University Delegates WebEx Meeting
November 7, 2013 – 12:30-1:30pm EST
CIHR Room 10-219, Ottawa, Ontario

Participants

Chair: Jen O’Donoughue, Executive Director, Reforms Implementation

Members: Christian Baron, Université de Montréal
Lionel Berthoux, Université du Québec à Trois-Rivières
Janet Bryanton, University of Prince Edward Island
Lori Burrows, McMaster University
Michael D. Buschmann, Polytechnique Montréal
Dean Care, Brandon University
Roy Duncan (on behalf of Gerry Johnston, Dalhousie University)
Bareket Falk, Brock University
John Fisher, Queen’s University
Faith Donald, Ryerson University
Réjean Dubuc, Université du Québec à Montréal
Janice Eng, University of British Columbia
Denise Figlewicz, University of Western Ontario

Lucie Germain, Université Laval
Marilyn Hodgins, University of New Brunswick
Dale Keefe, Cape Breton University
Richard Leduc, Université de Sherbrooke
Rod Merrill (on behalf of Joseph Lam, University of Guelph)
Cindi Morshead, University of Toronto
Marianna Newkirk, McGill University
Stephen Perry, Wilfrid Laurier University
John Reynolds (on behalf of Gerald Zamponi), University of Calgary
David Rose, University of Waterloo
Brenda Smith-Chant, Trent University
Chris Shields, Acadia University
Joanne Simala (for Richard Wozniak), University of Alberta

Institution staff: Leslie Copp, University of Waterloo
Cheryl Rogers, University of Ontario Institute of Technology

Regrets: Ranjana Bird, University of Northern British Columbia
Peter Cattini, University of Manitoba
Estelle Chamoux, Bishop’s University
Keith De’Bell, St. Francis Xavier University
Michael Hayes, University of Victoria
Karen Grant, Mount Allison
Norbert Haunerland, Simon Fraser University
Shawn Hayley, Carleton University
Shanthi Johnson, University of Regina
Olga Kovalchuk, University of Lethbridge
Julian Little, University of Ottawa
Rod McCormick, Thompson Rivers University
Jennifer McGrath, Concordia University
Michael Owen, University of Ontario Institute of Technology
Roger Pierson, University of Saskatchewan
Proton Rahman, Memorial University of Newfoundland
Lauren Sergio, York University
Peter Twohig, Saint Mary’s University
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. EST and welcomed the University Delegates (UDs) to the WebEx meeting. A round table of CIHR staff attending the meeting followed.

1. Update on Signature Initiatives

Jonathan Faulkner, Manager, Strategic Investment Planning and Reporting, presented an update on CIHR’s Signature Initiatives.

A presentation providing an update on Signature Initiatives was circulated to the UDs in advance of the meeting. The presentation highlighted that a Signature Initiative is:

- A mechanism to deliver on CIHR’s Roadmap strategic priorities;
- Co-designed by multiple CIHR Institutes and partners to address a key gap or opportunity;
- Dependent on partner engagement to be successful; and
- Typically large, with a long-term vision and long-term investments.

As well, the presentation highlighted the different Signatures Initiatives currently in place and provided an update on each one.

For more information on Signature Initiatives, including contact information for initiative leads, please visit the CIHR website: [http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/43567.html](http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/43567.html)

2. Update on the Funding Opportunities for the Fall 2014 Foundation Scheme “live pilot” and the 2014-2015 Transitional OOGP competitions

Jen O’Donoughue, Executive Director, Reforms Implementation, provided an update on the funding opportunities for the 2014 Foundation Scheme “live pilot” and the 2015 Transitional OOGP competitions.

It is anticipated that both funding opportunities and supporting documents will be published in the coming weeks. The two funding opportunities are being published in parallel and in advance of the registration and application deadlines to ensure that the research community has ample time to prepare for the changes and understand the differences between the two competitions.
These funding opportunities will be supported by:
- A set of Questions and Answers
- Application requirements
- A PowerPoint presentation to support delegate discussions with the research community.

The application requirements for the 2014 Foundation Scheme “live pilot” competition will provide further information on what reviewers will be assessing in the applications during each stage of the peer review process. The requirements present an overview of the content of the application and have been developed for illustrative purposes only. The actual application will be completed through ResearchNet and may differ from these documents. CIHR will update the application requirements if any substantive changes to the application are made as a result of ongoing pilots.

Note that the application requirements and processes for the 2015 Transitional OOGP will remain the same as the current OOGP.

As the funding opportunities for both the 2014 Foundation Scheme “live pilot” and the 2015 Transitional OOGP are being published in advance, the applications are not yet available. The dates of when the applications will be available on ResearchNet will be included in the funding opportunities.

CIHR continues to receive questions from the research community regarding the new Foundation Scheme. These questions have been helpful in updating our Questions and Answers on the eligibility criteria for the Foundation Scheme “live pilot” competitions.

One important concept that we ask delegates to communicate to their communities is that the Foundation Scheme is a programmatic research scheme and different from the OOGP. Although researchers may be conducting programmatic research and funding it today through the OOGP, the way that the OOGP is structured is project-based.

Questions were raised regarding the Foundation Scheme and the transition details. They included:

- What are the competition timelines and dates for the Foundation Scheme? Further clarity was provided on the transition details and the different competition timelines. This information can be found on CIHR’s website’s Transition Plan section.

- A question was asked regarding what would happen to those who have grants up for renewal in September 2014 and whether their grants will be extended. It was clarified that these researchers may have two options. First, if they meet the eligibility requirements, they can choose to apply to the 2014 Foundation Scheme “live pilot” competition. Researchers who are eligible to apply to the Foundation Scheme “live pilot” competitions but decide not to apply will be permitted to:
  - Apply early to one of the remaining OOGP competitions, including the 2015 Transitional OOGP, without the early renewal penalty (i.e. applicants would keep their existing funding if not renewed).
  - Request a change to their grant term expiry date with no increase in budget.
Furthermore, the Anticipated Stage 1 Notice of Decision for the 2014 Foundation Scheme “live pilot” will be made available prior to the Registration deadline of the 2015 Transitional OOGP. Applicants will therefore be able to decide whether or not they wish to continue with the Foundation Scheme application or to withdraw from the Foundation Scheme competition and apply to the 2015 Transitional OOGP.

- A question was posed regarding enhanced institutional support. It was clarified that CIHR’s original concept of enhanced institutional support has since evolved. After consultations with a number of stakeholders including institutions, the requirement for institutional support will be the same for Foundation Scheme as it is currently for OOGP grants. CIHR will therefore require institution sign-off as it is currently needed. Further clarity on institutional support is provided in the funding opportunity for the Foundation Scheme “live pilot” competition.

- A question was posed regarding eligibility of a researcher who currently holds two grants, one which they are about to renew, and one with a grant end date during the eligibility period. In this case, as long as the applicant meets the eligibility requirements, they are still eligible to apply to the Foundation Scheme “live pilot” competition.

- It was asked whether CIHR has given any consideration to the gap in funding, and if a project competition could be launched earlier. It was reiterated that CIHR did consider a number of different options and a number of different scenarios when planning the sequencing of the different competitions. The challenge is that CIHR is working within a finite budget. CIHR understands that the transition may not be ideal for all researchers. However, the way in which the competitions have been sequenced maximizes the budget as best as possible. Furthermore, CIHR has changed the renewal policy during the transition period so that applicants who are eligible to apply to the Foundation Scheme “live pilot” competitions are able to apply early to one of the remaining OOGP competitions, including the 2015 Transitional OOGP, without the usual early renewal penalty.

- A question was posed regarding the new/early career investigators and whether there is a specific proportion of the budget committed to them. It was clarified that there will be a separate stream with a dedicated budget for new/early career investigators in the Foundation Scheme. The details of the budget are still under analysis, but current thinking suggests it will be based on the application pressure.

- A question was asked on how many grants will be awarded in the 2015 Transitional OOGP competition. It was reiterated that the budgets for the 2014 Foundation Scheme “live pilot” and the 2015 Transitional OOGP competitions will be shared and the number of grants funded will depend on application pressure. For that reason, CIHR has indicated that it anticipates funding somewhere between 120 and 250 Foundation grants in the first pilot.

- A question was asked on the success rate of making it past Stage 1 review. CIHR has been trying to model the success rate, but, as previously mentioned, it is difficult to anticipate this as it will primarily depend on application pressure.

- A question was posed on the expected impact of applicants now being allowed to submit early renewals on the Spring 2014 OOGP competition. CIHR has conducted analyses and acknowledges that this change may increase application pressure; however, CIHR was
looking for a balance in the overall transition plan. The registration phase is therefore important as it will allow CIHR to plan accordingly.

- A question was posed on the Foundation Scheme’s application process and whether an applicant would be allowed to resubmit their application in the following year. During the transition period, there will be no restrictions to resubmitting applications. CIHR will ask applicants to consider the peer review feedback received and whether or not they are able to improve their track record significantly in that period of time.

Questions regarding the two funding opportunities can be directed to the CIHR Reforms team at: Roadmap-Plan.Strategique@cihr-irsc.gc.ca.

3. Effectiveness of University Delegates’ communication tactics within institutions

A discussion on the delegates’ effective communication tactics within their institutions was led by Jen O’Donoughue.

Despite CIHR’s best efforts to communicate information to the research community, there seems to be parts of the research community who are not receiving or reading the information provided on the reforms. In an effort to improve our communication tactics, CIHR asked the delegates to discuss and share their institution communication practices and what has been effective thus far.

Delegates shared different engagement tactics used at their institutions. These included:

- Town hall meetings;
- Workshops;
- Leveraging university committee meetings as a means to communicate CIHR information with the faculties on campus who are engaged in health research;
- Email blasts from the research central office;
- Communicating directly with researchers who have a grant ending during the eligible time period for the Foundation Scheme “live pilot” competitions;
- Presentations throughout the year on the grant process;
- Presenting information to the Vice-President of Research and the Vice-Deans;
- Preparing and circulating one page summaries of expected changes and timelines outlining deadlines and funding gaps;
- Preparing key facts sheet;
- Quarterly meetings with Research Deans from faculties outside of the health field.

CIHR appreciates receiving presentations and fact sheets created by the delegates and will provide feedback on these documents in order to ensure clarity and consistency with respect to messaging.

It is important to note that CIHR has updated the Reforms section of its website. Feedback on the website is appreciated and can be sent to the University Delegates inbox.
CIHR is also in the process of undergoing a study on how effective it is in communicating with the research community. A survey will be launched next week which builds on a recent set of surveys that were conducted by some of CIHR’s institutes. The survey is meant to help CIHR better understand what communication tactics are effective. Furthermore, questions regarding the University Delegates will be included in the survey such as “do you know who your UD is?” and “are you in contact with your University Delegate?” The results of the survey will be shared with the delegates once the report is complete.

4. University Delegates Executive Committee (UDEC) membership

Jen O’Donoughue provided an update on the UDEC membership.

As discussed in previous meetings, the UD network agreed that it was time to refresh the membership of the UDEC. A call for nominations was sent to the UDs, and 5 delegates were nominated. A confidential vote will commence next week to select 3 new members. In selecting members, it is important to consider representation on the UDEC, including various perspectives, research areas, institution size, career stage, and geographical representation.

The two members who have agreed to remain on the committee are Julian Little and John Fisher. CIHR would like to thank Gerry Johnston and Joe Lam who have been a part of the committee since 2009. They have provided very valuable insight and have been key contributors to our discussions.

Adjournment

The Chair thanked everyone for their participation, and adjourned the meeting at approximately 1:20 p.m. EST.