Indigenous Health Research Development Program

Community-Based Research Application Guidelines

(updated July 2008)

The Indigenous Health Research Development Program (IHRDP) aims to promote Aboriginal capacity in Aboriginal Health Research through the development of relationships with First Nations communities in Ontario. One of the goals of the IHRDP is to facilitate community/ university partnerships between parties who have mutual research interests. The IHRDP also encourages First Nations or other Aboriginal communities or health organizations to develop their own research projects.

The maximum funding available is $25,000 for a 12-month period.

Funding support will depend on the scope of the research project. Funding decisions will be made on the basis of merit, potential impact of project and availability of funds. Applications should demonstrate clear evidence of community support, and should include appropriate letters of support. The application should be grounded in the relevant research literature and demonstrate the community and scientific value of the research and the potential for capacity-building (by way of student involvement, research training, partnerships etc.).

Preference will be given to proposals addressing research priorities of the IHRDP (Indigenous Knowledge and Traditional Medicine; prevention and control of chronic diseases; mental health, health services and policy; ethics).

Proposals will be assessed on their ability to:

- Respond and contribute to current health priorities relevant to the designated Aboriginal community
- Design and conduct community-based research in and with Aboriginal communities as full partners
- Provide training opportunities for local community members to increase their capacity to identify and address local health issues
- Respect all ways of knowing as they apply to capacity building, training and partnerships
- Maintain respectful ethical standards. Applications should indicate how the research is compatible with CIHR's Guidelines for Aboriginal Health Research http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/29339.html and which University, Government or Aboriginal Research Ethics Board will approve the research.
- Disseminate new information learned from the project to the Aboriginal community and the broader public.

The Research Proposal should be no more than 5 pages, excluding budget. Please use a 12 pt font with margins of no less than 1/2 inch.   The proposal should include a literature review of no more than one page. Your application should clearly outline the

objectives, research questions, methodology and dissemination plan (see attached guidelines). In addition to the Research proposal, an application submission will include:

- completed application form (found at http://www.ihrdp.ca/commresearch.html)
- copy of the principal applicant's CV/resume
- letter of support/collaboration from the partner community
- a one page budget, with line item explanation of costs in major categories

The IHRDP will be available to assist communities in the development of their proposals. We can provide training in research methods, assist in the development/refinement of the research question, assist in identifying resources, etc. Again, the goal of the IHRDP is to promote Aboriginal capacity in conducting health research.

Successful applicants will be required to submit a final report at the end of the project. The final report will outline the current progress of the project, the project outcomes, and will outline how the community's capacity was strengthened as a result of the project.

IHRDP COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH PROPOSAL GUIDELINES

Every proposal begins, or at least should begin, with an idea. However, an idea is not a project. Turning an idea into a well thought out research project proposal requires a number of tasks and diverse skills, so even though a proposal may actually be written by one person, it generally requires the help of many people for consultation, input and review.

The project team will often also serve as the proposal preparation team. Their first task is to gather the information that will be needed for the different sections of the proposal and determine what additional materials are needed. They should then establish a detailed timetable with delegated responsibilities for preparation, completion and timely delivery of the proposal.

Funding is generally awarded on a year by year basis, which means that your proposal should focus on 1 year of work with a specific deliverable at the end.

Format of the Proposal
The proposal should be written in plain-language. Avoid jargon and flowery language. The best proposal is one that clearly explains your project. Many terms have different meanings in different disciplines - include definitions to avoid misunderstandings. Your proposal should clearly state the research phase for which you are seeking support; the information you provide in the following categories should reflect the focus of your proposal. A long proposal is not necessarily a better proposal. Your goal should be to make the proposal clear and concise - **Five pages is the maximum length (12 pt font and ½" margins).**

A good proposal **must** address the following areas:

1) Background: This section is designed to introduce the reader to the project. A brief description of the community/communities involved is a good starting point. The next step is describing how and why the project developed. This is the place to mention how the research question came to your attention or why the project was developed. Why is this a "burning issue" in the community? Does this burning issue affect other First Nations communities? Who?

2) Literature Review: The next step is to discuss your research within the context of the existing literature on subject. What other research has been done on this subject? If other research has been done, what did they find? How does your project contribute to what is already known, or address gaps in existing knowledge? Will your research build on other research? How is your project different? Has this methodology been used before?

3) The Research Question: *or What do you want to find out?*

What is the question that you want this research to answer? This is your "Burning Question".

Be realistic in designing the project. Overly optimistic notions of what the project can accomplish in a given timeframe will only detract from the proposal's chances of being approved. One of the most common comments made by reviewers is that the research plans should be scaled down to a more specific and more manageable project that will permit the approach to be evaluated and that, if successful, will form a sound basis for further work. In other words, your proposal should distinguish clearly between long-range research goals and the short-range research question for which funding is being sought.

4) Methods: The methods section is the most crucial part of the proposal. It is where you describe *EXACTLY* what you are planning to do and with whom?

> ***A) Data collection:*** The following questions should be answered in this section:
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> **What** will be collected? (The rationale for what data will be collected should be made as part of the background section)
>
> **Who** will be collecting the data?
> Will staff be hired to collect the data? How many? Who? For how long? How will they be trained?
>
> **How** will you determine your sample? Is there a definition of your sample?
>
> **Who** will be providing the data?
> *EXAMPLES:*
> *For human health studies* - this section must include specific information about how participants will be chosen, as well as the number of participants and the rationale for the number of participants.
> *For environmental studies* -who will be gathering the samples? Exactly what will they collect? How many? From where?
>
> **When** will the data be collected?
> Are there any environmental constraints that will limit the data collection (weather, hunting/fishing seasons/growing season)? How will these be dealt with?
>
> **Where** will the data be collected?
> *EXAMPLES:*
> *For human research studies* - Will interviews take place in people's homes or will they visit a project office? Where will the project office be? Will the nursing station be used to collect blood samples?
> *For environmental data* - specific location of sample location —identified on a map or by longitude/latitude coordinates.
>
> **How** will the data be collected?
> *EXAMPLES:*
> *For human research studies* - Hair samples, blood, urine – Protocol for sample collection. If data collection includes a survey or questionnaire – a copy ***must*** be

included with the proposal. Has this survey/questionnaire been used in other studies?
For environmental data - Specific protocols for collecting each type of specimen

B) Data Management
This section should describe how the data will be managed, after it has been collected.
The following questions should be answered:

Does the data need to be entered into the computer to be analyzed? Who will do the data entry? What software program will be used for analysis?

C) Data Analysis

Specific plans for analysis must be outlined, including how the results will be verified by the involved community and which specific analytical methods will be used. The analysis methods must be appropriate for the research design and the type of data. Who will do the analysis? Who will do the interpretation? What methods/software will be used?

D) Dissemination Plan: How will you make sure that research results reach the appropriate audiences? Community? Policy makers? Government? Other researchers? The public?

5) Community Involvement: This section should include information about how the community/communities will be impacted and involved in the research.

- Will the research provide important information back to the community?
- How will the results be communicated back to the community?
- Will there be other benefits for the community?
- Will this project build community capacity?
- Will there be job opportunities? How many? Doing what?
- Will the results from this project impact other First Nations communities?
    - How?
    - Where?

6) Ethical Considerations: It is the applicant's responsibility to obtain the required ethics approval for research involving human subjects from the relevant research ethics review board in an appropriate/affiliated institution. Funds will not be released until evidence of Ethics clearance is obtained by the IHRDP. Applications should briefly indicate how the research is compatible with CIHR's Guidelines for Aboriginal Health Research and which University, Government or Aboriginal Research Ethics Board will approve the research.

7) Activities and Timeline: Be as detailed as possible about the schedule of the proposed work.

- When will the first step be completed?

- When can subsequent steps be started?
- What must be done before what else, and what can be done at the same time?

A calendar detailing the projected sequence and interrelationship of events often gives the reviewer assurance that the investigator is capable of careful step-by-step planning and that the proposed timeframe is feasible. If included, list this as an APPENDIX to the proposal and do not count the timeline against the 5 page limit.

8) Budget: Include a one page budget in addition to the 5 page proposal. Budgets must be realistic and only include those resources necessary for the successful completion of the research. It is necessary to include a budget justification for most items in the budget that explains how the figure was derived and why the item should be included. A detailed budget assists in project management.

It can be helpful to divide the budget into categories, such as *personnel salaries and benefits*, *travel*, *equipment*, *supplies*, *laboratory analysis* and *contract costs*. The budget should demonstrate consistency with project activities. If another agency or organization is providing a good or service, include this in an "*In-kind contributions*" section. Make sure to account for all the activities that will need to be carried out for the project - including printing. If your budget includes a contract or honorarium to an organization or individual to complete a portion of the work of the project, include a breakdown of exactly what tasks are to be completed and the specifics of the contract.

You must also include a statement describing all other funding (both applied for and received) sources for this project.

Be as specific as possible.