Eligibility and Compliance Webinar
November 2\textsuperscript{nd}, 2016

Presenters:
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Rita Carrière – NSERC-SSHRC
Agenda

• Follow up to the Agencies’ Survey
  - What you said!! And what we did
  - Future Considerations
• Highlights from the 2016 Tri Agency Guide (University)
• General Principles on Use of Grant Funds
• Stakeholders Roles & Responsibilities
• Adequate Justifications: Why, What is required, Examples
• Eligibility and Compliance of Expenditure
  - Travel
  - Equipment
  - Hospitality and gifts
• Delegation of Signing Authority
• Question Period
• Next Step
• Agencies’ Contacts
Follow up to the Agencies’ Survey

• What you said!!

• What we did:
  - Some topics were addressed in 2016 Guide
    – harmonization of 4 policies + changes to home internet costs
  - Others topics - Special Working groups have been created to address the following:
    - Maternity, parental, medical leaves
    - Sabbatical leaves and other leaves
    - Hiring limits for Postdoctoral Fellows
    - Compensation-related expenses
Follow up to the Agencies’ Survey

• Future consideration:

  Increase and ensure a widespread accessibility for the research community on policies and guidelines interpretations relating to the use of grant funds and post award administration by:

  • Participating in the development of future joint webinars with CARA on post award issues;

  • Engaging in discussion to develop future tri-agency electronic tools to facilitate access to post award rulings and interpretations relating the use of grant funds and post award administration matters.
Highlights from the 2016 Guide

- Responsibility and accountability: *no changes*

- Annual funding of grants – updates to the *table of extension (NSERC – SSHRC) and to end dates for CIHR.*

- Use of Funds – *general principles* – indirect and overhead cost to be paid by institution – via new paragraph on indirect cost and the Research Support Fund how it can be used and links to the program
  - reminder to verify details in funding opportunity which could prevail over the guide

  - *Compensation Related expenses* – New in guide but existing policy SSHRC only Postdoc Fellows can simultaneously be paid from a grant.

  - *Travel and Subsistence Costs* – now harmonized
    - Collaborators’ travel expenses
    - Nursing mothers travel cost
Highlights from 2016 Guide – Con’t

– **Sabbatical Leave** – travel costs to and from institution now harmonized
  - living expenses not eligible = subsistence and accommodation costs
– **Computer and Electronics Communications**
  - Home internet now non-eligible

• **Reporting and Supporting Evidence**
  - More clarity on the need to have evidence that demonstrates [the link to the research](#)

• **Administrative Matters**
  CIHR has modified the following:
  – **Maternity leave** – one year leave – now refer to extension to the Authority to use funds period
  – **Paid maternity-parental leave** – statement remove on availability of funds
  – **Sabbatical leave** now harmonized with other agencies
  – **Residual funds** - new link to guidelines for the GRF + list of eligible programs for GRF transfer

• **Checklists** – Additional information were added to:
  • **Maternity-parental for students** – NSERC requirements to send invoices
  • **Sabbatical leaves** – harmonized policy
  • **Transfer from primary institution non eligible institution** – more info on human - animal ethics
General Principles – Use of Funds

• Funds must contribute towards only the direct cost of research, must be used effectively and economically and be essential for the research – with proper supporting documentation and/or detailed justification

• The institution has the right and responsibility to withhold and withdraw approval of expenses that contravene the Agency’s policies
Roles and Responsibilities

**Agencies:**
- Provide public resources to promote and assist research, while being accountable to the Canadian people for the use and outcome of these funds, and ensure that the activities supported are conducted in accordance with the highest legal, ethical and financial standards.

**Institution:**
- Provide appropriate physical and organizational infrastructure to conduct the research, implement appropriate and effective policies, administrative systems and controls to ensure that the research is conducted in compliance with all agencies’ requirements including withholding or withdrawing approval of expenses that contravene the Agency’s or Institutional policies.

**Grantee:**
- By drawing on the funds the grantee confirms that he/she will comply with all the terms and conditions of the award.
Adequate Justifications

**Travel:**

- Must define the purpose of the trip and the link to the funded research.

**Hospitality and Gifts:**

- Must define the purpose or circumstances for the hospitality or the gift and the link to the funded research.
Adequate Justification

Equipment and Supplies:

– **Role of the institution**: provide the infrastructure and equipment as per the Institutional Agreement - equipment belongs to Institution

– **When is a justification needed**:
  • Computer and related hardware
  • Cellular phones, smartphone or other electronic devices only when they are necessary for research purposes and/or for personal safety
  • Specialized software
  • When link to the funded research is not evident
  • Specialized office supplies
Adequate Justification

Equipment and Supplies cont’d

An adequate justification must demonstrate that the purchase is:

• directly related to and necessary for the advancement of funded research
• not normally provided by the institution
• an economical use of funds
• a need that is not met by equipment currently available or in the grant holder’s possession
Eligibility and Compliance for Research Expenses

Travel Guidelines:

**Lowest rate available** - up to full economy with detailed travel purpose or detailed justification that clearly establishes the link with the funded research

- *Full economic = Air Canada up to Latitude - WestJet up to Flex.*
- *The lowest rate should be used if not a justification for using the higher level is required.*
- *Special circumstances may allow first class – Agencies’ pre-approval is required.*
- *Land travel: can charge up to equivalent of a full economic airfare – same rules apply.*

**During Sabbatical Leave**: status quo - only to and from the sabbatical location with no living expenses and for short field work, or to attend a conference outside of sabbatical location.

(Working Group will be reviewing this item in the coming months)
Eligibility and Compliance for Research Expenses

Travel Expenses cont’d

• **Combine travel**
  Non research related expenses must be clearly identified and not calculated as part of the claim if using same receipts/invoices.

• **Extended travel**: Institution’s travel policy applies with agencies general principles.
Eligibility and Compliance for Research Expenses

Travel purpose:

Sample provided by Researcher-incomplete
The conference in Victoria, B.C. is related to my research on molecular biology

Ideal purpose:

• Attended conference in Victoria which discussed molecular biology which is related to my grant because I am hoping to apply the theory presented to my lab experiments.

Other examples of purpose

• Fieldwork in Maine; collected water samples to be used in my (describe the research) where I am analyzing the impact of local mining projects on sediment quantity.
• Archival work at the Institute of Archaeology; reviewed bone specimens for evidence of decay directly related to my research grant.
• Collaboration at the University of Wisconsin with Prof. Brown on comparison of research finds to date related to XXX theory which is directly related to my research grant.
Eligibility and Compliance for Research Expenses

Travel Purpose

Sample
• I needed to arrive early for my conference in Poland for research purposes

Ideal Purpose
• I arrived 2 days earlier at the conference location in Warsaw, Poland because I had to meet with my co-presenter Professor Todd from University of Warsaw to go over material we would be co-presenting at the conference on the economic crisis in Europe
Eligibility and Compliance for Research Expenses

Sample provided by researcher:
• The printer I purchased was necessary for printing copies of my research results on the effect of chemical spills for dissemination at the conference in Berlin (explains printing not the printer)

Ideal justification:
• The printer purchased is required for the research because it is permanently connected to the equipment and prints results at a set timeframe
• The printer purchased is required for the research because it is more economical to print our surveys then to have them printed at the Print shop
Eligibility and Compliance for Research Expenses

Equipment Justification

Samples provided by researchers:

– The apple watch (or ipad or cell phone etc) is necessary for my research work on collecting data about bees and their habitat and also for safety reasons in the field
– I require the video camera for my research as I will be filming a documentary on aboriginal life in the Arctic
– This book on genetics is necessary for my research on genetic diseases and is not available at the library.

• Ideal justification:
  – The above samples are reasonable but could be more complete by providing a bit more information on the direct link to the funded research and not just the professor’s general research field.
Eligibility and Compliance for Research Expenses
Hospitality and Gifts

Sample provided by researcher:
• After attending the conference on Business Ethics which is related to my research, I had a dinner business meeting where I invited my colleagues to discuss various interpretations of the information that was presented at the conference and we shared our own research results.

Ideal supporting information:
Ideally, information for hospitality must contain the following:
• A list of attendees including their titles, institutions and their relation to the funded research. There MUST be at least 1 person external to the research group participating in the hospitality.
• A brief explanation as to why the meal took place (i.e. the purpose of the meeting). The explanation must also demonstrate that the hospitality was required for formal courtesy between the grantee and guest researchers or for research-related activities in the context of assemblies that facilitate and contribute to the achievement of the research objectives.

Note: Hosting of fellow employees is not eligible e.g. pizza lunches for students and research team members.
Eligibility and Compliance for Research Expenses

Hospitality and Gifts

• Eligible vs. non eligible costs for hospitality

• When is the offering of hospitality considered appropriate?

• Offering of gifts
Delegation of Authority Instrument

• Who can delegate authority and to whom
  – Grantee has sole authority to delegate
  – Delegate must be tied to research project
  – No re-delegation is allowed

• What to include in a delegation instrument
  – Grant account number
  – Brief description of why it needs to be delegated
  – Name of grantee
  – Name of delegate
  – Type of expenses the delegate can approve
  – Start and end date of the delegation period
  – Date and signatures of grantee and delegate
Next Steps

• Agencies’ Working Groups
• Future Joint Webinars in 2017  
  – What topics would you like us to address?
• Monitoring Review Webinar on Nov. 25, 2016
Questions
Contacts

NSERC and SSHRC:
Awards Administration:
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