University Delegates WebEx Meeting
September 3, 2015 – 12:30-1:30pm EDT
CIHR Room 10-219, Ottawa, Ontario

Participants

Chair: Adrian Mota, Director General, Operations Support

Members: Shari Baum, McGill University
Christian Beaulieu, University of Alberta
Lionel Berthoux, Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières
Robert Bertolo, Memorial University of Newfoundland
Lara Boyd, University of British Columbia
Lori Burrows, McMaster University
Peter Cattini, University of Manitoba
Leslie Cudmore (for J. Bryanton), University of Prince Edward Island
Daniel Cyr, Institut national de la recherche scientifique (INRS)
Faith Donald, Ryerson University
Bareket Falk, Brock University
John Fisher, Queen’s University
Mark Filiaggi, Dalhousie University
Denise Figlewicz, University of Western Ontario
Cezar Khursigara (for J. Lam), University of Guelph
Troy Harkness, University of Saskatchewan
Norbert Haunerland, Simon Fraser University
Marilyn Hodgins, University of New Brunswick
Richard Leduc, Université de Sherbrooke
Julian Little, University of Ottawa
Rod McCormick, Thompson Rivers University
Cindi Morshead, University of Toronto
Michael Owen, University of Ontario Institute of Technology
Stephan Perry, Wilfrid Laurier University
David Rose, University of Waterloo
Gerald W. Zamponi, University of Calgary

Institution staff: Leslie Copp, University of Waterloo
Oksana Moshynska, University of Saskatchewan
Penny D’Agnone, University of Lethbridge
Jessica Vaisica, York University

Regrets: Christian Baron, Université de Montréal
Ranjana Bird, University of Northern British Columbia
Michael D. Buschmann, École Polytechnique
Dean W. Care, Brandon University
Estelle Chamoux, Bishop’s University
Cheryl Currie, University of Lethbridge
Michel Dugas, Université de Québec en Outaouais
Régis Dubuc, Université du Québec à Montréal
Donald Faith, Ryerson University
Karen Grant, Mount Allison University
Shawn Hayley, Carleton University

Michael V. Hayes, University of Victoria
Richard Isnor, St. Francis Xavier University
Shanthi Johnson, University of Regina
Dale Keefe, Cape Breton University
Jennifer McGrath, Concordia University
Marc Pouliot, Université Laval
Lauren Sergio, York University
Chris Shields, Acadia University
Brenda Smith-Chant, Trent University
Peter Twohig, Saint Mary’s University
Panayiotis (Otis)Vacratsis, University of Windsor
Elaine Wiersma, Lakehead University
Nancy Young, Laurentian University
Welcome Message

The Chair called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m. EDT and welcomed the University Delegates (UDs) to the WebEx meeting.

1. CIHR Update

UDs were informed about recent changes to the CIHR management team:
- Adrian Mota has replaced Jennifer O’Donoughue as Director General, Operations Support.
- Sarah Connor Gorber is the new Director General for the College of Reviewers.
- Mark Ferdinand is the new Director General for Partnerships and Business Development.
- Kirill Popov is the new Executive Director of the Canadian Common CV.

2. 2014 Foundation Pilot Competition Preliminary Analysis of Results

Adrian Mota, Director General, Operations Support, presented the 2014 Foundation Pilot Competition Preliminary Analysis of Results. The preliminary analysis focuses on competition demographics, not on survey results. CIHR is in the process of completing a detailed analysis for the first Foundation Scheme live pilot competition that will be shared with the community.

An overview of the changes that CIHR has implemented to Stage 1 of the Foundation Scheme was provided. CIHR revised the Interpretation Guidelines for the Stage 1 criteria to ensure that the Leadership sub-criterion is applicable across career stage. The Foundation Scheme CV has also been modified with the addition of new sections and an increase in the limits of some pre-existing sections. In addition, new/early investigators will be reviewed separately at each stage of the competition.

Changes to Stage 2 are currently in progress. CIHR’s goal is to communicate these changes by December, around the same time that Stage 1 decisions are made, so that applicants are aware of the changes that may impact them for Stage 2.

3. Feedback from the Research Community on the 2014 Foundation Pilot Competition
Adrian Mota, Director General, Operations Support, opened the floor to provide feedback, raise issues, and ask questions. UDs raised the following issues:

- **Unintentional bias against applicants from non-medical universities:** CIHR assured members that there is an analysis currently being undertaken related to institution size.

- **Number of Aboriginal health applications:** CIHR clarified that 17 applications reported an affiliation with the Institute of Aboriginal People’s Health (IAPH). Originally, we looked at the flag that applicants check to state if their research contains a component of Aboriginal health research and 10% of applicants checked that box within their application. CIHR is looking into how meaningful this box is and understanding why people select it.

- **Inappropriate reviewer comments:** It is the role of the Virtual Chair to caution reviewers about making inappropriate comments, as well as CIHR staff to play a supporting role.

- **Targets for the current Foundation Scheme and Project Scheme competitions:** CIHR is going to assess the application pressure in both of these programs, budget requests, and peer review recommendations in making funding decisions. The aim is for a 45/55 split between the Foundation and Project Schemes respectively, however this will have to be rethought if there is significant application pressure in the Project Scheme.

- **Reviewer training with respect to author order in journals that are outside of their area of expertise:** CIHR does an “ability to review” to ask reviewers if they are in fact able to review the applications. Applications are matched to reviewers who have the ability to review. It is an application-centric review so the expectation is that whoever is looking at that particular application understands the context of the primary field of research that the application is articulating.

- **Foundation Scheme applicants acting as reviewers within the same competition:** CIHR confirmed that applicants will not be permitted to review other applications in that competition. CIHR recognizes that people perceived this as a serious conflict of interest in Stage 1 of the first Foundation Scheme competition.

- **Assessment of new investigators:** New/early career investigators will be assessed and ranked separately at all stages of the Foundation Scheme competition.

- **Foundation Scheme budget submission:** CIHR confirmed that a budget “ask” that was at or slightly higher than the baseline budget level did not affect final budget decisions for the first Foundation live pilot competition. It was suggested that it would be helpful for CIHR to provide applicants with their baseline budget when they are approved for Stage 2. CIHR is looking into this and working on improving the budget process and instructions for the second pilot.

**New Investigator Salary Award Program:** Delegates suggested funding new investigators through this program and aiming the Foundation Scheme at mid-career and established investigators, thereby reducing the review pressure in the Foundation program. CIHR is sunsetting the New Investigator Salary Award
Program. It is more impactful to give new investigators operating funding, as opposed to salary funding.

Adjournment

The Chair thanked everyone for their participation, and adjourned the meeting at 1:30 p.m. EDT. The next UD call is scheduled for October 1, 2015.