

CIHR opportunity for Early Career Investigators

CIHR is pleased to announce the launch of a pilot observer program for early career investigators (ECIs) to participate in the peer review process of the Project Grant: Fall 2016 competition.

This pilot observer program will help CIHR and the College Chairs develop a more formal mentorship program within the College of Reviewers.

CIHR is now accepting expressions of interest from ECIs who wish to gain peer-review experience by participating in this pilot observer program.

The role of the ECI

Eligible ECIs will be paired with Competition Chairs who oversee the review process for the 36 application clusters within the Project Grant competition. At this time, CIHR anticipates needing 36 ECIs so that there will be one ECI per Chair.

The ECI will:

- Assist the Chair with the review quality assurance process taking place in February. This process will involve reading all of the reviews for a specific subset of applications within the cluster (for which the ECI is not in conflict) and working with the Chair to identify any inappropriate reviews. Additional instructions and tools will be provided to participating ECIs, but it should be noted that ECIs will not provide an assessment of the scientific opinion of the reviews; he or she will instead flag potentially inappropriate language, or ratings that appear to be inconsistent with the written strengths or weaknesses.
- Observe the Stage 2 face-to-face meeting in Ottawa (leaving the room for any applications with which she or he is in conflict).

Important dates

The review quality assurance process will take place during the weeks of February 20 and February 27 (i.e., two full weeks). This will be a time-consuming process, so interested ECIs should consult their schedules accordingly to confirm their availability.

The Stage 2 face-to-face meetings will be held in Ottawa between April 19 and May 5, 2017. Meeting dates vary by cluster. Exact dates will be confirmed with each participating ECI once they are assigned to a cluster. CIHR will cover the travel costs for the ECI to attend the cluster meeting.

Eligibility

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To be eligible to participate in this pilot observer program, the ECI must be within 60 months of their first academic appointment, as of January 1, 2017.

Nominated Principal Applicants and Principal Applicants in the current Project Grant competition are not eligible for this opportunity. Nominated Principal Applicants and Principal Applicants were eligible to be reviewers for this competition, but they were not eligible for the role of Chair or Scientific Officer; the same eligibility rules apply for the ECI observer.

Preference may be given to ECIs who do not yet meet CIHR's [peer reviewer eligibility criteria](#). It should be noted, however, that participation in this program is not a prerequisite to becoming a reviewer in the future (nor is it a guarantee that the ECI will meet the eligibility criteria at a later date).

Interested ECIs will be asked to complete a CIHR Reviewer Profile in order to allow CIHR to assign ECIs to clusters related to their area(s) of research. If there are too many candidates for a single cluster, a lottery approach will be used to select the final candidate.

How to apply

To express your interest in participating in this pilot observer program, please send an e-mail to IIRGrants-RLSubventions@cihr-irsc.gc.ca by 5pm EST on Wednesday, January 25, 2017, and include a copy of your most recent CV, attached as a PDF, showing that as of January 1, 2017, you meet the criteria as an early career investigator.

Interested ECIs will then be invited to complete a CIHR Reviewer Profile by January 31, 2017. The Reviewer Profile must be completed in order for the ECI to be considered eligible for this opportunity.

All potential candidates will be informed of their status during the week of February 6th, 2017. Accepted candidates will also be introduced to their Chairs and given instructions regarding the review quality assurance exercise during the week of February 6th.

If you have any questions, please contact support@cihr-irsc.gc.ca.
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