SSHRC Information Session

Writing your Insight Grant proposal

SSHRC 2014 Insight Grant Competition
Overview

• Introductions
• The Insight Grant – brief introduction
• Adjudication Process – today’s speaker
• Proposal Process & Development
• Submission
• Tips & resources
• Q &A
Introductions

SSH Team – Research Services Office

- Candy Lam
  Research Funding Officer

- Sheila Van Landeghem
  Research Funding Manager
Insight Program

- build knowledge and understanding from disciplinary, interdisciplinary and/or cross-sector perspectives through support for the best researchers;
- support new approaches to research on complex and important topics, including those that transcend the capacity of any one scholar, institution or discipline;
- provide a high-quality research training experience for students;
- fund research expertise that relates to societal challenges and opportunities; and
- mobilize research knowledge, to and from academic and non-academic audiences, with the potential to lead to intellectual, cultural, social and economic influence, benefit and impact.
Insight Grant

- Up to $500,000 over 3 to 5 years
  - Maximum in any single year $200,000
  - Minimum request $7,000 in one year
  - Automatic one-year extension

- Single researcher or team
  - Applicant, co-applicant and collaborator
    - What is the difference between a co-applicant and a collaborator?
Insight Grant key features

- New Scholars
  - No separate funding envelope
  - Evaluated using same criteria and weighting as established scholars

- Evaluation criteria arranged in 3 broad categories
  - Challenge - Aim and importance of the endeavour (40%)
  - Feasibility - The plan to achieve excellence (20%)
  - Capability - The expertise to succeed (40%)
Key features, cont’d

- Priority areas
- 6 Future Challenge Areas
- Research-Creation
- Committee structure
  - 5 research groups, disciplinary committees within them
  - Thematic committees for proposals aligned with Priority Areas
- Multidisciplinary evaluation
Guest speaker

Adjudication Process

- Diane Massam
  - 2012 SSHRC Linguistics and Translation Committee Chair
  - Professor, Dept. of Linguistics
Eligibility to apply

- NOI submitted 15 August 2014
- MRA to be submitted by Wednesday October 8th
  - [https://ppm-wd.utoronto.ca/irj/portal](https://ppm-wd.utoronto.ca/irj/portal)
  - Access to MRA determined by eligibility to hold an award at UofT (Provost’s guidelines)
- Postdocs and PhD students can apply directly through SSHRC
Writing your Insight Grant proposal

- Review Guidelines for Effective Research Training
- Prepare your proposal with the Assessors and Committee in mind – follow their checklist
- Demonstrate how this new research builds upon past work
- Have your grant proposal read by colleagues who have been successful in previous competitions
- Follow the application and CV instructions
- Use the RSO Tip Sheet
Writing your Insight Grant proposal

- Convey and inspire confidence
- Present a challenging topic
- Clearly establish the need for the research
- Demonstrate its importance and originality
- Strike a balance between ambition and realism
The application form

- Webform contains data transferred from Notice of Intent: any data can be changed or overwritten

- Summary
  - All committee members will read this section

- Detailed Description
  - Objectives, Context, Methodology
  - Address the evaluation criteria
  - Use headings
  - Allocate space appropriately
Detailed Description

- Clear and precise objectives
- Clear theoretical or conceptual framework
- Define all key terms or concepts
- Provide a complete literature review
- Explain and justify methodology
- Fit between objectives / hypotheses and methodology
- Append a list of all references cited
Knowledge Mobilization, Expected Outcomes

Knowledge Mobilization Plan attachment

- Traditional and innovative, taking advantage of digital technologies
  - Can refer to teaching and curriculum development
  - Cross-discipline, -sector, international, open-access
  - Plan, time-line and goals

Expected Outcomes module

- SSHRC will revise the final research report to permit comment on these outcomes
Research Team, Previous Output, Student Training

- Justify team approach
- Describe contribution, role, value added by each team member (applicant, co-applicants, collaborators) - use percentages to indicate contribution to project and time spent
- Previous and ongoing research – note relevance to proposal; include co-applicants’ projects
- What will each student be doing, how will it complement their academic training, how will they be supervised, will they possess or develop any special skills?
Budget

- IMPORTANT: the appropriateness of the budget is now an evaluation criterion – it will count towards your overall score

- Budget and Budget Justification are about more than the funds you request
  - Management of research
  - Training of students
  - Dissemination
Budget DO’s

- Follow structure of SSHRC form
- Ensure that budget relates closely to methodology in proposal
- Explain how amounts are calculated
- Follow institutional guidelines where applicable
  - compensation: ask business officer
  - per diems: UofT ($55 in Canada, $75 international)
- Indicate that hourly compensation includes benefits and vacation pay
- Payment by stipend must be justified
  - no limit on stipend amounts: ask business officer
- Explain what each student will be doing
Budget DON’Ts

- Avoid including items that are not clearly related to the project e.g. travel for dissemination in Year One
- Don’t include ineligible items- Blackberries, phone connections
- Cell phones only allowed if needed for data collection or safety
- Do not include overhead
- Avoid math errors
- Avoid multiple trips to one destination without justification
- Avoid hiring non-students without a clear justification
CV and Research Contributions

- CV form is completed online, can be maintained and updated at any time
  - Your CV form will be captured when you click on Submit
  - Note that for co-applicants, their CV form is captured when they accept invitation – follow instructions on SSHRC site to refresh
Research Contributions

- Now an attachment to the application form
- Ensure that you follow SSHRC presentation specifications
  - Use SSHRC categories
  - Indicate SSHRC-supported contributions by *
- Last 6 years (Oct 2009 to present) – period can be lengthened if you have had a career interruption
- Explain periods of low productivity due to special circumstances
- Where co-authored, indicate student authors
Research Contributions

- Include citation figures
- Where appropriate, add text
- Do not include work not yet submitted
  - previous & ongoing research
- Most Significant Career contributions
  - Goes back before the 6-year cut-off
  - Describe impact and significance of each
Online application tips

- Text boxes - always use Preview to check that text appears correctly
- Formatting – follow SSHRC’s presentation specifications: minimum 12 pt Times New Roman, minimum ¾” margins (plain text)
- Attachments – make sure that the correct versions of each are attached in the correct place

DON’T BE DISQUALIFIED FOR NON-COMPLIANCE!
Common weaknesses

SSHRC committees: top 5 critiques
• Incomplete or out-dated literature review
• Lack of separation from previous research
• Lack of theoretical rationale
• Lack of specificity and justification in the methodology
• No link between the conceptual framework and the methodology
Tips

- Do not submit a “premature” proposal
- Invest time in the preparation of your proposal
- Ensure that there are no errors
- Present a well-written and carefully crafted proposal
How to submit

- **Wednesday October 8, 2014**
  1. Submit MRA with application attached

- **Noon, Friday, 10 October, 2014**
  1. Submit SSHRC application online

- **Note that departments may have earlier internal deadlines**
Resources

- SSHRC Insight Grant description
- SSHRC IG application instructions
- SSHRC Committee application checklist
- Review Guidelines for Effective Research Training
- UofT Tip Sheet
- Tri-Agency Financial Administration Guide
Resources

- Departmental business officer
- Department or divisional research manager
- Research Services staff

- UofT Guide to Financial Management
  http://www.finance.utoronto.ca/gtfm.htm

- Research Services website
  http://www.research.utoronto.ca/research-funding-opportunities/insight-grants/
Your questions?
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