

Terms of Reference: FHS Internal Review Process for CIHR Project Grants

Overview

Preamble: The FHS Internal Review Process for CIHR Project Grants is a faculty-wide initiative aimed at improving success rates of CIHR applications. All FHS faculty submitting CIHR Project Grants are invited to participate in this internal review process. PIs within 10 years of their first academic appointment are expected to participate, and PIs with resubmissions that scored over 4.0 are encouraged to participate. Only those faculty members that participate in the internal review process will be eligible to be considered for bridge funding within the FHS.

1. Internal Registration: PI planning a CIHR Project Grant application will register for the FHS Internal Review Process online and identify any co-applicants. They will be asked to suggest 3 internal and/or external reviewers with expertise in the research area (external reviewers are welcome to participate remotely, some remuneration is available); PI will identify the target CIHR panel(s) & provide application keywords.

2. Pre- Registration review (Phase I): PI provides a PowerPoint presentation (10 min maximum) pitching the grant idea to reviewers; PI pre-circulates slides, which should include a grant summary, hypothesis, objectives, preliminary data, and prior reviews & rebuttal if a resubmission. FHS Admin will schedule a meeting with reviewers & PI (likely via Zoom/Teams during COVID); target timeline ~4 months before CIHR full application deadline. Applications outside this window will not be accepted due to insufficient time for meaningful feedback and change.

3. Full Application review (Phase II): PI provides a draft of the full application (proposal with figures/captions); Chair meets with reviewers without PI to discuss the grant, capture key points (e.g. SO notes), and reviewers will score the proposal; PI will then join the discussion halfway through the meeting to discuss feedback with the reviewers (likely via Zoom/Teams during COVID); target timeline ~2 months before CIHR full application deadline. Applications outside this window will not proceed.

4. FHS Admin will provide SO notes, reviewer reports, and any marked-up copies of the proposal to the PI. A copy of the SO notes and reviewer reports will also be sent to the FHS Research Office.

5. Optional Penultimate Version Review (Phase III): The PI will have the option to receive written feedback on a penultimate version of their full application (proposal with figures/captions); target timeline ~3-4 weeks in advance of CIHR deadline.

Internal Registration

Completed Online: Application Information (provided by PI)

Principal Investigator (Name/Department):

Co-Investigators (Name/Department):

Project Title:

Resubmission (Yes/No):

Target review panel:

Application keywords:

Suggested reviewer 1 (Internal/External; Name, Institution, e-mail):

Suggested reviewer 2 (Internal/External; Name, Institution, e-mail):

Suggested reviewer 3 (Internal/External; Name, Institution, e-mail):

Phase I. Pre-Registration Review Process

Project Pitch Presentation (provided by PI):

The applicant(s) are asked to provide a PowerPoint presentation to the reviewers, pitching the proposed project using scientific or technical terms and making sure to provide the following information (as applicable). Slides should be pre-circulated to reviewers:

- The clinical need and broad goal(s) of the proposed research.
- A brief overview of relevant background information and/or rationale.
- Specific research aims and hypotheses with a brief overview of the methodology that will be used to address each of the research aims.
- Current and expected supporting data prior to the CIHR deadline.
- The nature of the core expertise being brought together to address the proposed research. Information may include important collaborations, within or outside of the research community that will be accessed to achieve the outlined research goals.
- Expected outcomes of the proposed research highlighting the significance of the proposed research and how it will advance knowledge and/or its application to health care, health systems and/or health outcomes.

Phase II. Full Application Review Process

PART A: Draft application submission

PI will distill Phase I feedback into a complete CIHR Project Grant draft application package (PI will provide a revised summary, 10 page proposal including figures with legends; reference list; CCV; budget request) within four weeks of the Phase I feedback.

PART B: Review mini-panel (Chair & 3 examiners + PI)

FHS Admin will arrange an in person or remote meeting with the Chair, 3 reviewers, and PI (ideally within 2-3 weeks of receipt of the full application materials). During the first half of the meeting, the Chair and reviewers will discuss the application without the PI present. The PI will then join the meeting to discuss the reviewers' feedback and recommendations.

i) Initial Reviewer Discussion (Chair & examiners)

1. Chair will ask for initial scores from each reviewer & initial consensus score
2. Reviewer 1 will provide summary of research team, proposal, strengths, weaknesses & overall impressions
3. Reviewer 2 will provide their strengths, weaknesses & overall impressions
4. Reviewer 3 will provide their strengths, weaknesses & overall impressions
5. Chair will facilitate discussion to address any differences in opinions about the project and ask reviewers for their revised scores
6. Chair will ask for comments on the budget
7. Chair will ask if sex/gender issues are relevant & addressed in the proposal
8. FHS Admin will take notes (e.g. scientific officer (SO) notes) of the key points raised by the reviewers

ii) Feedback to the PI (Chair & examiners + PI)

1. The PI will join the second half of the mini-panel to discuss reviewer feedback and recommendations.
2. The Chair will provide the PI with an overview of mini-panel review feedback/discussion, including initial and final consensus scores
3. Individual reviewers or the Chair will share key points in their reviews with the PI
4. PI can ask for clarification of any key points that were raised
5. If warranted, the Chair may discuss strategies and recommendations for the grant application timing and future content
6. FHS Admin will secure copies of all written reviewer reports & edits/comments made on the draft grant application from each examiner and provide to the PI along with SO notes

Phase III. Penultimate Version Review (Optional)

The PI will have the option to receive feedback on a penultimate version of their application. The PI will submit the near final version to FHS Admin, who will send to the reviewers for feedback. Edits on the revised application will be sent to the PI.

Phase I. Pre-Registration Reviewer Report (completed by reviewers)

Is the health problem and rationale stated clearly?

Is the hypothesis stated clearly?

Will the aims or objectives test the hypothesis?

Is preliminary data sufficient?

Is the research approach clearly described?

Are the research methods likely to deliver results to the stated objectives?

Is the stated significance of the study plausible?

Were previous reviewer comments provided? If so, did rebuttal address key points?

Does the study seem feasible? If not, why?

Is the study likely to impact on knowledge or healthcare approaches?

What is your overall assessment of the application?

Insert text here or add attachment

Phase II. Full application review report (completed by reviewers)

PART A: Grant information

Primary Investigator:

Co-investigators:

Project Title:

CIHR Panel:

PART B: Reviewer report

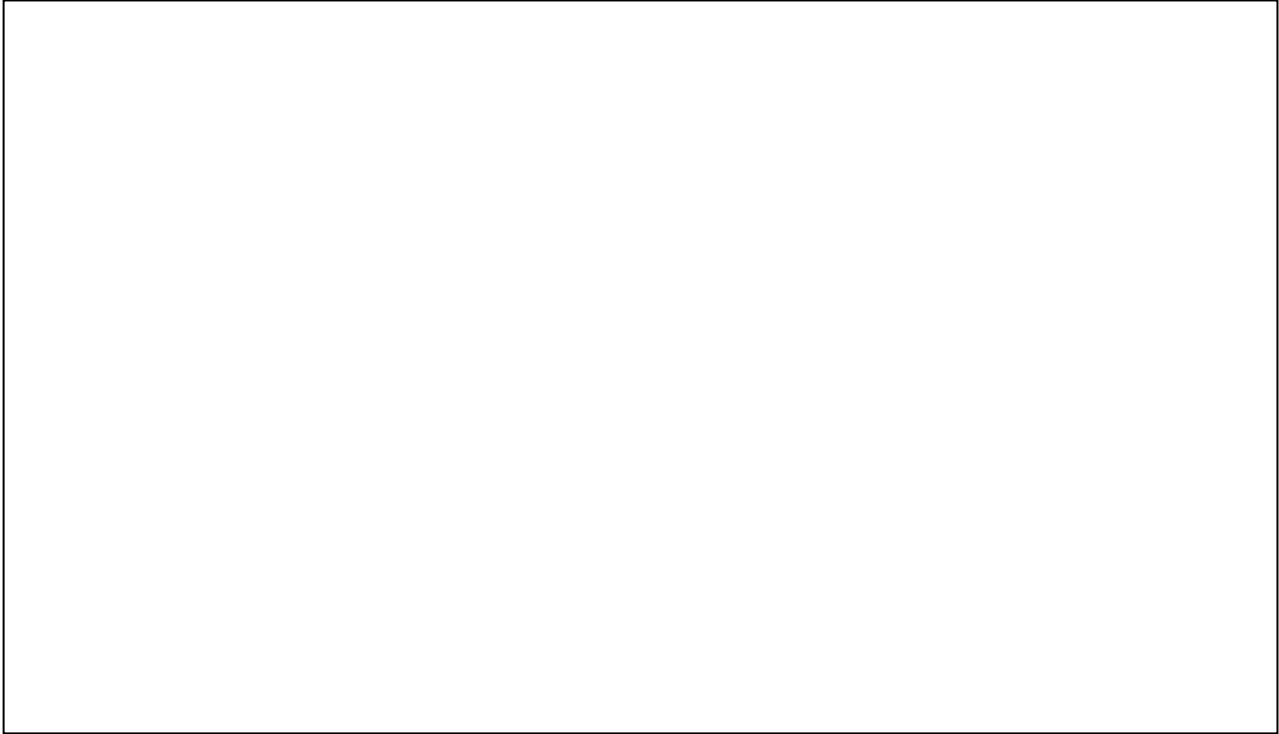
Brief summary of project and track record of PI/team:

Response to previous reviews (if applicable)

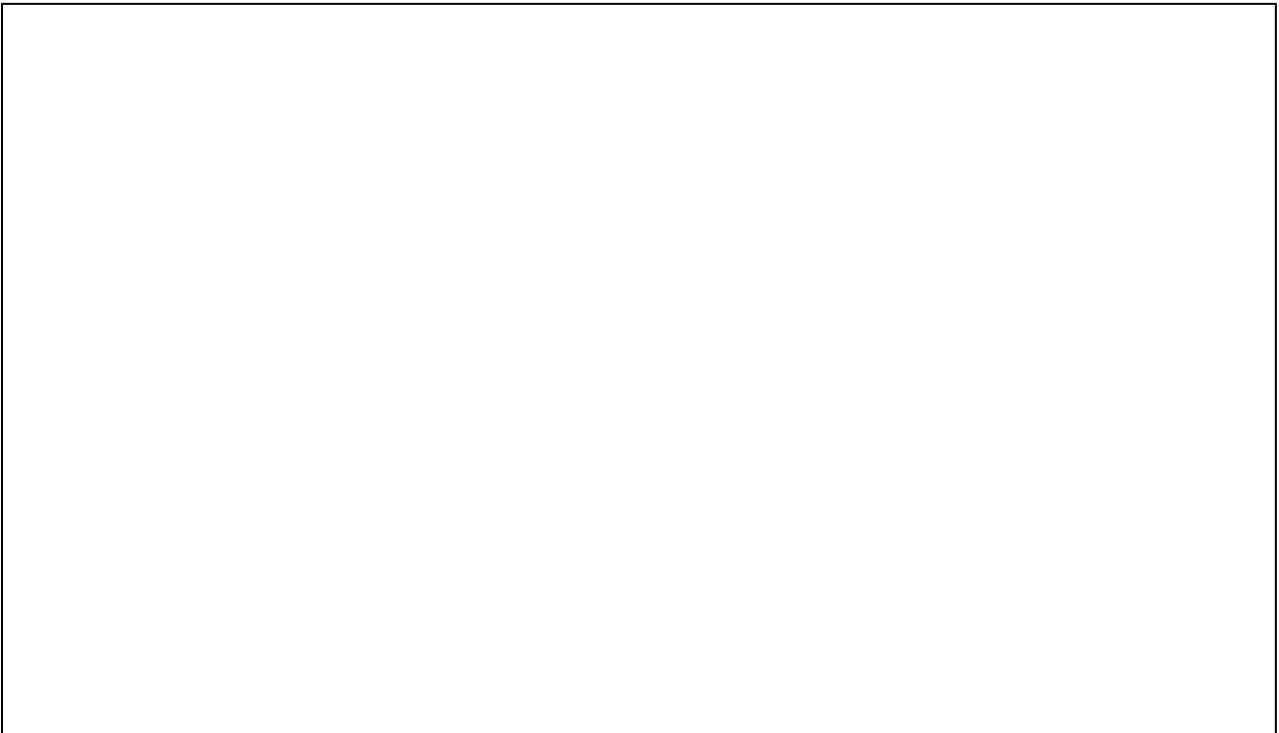
Excellent, very good, good, fair, poor, inappropriate:

Comments:

Project strengths:



Project weaknesses:



Overall impressions & specific recommendations for improvement (attach additional pages if necessary).

PART C: BUDGET

Requested Budget:

Is it justified in the application?

Are the sums requested adequate?

PART D: Sex/gender considerations

Does the proposal consider sex/gender issues sufficiently?

Comments:

PART E: Scientific Officer notes & ranking (completed by Chair & reviewers)

Please list any specific recommendations for improvement (attach additional pages if necessary).

Insert SO notes

Please rank the proposal as is and the proposal if the proposed revisions are made.

Please use the two digit CIHR rating system: 4.5 – 4.9 outstanding, 4.0 -4.4 excellent, 3.5 – 3.9 very good, 3.0 – 3.4 acceptable but low priority, 2.5 – 2.9 needs revision, 2.0 – 2.4 needs major revision, 1.0 – 1.9 seriously flawed, 0 not acceptable.

<u>Names of Reviewers</u>	<u>Rating of Proposal (As is)</u>	<u>Rating of Proposal (After suggested revisions made)</u>	<u>Signatures</u>

Name of Chair:
Date of Review:

Faculty of Health Sciences

Queen's University, Kingston, Ontario Canada K7L 3N6

PART F: Follow up with PI (Chair & examiners + PI)

Date:

Participants:

Points of clarification raised by PI?

Recommendations of the review committee?

Insert comments