

CIHR Project Grants: What You Need to Know

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Research Commons Information Session: July 10, 2024

CIHR Webinars

CIHR will be hosting the following webinars for “Fall 2024 Project Grant”

Duration: 60 minutes

English Sessions

When: Wednesday, July 31, 2024 at 11:00 AM ET | [Join](#)

When: Thursday, August 15, 2024 at 1:00 PM ET | [Join](#)

French Sessions

When: Wednesday, July 31, 2024 at 1:00 PM ET | [Join](#)

When: Thursday, August 15, 2024 at 11:00 AM ET | [Join](#)

Project Grant: Program Overview



Open to applicants in all areas of health research that are aligned with the CIHR mandate: "To excel, according to internationally accepted standards of scientific excellence, in the creation of new knowledge and its translation into improved health for Canadians, more effective health services and products, and a strengthened Canadian health care system"

Duration: Upto 5 years

Value: Varies depending on the research field, approach, and scope of the project. In the Fall 2023 Project Grant competition, the average YorkU award was \$ 627,410

Registration Deadline: Wednesday, August 14, 2024 (click [here](#))

Note: Nominated Principal Applicant cannot change between registration and application

Application Deadline: Wednesday, September 11, 2024 → Must submit on the CIHR ResearchNet portal by 10 am. FoH Mandatory internal deadline: 9 am, Monday September 9, 2024.

Project Grant: York Success Rates

YorkU	Fall (F) 2023	Spring (S) 2023	F 2021	S 2021	F 2021	S 2021
Success Rate	38.46%	33.33%	26.67%	14.30%	16.67%	14.30%

CIHR Project Grants– General reminders



The Project Grant program is open to applicants in **all areas of health research**

- Can be Nominated Principal Applicant (NPA) on upto 2 applications per competition
- NPA can not be changed after registration. Please ensure your eligibility
- The NPA must wait for all other participants to complete their relevant sections of the application before submitting.
- Early Career Researchers encouraged to be NPAs
- All application participants **must complete the EDI Self-identification Questionnaire**

CCV (start early)

- Required for Principal Applicants and Co-Applicants
- If any to update CCV before the deadline, a new confirmation number must be created and linked
- [Click here to complete CCV or BioSketch CV for the NPA](#)

CIHR Pins

- Required for each participant including Collaborators.
- If they do not currently have a CIHR PIN they should [register](#) through CIHR's website.

Priority Announcements

- Additional sources of funding for highly rated applications that are [Project Grant: Fall 2024 Priority Announcements \(Specific Research Areas\)](#)
- Note the bridge funding options

Project Grant Application Components on ResearchNet



Research Module

- Nominated Principal Applicant (NPA) & Institution details
- Relevance Form
- Other Applicants and roles (Co-I's, Collaborators, Partners, Knowledge Users (KU))
- Complete Summary
- Lay Summary & Lay Abstract

Application Details & Attachments

- Research Proposal (10 pages English, 12 pages French)
- Summary of Progress (2 pages)

Other Attachments

- References
- Up to 5 publications from the last 5 years
- NPA's SGBA Training Certificate
- Letters of Support (if applicable)
- Response to Reviewers with previous reviews & SO notes appended

Budget

- Budget request with justification

Most Significant Contributions

CV - can be referred to as "BioSketch (C)CV"

[Click here for Application Instructions](#)

ATTACHMENT FORMATTING GUIDELINES:

- Use a font size of 12 point, black type (for example Times New Roman). Do not use condensed/narrow font sizes. Smaller text in tables, charts, figures, and graphs is acceptable, as long as it is legible when the page is viewed at 100%.
- Minimum of single line spacing. Do not use narrow spacing.
- Margin of 2 cm (3/4 inch) – minimum – around the page.
- Observe page limitations
- Use only letter size (21.25 X 27.5 cm / 8.5" X 11") white paper/background for all attachments.
- Photo-reduce the supporting documents if the originals are larger than 21.25 X 27.5 cm / 8.5" X 11".
- Attachments must be uploaded in PDF format (unprotected).
- The size of the attached document(s) cannot exceed 30 MB per document.

Project Grant evaluation criteria



Criterion 1 - Concept :

Significance and Impact of Research

- Creative idea?
- Rationale?
- Goals/objectives well-defined?
- Will anticipated contributions advance health-related outcomes?

Criterion 2 – Feasibility

Sub-criterion 2.1: Approaches and Methods

- Approaches/methods appropriate for delivering proposed outputs?
- Realistic timeline and deliverables?
- Identification of potential challenges/mitigation strategies?

Sub-criterion 2.2: Expertise, Experience, and Resources

- Applicant(s) have appropriate expertise and experience?
- Appropriate level of engagement from applicant(s)?
- Appropriate environment?
- Adequate demonstration of productivity, progress, impact (Summary of Progress)

Each of the 3 weighted criteria scores condensed into one average score
Rating scale: 3.5 and above may be funded

CIHR Project Grant: Proposal Structure and Common Application Issues



SIGNIFICANCE & IMPACT OF RESEARCH (25%) ... ~ 1-1.5 PAGE

- Background & rationale: short overview of ESSENTIAL background information. Key issues or knowledge gaps.
- Goal: Clearly state the main goal of your project. Main lines of inquiry you will undertake. Ideally, the objectives should directly address the key issues or knowledge gaps you identified earlier. General information about the approach.
- Methods/Expertise: Methodology and expertise that will help achieve the goal. What is innovative about your project? Not technical details.
- Expected Outcome: Main outputs of your project. Tangible outcomes you anticipate at the end of your project. Overall significance. Why is this important to do?

COMMON ISSUES

Many applicants provide too much background information in this section.

- SOLUTION: What is essential for thrust of your project – the main issues/knowledge gaps, your goal & objectives, and why your project is important. This section needs to grab their attention – not the space for technical details.

CIHR Project Grant: Proposal Structure and Common Application Issues



APPROACH & METHODS (50%) 7.5-8 PAGES

- Background: Provide the background information necessary to JUSTIFY your approach to meet the objectives
- Methodology: Approaches and methods you to accomplish each objective.
- Note: when sex and/or gender is applicable in the research design, addressing these considerations solely in the sex and/or gender textbox is insufficient. Specifically address this in the 10-page proposal.
- Knowledge translation approach is well-defined
- Project timeline is realistic with clear milestones
- Deliverables are aligned with the objectives
- Potential challenges & mitigation strategies are described

COMMON ISSUES

Repetitive background information between the “significance” and “approach” sections.

- SOLUTION: In the “Significance” section → general background information. In the “Approach” section → rationale behind your approach. Highlight background information or preliminary data that apply to ALL objectives. Then, sub-divide the approach by objectives. Within each objective’s subdivision, present additional background/rationale/preliminary data that only pertain to that particular objective.

Failing to clearly provide timeline

- SOLUTION: i) timeline figure, ii) short summary at the end of each objective. Timeline figures tend to use fewer characters, e.g. a Gantt Chart. See: how to make a [Gantt Chart in Excel](#)

CIHR Project Grant: Proposal Structure and Common Application Issues



EXPERTISE, EXPERIENCE & RESOURCES (25%) ~1 PAGE

- Expertise & Experience of Applicant(s): As it relates to your ability to deliver on the objectives of the project.
- Academic rank, area of expertise, relevant administrative and leadership positions, past experience with equipment/techniques, etc.
- Roles & Responsibilities: should be clearly described and linked to the objectives
- Level of Engagement: Appropriate time and other commitments of each applicant
- Institutional Environment: Research environment, access equipment, facilities, and support personnel to complete the project. Emphasize any unique resources available to you and your team.

COMMON ISSUES

Many applicants fail to describe the role of all of their team members.

- SOLUTION: Describe the experience/expertise and roles & responsibilities for each team member (including the NPA, co-applicants, and collaborators). Also estimate the level of engagement (# hrs/week) in way that it makes sense.

No details about research environment

- SOLUTION: Include a fulsome description of your research environment. This can include (but is not limited to): Physical infrastructure & facilities (lab, office space, shared facilities), Equipment (highlighting specialized equipment), access to support personnel, if any (technicians, coordinators, etc.), access to specialized resources (e.g. patient cohorts/samples)

CIHR Project Grant: Summary of Progress (SoP)



- Mandatory - maximum of two (2) pages)
- No figures or tables since 2022

What to address? (Use the topics below, verbatim as headings in your document)

- **Progress/Productivity:** Any research activities that support the current application.
- **Impacts on progress** of research: leave, the COVID-19 pandemic, etc.
- **ECRs:** If held Foundation grant → add to SoP
- **Budget** requested in relation to overall funding held currently or previously. Illustrate clearly why the requested funds distinct from the funds currently held.

CIHR Project Grant: Budget



- Budget items (make sure they are eligible) must be well justified in relation to their need for the research
- Use the categories mentioned in the [CIHR budget instructions](#)
- Budget recommendations are NOT factored into the rating; however, reviewers can recommend that a budget be reduced.
- Reviewers will be looking for:
 - Is the requested funding appropriate, realistic, and well justified?
 - Any overlap in current funding and the proposal?

CIHR Project Grant: Reminders and General Tips



- Proposals wanting to be reviewed by Tri-Agency Interdisciplinary Review Committee: **MUST** indicate so as their first suggested committee at **REGISTRATION**
- **Print the most recent guidelines in colour.** CIHR adds important changes in **red**
- **KNOW YOUR AUDIENCE:** Be sure you choose the most appropriate Peer Review Committee
- **REVIEWERS TO EXCLUDE:** List anyone here who might have a bias against the proposal for any reason
- Suggesting external reviewers → highly recommended
- Note: RCT vs discipline-based committee: Budget > \$250,000 in any project year → must apply to the RCT peer review committee.
- Reviewer Guided Writing:
 - Read the [CIHR's Peer Review Manual](#) – provides insight into what peer reviewers are looking for.
 - Headings – use the evaluation criteria headings to guide the reviewer
 - Panels – Be very clear as to why your grant belongs on the specific panel.
 - Grantsmanship – don't forget the importance of writing clearly and selling your project. Why this should be funded? Remember that grant-writing is also a marketing exercise.

CIHR Project Grant: General Tips & Pitfalls to Avoid



- **SEX and GENDER**– Discuss sex and gender-based analysis **throughout** the proposal where applicable.
- **PRELIMINARY DATA** intro + prelim data ~ 40% of CIHR application. Lots of proposals seriously hurt by absence of prelim data.
- **FORMATTING:**
Keep white Space, Bolding/Underline – be selective and use interchangeably.
Ensure Figures/Tables – ensure legends are legible.
- **SUMMARY:** Include some methods information here, and use the headings: not adjudicated (but used by CIHR to assign reviewers)
BACKGROUND AND IMPORTANCE
GOALS/RESEARCH AIMS
METHODS/APPROACH/EXPERTISE
EXPECTED OUTCOMES.

IMPORTANT: applicant must demonstrate how sex and/or gender are integrated into:

- Research proposal design
- Methods
- Analysis & Interpretation, and/or
- Dissemination

RESUBMISSIONS ONLY: Optional 2-page response to previous comments. Applicants who upload a “response to previous reviews” must include all the reviews received in the last round of submission in the response, not just those to which you have responded.

Upload the SO Notes and reviewers reports in a single PDF with the 2-page response.

Do NOT include the Notice of Decision (NOD) or results letter.

CIHR Project Grant: General Tips & Pitfalls to Avoid contd.

BUDGET

- Allowable costs only (ineligible = salary for team applicants, infrastructure costs)
- Consider salaries + benefits + applicable taxes → description of the staff member(s) proposed role(s) in the project.
- For conference travel, include: the conference name/location (if available), who is travelling (i.e., PI only; PI + grad student), and the estimate (i.e., airfare, train travel, meals etc.)

See the YorkU “Research Costs Table” in this [link](#). YorkU ID and password required to login.

- For publication expenses include: the name(s) of the journal(s) & estimate the number of papers.
- Budget NOT listed p.a., list total amounts over entire grant
- Subtotals - rounded to nearest \$1000
- Totals – rounded to nearest \$5000

KNOWLEDGE TRANSLATION (KT) & INTEGRATED KT (iKT)

Decide if you are going to have integrated Knowledge User (KU) involvement (iKT)

→ need KU Applicant CV in addition to NPA Biosketch CV.

TEAM COMPOSITION

- Must have recognized academic excellence of P.I., Co-applicants
- Address diversity of team re research interests (multidisciplinary is desirable) & EDI considerations
- If possible, incorporate mix of SENIOR & JUNIOR researchers

COMMON PITFALLS (Proposal does not include:)

- Timeline clearly delineated or in chart form → feasibility
- SGBA: is sex considered as a biological variable? Gender as a socio-cultural determinant of health? Say WHY or WHY NOT, justify this position.
- Anticipated outcomes
- Alternative approaches should primary approach fail
- Letters of support from collaborators (i.e. for equipment)
- Well thought out KT plan with listing of milestones & stakeholder involvement
- EDI considerations (both HQP and subjects/participants)

Project Grant: Some Resources



LINKS

- [CIHR Project Grant Program Overview & Latest Updates](#)
- [CIHR Project Grant Application Instructions](#)
- [Summary of Jan 2022 CIHR Project Grant “Ask Me Anything” Seminars](#)
- [CIHR Project Grant Peer Review Manual](#)
- [Tri-Agency Guide on Financial Administration](#)
- [CIHR Glossary of Funding Related Terms](#)
- [CIHR: How to Integrate Sex and Gender into Research \(includes definitions for sex, gender\)](#)
- [NIH: Reviewer Guidance to Evaluate Sex as a Biological Variable \(SABV\)](#)
- [Biosketch CCV – Quick Reference Guide](#)
- [Guide to Knowledge Translation Planning at CIHR: Integrated and End-of-Grant Approaches](#)
- [Innovation York’s Knowledge Mobilization Unit \(KMb\)](#)

CONTACTS

- YorkU Faculty Research Officer(s)

THANK YOU FOR YOUR ATTENTION

- Contact info for Faculty of Health

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