

# Graduate Student Writing Workshop

## Peer Review of the One Page Research Proposal Scholarship Applications

Prepared by J.E. Wallace  
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It can be very challenging to summarize your entire research project in one or two pages and convince potential funders that you will be successful in carrying it out and that it deserves to be funded. In this session, we will discuss the criteria used in evaluating proposals and the group will review each others' proposals. This is your opportunity to receive immediate and objective feedback on your one page research proposal before submitting it to CIHR or SSHRC.

***Please note we will also be holding a peer review session on Thursday October 24<sup>th</sup> geared primarily towards the first years' proposals – all are welcome to attend as applicants and reviewers.***

- Important Dates and Presentation Standards (p. 2)
- Guidelines for the SSHRC Eligibility of Applications Related to Health (p. 3-4)
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## IMPORTANT DATES

**November 1:** SSHRC PhD application deadline (programs submit to FGS by November 7th)

**December 1:** All Tri-Council Master's deadline (students submit via Tri-Council Portal to FGS)

***Please note that with the harmonization of the tri-council competitions, the research proposal is now TWO pages for all competitions.***

## PRESENTATION STANDARDS

In each section of the on-line application, you will find instructions and tips on how to complete your application. You are responsible for submitting a complete application that conforms to the following presentation standards.

- Text must be single-spaced, with no more than six lines per inch.
- The acceptable font is Times New Roman (regular, minimum 12-pt.) or any comparable serif font.
- Condensed type is not acceptable.
- Set margins at a minimum of 2 cm (3/4 of an inch) all around.
- Use a left-justified, standard page layout.
- Include your name in the page header (on every page).
- For multipage attachments, number the pages sequentially.
- The maximum number of pages permitted is indicated in each section of the application. Pages in excess of the number permitted will be removed.
- If you have supporting documents written in a language other than English or French, you must provide a translation of the document in English or French.
- All attachments must be in PDF format before they can be attached to the electronic application.

Incomplete applications will be rejected. Applications that do not meet presentation standards may be rejected, or be at a disadvantage, in comparison with those that respect the presentation standards.

## **Guidelines for the SSHRC Eligibility of Applications Related to Health**

[http://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/apply-demande/background-renseignements/selecting\\_agency-choisir\\_organisme\\_subventionnaire-eng.aspx#af3](http://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/apply-demande/background-renseignements/selecting_agency-choisir_organisme_subventionnaire-eng.aspx#af3)

New guidelines regarding subject matter eligibility for health-related research came into effect in 2009. The following are considerations when preparing or assessing the eligibility of the subject matter of applications related to health:

- Investigators whose proposed research is health-related should consult CIHR's mandate **first** to explore eligibility. CIHR has policies and procedures in place to adjudicate the full range of social science and humanities research proposals related to health research. Research eligible under the mandate of [CIHR](#) will not be considered by SSHRC.
- The use of social science or humanities theories, methodologies and hypotheses is, in and of itself, not sufficient to make a proposal eligible at SSHRC.

### **Ineligible for SSHRC Support**

Social science or humanities research that is primarily intended to improve and/or increase knowledge of health (including mental health), health care and health-care systems in Canada or internationally is not eligible for support from SSHRC. Examples of ineligible research include:

- socio-economic and cultural determinants of health, including theoretical and empirical research on the social construction of health, sickness and health behaviour;
- health promotion (e.g., healthy eating, disease prevention, health and sexual education);
- education and psychology research related to health service delivery (e.g., clinical/practical competencies, supervision, curriculum development);
- health behaviour (e.g., fitness, psychomotor learning, psychophysiology and kinesiology; addictions, sexual activities, etc. as they affect health status); clinical research (e.g., treatment, prevention or diagnosis of a condition, disorder or disease; testing or evaluating the impact of interventions, medication or medical aids);
- therapy (e.g., counselling, interventions, psychotherapy, rehabilitation, speech and occupational therapy, validation/testing of diagnostic tools), including the use of
- performing/visual arts as an element of therapy;
- knowledge translation research related to health (e.g., research that informs health policy, treatment and/or services);
- health policy, management and law (e.g., care practices and service provision, training of health professionals, access to and quality of care, cost management in health care, liability of practitioners, health insurance, health record systems, evaluation of health programs and/or services);
- public health (e.g., workplace, food and water safety and security as they affect health status); and
- humanities perspectives on health, including health ethics.

### **Eligible for SSHRC Support**

Proposals may be eligible if there is no intent to directly or indirectly impact health, or if health is a subsidiary element in a study intended to increase our understanding of individuals, groups and/or societies. Eligible research may include, for example:

- comparative studies in which health is not the primary object of study;
- use of physiological methods and/or approaches to improve learning, teaching and curriculum development, or to investigate social/cultural processes and behaviors;

- historical and/or archaeological research where there is no intent to influence health (e.g., biographies of health practitioners or health scientists; health and hygiene in ancient civilizations);
- economic or management analysis unrelated to improved health or health care (e.g., the impact of the health-care industry on national or local economies; the impact of epidemics on the profitability of insurance companies);
- cinematic or other artistic portrayals of illness in which health promotion is not a central aim; or
- religious and/or cultural research related to dietary or other practices (e.g., fasting, vegetarianism), in which health is not the central focus of research.

# CIHR Peer Review Manual for Grant Applications

[http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/4656.html#s3\\_7\\_2](http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/4656.html#s3_7_2)

## 7.2 Evaluation Criteria

**The exact criteria for each funding opportunity are described in the funding opportunity details.** All applications for **Operating, Catalyst, Teams** and **Emerging Teams** grants are evaluated against the five criteria indicated below. These five criteria are further elaborated and defined by specific factors to be considered under each criterion, although it should be noted that not all factors are necessarily relevant to every grant application. The criteria are not listed in order of importance: the relative weighting of each criterion will vary depending on the objectives of the funding opportunity, as defined by CIHR. The review of the application should be structured to justify the overall rating based on the relevant criteria.

### Criterion #1: Research Approach

- Clarity of the research question.
- Completeness of the literature review and relevance to study design/research plan.
- Clarity of rationale for the research approach and methodology.
- Appropriateness of the research design.
- Appropriateness of the research methods.
- Feasibility of the research approach (including recruitment of subjects, project timeline, preliminary data where appropriate, etc.).
- Anticipation of difficulties that may be encountered in the research and plans for management.

### Criterion #2: Originality of the Proposal

- Potential for the creation of new knowledge.
- Originality of the proposed research, in terms of the hypotheses/research questions addressed, novel technology/methodology, and/or novel applications of current technology/methodology.

### Criterion #3: Applicant(s)

- Qualifications of the applicant(s), including training, experience and independence (relative to career stage).
- Experience of the applicant(s) in the proposed area of research and with the proposed methodology.
- Expertise of the applicant(s), as demonstrated by scientific productivity over the past five years (publications, books, grants held, etc.). Productivity should be considered in the context of the norms for the research area, applicant experience and total research funding of the applicant.
- Ability to successfully and appropriately disseminate research findings, as demonstrated by knowledge translation activities (publications, conference presentations, briefings, media engagements, etc.).

- Appropriateness of the team of applicants (if more than one applicant) to carry out the proposed research, in terms of complementarity of expertise and synergistic potential.

#### **Criterion #4: Environment for the Research**

- Availability and accessibility of personnel, facilities and infrastructure required to conduct the research.
- Suitability of the environment to conduct the proposed research.
- Suitability of the environment (milieu, project and mentors) for the training of personnel (if applicable).

#### **Criterion #5: Impact of the Research**

- Research proposal addresses a significant need or gap in health research and/or the health care system.
- Potential for a significant contribution to the improvement of people's health in Canada and the world and/or to the development of more effective health services and products.
- Appropriateness and adequacy of the proposed plan for knowledge dissemination and exchange.

## Canada Graduate Scholarships-Master's Program

[http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Students-Etudiants/PG-CS/CGSM-BESCM\\_eng.asp](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Students-Etudiants/PG-CS/CGSM-BESCM_eng.asp)

### Selection Criteria

The merit review of CGS M applications will be carried out by universities with an allocation, and will be based on the following evaluation criteria:

Criteria	Description	Weight
	As demonstrated by past academic results, transcripts, awards and distinctions.	
	<b>Indicators of Academic Excellence:</b>	
<b>Academic Excellence</b>	Academic record (first class average) Scholarships and awards held Duration of previous studies Type of program and courses pursued Course load Relative standing (if available)	50%
	As demonstrated by the applicant's research history, his/her interest in discovery, the proposed research, its potential contribution to the advancement of knowledge in the field, and any anticipated outcomes.	
	<b>Indicators of Research Potential:</b>	
<b>Research Potential</b>	Quality and originality of contributions to research and development Relevance of work experience and academic training to field of proposed research Significance, feasibility, and merit of proposed research Judgment and ability to think critically Ability to apply skills and knowledge Initiative, autonomy and independence Research experience and achievements relative to expectations of someone with the candidate's academic experience	30%
	As demonstrated by the applicant's past professional and relevant extracurricular interactions and collaborations.	
	<b>Indicators of Personal Characteristics and Interpersonal Skills:</b>	
<b>Personal Characteristics and Interpersonal Skills</b>	Work experience Leadership experience Project management including organizing conferences and meetings The ability or potential to communicate theoretical, technical and/or scientific concepts clearly and logically in written and oral formats Involvement in academic life Volunteerism/community outreach	20%

## INTERNAL FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES FOR GRADUATE STUDENTS

Updated October 11 2013

### TRAVEL AWARDS

Domestic graduate students and permanent residents are eligible to apply for travel funds through the Faculty of Graduate Studies. International graduate students are eligible to apply through the University Research Grants Committee.

#### Faculty of Graduate Studies Travel Awards

**Value:** up to \$1,500 overseas destination, up to \$750 North America destination

**Eligibility:** Open to students registered full-time in a graduate program at the University of Calgary who are presenting their work or research at major national and/or international conferences. Candidates must be either Canadian citizens or permanent residents and a resident of Alberta.

An individual is eligible for one award at the Master's level and one award at the PhD level.

**Deadline:** February 1, April 1, June 1, August 1, October 1, December 1.

**Additional Information and application form:**

<https://iac01.ucalgary.ca/FGSA/Public/SpecificAward.aspx?AwardID=3244>

#### University Research Grants Committee Graduate Conference Travel Awards

**Value:** up to \$1,500 overseas destination, up to \$750 North America destination

**Eligibility:** Open to students registered full-time in a graduate program at the University of Calgary who are presenting their work or research at major national and/or international conferences. Candidates must be international graduate students (those who are in Canada on a study permit). An individual is eligible for one award at the Master's level and one award at the PhD level.

**Deadline:** October 1 and March 1

**Additional Information** (refer to page 20):

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/research/system/files/URGC+Program+Information+and+Guidelines+final.doc>

**Form:** <http://www.ucalgary.ca/research/system/files/URGC+Grad+Travel+Final.docx>

#### Department of Sociology Graduate Student Travel Awards

**Value:** \$750 No more than one grant will be awarded to a student in any budget year (April 1 to March 31) and applications are assessed on a first come, first served basis, beginning April 1 of a budget year. Grants are subject to availability of funds.

**Eligibility:** Only students who are presenting a paper they have authored or co-authored or students presented a paper will be eligible for this support.

**Deadline:** A written application should be made as soon as possible after the paper has been accepted for presentation and no later than two weeks prior to the conference.

**Additional Information:** <http://soci.ucalgary.ca/graduate/funding>



## FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR STUDENT RESEARCH

### University Research Grant Committee Thesis Research Grant

**Value:** The University's Research Services Office provides Thesis Research Grants to cover student research expenses (up to \$1,000 for M.A. students and \$1,500 for Ph.D. students). Thesis/Dissertation Grants receive third priority for funding.

**Eligibility:** Thesis/Dissertation Research Grants are available to assist graduate students with *exceptional or unforeseen* costs that are essential to the conduct of their thesis/dissertation that *could not reasonably be anticipated*. The expenses must be beyond the means of the student, the laboratory, or the department, such as:

- Acquisition of special equipment or materials not available in the laboratory or department, in which the student performs their research;
- Highly specialized services which the student cannot perform; or
- Assistance with travel or field work expenses.

Applicants must be registered full-time in a research based program leading to a Master's or Doctoral degree from the University of Calgary. Graduate students applying for Thesis/Dissertation grants must have their thesis/dissertation project approved by the department.

**Deadline:** October 1 and March 1

**Additional Information** (refer to page 11):

<http://www.ucalgary.ca/research/system/files/URGC+Program+Information+and+Guidelines+final.doc>

**Form:** <http://www.ucalgary.ca/research/system/files/URGC+Thesis+Dissertation+Final.docx>

### Department of Sociology Thesis Research Grant

**Value:** The Department may supplement the URGC awards up to \$1000 for MA students and \$1500 for PhD students.

**Eligibility:** Students must have an approved thesis prospectus on file and must already have applied for and exhausted the funding available from the URGC Thesis Research Grant Program.

**Deadline:** following announcement of URGC decisions (e.g., November-December and April-May)

**Additional Information:** <http://soci.ucalgary.ca/graduate/funding>

**Form:** <http://www.ucalgary.ca/research/system/files/URGC+Thesis+Dissertation+Final.docx>

**PEER REVIEW CHECKLIST FOR PROPOSAL REVIEWS**  
**Graduate Student Writing Workshop**  
**Prepared by J.E. Wallace**  
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*Remember two key things to ask yourself in reviewing a proposal:*

1. *is the project worth doing and*
2. *is it doable?*

**The Research Question and the Proposed Study**

- ✓ Is the research question clearly presented and presented early on in the proposal?
- ✓ Is the rationale for the research approach and methodology clear?
- ✓ Are the research design and data collection approaches appropriate for answering the research question?
- ✓ Is the description of the proposed study easily understood and presented in non-technical, jargon-free language?

**Originality of the Research Question/Proposed Study**

- ✓ What is new or original about this study and why is it important?
- ✓ Does the proposed project address a significant need or gap in the literature or field of inquiry?
- ✓ How is the proposed research original (in terms of the hypotheses/research questions addressed, theoretical approach, methodology, sample/data source)?
- ✓ Is it clear how this project will yield a notable advancement or innovation in the discipline?

**Study Feasibility and Success**

- ✓ Does the applicant seem qualified in terms of their training, coursework, and experience such that they should be successful in carrying out the proposed study with the proposed methodology?
- ✓ Is the project doable within a reasonable time frame for an MA/PhD student (including recruitment of subjects, project timeline, data collection, data analysis, etc.)?
- ✓ Is the project doable with limited external funds for an MA/PhD student (e.g., does it entail equipment, travel, recruitment incentives, software, etc.) that are not covered by a CIHR or SSHRC grant?
- ✓ Are there any potential difficulties that seem likely and are they addressed in the proposal (e.g., access to subjects/recruitment, ethics approval)?