

**University Delegates Meeting
October 7th, 2021 – 12:30-1:30pm (EDT)
Meeting Minutes**

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

1. CIHR Updates

Latest update regarding the University Delegates (UD) membership

The Chair thanked Dr. Wendy Ward from Brock University for their contribution over the years. Brock University has appointed Dr. Matthew Kwan as their new UD representative. The network welcomed Dr. Kwan.

Peer Review Allowance

CIHR recently [announced](#) a new policy for peer review allowances. As of September 1, 2021, most peer reviewers who participate in virtual peer review meetings for CIHR competitions will receive an allowance of \$50 per day to cover out-of-pocket expenses incurred while participating in these meetings. Expense claims or receipts are not required; CIHR will automatically pay the allowance to peer reviewers.

2. Update on CIHR's 2021-2031 Strategic Plan

Next Steps for Strategic Plan Implementation

CIHR is developing a performance measurement framework anticipated for launch in Winter 2022. This framework will identify indicators for monitoring progress and assessing the performance of Strategic Plan priorities and strategies against annual action plans. It will also inform corrective measures as needed. Year-end reports, which will summarize key milestone achievements and performance results (the reporting of performance results will begin in 2022-23), will allow CIHR to demonstrate accountability in achieving its goals and commitments. CIHR will continue to collaborate and engage closely with health research ecosystem stakeholders, including the University Delegates' Network, to identify and make progress on shared priorities and strategies identified in the Strategic Plan.

UD network members are invited to express their interest in receiving a more focused presentation on specific areas of the [Strategic Plan's Action Plan for Year 1 \(2021-22\)](#). For more information on CIHR's Strategic Plan, please consult [CIHR Strategic Plan 2021–2031](#). For questions, or to highlight specific areas of interest, please reach out to the [University Delegates mailbox](#) or the [CIHR Contact Centre](#).

3. Fall 2021 Project Grant Competition

Fall 2021 Project Grant Competition - Important Dates

The application period closed in September. Application demographics will be shared with the UD network at a future meeting.

Peer review committee meetings / Réunions du comité d'évaluation par les pairs	November 16 – December 16, 2021 // 16 novembre au 16 décembre 2021
Notice of Recommendation (NOR) / Avis de recommandation	January 19, 2022 // 19 janvier 2022
Anticipated Notice of Decision (NOD) / Date prévue de l'avis de décision	February 2, 2022 // 2 février 2022
Funding Start Date / Date de début du financement	April 1, 2022 // 1er avril 2022

Fall 2021 Project Grant Competition Webinars

Webinars for reviewers will be held in October. UD network members who are also reviewers are welcome to participate in any session.

Reviewer Webinar (one English, one French)	October 13, 2021
Reviewer Webinar (one English, one French)	October 21, 2021

4. The Future of Peer Review

Peer review meetings for the Fall 2021 Project Grant competition will occur virtually in November and December 2021. Peer review meetings will likely remain virtual for the Spring 2022 Project Grant competition due to considerations associated with the ongoing pandemic; however, a final decision has not been made.

Recently, CIHR conducted a survey aimed at capturing feedback from applicants, reviewers and the research community about their preferences towards peer review models (i.e. face-to-face, virtual, hybrid, etc.). A summary of the survey analysis was provided to the network. Some of the considerations CIHR is taking into account, while investigating the future of peer review are, include COVID-19 impacts, the community response, the quality of peer review, the role of CIHR within peer review, as well as operational considerations.

The network showed interest in continuing the discussion of alternative scenarios and peer review models. Suggestions focused on considerations for the three peer review scenarios (i.e. virtual, face-to-face, and hybrid), noting that there are advantages and disadvantages to each approach. Some advantages of virtual peer-review include lessened environmental impacts as well as cost-effectiveness. Virtual peer-review was also noted as being beneficial and favorable from an EDI perspective, eliminating many barriers to participation for some. Moreover, advantages to face-to-face mentioned by the network consisted of the elimination of 'zoom fatigue', perceived better quality of peer review and networking opportunities. CIHR remains committed to continuing these discussions, including with the University Delegates Executive Committee (UDEEC) on October 12, analyzing various approaches, and commits to being transparent about future decisions.

5. Funding Opportunities

A list of funding opportunities released in September can be found in Appendix A of the presentation.

6. Adjournment

The University Delegates meeting concluded at 1:17pm EDT. The Chair thanked the network for their participation and valuable insight. The next meeting of the University Delegates will take place on November 4th.