

# SSHRC Information Session

## Writing your Insight Grant proposal

SSHRC 2013 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

- Sheila Van Landeghem  
Research Funding Manager
- Jenny Korolik  
Research Funding Administrator

# 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
  - Aboriginal Research
  - Canadian Environmental Issues
  - Digital Economy
  - Innovation, Leadership and Prosperity
  - Northern Communities: Towards Social & Economic Prosperity
- Research-Creation
- Committee structure
  - 5 research groups, disciplinary committees within them
  - Thematic committees for proposals aligned with Priority Areas
- Multidisciplinary evaluation

# Adjudication Process

## 5 Research Groups

Sub committees focused on specific disciplines

Committee members know the discipline

## Thematic Committees

Review proposals with alignment to Priority Areas or  
Multidisciplinary focus

Committee membership more broadly based

## Proposals reviewers

Members of the Insight Grants adjudication committees

External reviewers

# Eligibility to apply

- LOI submitted 15 August 2013
- MRA to be submitted by Wednesday October 9<sup>th</sup>
  - <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

- 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, curriculum and pedagogy 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 refereed contributions by R in margin
  - Indicate SSHRC-supported contributions by \*
- Last 6 years (Oct 2007 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 3/4” margins
- 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 4 critiques

- Incomplete or out-dated literature review
- 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

- **Noon, Friday, 11 October, 2013**
  1. Submit SSHRC application online
- **Note that departments may have earlier internal deadlines**

# Resources

- **SSHRC Insight Grant description**

[http://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/programs-programmes/insight\\_grants-subventions\\_savoir-eng.aspx](http://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/programs-programmes/insight_grants-subventions_savoir-eng.aspx)

- **SSHRC IG application instructions**

- **SSHRC Committee application checklist**

- **UofT Tips Document**

- **Tri-Agency Financial Administration Guide**

[http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/FinancialAdminGuide-GuideAdminFinancier/index\\_eng.asp](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/FinancialAdminGuide-GuideAdminFinancier/index_eng.asp)

# 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?

# RSO Contacts

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# 2011 IG success rate

Award duration	Number of applications	Number of awards	Average award (\$)	Median award (\$)
3 year	925 (national) 69 (UofT)	217 22	\$126,652 \$141,840	\$107,253 \$120,603
4 year	351 (national) 37 (UofT)	103 11	\$170,352 \$129,610	\$148,595 \$101,250*
5 year	523 (national) 54 (UofT)	166 30	\$235,459 \$174,506	\$207,796 \$145,594