STAR | STRENGTHENING ADMINISTRATION OF RESEARCH

2021 Workshop Series

- Welcome! Thank you for joining us. The workshop will begin shortly.
- Please check that you are on mute and your video is off.
- This workshop will be recorded.

Tri-Agency Guide on Financial Administration Review – One Year Later

May 12, 2021, 2:00 pm – 3:00 pm

Donna Walker
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Director, Agency and Foundation Funding, Research Services, VPRI

Peter Schwarz-Lam
Business Process Integration Manager, VPRI

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Land Acknowledgement

"I (we) wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and the Mississaugas of the Credit. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land."

Access Check

Access is a shared responsibility between everyone in this workshop.

- Is there anything (presenter screen, sound) that may affect your participation in this session?

- For any other general access issues, please use the Zoom chat to send a private chat message to *Alexandra Candib*

Learning Objectives

By the end of this session, you should be able to:

- Understand and apply the Tri-Agency principles and directives governing the appropriate use of grant funds

- Understand the intersection between the TAGFA and U of T institutional policies

- Navigate TAGFA-related resources available at U of T

Agenda

TAGFA at a glance

Current topics in use of grant funds

Where to find support

Resources & learning tools

TAGFA At A Glance

- The new TAGFA took effect on **April 1, 2020**

- Shifted to a **principles-based approach** governing the appropriate use of grant funds

- Shifted away from a prescriptive list of eligible and ineligible expenses due to challenge with maintaining an exhaustive list

- Provides a framework for institutions to determine eligibility of expenses **in accordance with their own policies and procedures**

TAGFA At A Glance

Is there a list available of eligible and ineligible expenses?

- No. All questions about use of grant funds are evaluated individually against the funding opportunity guidelines, TAGFA principles and directives, and institutional policies

- **Remember:** All circumstances are unique and should be evaluated on their own merits

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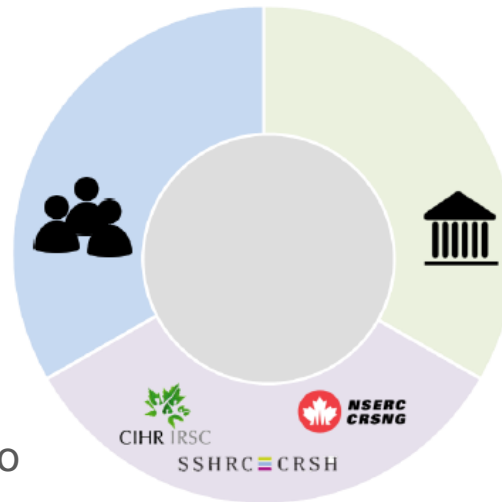
TAGFA At A Glance

Roles & Responsibilities

Grant Recipients (and Delegates)

- Provide authorization
- Manage public funds soundly; best value
- Expense ownership and justification

Agencies

- Release of payments
- Administration of guidelines and policies
- Monitoring visits; review of Form 300s
- Ensure transfer payment policy is adhered to
- Ensure terms/conditions are adhered to
- Determine eligibility status
- Administer and review Institutional Agreement

Administering Institutions

- Apply guidelines and policies
- Establish sound controls
- Respond to grant recipient queries
- Prepare annual reports to Tri-Agency
- Maintain eligibility status
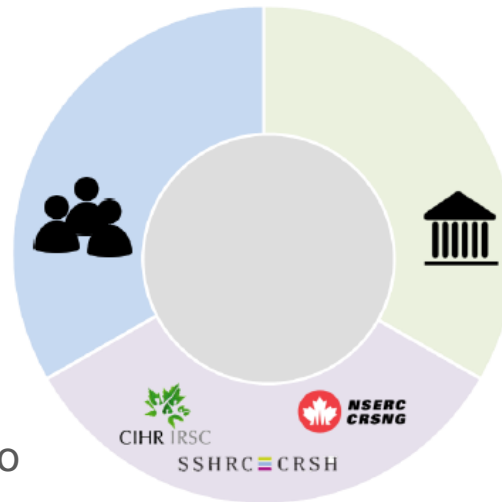- Adhere to Institutional Agreement

TAGFA At A Glance

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TAGFA At A Glance

Use of Grant Funds

Expense eligibility is determined according to these considerations:

| Program / Funding Opportunity | **Principles** on Use of Grant Funds | **Directives** on Expense Types | Institutional Policies |

TAGFA At A Glance

Program / Funding Opportunity

- Unique to the goal of the program or funding opportunity; cited specifically as eligible (or ineligible) in the funding opportunity description

- Expenses not normally considered eligible on Tri-Agency grants

- Would normally be listed on the Funded Research Digest (FReD)

TAGFA At A Glance

University of Toronto
Office of the Vice President, Research
Funded Research Digest

Principal Investigator: Jean-Luc Picard		UTRS Application: 123456	Funded Research No.: 72123456	Page: 2
Department: DEPT OF STARSHIP CAPTAINS		Fund No.: 500000	Type of Agreement: Operating Grant	
Sponsor: 303157 **CIHR - Grants**		Sponsor's Reference: CIIH-1234	Fund Period: Jan 1, 2020 to March 31, 2025	
PI Fund Center: 200000	Department Fund Center: 100000		Grant Period: Jan 1, 2020 to Dec 31, 2022	
Location of Research: St. George Campus;		Fiscal Year: Apr-Mar	Internal Order:	Cost Center: 10000
Short Title of Research: Demystifying the Prime Directive				

Eligible Expenses

Funding can be used to support Research operating costs that are directly related to the proposed collaborative research program. Eligible expenses would include:

Purchase of equipment and maintenance contracts for common services and shared facilities;
Costs of data collection, database and maintenance of information holdings directly related to the CIHR Team Grant;
Costs of regional, national and international networking activities, including collaboration, planning, and knowledge exchange activities, directly related to the CIHR Team Grant;
Salaries of research assistants, technicians and other personnel who will enhance the collaborative research productivity of the Team, professional coordinator and/or administrative assistant;
Support of research trainees;
Release time payments to enable employees of community partners to participate in the research program, limited to 50% of salary costs, and an overall maximum of $100,000 per year;
A maximum of $20,000 annually for a release time stipend for the team leader; and
Costs involved in linkage with and dissemination of research findings.

For more information on use of grant funds please see http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/22632.html#3-A10

TAGFA At A Glance

Principles on Use of Grant Funds

Grant expenditures must:

1. contribute to the **direct costs of the research/activities** for which the funds were awarded, with benefits directly attributable to the grant

2. not be **provided by the administering institution** to their research personnel

3. be **effective and economical**

4. not result in **personal gain** for members of the research team

TAGFA At A Glance

What are direct costs?

- Essential expenditures that would not have been incurred had the grant not been undertaken.

What makes an expense "effective and economical"?

- It achieves the intended outcome with due regard for minimizing cost by avoiding unnecessary expense. Does not necessarily mean the "lowest cost."

What does "provided by the administering institution" mean?

- If an administering unit normally provides a good or service, it cannot be charged to the grant.

What is personal gain?

- A benefit or advantage to a particular person, including the grant recipient and/or member of the research team, rather than to the grant-funded research/activities.

TAGFA At A Glance

Directives on Expense Types

Employment and Compensation	Goods and Services	Travel and Travel-Related Subsistence

Hospitality	Gifts, Honoraria, Incentives

TAGFA At A Glance

General Directives

- If an approver considers that the grant-related purpose for the expenditure is unclear, **a justification must be obtained** from the grant recipient

- Expense-related adjustments made to grant accounts **require documentation** (such as a journal voucher, etc.) justifying the adjustment, as well as the **grant recipient's authorization**

- All supporting documentation **must be kept for at least 7 years**

Directives: Employment & Compensation

Eligible

- ✓ Individuals employed to work on funded research/activities can be compensated from the grant funds (with exceptions; see Ineligible section *)

- ✓ International Researchers (employer must attest, by letter, that the individual is not being compensated by the employer for time spent on the grant)

- ✓ Mandated compensation benefits

- ✓ Only the portion of mandated severance pay for the <u>period the individual worked on the current grant</u>

Ineligible

- ✗ * Grant recipients or individuals who conduct research independently as part of the terms and conditions of their employment

- ✗ * Individuals expected to work on the funded research/activities free of charge

- ✗ * Individuals employed and compensated by another organization for the time spent on the funded research/activities

Directives: Goods & Services

Eligible

✓ Goods and services expenditures, in accordance with the four principles and U of T procurement policies

Ineligible

Consulting fees to:

✗ Grant recipients or individuals who conduct research independently as part of the terms and conditions of their employment

✗ Individuals expected to work on the funded research/activities free of charge

Directives: Travel & Travel-Related Subsistence

Eligible

✓ Travel and travel-related subsistence claimed in accordance with the Guide to Financial Management (GTFM)

✓ Claimed for the grant recipient and other individuals who contribute to the funded research/activities

Ineligible

✗ Alcoholic beverages

Directives: Hospitality

Eligible

Hospitality costs must be directly related to the funded research and be incurred for:

- ✓ Networking purposes provided in the context of a formal courtesy or as a form of cultural respect

- ✓ Activities in the context of assemblies or gatherings that facilitate and contribute to achieving the research objectives

- ✓ Where one or more of the individuals participating is not a member of the research team and not involved in the day-to-day funded research/activities

Ineligible

- ✗ Alcoholic beverages

- ✗ Costs incurred for interactions between participants involved in day-to-day funded research/activities

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Directives: Gifts, Honoraria, Incentives

Eligible
Gifts, honoraria and incentives can be offered to an individual/group *:
✓ when participation is voluntary
✓ as a "thank you" for a service for which fees are not traditionally paid
✓ as a token of appreciation, respect and/or goodwill
✓ when prescribed by cultural heritage/established traditions
✓ as a formal courtesy

Ineligible
Gifts, honoraria and incentives cannot be offered to:
✗ Tri-Agency grant recipients
✗ a member of the grant team

* Note: The provision of gifts and incentives to participants requires the prior approval of the appropriate Research Ethics Board.

TAGFA At A Glance

Institutional Policies

- The TAGFA relies heavily on institutional policies and processes to assess the appropriateness of expenditures

- Examples:

  o U of T Guide to Financial Management (GTFM)

  o U of T Governing Council Policies

  o Other: HR & Equity Policies, AAPM, SGS Policies, etc.

Current Topics in Use of Grant Funds

Travel During COVID-19

- Government-mandated self-isolation and related costs for essential travel are potentially* eligible as an incremental cost

- Non-refundable travel fees due to impacts of COVID-19 (e.g. conference cancellation) and cancellation insurance are potentially* reimbursable

    * *Purpose & method of travel must adhere to TAGFA principles and directives, and U of T policies*

    * *Documentation and appropriate justification must be kept on file*

Current Topics in Use of Grant Funds

General Travel Considerations

- All travel must adhere to policies and guidelines outlined in the **GTFM**

- Key policies and guidelines include:

    o Approvals and documentation requirements

    o Class of service for air and rail

    o Personal travel combined with business travel

    o Accommodation and meals, insurance, etc.

Current Topics in Use of Grant Funds

Dependant Care and Related Expenses

- Effective May 1, 2021, dependant care (formerly "child care") guidelines in GTFM have been revised to provide greater detail and clarity around reimbursement in accordance with EDI principles

- Two mechanisms for reimbursement: Actual costs, or per diem allowance

- Additional guidance/direction on documentation, approvals, etc.

- To be eligible on a Tri-Agency grant, expenses must adhere to the principles and directives on use of grant funds in addition to GTFM dependant care policy

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Current Topics in Use of Grant Funds

Dependant Care and Related Expenses

Updates and Changes to the Guide to Financial Management

May 1, 2021 [Ref. 2021-1]:

Travel and Other Reimbursable Expenses – Policies and Guidelines

Dependant Care and related expenses

Effective May 1, 2021, the Travel and Other Reimbursable Expenses section has been updated with the revised Dependant Care and related expense guideline (formerly Child care and related expenses). See Travel and Other Reimbursable Expenses – Policies and Guidelines under Allowable Miscellaneous Business Related Items (#10). The memo issued to academic administrators on April 22, 2021 can be found here.

https://finance.utoronto.ca/policies/gtfm/travel-and-other-reimbursable-expenses/travel-and-other-reimbursable-expenses-policies-and-guidelines/#MiscBusRelatedItems

Current Topics in Use of Grant Funds

Home Office (Furniture/Equipment) Expenses

- **Not** an appropriate use of Tri-Agency grant funds in almost all instances; expenses generally do not contribute to the direct cost of research for which funds were awarded

- PIs should consult their department/division about potential alternative funding sources to claim reimbursement for certain home office expenses

Current Topics in Use of Grant Funds

Home Internet Expenses

- **Not** an appropriate use of Tri-Agency grant funds in almost all instances; expenses generally do not contribute to the direct cost of research for which funds were awarded

- **Not** a reimbursable expense under other U of T funding sources in almost all instances; expenses generally do not relate exclusively to University business activity

Participant Poll 3:

Where to Find Support

- **Funding/Partnership staff in the VPRI** are your first point-of-contact for questions related to Tri-Agency grant funding

- Depending on the question, VPRI may redirect your question to Financial Advisory Services and Training (FAST) Team, HR & Equity, or other U of T policy owners

- PIs and divisional staff are encouraged **not** to contact Agency staff directly, since Tri-Agency will refer you back to VPRI

Where to Find Support

Resources & Learning Tools

Tri-Agency Resources

- Tri-Agency Guide on Financial Administration
- Frequently Asked Questions
- Roles and Responsibilities

VPRI Resources

- VPRI – TAGFA Renewal website
  - Training Tools
  - Frequently Asked Questions
- U of T TAGFA Companion

General U of T Resources

- Guide to Financial Management (GTFM)
- Expense Reimbursement Checklist - Template
- FAST Team website

Resources & Learning Tools

Resources & Learning Tools

FAQs

Last updated Monday April 23, 2021 at 10:45 AM EDT

1. Who should I contact with questions about expense eligibility on my Tri-Agency grant? +

2. Will expenses that were eligible under the old Tri-Agency Guide continue to be eligible under the new Guide? +

3. Are non-refundable travel fees reimbursable from Tri-Agency funds due to the impacts of COVID-19? +

4. Is home internet an eligible expense on my Tri-Agency grant? +

5. During COVID-19, is home office furniture/equipment related to remote work an eligible expense on my Tri-Agency grant? +

6. During COVID-19, are protective masks an eligible expense on my Tri-Agency grant? +

7. Are dependant care

Resources & Learning Tools

Division of the Vice-President, Research & Innovation

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Tri-Agency Guide on
Financial Administration (TAGFA)

Companion

Revised July 2, 2020

ABOUT THIS COMPANION

This Companion is intended as a ready reference for the new Tri-Agency Guide on Financial Administration (TAGFA) that came into effect at the University of Toronto (U of T) on **April 1, 2020**.

This document summarizes the key sections of the TAGFA and integrates the content of the TAGFA with applicable U of T policies, guidelines, and resources. The Companion is intended to be used by all members of the U of T research community who apply for, hold, manage or administer Tri-Agency grants and awards.

Please note: This Companion is a reference to, not a replacement of, the TAGFA, Tri-Agency program/funding opportunity literature, Tri-Agency agreements and policies, and U of T policies and guidelines which take precedence over this Companion.

Tri-Agency Resources
- **Tri-Agency Guide on Financial Administration**
- **Frequently Asked Questions**
- **Roles & Responsibilities**

Question & Answer

Still Have Questions?

Contact Us:
- https://research.utoronto.ca/contact-us

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Feedback, please!

2021 STAR Workshop Series: Next Events

Tri-Agency Guide on Financial Administration: Apply Your Knowledge to Real World Scenarios	Thurs. May 13, 10:00 - 11:00 am
Canada Foundation for Innovation Workshop: Fair Market Value *(Invitation only)*	Wed. May 26, 10:00 - 11:30 am
My Research Applications and Agreements (MRA) Renewal Initiative: Updates	Mon. June 28, 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

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Thank you for participating!

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