



Project Grant Competition

Part 1: Updates to the Project Grant Competition

Title

Welcome to this learning module in the Project Grant competition series: Part 1: Updates to the Project Grant competition. In this module, reviewers will learn about updates to the upcoming project grant competition to ensure they are well prepared for the peer review process.

Playbar Buttons

This course is designed to be self paced.

Use the playbar below to resume playback, navigate between slides, mute and unmute audio, and toggle closed captions. You can also browse the full table of contents, and collapse or move the playbar.

The Project Grant Program

The Project Grant program is 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 health care system."

The Project Grant Program 2

The Project Grant program is designed to capture ideas with the greatest potential for important advances in fundamental or applied health-related knowledge, the health care system, and/or health outcomes, by supporting projects with a specific purpose and a defined endpoint. The best ideas may stem from new, incremental, innovative, and/or high-risk lines of inquiry or knowledge translation approaches.

What's New

For the Spring 2024 Project Grant competition, peer review committee meetings will be held virtually. Please review the [competition-specific updates](#) and [frequently asked questions](#). There is also a [new downloadable template that meets the requirements for PDF attachments](#).

Limiting the type of attachments that are allowed

New for the Spring 2024 Project Grant competition: CIHR will be limiting the types of materials that researchers can attach to their applications. We understand the desire to round out applications with supporting materials and additional preliminary data, but we wish to underscore that all research proposals should be written in such a way that they stand alone. This means that they should contain a complete description of the project and all the information required to support the assessment of the research plan.

At the moment, there is inequality in the process and among peer review committees. Some applicants attach many supplementary documents to their applications while others do not. Some reviewers read all attachments while others do not consult them. We realize that CIHR's current policy—allowing attachments but not requiring reviewers to read them—contributes to this situation.

We recognize the enormous time commitment researchers make in preparing and reviewing applications. To ensure the equitable evaluation of proposals and based on feedback from the community, we are changing our approach to these supporting documents. Our new policy is designed to level the playing field.

Limiting the type of attachments that are allowed 2

Starting with the Spring 2024 Project Grant competition, the following attachments will no longer be accepted:

- Questionnaires, surveys, and consent forms.
- Supplementary tables, charts, figures, and photographs.
- Patient Information Sheets (for Randomized Controlled Trial applications).
- And lastly, publications.

If any of these are included, they will be removed from the application.

Limiting the type of attachments that are allowed 3

Some attachments will continue to be mandatory, such as certificates of completion for sex- and gender-based analysis training modules and letters of community support from Indigenous partners.

Others will be optional, such as letters of collaboration that outline a specific service that will be provided like access to equipment, provision of specific reagents, training in a specialized technique, statistical analysis, access to a patient population, as well as additional CV information to account for any leaves, absences, illnesses, caregiving roles, et cetera.

[Please consult the Project Grant application instructions for more information.](#)

Artificial Intelligence and Grant Review

With the rise of powerful artificial intelligence tools, peer reviewers are responsible for reading applications assigned to them, and writing fair and rigorous reviews. Our colleagues at the National Institutes of Health have recently noted that copying and pasting applications, proposals, or meeting materials into AI platforms [constitutes a breach of confidentiality](#).

Matters related to plagiarism are currently covered by the [Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research](#). Reviewers should also be familiar with the [College of Reviewer's guidelines on Review Quality](#).

The use of artificial intelligence is a rapidly evolving issue, and we are already working with our Tri-agency colleagues on how best to provide consistent guidance to the Canadian research community on this matter.

Additional Resources

The resources listed on screen will provide you with additional details to prepare you for reviewing applications in the Project Grant competition. Before concluding this module, please [complete the survey](#) to assist CIHR in tracking the uptake and improving the quality of the learning.

You may choose to exit the module and [return to the learning page](#) or continue to the next part of the Project Grant competition series, [Part 2: Overview of the Peer Review Process](#).