

Knowledge Synthesis Grants: Envisioning Governance Systems that Work 2024

Sponsor

SSHRC in partnership with CIHR and UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)

Description

SSHRC, in partnership with the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), is pleased to launch a Knowledge Synthesis Grants competition to mobilize, examine and synthesize social sciences and humanities research on Envisioning Governance Systems that Work. The themes of this funding opportunity complement those of the [three next upcoming Knowledge Synthesis Grants](#) [1]: The Changing Nature of Security and Conflict, The Arts Transformed, and Truth Under Fire in a Postfact World.

Envisioning Governance Systems that Work is one of the 16 global future challenges identified through SSHRC's Imagining Canada's Future initiative. These complex issues, identified in 2018 following an extensive foresight exercise, reflect key challenges that Canada and the world are likely to face over the coming decades. All the challenges cross multiple sectors, jurisdictions and research disciplines, and require broad collaboration to address. This Knowledge Synthesis Grants funding opportunity is informed and shaped by cross-sectoral and diverse perspectives, including of subject matter experts, policy leaders and community leaders.

In today's world, a growing number of crises, such as climate change, pandemics and the housing crisis, continue to expose the shortcomings of governance models built for another era. It is time to learn from the past and look at ways to make these governance systems work better. The complexity of these wicked problems calls for an innovative approach to governance that is proactive and collaborative, informed by a variety of evidence, perspectives and voices. This will likely require cross-sectoral engagement, involving non-state actors, such as communities, as well as involvement from different levels of government, at local, national and international levels.

In addition to responding to current crises, governance systems must also face the challenges of social acceleration in all aspects of contemporary societies. This includes the rapid development of new technologies, such as generative AI and blockchain technologies, which are evolving much faster than laws and regulations can be enacted. New and emerging technologies have immense potential to contribute to society in important ways, e.g., by improving access to information and communication, for a more transparent and informed

democratic process. The same technologies can, however, undermine the electoral process if left unregulated, as demonstrated by the proliferation of deep fakes and AI-generated misinformation. This underscores the importance of robust, proactive and global digital governance.

Evolving forms of digital governance or internet governance, such as the European Union AI act, are already taking shape at national, regional and global levels. However, developing effective representative governance arrangements may be more complex due to the transnational nature of these new technologies. A truly effective and inclusive model of governance will need to include countries from both the Global North and Global South. International cooperation may prove challenging, given the current state of international relations, marked by a decline in multilateralism and a shift in power dynamics.

The shift in geopolitical influence that is affecting the international system is not solely determined by nation states, but also reflects the growing influence of a wide variety of non-state actors. For instance, the influence of technology companies such as Meta, Alphabet, Microsoft, Baidu or Alibaba extends beyond the content of their platform. Recent studies have shown that social media play a role in the polarization of society and decline in trust in government observed in many Western countries. Restoring trust in government and institutions will require a concerted effort by the private and public sectors, through a combination of regulation, cooperation and new modes of meaningful, equitable citizens' engagement.

The COVID-19 pandemic recently demonstrated the importance of concerted and proactive efforts between the private and public sectors, as well as local communities and different levels of government, to improve preparedness for and response to public health emergencies. It underscored the importance of adopting an inclusive approach to reduce disparities in health outcomes among equity-seeking groups. The pandemic, as well as recent record-breaking forest fires and floods, also highlighted the need to rethink the division of powers and responsibilities, and ensure greater collaboration and coordination between the federal/national, provincial/territorial/regional and municipal levels of government.

Overall, these events and impacts on governance have also underscored the importance of considering First Nations, Metis and Inuit governance systems' relationships with other orders of government—including federal, provincial or territorial, municipal and others—and the ways in which Indigenous self-determination can be meaningfully pursued and practiced within, and independently of, this broader context.

Current and future governance challenges create opportunities to rethink our perception and understanding of governance structures, which can pave the way for models that integrate diverse perspectives, while also providing greater agency to marginalized individuals and communities excluded from, or facing barriers in, existing governance models.

SSHRC, CIHR, UKRI-AHRC and UKRI-ESRC have partnered on this funding opportunity to support research that will foster a deeper understanding of the state of knowledge about the global challenge of Envisioning Governance Systems that Work. This competition includes two streams:

- Stream 1 will be reserved for applications submitted by an applicant affiliated with an

eligible Canadian institution. CIHR may fund up to three projects in this stream and SSHRC may fund up to 17.

- Stream 2 will be reserved for applications jointly submitted by two applicants, one based in Canada and the other in the United Kingdom, who are affiliated with eligible institutions in their respective countries. SSHRC, UKRI-AHRC and UKRI-ESRC may jointly fund up to 27 projects.

The resulting knowledge syntheses will identify roles the academic, public, private and not-for-profit sectors could play in promoting more inclusive, equitable societies, and could inform development of effective tools and technologies, robust policies, and sustainable practices needed to support the path toward a diverse and inclusive future for all.

Knowledge Synthesis Grants

Knowledge Synthesis Grants support researchers in producing knowledge synthesis reports and evidence briefs that:

- support the use of evidence in decision-making and the application of best practices; and
- assist in developing future research agendas.

Applicants must address the following three objectives in their proposals:

1. State of knowledge, strengths and gaps
 - critically assess the state of knowledge of the future challenge theme under consideration from a variety of sources, as appropriate;
 - identify knowledge strengths and gaps within the theme;
 - acknowledge Indigenous knowledge systems and research methodologies when appropriate; and,
 - identify the most promising policies and practices related to the theme.
2. Research data
 - assess the quality, accuracy and rigour (i.e., methodological approaches) of current work in the field; and
 - identify strengths and gaps in the quantitative and qualitative data available.
3. Knowledge mobilization
 - engage cross-sectoral stakeholders (academic, public, private and not-for-profit sectors) and/or First Nations, Inuit and Métis rights holders throughout the project to mobilize knowledge related to promising policies and practices; and
 - use effective knowledge mobilization methods to facilitate the sharing of research findings with cross-sectoral stakeholders and Indigenous rights holders.

Researchers can include international comparisons and case studies in their proposal, but must show how the research has the potential to inform policy issues in Canada (Stream 1) or Canada and/or the UK (Stream 2).

This Knowledge Synthesis Grants funding opportunity is guided by the following questions:

1. Drawing on domestic, international and/or cross-sectoral evidence, what can researchers tell us about these issues?
2. How might the findings guide public policy, practice and research agendas for Canada (Stream 1) or Canada and/or the UK (Stream 2) in the immediate and long term?

Eligibility

Review [eligibility criteria](#) [2] related to subject matter, applicants and institutions.

Funding Availability

Stream 1: Up to 20 grants of up to C\$30,000 per project may be awarded. SSHRC may fund up to 17 projects and CIHR may fund up to three. The projects funded by CIHR must address governance questions that directly or indirectly impact population health and/or social inequities in health, such as governance of public health systems, healthy cities, and global health.

Stream 2: Up to 27 grants may be awarded, of up to C\$30,000 in total per project (~£17,528 , subject to the Bank of Canada exchange rate). Applicants should use the Bank of Canada exchange rate based on the day the application is submitted. For projects selected for funding, each country's applicant or team will receive a grant from their respective country's funder for their portion of the project.

The international teams should include balanced budget requests for both portions of the project with their application, directed to SSHRC, UKRI-AHRC and/or UKRI-ESRC, respectively. Budgets cannot exceed a maximum 60/40% or 40/60% split across the two agencies (e.g., C\$18,000/£10,517 or £7,011/C\$12,000).

The Canadian researchers' portion of the project will be funded by SSHRC based on the funding request they submitted through the itemized budget.

The UK researchers' portion of the project will be funded by UKRI-AHRC and/or UKRI-ESRC based on the funding request submitted through the itemized budget. All UK costs will be funded at 80% of the full economic cost. Ensure the full economic cost, as outlined in the UK budget form and the SSHRC budget form combined, does not exceed C\$30,000. The UK budget form can be downloaded from the instructions page. For more details on eligible costs, see the [UKRI-AHRC research funding guide](#) [3] and [UKRI-ESRC research funding guide](#) [4].

Maximum Project Value

Knowledge Synthesis Grants are valued at \$30,000 for one year.

Indirect Costs

0%

Project Duration

One year.

Knowledge mobilization activities (i.e., conference presentations and outreach activities) can take place throughout the year. All synthesis reports and evidence briefs must be completed before the virtual forum.

Special Notes

By applying for this funding opportunity, successful applicants consent to SSHRC and its partners sharing the resulting synthesis reports and evidence briefs with other interested organizations and individuals. This does not in any way limit how researchers may otherwise publish or use the results of their research.

Deadlines

If College-level review is required, your College will communicate its earlier internal deadlines.		
Type	Date	Notes
Internal Deadline	Thursday, December 5, 2024 - 4:30pm	PI to submit a signed OR-5 form along with a copy of the full application to: research.services@uoguelph.ca [5] Please select 'submit' on the SSHRC Portal on or before the internal deadline.
External Deadline	Thursday, December 12, 2024 - 8:00pm	Application will be submitted to SSHRC electronically by the Research Services Office through the SSHRC Portal.

How to Apply

Applicants must complete the [application form](#) [6] in accordance with the [accompanying instructions](#) [7].

Information For Co-applicants

If you need to meet a deadline set by the lead institution for this opportunity, please ensure that you provide the Research Services Office with at least five days in advance of the lead institution's deadline to review the application, or your proposed component of the project. Please be in touch with the Research Services Office (research.services@uoguelph.ca [5]) ahead of the deadline if it looks like it will be difficult for you to submit all the required documentation on time (i.e. budget, proposal, OR-5 Form).

For Questions, please contact

For more information, contact:

Stream 1 and Stream 2—Applicants affiliated with a Canadian institution

Email: KSG-SSC@sshrc-crsh.gc.ca [8]

Toll-free: 1-855-275-2861

Office of Research

Ariah Easley, Awards & Agreements Officer

Research Services Office

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URL: <https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/alerts/content/knowledge-synthesis-grants-envisioning-governance-systems-work-2024>

Links

[1] https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/society-societe/community-communite/Imagining_Canadas_Future-Imaginer_l_avenir_du_Canada-eng.aspx

[2] https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/programs-programmes/ksg_governance_systems-ssc_systemes_gouvernance-eng.aspx#3

[3] <https://www.ukri.org/publications/ahrc-research-funding-guide/>

[4] <https://www.ukri.org/publications/esrc-research-funding-guide/>

[5] <mailto:research.services@uoguelph.ca>

[6] https://webapps.nserc.ca/SSHRC/faces/logon.jsp?lang=en_CA

[7] <https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/instructions/ksg-ssc/egsw-sgqf/applicant-candidat-eng.aspx>

[8] <mailto:KSG-SSC@sshrc-crsh.gc.ca>

[9] <mailto:aeasley@uoguelph.ca>