IT’S REALLY NOT TOO EARLY

STRATEGIES FOR A COMPETITIVE SSHRC INSIGHT GRANT
"Take a moment to consider your idea, your brilliant idea! The beauty of it. The wonder, the possibilities!

In the months and years to come, I want you to hold onto that feeling – make sure you remember it. Make notes about it. Go back to it. It will sustain you.

When you are in the depths of grant-writing hell, it will sustain you."

-THE RESEARCH WHISPERER
PLANNING – DOES YOUR IDEA MATCH THE IG?

• **OBJECTIVES OF THE 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**.

• **SCOPE:** 4-5 Year projects, Small teams, a range of budget sizes

• **FEASIBILITY RULES THE ROOST:** need to 100% convinced that you will achieve the proposed outcome
CONCEPTUALIZATION

• **WHAT** – What do you plan to do? (Try to communicate in 1 sentence or question)

• **WHY** – Why is important? Why do you think it is worth doing? What do you think the impact/outcomes of your idea will be?

• **HOW** – How do you think you will complete the tasks? What steps will you take? What resources will you need? How will you communicate your idea and its results to others?

• **WHEN** – Why is your project timely? How long will you need to complete all these steps? In what order does it make the most sense to do them?

• **WHERE** – Where will you need to go to achieve your idea?

• **WHO** – Besides yourself, who else might you need to achieve your idea? Other experts? Students?
DRAFTING

• **JUST WRITE!**
  • Don’t worry about formatting, page counts, character counts, adjudication criteria, or required sub-headings at this time

• **START BY DESCRIBING THE PROJECT:**
  • What is your goal or research question?
  • Why is it important? Why should someone outside your sub-field care?

• **THEN EMBED IT IN THE RELATED AND RELEVANT SCHOLARLY LITERATURE:**
  • What have others said on this topic? How will your project build or expand upon this previous work?
  • What will be your project’s contribution to knowledge in your field?
DRAFTING CONT’D

• **NEXT, WRITE ABOUT YOUR THEORETICAL APPROACH:**
  • What key concepts does your project engage with?
  • How do you understand these concepts?
  • Why are those the best conceptual tools for answering your research question?

• **FINALLY, WRITE ABOUT THE METHODOLOGY OF YOUR PROJECT:**
  • What process will you use to answer your research question? What steps will you take?
  • Where are you going to find the information or data you need?
  • How will you gather and organize it?
  • How do you know it is feasible to collect it that way? Has it been done before? By you?
  • What are you going to do with your data and information once you have it?
  • How will you know whether you have answered your research question?

**STEP AWAY—WORK ON SOMETHING ELSE.**
REWORK YOUR DRAFT

• THINK ABOUT YOUR READER
  • Not a sub-disciplinary specialist, needs to appeal to anyone around the table at your departmental meeting
  • Choice of language – you can have jargon but it needs to be explained
  • Assumptions – explain all the decisions you are making in proposing the project this way, and why they are the right decisions for your project

• OBJECTIVES (3/4-1 PAGE)
  • core research question, along with your objectives/sub-questions, contribution to knowledge (summary form), importance of the project

• CONTEXT (2-3 PAGES)
  • literature review (used to support your claims of contribution to knowledge), theoretical approach

• METHODOLOGY (2-3 PAGES)
  • data collection, analysis, interpretation, timeline
BACK TO DRAFTING – BUT NEW STUFF!

- **TEAM**
  - Do you have all the relevant expertise (topic, theory, methods)? Or, do you need to supplement with other expertise?

- **STUDENTS**
  - How will they be involved? What skills sets do they need to join your project? What will they learn and how will they be trained to do the tasks you ask of them? What will the gain from their involvement in the project?

- **KNOWLEDGE MOBILIZATION**
  - How will you reach your traditional academic audiences? What about other audiences? How will you reach audiences that don’t read publications in your sub-field or go to your conferences? Who will be responsible for this outreach? What will be the influence or impact on these audiences?

- **BUDGET**
  - Re-read everything and create a list of the stuff that will cost money (people, things, travel, dissemination, etc.) and when you think you might need it
  - Start locating prices for these items
**FEEDBACK**

- **SEEK CONSTRUCTIVE CRITICISM FROM ANOTHER PERSON**
  - “Seems good to me” or “great idea!” is not what you want to hear at this stage
  - “Explain this more” or “I’m not sure about...” or “what do you mean by....” or “why?” is what you want to hear

- **THINK**
  - Plan for time to process this feedback and substantively address the comments

- **DON’T PANIC**
  - Ideally you still have lots of time to the deadline
  - Don’t worry if you go back over the page limits trying to address this feedback

- **ASK THE SAME PERSON TO REVIEW AGAIN, AND ASK IF YOU ADDRESSED THEIR COMMENTS.**
  - They may have new comments. Address those again.
  - Don’t panic about the page limits.
MORE FEEDBACK

- Do this as much as you can
- The more diverse feedback you can get from across your discipline, the better.
- Research facilitators can be one of these people
  - But probably shouldn’t be the only one!

(Re-)write

Show it to someone

Think about their comments

Do more work
COMPLETING THE APPLICATION

- WRITE YOUR SUMMARY
- GET THINGS DOWN TO THE PAGE/CHARACTER LIMITS
  - Research Facilitators can help with this!
- MAKE SURE EVERYTHING IS COMPLETED
  - Are you missing any pieces of the application?
- THINK OF A GOOD TITLE
- REFINE THE BUDGET
  - double check that everything is eligible at SSHRC
  - Research facilitators can also help with this!
YOU ARE NOT DONE - FINAL REVISION

• THIS IS THE STEEPEST PART OF THE PROCESS – THE MOST TAXING!
  • Because you are trying to think about your project from the perspective of someone else – the reviewer!

• REVIEW THE WHOLE APPLICATION YOURSELF
  • make sure you have active voice, clarity, sub-headings, linear logic

• CONNECT TO INSIGHT PROGRAM OBJECTIVES
  • And Future Challenges, if relevant.

• SHOW THE FINAL VERSION TO A PEER THAT YOU THINK WILL GIVE CRITICAL BUT HELPFUL COMMENTS
HOME STRETCH

• DOUBLE CHECK THAT YOUR BUDGET (AND JUSTIFICATION) MATCHES THE REST OF YOUR APPLICATION

• PROOF-READ! PROOF-READ! PROOF-READ!
  • Sometime this good to ask someone else do

• UPLOAD THE FINAL DOCUMENTS

• COMPLETE THE CURESEARCH CHECKLIST

• SUBMIT THE APPLICATION TO CURO
SUGGESTED WORKPLAN

The Idea & Planning (NOW)

Conceptualization (By the middle of May)

Drafting Round 1 (by the end of May)

Re-work your Draft (by the middle of June)
SUGGESTED WORKPLAN CONT’D

Drafting Round 2 (By the end of June)

Feedback & Revisions (By the end of July)

Completing the Application (by the end of August)

Final Revisions (6 weeks until deadline)

Home Stretch (1 week until deadline)
AAAAG!
Groan!

Whine! Whimper!
Sigh!

Who knew that a twelve-page research paper would take more than an afternoon to write?

Is that rhetorical, or should I start naming every other person on the planet?
PANEL, Q&A
TIPS & TRICKS, ADJUDICATION PROCESS, ETC.

HOW TO MAKE WRITE

THE ENVISION

THE INSPIRE

THE CREATE

THE REVEAL

THE REVISE

THE SUBMIT

THE LIE-AWAKE

THE REFUSE

We are very sorry to inform you.

THE REGRET

THE RECOVER

THE RESTART

GRANT SNIDER
RESOURCES

• Insight Grant Program: HTTP://WWW.SSHRC-CRSH.GC.CA/FUNDING-FINANCEMENT/PROGRAMS-PROGRAMMES/INSIGHT_GRANTS-SUBVENTIONS_SAVOIR-ENG.ASPX


• SSHRC Guidelines for Effective Student Training: HTTP://WWW.SSHRC-CRSH.GC.CA/FUNDING-FINANCEMENT/POLICIES-POLITIQUES/EFFECTIVE_RESEARCH_TRAINING-FORMATION_EN_RECHERCHE_EFFICACE-ENG.ASPX

• SSHRC Guidelines for Effective Knowledge Mobilization: HTTP://WWW.SSHRC-CRSH.GC.CA/FUNDING-FINANCEMENT/POLICIES-POLITIQUES/KNOWLEDGE_MOBILISATION-MOBILISATION DES CONNAISSANCES-ENG.ASPX
RESOURCES CONT’D

• TRI-COUNCIL POLICY STATEMENT: ETHICAL CONDUCT FOR RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS:
  HTTP://WWW.PRE.ETHICS.GC.CA/ENG/POLICY-POLITIQUE/INITIATIVES/TCPS2-EPTC2/DEFAULT/

• TRI-COUNCIL FINANCIAL ADMINISTRATION GUIDE: HTTP://WWW.NSERC-CRSNG.GC.CA/PROFESSORS-
  PROFESSEURS/FINANCIALADMINGUIDE-GUIDEADMINFINANCIER/INDEX_ENG.ASP

• TRI-AGENCY POLICY ON OPEN ACCESS:
  HTTP://WWW.SCIENCE.GC.CA/DEFAULT.ASP?LANG=EN&N=F6765465-1