's productivity may be disrupted. CIHR will follow our standard definition of leave, including which types of leave are considered eligible career breaks. CIHR encourages applicants whose situations fall outside the standard definition, who believe their circumstance necessitate an exception, to contact CIHR's Contact Centre to request an extension.

For more information regarding eligible leaves, please visit the [Tri-agency Guide on Financial Administration](#).

**4. Questions & Answers**

**Q. Are we going back to face-to-face peer review in Spring?**

Discussions are ongoing and no decision has been made yet.

**Q. Should there be work done to make the RCT committee more inclusive?**

CIHR has formed a temporary working group to review the RCT committee and identify opportunities to make it more inclusive. It is expected that the working group will have recommendations to bring forth in the near future for CIHR's consideration.

**Q: Increasing CIHR awards to trainees doesn't help those paid from grants. Grants need to go up to give trainees a bare living stipend. Our dept recently decided on \$60,000 for starting PDF salary (plus benefits).**

CIHR is aware of this challenge and discussions are taking place to address grant amounts relating to trainee stipends. This is a high priority for Christian Baron, Vice President of Research Programs. The University Delegates support team will be issuing a survey in the coming weeks to query internal practices within the institutions participating in the UD network.

**Q. In the last 2 Project competitions, CIHR instituted a policy that the Chair and SOs could NOT 'rescue' a streamlined application for discussion. This is worrisome when it could be due to one low rating (by a new reviewer). Can this be revisited? There could be other reasons that the committee Exec could also want to have an application discussed.**

The Chair and SO can choose to pull an application from the streamlined pool. CIHR is conscious of the appearances around a specific application being 'rescued,' particularly around the risk of conflicts of interest.

**5. Adjournment**

The University Delegates meeting concluded at 1:31 pm EDT. The Chair thanked Network members for their participation. The next meeting of the University Delegates is scheduled to take place on October 6th, 2022.

Please reach out to the UD Support team by email, or to a member of the UDAC, with questions or topics for future UD meetings.