The **Grant Assist Program [GAP]** is an initiative of the Office of the Vice-President (Research), begun in 2011 for CIHR researchers. Support specifically targeted for researchers in the social sciences and humanities [SS&H] was initiated in the spring of 2013. The goal of the **SS&H GAP** is to support researchers applying to the **Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council [SSHRC]**, and to improve the caliber of grants submitted. The SS&H GAP offers peer review feedback processes, private mentoring, bridge funding, capacity-building workshops, information panels, grant editing, research assistants, access to sample successful grants and an extensive archive of grant-crafting resources.

This document summarizes responses to a survey conducted in late Fall 2016. The purpose of the survey was to continue to evaluate the SS&H GAP (Fall 2015 – 2016) and to monitor changes in uptake of the program since the 2015 survey. The survey was sent to 710 continuing faculty members who have had any contact with the SS&H GAP since 2013. 115 responses were received [16% response rate]. Strong satisfaction with and support for the program and the director are indicated. Suggestions for improvement include support for French language applications and improved access to professional editing.

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Section 1: Awareness of the Range of GAP Services

Figure 1a: Awareness of SS&H GAP Offerings for 2016

Figure 1b: Change in awareness of SS&H GAP Offerings from 2015 Survey to 2016 Survey

* E-newsletter new for 2016
### Section 2: Satisfaction with GAP Services

**Figure 2: Most Recent Year (2016) and Cumulative Satisfaction with GAP SS&H Services**

<table>
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<th>Service</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2015 &amp; 2016</th>
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<td>Facebook</td>
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**Legend:**
- a = Dissatisfied
- b = Satisfied
- c = Highly Satisfied
- d = N/A (did not access this)
- e = Did not access this, but think it's worthwhile
Section 3: Opinions Regarding the GAP SS&H Key Services

Figure 3: Opinions of GAP SS&H Key Services

The SS&H GAP should be maintained
The SS&H GAP should be expanded
The Research Assistant was helpful
The Professional Editor improved my proposal
The Peer Reviewer’s critical feedback made my proposal stronger
The Senior Coordinator was knowledgeable and supportive
I will participate in future GAP activities
I would recommend GAP to my colleagues
As a Peer Reviewer, I was treated with respect and felt my contribution was valued

Section 4: Narrative Feedback

Respondents were asked to comment on any aspect of the Social Sciences and Humanities' Grant Assist Program (SS&H GAP). Analysis was performed on 50 comments received from 115 total survey respondents. Bullet points (●) highlight and paraphrase specific comments. The percentage of mention is shown followed by the number of mentions in square brackets. Comments are listed from highest to lowest mention.

The SS&H GAP Initiative – 54% [27]

- Great program and I think it enhances the ability of researchers to achieve success with SSHRC.
- I recommend the GAP program regularly to Faculty colleagues.
- I cannot say enough about how appreciative I am for the supports offered by GAP. I feel really supported by the GAP program and can honestly say that the positive feedback and support I get from the program keeps me hopeful and motivated to keep applying for grants.
SS&H GAP Peer Review Process – 26% [13]

- Reviewer’s Perspective:
  - I strongly recommend that there is some acknowledgement of reviewers such as course release for serving on committees.
  - Biggest issue is that many applicants work only to the deadline and do not submit the best possible applications for review.
  - I felt my expertise was not well matched to the proposal.

- Applicant’s Perspective:
  - The peer review was very helpful, timely and encouraging. I think it made a very important difference in the success of my application.
  - More attention for reviewer selection and guidance as to what is important for review.
  - More people could benefit by taking advantage of peer review.

The SS&H GAP Director – 22% [9]

- I can’t speak highly enough of the work that Heather is doing for SSHRC applicants.
- Heather Young-Leslie’s support, since stepping into this role, has been crucial to my success.
- Speaking with Heather made me feel 100% less intimidated about applying to SSHRC.

Expanding Support of the SS&H GAP – 16% [8]

- The University should continue and expand this program.
- Services should be offered in French.

SS&H GAP Events – 12% [6]

- The SSHRC IG Bootcamp was a terrific program. A must for new (and experienced) SSHRC grant writers.
- I would like to see more funding for SSHRC Bootcamps.
- Open Minds 2016 is a great idea.

UofA Support of SSHRC Research – 10% [5]

- Concern with UofA expectations for humanities researchers to seek and fund significant salary of Research Assistants.
- UofA Faculties are inconsistent in understanding the needs of diverse arts and humanities scholars, which contributes to sending confused messages to professor-applicants as well as SSHRC.
- Social sciences and humanities researchers need to be allowed more time to expend to research in order to be successful.
- The UofA needs to see the value of short-term sessional instructors and address the imbalance with tenure/tenure-track academics who can apply for funding, teaching relief and research/teaching assistants.

SS&H Research Assistants (RAs) – 6% [3]

- Help from the RA was invaluable.
- Access to RAs should be expanded.

SS&H GAP Editing Service – 6% [3]

- Need for grant editors with more expertise in the field.
- More resources for access to editors is needed.
Miscellaneous Comments – mentioned <2 times

- The Grant Library was wonderfully helpful.
- I’d like more information on Facebook.

Section 5: Demographics of Survey Respondents

Respondents were asked to volunteer information as to their main faculty affiliation and duration of employment at the University of Alberta. 94% of the respondents provided their demographic information.

Figure 4a: Response by Faculty

![Pie chart showing faculty responses]

- Arts: 37%
- Education: 21%
- Science: 4%
- Physical Education & Recreation: 9%
- Nursing: 3%
- Medicine & Dentistry: 1%
- Law: 3%
- Extension: 2%
- ALES: 7%
- Augustana Business: 4%
- Campus St-Jean: 5%
Figure 4b: Employment (years)

Section 6: Appendix

<table>
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<td>Mentoring</td>
<td>One on one strategy meeting with the GAP's Director; post-results detailed review of a failed application; detailed written/email correspondence about your proposal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshops</td>
<td>CCV-Bees</td>
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<td>Bridge Funding</td>
<td>Partnership LOI preparation grant; GAP bridge funding</td>
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<td>Panel Presentations</td>
<td>SSHRC Adjudicators Debrief</td>
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<tr>
<td>Open Minds 2016</td>
<td>Celebration of SSHRC research</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>&lt;sshrcUofA&gt; Listserv</td>
<td>Email distribution list for SSHRC Researchers at UAlberta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GAP Website Resource Centre</td>
<td>Tips on grant success, budget-crafting, etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preferences Polls</td>
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<tr>
<td>GAP SS&amp;H document repository in ERA</td>
<td>Document repository in the ERA documents housed in the Libraries' Education and Research Archive</td>
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