Grant Writing Seminar

Information session given at the Simon Fraser University by Laurent Messier and Jason Muscant September 21, 2005
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What is new at SSHRC:

> Departure of Dr. Renaud
> Transformation news

• Strategic Plan, 2006-2011
  – Retool and fine-tune programs
  – Create new programs, new approaches
  – Renew Council structures and organization
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Retool and fine-tune programs:

• Continuum of funding
• Improving the success rate
• Funding the publication of scholarly books and journals
• Supporting scholarly associations
• Focussing on advanced learning
• Integrating the CURA program
• Revitalizing the Aid to Small Universities program
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New programs, new approaches:

- Clustering research
- Mobilizing knowledge for greater impact
- Connecting to the World
- Creating research tools for the 21st century
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Building the knowledge council:

• Act as a national “clearinghouse”
• Create more effective relationships with media
• Provide stronger policy leadership
• Establish a network of SSHRC representatives
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Overview of SSHRC’s Programs:

> Fellowships and Institutional Grants Division
> Strategic Grants and Joint Initiatives Division
> Research and Dissemination Grants Division
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> Fellowships and Institutional Grants Division

- Canada Graduate Scholarships Program – Master’s Scholarships
- Sport Participation Research Initiative: Doctoral and Postdoctoral Supplements
- Doctoral Awards
- Postdoctoral Fellowships
- SSHRC Institutional Grants
- Aid to Small Universities
- Special Fellowships
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> Strategic Grants and Joint Initiatives Division:

- Aboriginal Research: Development and Research Grants
- Research/Creation Grants in Fine Arts
- Research Development Initiatives
- Community-University Research Alliances (CURA)
- Image, Text, Sound and Technology: Networking Grants
- Northern Research Development Program
- The Social Economy Suite: National and Regional
- Strategic Joint Initiatives
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> Research and Dissemination Grants Division:

- Standard Research Grants
- Major Collaborative Research Initiatives
- Sport Participation Research Initiative: Research Grants
- Aid to Research Workshops and Conferences in Canada
- Aid to Research and Transfer Journals
- Aid to Scholarly Publications (ASPP)
- Travel Grants to Scholarly Associations
Objectives of the Standard Research Grants Program

- Peer-reviewed independent programs of research
- Training of future researchers
- New theoretical or methodological approaches
- Disciplinary and multidisciplinary research
- Communication of research results
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Characteristics

 Three-year cycle
 Team and individual applications
 Funding of a program of research
 $100,000 per year or $250,000 over 3 years
 March 2005: the average three-year grant awarded was $90,336.

> Statistics
## Grant Writing Seminar

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YEAR</th>
<th>#</th>
<th>Funded</th>
<th>Recommended</th>
<th>Unsuccessful</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2003</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>18</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(27.45%)</td>
<td>(37.25%)</td>
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<td>2004</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(44.62%)</td>
<td>(24.62%)</td>
<td>(30.76%)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>25</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(42.67%)</td>
<td>(24.00%)</td>
<td>(33.33%)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Eligibility

- Affiliation with a Canadian post-secondary institution
- Submission of the Final Research Report
- Not a student
- Citizenship
NEW SCHOLAR CATEGORY

☐ Not principal investigator on SRG, MCRI or Strategic Grant
☐ Completed highest degree less than five years OR
☐ Held tenure-track position less than 5 years OR
☐ Never had a tenure-track position OR
☐ Career interrupted or delayed for family reasons
☐ Weighting
ADJUDICATION COMMITTEES

 관한, ancient and mediaeval studies, religious studies, classical archaeology (01)

 History, history of science, technology and medicine (02)

 Fine arts, history and philosophy of art, architecture, theatre, music, film, dance (03)

 Applied linguistics and Translation (05)

 Economics (07)

 Sociology and demography (08)
ADJUDICATION COMMITTEES

- Geography, urban planning, environmental studies (09)
- Psychology (10)
- Education (12)
- Interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary studies (15)
- Anthropology and archaeology (16)
- Education (17)
- Literature (18)
ADJUDICATION COMMITTEES

- Literature (19)
- Health studies, social work (20)
- Human resources management, management, business, industrial relations (21)
- Accounting, finance, operations management (22)
- Law, socio-legal studies and criminology (23)
- Political science and public administration (24)
- Philosophy (25)
- Women’s studies, cultural studies, communication studies (26)
EVALUATION CRITERIA (Record of Research)

- Quality and significance of published work
- Originality and impact of previous research
- Quantity of research activity
- Importance of other scholarly activities
- Recentness of output
- Relevance of dissemination to non-academics
- Productivity from previous grant(s)
- Training of future researchers
EVALUATION CRITERIA (Program of Research)

 Contribution to advancement of knowledge
 Intellectual, social and cultural significance of research
 Appropriateness of the theoretical approaches/framework
 Appropriateness of the research strategies/methodologies
 Suitability of plans to communicate research results
 The nature and extent of research training
Choosing committee members

- Overall competence and credibility
- Scholarly stature of the individual nominees
- Appropriate representation on the basis of:
  - areas of expertise
  - small/mid-size/large university
  - geographical region
  - language
  - gender
Choosing external assessors

- Two assessors chosen per file
- Conflict of interest:
  - a close friend
  - a relative
  - a research collaborator
  - a departmental colleague
  - a student previously under the applicant’s supervision
  - a person with whom the applicant is involved in a dispute
  - a person with whom the applicant is involved in a partnership
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Preparation

☞ 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.
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Overall presentation

- Convey and inspire confidence
- Present a challenging topic
- Establish clearly the need for the research.
- Demonstrate its importance and originality.
Overall presentation (continued)

- Prepare your proposal with the assessors and committee in mind.
- Strike a balance between ambition and realism.
- Demonstrate how this new research builds upon past work.
- Have your grant proposal read by colleagues who have been successful in the SRG competition.
Summary Page

Clearly indicate the purpose, the objectives, the context and impact.
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Statement of objectives and theoretical framework

- Clear and precise objectives.
- Clear theoretical or conceptual framework.
- Complete literature review.
- Define all key terms or concepts.
- Append a list of all references cited.
Methodology

- Explain and justify methodology.
- Synergy between objectives and methodology.
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Presenting your curriculum vitae

- 60% of the score to the Record of Research
- Follow the instructions.
- Organize your publications.
- Avoid “inflating” the c.v.
- Demonstrate productivity from previous grants.
Budget

- Reasonable and fully justified budget.
- Check list of eligible and ineligible expenses.
- Explain the role of students.
- Link between research objectives and budget.
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Team applications

❖ Each member is assessed
❖ MYTH: SSHRC favors team applications.
   TRUTH: Similar success rate
Keep in mind!

Do not be discouraged by a previously unsuccessful application.

In 2005, success rate was 40.1%. Another 28.3% were recommended but not funded.
THINGS TO KEEP IN MIND

❖ Clarity
❖ All relevant literature should be addressed
❖ Design/methodology/procedures should be clear
COMMITTEE COMMENTS: THE TOP 3

- Incomplete literature review
- Lack of theoretical rationale
- Lack of specificity in the methodology
OTHER MATTERS

괗 Streamlining the process
 Oprah Automation
 Oprah Case load of committee members
WAYS TO ENSURE YOU WILL ANNOY THE COMMITTEE

omnia
Write in a really small font
omnia
Avoid paragraph breaks and headings
omnia
Reduce the space between lines
omnia
Reduce the margins
omnia
Do all the above and whine that you do not have enough space to explain your methodology
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BE ANNOYING IN YOUR RESEARCH RECORD

飗 Avoid paragraph breaks
飑 Mix up your refereed publications
飑 Include articles that are more than six years old
飑 Don’t use any recognized method of referencing
飑 Do not include page #s
飑 Do not indicate what was produced from a past SSHRC grant
MORE WAYS TO ENSURE YOU ARE ANNOYING

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STILL MORE

- Assume you are so prominent you can get by on your record and don’t bother much about the program of research
- Include a prominent researcher as a Co-applicant but do not give him/her a clearly defined role
- Do not indicate productivity from past grant(s)
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BE ANNOYING IN YOUR BUDGET

✶ Say you need a full time research director
✶ Inflate computer costs
✶ Plan to attend many conferences
✶ Do not give students definite and meaningful tasks
✶ Use lots of non-student personnel
EXTENUATING CIRCUMSTANCES/
CAREER INTERRUPTIONS

 Serious health problems, death of a loved one, ageing parents, and leaves (child birth, parental, adoption leave…)
NOT LEGITIMATE EXCUSES

Having to teach, having to sit on committees, having to move, having to write a book, buying a car…
How to stay informed and involved?

- Visit the web site for regular updates.
  
  www.sshrc.ca

- Contact your Program Officer