Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

The Government of Canada, and the Vanier-Banting Secretariat, are committed to ensuring that all trainees have equitable access to research funding and career support. Equity is an integral part of a sustainable research ecosystem as it encourages greater diversity among applicants. Studies show that diversity—of not only scientific expertise but also the people conducting and participating in the research—leads to more creativity and more innovation.

All reviewers must reinforce standards of rigor, fairness, respect and equity, diversity and inclusion throughout the peer review process and when assessing applications should:

- keep in mind that excellence remains the principal criteria but excellence should not be limited to its narrow and traditional sense and reviewers should ensure that non-traditional career paths and metrics of research (e.g., leadership, applied research, etc.) are taken into account;
- be aware of the potential for systemic bias in the assessment of "quality" (for example, focusing only on journals ranked in traditional fields may disadvantage scholars in interdisciplinary or emerging fields who are more likely to be from under-represented groups, and therefore reviewers should focus on the quality of a publication's content and not limit their assessments to the number of publications; the quality of journals; or the impact of journals);
- carefully consider "career interruptions and personal circumstances" as a legitimate explanation for delays in research productivity;
- recognize that all individuals carry assumptions and stereotypes about gender and should avoid unconscious bias when assessing the merit of a nomination;
- ensure that they fairly assess the quality of training for internationally educated scholars rather than favoring graduates of domestic institutions who are part of existing networks;

Applicants are thus encouraged to discuss their productivity in terms of research/leadership opportunities that were available to them in the Special Circumstances attachment of their application.

To better equip all those participating in the Banting competition (applicants, host institutions, referees, reviewers and readers), the Tri-Agencies have curated an important list of resources to help guide each group.

- For Applicants
- For Host Institutions
- For Referees
- For Reviewers and Readers

Promoting equity, diversity and inclusion in research

Sex and Gender Based Analysis Plus (SGBA+) is the process by which we ensure sound equity, diversity and inclusion principles are applied to research design, methods, analysis and interpretation, and/or dissemination of research findings. In the context of research, SGBA+ is an analytical process used to systematically examine how differences in identity factors, such as sex, gender, race, ethnicity, religion, age and mental or physical disability, affect the

outcomes of research and the impacts of research findings. The purpose is to promote rigorous research that considers identity factors so that the results are impactful and relevant to the diversity of the population. Applicants must provide a strong rationale if they believe that no aspect of the proposed research's design, methods, analysis and interpretation, and/or dissemination of findings should take SGBA+ into consideration.

Applicants are strongly encouraged to take the Status of Women Canada's online Introduction to Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) course.

There is an increasing number of cited research examples that would have or have benefited from considering identity factors in the research design and process. A good source for such examples is CIHR's "Impacts of integrating sex and gender in research" and the Stanford University Gendered Innovations project. These materials provide practical examples and methods for sex and gender considerations, in addition to other factors or variables that should be considered, such as biological, socio-cultural or psychological aspects of users, communities, customers, experimental subjects or cells. Research has demonstrated how not taking into consideration certain identity factors, such as race or age, can lead to failed research projects.

Resources

- CIHR – Sex, Gender and Health Research
  - This guide was developed specifically for CIHR programs, but it includes useful definitions and considerations for all research areas.
- Status of Women Canada – What is GBA+? ; GBA+ course
- NSERC's Guide for Applicants: Considering equity, diversity and inclusion in your application [PDF (223 KB) - external link]
  - This guide was developed specifically for NSERC programs, but it includes useful definitions and considerations for all research areas.
- Stanford University Gendered Innovations project
- Further reading includes:
  - CIHR's Equity Strategy, including Gender Equity Data Analyses

Research respectfully involving and engaging Indigenous communities

- Tri-Council Policy Statement (TCPS 2), Chapter 9: Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples of Canada
  - The Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships (PDF) program is committed to supporting research by and with Indigenous Peoples. For applications in which the proposed research respectfully involves and engages Indigenous communities, applicants and host institutions should be aware of and refer to the principles and protocols established for this type of research, such as following the Principles of OCAP® (i.e., ownership, control, access and possession/protection), the CARE Principles for Indigenous Data Governance, and/or other principles as determined by relevant communities.
  - Applicants whose proposed research respectfully involves and engages Indigenous communities are asked to include "This research respectfully involves and engages Indigenous communities" at the beginning of the lay

abstract. The program administrator for each selection committee (CIHR, NSERC, SSHRC) will endeavour to ensure that the primary or secondary reviewer on these applications has expertise in Indigenous research. Reviewers and readers will be asked to read and take into consideration the following:

- SSHRC Guidelines for the Merit Review of Indigenous Research
- Selection committee guide
- CIHR's Research Involving First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples of Canada – Webinar

Note: Research respectfully involving Indigenous communities is defined as research in any field or discipline that is conducted by, grounded in, or engages with First Nations, Inuit, Métis and/or Urban Indigenous communities, societies, and/or individuals, and their wisdom, cultures, experiences, and/or knowledge systems, as expressed in their dynamic forms, past and present.

Examples include:

- projects in which water samples are extracted from Indigenous lands in South America
- analyses of educational policies pertaining to Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians
- cross-sectional studies of how injuries sustained by different groups of people, including Inuit youth, are treated

In order to be funded, research involving and engaging with Indigenous communities must fulfill the pillars for respectful research engaging with Indigenous peoples.

Reducing unconscious bias

- Tri-Agency unconscious bias training module (19 minutes)
  - o This training module focuses on unconscious bias in the evaluation process but is still useful for applicants to help them identify and mitigate their own unconscious bias.
  - o Further reading includes:
    - Unconscious Bias [PDF (208 KB) - external link]
    - Harvard tests on Implicit Association (recommended: Gender – Science, and Gender – Career tests)
    - Global Research Council: Statement of Principles and Actions Promoting the Equality and Status of Women in Research [PDF (92 KB) - external link]
    - Canada Research Chair's Program: Equity and Diversity within the Program's Peer Review Process
    - Tips on reducing unconscious bias in the review process

Date modified: 2021-04-14