SSHRC 2020 INSIGHT GRANT

Agenda

- Insight Grant overview and UT stats
- Eligibility
- Budget
- General Tips
- Resources
- Submission / Deadlines

Insight Grant in brief

- Most flexible SSHRC funding opportunity: short or long-term for any subject under SSHRC's mandate
- $7,000 to $400,000 over 2, 3, 4 or 5 years, maximum annual budget of $100,000

- **Applicants/Co-Applicants/Collaborators**
  - Applicants can be emerging or established scholars
  - Applicants and Co-applicants: main affiliation with Canadian postsecondary institution (int'l co-applicants not allowed)
    - Collaborators do not need this main affiliation

- **Evaluation:**
  - Challenge 40% (relevance, originality, theoretical framework, methodology, lit review, training, impact)
  - Feasibility 20% (budget, timeline, expertise of applicant/team, KM plan)
  - Capability 40% (past experience in research, KM, training & mentoring, impact on professional practices and policies)

Insight Grant in brief cont'd

	2017		2018		2019	
	UofT	national	UofT	national	UofT	national
Number of Eligible Applications	160 (of 161)	1536	137 (of 140)	1365	141 (of 141)	1425
Number of Awards	88	727	78	619	78	580
Success Rate	55.00%	47.30%	56.90%	45.30%	55.30%	40.70%
Total Amount Requested	$24,027,880	$260,881,224	$22,034,828	$240,476,585	$24,491,355	$263,695,102
Total Amount Awarded	$10,937,733	$101,663,040	$9,851,208	$89,677,557	$11,924,780	$91,683,104
Average Request	$150,174	$169,845	$160,838	$176,173	$173,698	$185,049
Average Grant	$124,292	$139,839	$126,298	$144,875	$152,882	$158,074

Insight Grant in brief cont'd

- Funding streams
  - A: $7,000 - $100,000
  - B: $100,001 - $400,000*

  *2017 competition:
    83 stream A applications, 49 successful (59%)
    77 stream B applications, 39 successful (50%)
   2018 competition:
    69 stream A applications, 44 successful (64%)
    71 stream B applications, 34 successful (48%)
  2019 Competition
    70 stream A applications, 39 successful (56%)
    71 stream B applications, 39 successful (55%)

IG	IDG
Potentially large-scale initiatives that are more aligned with past research contributions	Short term projects, early stage research, clearly delimited
Challenge = 40%, Feasibility = 20%, Capability = 40%	Challenge = 50%, Feasibility = 20%, Capability = 30%
2-5 years, $7000 - $400,000	1-2 years, $7000 - $75,000
Int'l co-applicants not allowed	Int'l co-applicants allowed
No reserved funding envelope for Emerging or Established scholars, but Stream A has higher targeted success rate.	50% of funding envelope reserved for Emerging scholars
Applications assessed by both SSHRC IG adjudication committee members and external assessors	Single-stage IDG adjudication committee review (no external assessors)
CV requirement for IG application: SSHRC CV (as part of the SSHRC application site)	CV requirement for IDG application: Canadian Common CV

Eligibility

- Eligibility to be the Applicant (SSHRC) – must have a formal affiliation with SSHRC-eligible Canadian postsecondary institution (primary affiliation cannot be with a non-Canadian postsecondary institution)
- Eligibility to be PI (UofT)
  - Faculty
    - My Research Applications (MRA)
    - Access to MRA for Status Only or Retired/Emeritus
    - Exceptional cases (Teaching Stream, Librarians 3 or 4)

  - Postdoctoral fellows and PhD candidates in final year
    - Apply directly to SSHRC (see "Administering Organization" section of IG application instructions for more)
    - Must hold appropriate affiliation within 5 months of the start date of the grant (i.e., by Sept. 1, 2021)

- Co-applicant – same eligibility rules as the Applicant
- Collaborator – no required affiliation

Eligibility cont'd

- If you applied (as main applicant) for the 2020 IDG and were *unsuccessful*, then you may apply for the 2020 IG (but not if your 2020 IDG was successful).
- If you apply for the IG in Oct 2020, then you can also apply for IDG in Feb 2021, but objectives must be significantly different.
- Current IG holders: Can submit if you currently hold an IG award, but only if in final year (that is, the year prior to the final automatic extension year)

Eligibility cont'd

- Subject matter
  - Health-related – check guidelines, program staff
  - Projects whose primary objective is curriculum development, preparation of teaching materials, organization of a conference or workshop, digitization of a collection, or creation of a database are not eligible for funding
- Committee
- Indigenous Research
- Research-Creation

- Joint initiatives
  - Sport Participation Research Initiative (SPRI)
  - Department of National Defence (DNDRI)
  - Initiative for Digital Citizen Research

Impacts of COVID-19

IG application instructions (https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/instructions/index-eng.aspx?fid=ig_instr) describe where one may (if appropriate) speak to the possible impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the proposed research project, and also on how the pandemic has had an effect on the applicant's previous or current research activities.

SSHRC notes that this is not a mandatory part of the application.

Impacts of COVID-19

1. In the "Detailed Description" document

From the IG instructions: "Contingency plans related to the potential impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on your research project may be described in this section, if appropriate. This is not mandatory, but it may assist the merit review committee in assessing the feasibility of your proposal if your research plans are significantly disrupted, e.g., if international travel is not possible."

2. In the "Career Interruptions and Special Circumstances" section of the "Research Contributions" document

Again from the IG instructions: "Career interruptions occur when researchers are taken away from their research work for an extended period of time for health, administrative, family or other reasons, or reasons related to the COVID-19 pandemic. In these cases . . . explain the interruption(s) and ask that an overall total of six years of research activity be considered by the adjudicating committee.

Special circumstances involve slowdowns in research productivity created by health (and/or disability-related), administrative, family, cultural or community responsibilities, socio-economic context, COVID-19 or other reasons (i.e., the researcher was not completely taken away from research work).

Impacts of COVID-19

So not a mandatory part of the 2020 IG application, but…

A recent message from a SSHRC Senior Program Officer:

"Given the current COVID-19 situation, I suspect a committee will likely be looking critically at whether what is being proposed is feasible within the current context and whether any ongoing research remains incomplete."

…so referring to the pandemic within the context of either contingency plans for your proposed IG project or career interruptions or slowdowns in research should be considered if appropriate for your proposal.

Budget

- Minimum essential funding
  - Committee may recommend cuts if budget is deemed insufficiently justified or not appropriate
  - at 30% may fail on Feasibility
  - at 50% must fail on Feasibility

    ➢ know the typical budgets in your field, unrealistically high or low budgets will lower score
    ➢ justify all costs (HOW and WHY)
    ➢ be consistent with proposal description
    ➢ budget for any one year cannot exceed $100,000
    ➢ do not include ineligible expenses
       ➢ e.g. remuneration & travel for guest speakers and presenters, overhead, payments to Applicant/Co-Apps/Collabs.
       ➢ Upon initial review, if 30% or more of budget is ineligible, then application will not reach committee
       ➢ Research expenses for collaborators
    ➢ avoid red flags!

Budget cont'd

3 questions that should be answered for each item in one's budget:

How much? How did you calculate this cost? Why is this expense essential?

The budget is split into two sections:

1. **Funds requested from SSHRC (i.e., the budget table)**
- This section is just for the numbers (i.e., How much?)
- The budget for any one year cannot exceed $100,000

2. **Budget Justification document (max 2 pages)**
- Should be organized by budget category (i.e., categories listed in the "Funds requested from SSHRC" budget table)
- Show HOW an expense was calculated and WHY it's necessary for the project
    - HOW: Don't make the reviewers do math, indicate how the # was calculated
    - WHY: link justification to your methodology – account for every dollar, justifications should align with the project description and other parts of application

Budget cont'd

Personnel costs
- Undergrad, masters and doctoral students: ask your business officer for rates of pay, indicate that hourly rates include benefits and vacation pay
- Explain tasks students will do and why that level is needed (essential presence of students for successful completion of project)
- Stipends may be used for grad students – justify
- Costs of research assistants or associates who are not students must be fully justified in terms of the needs of the research

Budget cont'd

Personnel costs cont'd

- Postdocs: must be justified
  - If a postdoc is a co-applicant or collaborator, they cannot be paid from the grant, and they would have to establish a formal affiliation to remain as a co-applicant on the grant if the proposal is successful
  - Duration of engagement of PDFs is dictated by UofT institutional policy (no longer by the Tri-Agency). Please see the UofT SGS website and the official UofT Governing Council guidelines
- Technical services or consultants: eligible only if you can demonstrate that expert advice is needed and contribute directly to the proposed research. Consulting fees cannot be paid to anyone whose status would make them eligible to apply for a SSHRC grant.

Budget cont'd

Travel costs
- The budget table has one section for "Travel and subsistence costs", but instructions ask that you use separate sections in the "Budget Justification" document to distinguish between travel for research vs travel for communication purposes (e.g., conference travel)
- Use [institutional per diems](new as of Jan 2020: $80 domestic, $100 international)
- Use economy airline rates
- Justify multiple visits to one destination
- For conference travel: give dates if known, briefly justify why that particular conference
- If for student travel: explain benefits to students, relate to your Student Training section

Budget cont'd

- Tools
  - Between $7,000 and $100,000 for expenses related to development of a tool that is not "routine" and "typical" such as a survey or questionnaire
  - https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/policies-politiques/support_tools_soutien_outils-eng.aspx

- Costs of holding a workshop or seminar, the activities of which relate directly to the funded research
  - ➢ no conference organization

Budget cont'd

- Open Access costs? Try to be specific (no blanket costs)
- Tri-Agency Open Access Policy on Publications
  - For SSHRC, applies to peer-reviewed journal publications
  - http://www.science.gc.ca/default.asp?lang=En&n=F6765465-1
  - ➢ https://onesearch.library.utoronto.ca/copyright/funding-policy-cihr-nserc-and-sshrc

- Data Management
  - Address collection, preservation and sharing of data
  - http://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/about-au_sujet/policies-politiques/statements-enonces/edata-donnees_electroniques-eng.aspx
  - ➢ https://onesearch.library.utoronto.ca/researchdata

Budget Tips

Budget *Do's*

- Budget should strongly relate to methodology in proposal
- Explain HOW amounts are calculated and WHY they are necessary
  - Follow institutional guidelines for student compensation (BO) and per diems ($80 domestic, $100 international)
  - Indicate hourly compensation (includes benefits and vacation pay)
  - Explain tasks students will do and why that level (undergraduate, Masters, PhD or postdoc) is appropriate
  - Justify use of stipends
- Budget justification should mesh with other application sections (Detailed Description, Student Training & KM plan)

Budget Tips

Budget *Don'ts*

- Don't include ineligible items – see the updated Tri-Agency guide: https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/InterAgency-Interorganismes/TAFA-AFTO/guide-guide_eng.asp
  - ➢ Only direct costs for the research being proposed - No overhead or general administrative costs
  - ➢ No compensation-based costs for Research Team members (Applicant, Co-Applicants, Collaborators)
  - ➢ No costs for conference organization or travel/remuneration for presenters or guest speakers (but workshops are eligible if related to project objectives)
  - ➢ Primary project objective cannot be curriculum development, preparation of teaching materials, organization of a conference or workshop, digitization of a collection, or creation of a database
  - ➢ No research expenses for Collaborators (but travel and subsistence related expenses for KM events or research team meetings are fine)
- Don't pad or inflate costs
- Avoid:
  - Math errors
  - Multiple trips to one destination without justification
  - Hiring non-students without a clear justification
  - "Premature" expenses that could be a red flag (e.g., dissemination costs in Year 1 without proper justification)

Writing your proposal

- Demonstrate how this new research builds upon past work
- Follow all instructions (e.g., headings for "Detailed Description" section)
- Attachments: comply with formatting specs and ensure correct version is attached (don't be disqualified for omitting mandatory section)
- Read guidelines on [student training](#), [Knowledge Mobilization](#)
- Text boxes: use preview to ensure text is visible/legible
- Have proposal read by colleagues
- Avoid typos and math errors – proof and polish!
- **Have co-applicants complete CV and "Research Contributions" doc as early as possible**
- Suggested Reviewers section: don't drain the pool, offer direction
- Write with committee/assessors in mind: address evaluation criteria thoroughly
- **Write for a multi-disciplinary committee (i.e, Academic audience/peers, but not necessarily specialists in your field)**
  - **Define all terms, do not assume anything is obvious**

Adjudication Committee

Past IG Literature adjudication committee – example of diverse research interests

Chair: Literary and cultural history of the long 18th century in Britain, narrative studies, gender and sexuality theory

Member 1: Victorian literature and culture, the history of media and technology, sound studies, contemporary American poetry, and Canadian poetry

Member 2: 19th century literature, Literature and Anthropology, French literature

Member 3: Old English, Middle English, Renaissance Literature, History of the Book

Member 4: AI/Robotics and literature, Modern/Postmodern novel

Member 5: 19th and 20th century French literature, Gender and Sexuality Studies, Québec and francophone literatures

Member 6: Romanticism, 18th and 19th century literature and visual culture, history of museums and collections

Adjudication Committee

Past IG Multidisciplinary or interdisciplinary social sciences adjudication committee – example of diverse research interests

Chair: language variation and change, linguistic heterogeneity, varieties of English

Member 1: social and political implications of new media, global communications, media and crime, and Arab media and politics

Member 2: attention and memory, auditory and visual perception, psychology and sport

Member 3: intellectual property, health law, and bioethics

Member 4: surveillance studies, smart cities and ubiquitous computing, urban studies, literature and film

Member 5: resilience and psychosocial stressors, family caregiving for persons with Dementia or recovering from stroke, disaster response and high risk populations

Member 6: Canadian and American foreign policy, Latin American and Caribbean politics with an emphasis on Cuba, and international relations

Tips from previous committee members:

- Provide sufficient detail to allow _informed_ assessment by committee members
- Coherence: connect overall goals of new or continuing projects with past/ongoing research
- Be explicit as to whether or not the research is new, emerging, or a continuation
- Take time to address/define your outcomes (traditional/activities/community partnerships)
- 'Educate' the committee - persuasive in demonstrating a range of research goals and objectives
- Have your grant proposal read by colleagues who have been successful in previous competitions
- Present a challenging topic (originality)- but novelty alone not enough, why important?
- Convey and inspire confidence
- Clearly establish the need for the research and funds (importance)
- Strike a balance between ambition and realism
- If emerging discuss why you can do it
- Plan, organize and monitor your project well
- Methodology (specific in describing data, resources and procedures: who, what, where, how?)

UofT Resources

Department/Division
- Business officer (compensation, travel, supplies costs)
- Grant writing support (peer review, archived applications, internal deadlines)
- Research Manager

Guide to Financial Management: http://www.finance.utoronto.ca/gtfm.htm
- UofT travel policies and per diems

UofT Centre for Research & Innovation Support (CRIS) : https://cris.utoronto.ca/
- Central Research & Innovation hub (partnership between VPRI, UTL and ITS)

UofT Libraries
http://onesearch.library.utoronto.ca/triagencyopenaccesspolicy
- Advice on compliance with Open Access Policy, publication
https://onesearch.library.utoronto.ca/researchdata
- Advice on data management, DMPs
https://utsc.library.utoronto.ca/librarians
- List of UTSC Library Liaisons to assist with OA pubs and DMPs
https://library.utm.utoronto.ca/scholarly-communications
- UTM library info for help with OA pubs and DMPs

UofT Resources

Research Services Office

- Website: https://research.utoronto.ca/funding-opportunities/db/insight-grants
- Tip-sheet at the above website
- Research Services SSHRC team
  - Sarah Scott, Research Funding Manager (sja.scott@utoronto.ca)
  - Mark Bold, Research Funding Officer (mark.bold@utoronto.ca) – main RSO contact for IG

MRA

- Login: http://aws.utoronto.ca/services/my-research-mr/
- Technical help and access: raise@utoronto.ca or 416-946-5000
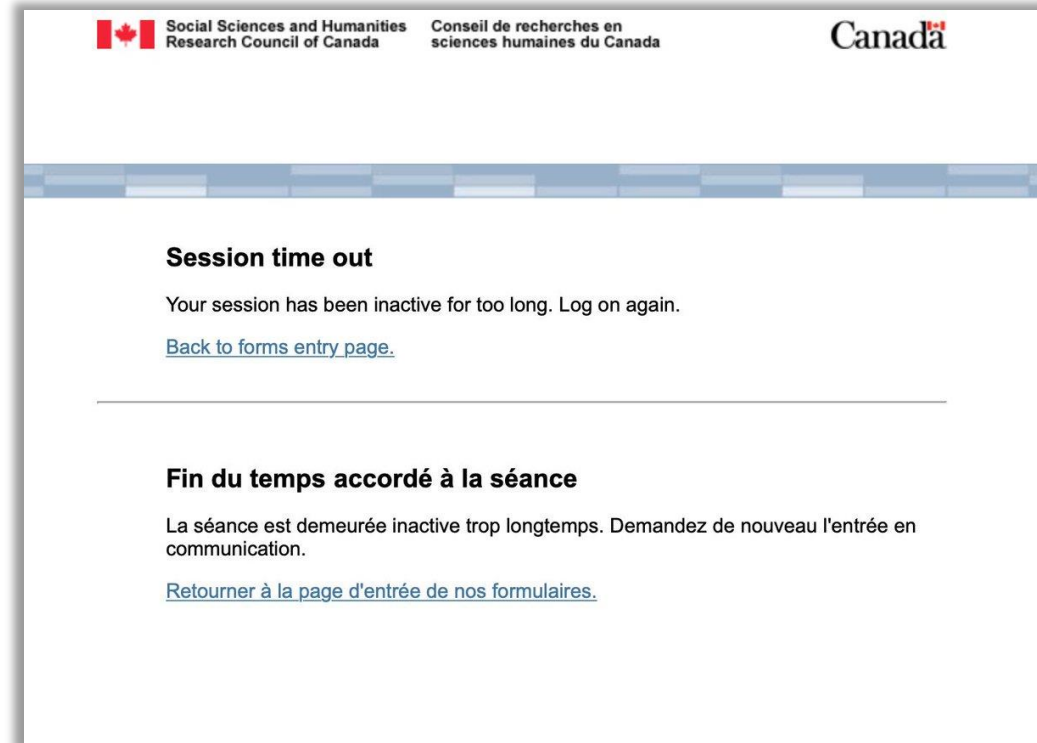
SSHRC Resources

- Funding opportunity description, link to application and application instructions
  http://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/programs-programmes/insight_grants-subventions_savoir-eng.aspx

- Tri-Agency Guide on Financial Management
  https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/InterAgency-Interorganismes/TAFA-AFTO/guide-guide_eng.asp

- SSHRC program staff (funding opportunity questions)
  insightgrants@sshrc-crsh.gc.ca or 613-996-6976

- Technical support for Application Form and CV
  webgrant@sshrc-crsh.gc.ca or 613-995-4273

Submitting your application/Deadlines

- Complete a My Research Applications (MRA) record
  - http://aws.utoronto.ca/services/my-research-mr/
  - Upload draft proposal, firm budget amount
  - Due at Research Services by **9 am on Wednesday, Sept 23, 2020**
  - ➢ Check with your department for their internal deadline

- Submit SSHRC application online
  - https://webapps.nserc.ca/SSHRC/faces/logon.jsp?lang=en_CA
  - Internal deadline for online submission through SSHRC website is **9 am on Monday, Sept 28, 2020**

Remember the Oct 2019 IG deadline?

- SSHRC's final deadline was Tuesday, Oct 15, but UofT internal deadline for applications to be submitted to SSHRC site was Thursday, Oct 10
- No issues if application was submitted by UofT internal deadline
- For those that tried to submit Oct 14 or 15: *days* of timeouts, delays, multiple extensions from SSHRC, anxiety, and wasted hours

KEEP CALM

AND

JUSTIFY EVERYTHING