



Michael Smith Foundation for
Health Research

Technology/Methodology Platforms

Background

Development of the Platforms

Phase 2 of the Networking Infrastructure Program focuses on the development of provincial health research platform technologies/methodologies. The key defining factor for a platform is that it is an essential technology/methodology that will support a broad range of health research applications across institutions and research groups. The intent is to support one provincial plan (development and implementation) per platform

MSFHR used a two-stage application process to support development of its Platform Program in BC.

Stage 1

In January 2006, MSFHR invited expressions of interest (EOI) from the research community for technology/methodology platforms. For details about the specific requirements for Stage 1, see the [program overview](#) (PDF).

Thirty-eight EOI were received by the deadline.

Review Process - Stage 1

In May 2006, a Review Panel convened in Vancouver to review the 38 EOI. All EOI were first grouped into potential platform areas, and then each application was reviewed by a panel of experts external to British Columbia. In June 2006 the MSFHR Board Executive approved the Panel's recommendations that nine potential platform areas, involving 16 of the 38 EOI, proceed to Stage 2 of the application process. Among the 16 EOI the Panel identified several pairs of applicants who they recommended should combine their efforts in the development of a single platform proposal.

Stage 2

In July 2006 applicants in the nine potential platform areas were invited to develop comprehensive strategies and business plans for the implementation of the provincial platforms. MSFHR provided \$50,000 for each platform area to support planning efforts over the period July-November 2006.

In addition, Business and Strategic Plan Guidelines and budget templates were developed to assist applicants in developing their final submissions.

Review Process - Stage 2

A three-step external review process was used to thoroughly evaluate the detailed strategic and business plans submitted by the applicants.

Step 1: Expert Reviews (December, 2006)

Each Stage 2 platform proposal was reviewed by 3 scientific experts with specific expertise in the platform area, and 1 or more business planning experts.

Step 2: Review Panel (February 2007)

All platform proposals and Expert Reviews were forwarded to a Review Panel for consideration.

The Review Panel reviewed and discussed all proposals and the Expert Reviews. Each proposal was evaluated and ranked.

Step 3: Reverse Site Visit

Applicant teams were invited to give a 15-minute presentation to the Review Panel on their proposed platform program followed by a 15-minute Q & A period. At this time, Stage 2 applicants were able to address any concerns and/or questions raised by the Review Panel.

At the conclusion of Step 3:

The Review Panel identified platform proposals that were ready to proceed; proposals that required major changes; and proposals that should be rejected.

Based on their assessment of budgets and budget justifications, the External Oversight Review Panel recommended award amounts for each Platform for approval by the MSFHR Board of Directors.

The panel's recommendations were approved by the MSFHR Board of Directors on March 30, 2007.

Evaluation Process

Rigorous review processes are a cornerstone of MSFHR's operations and help to ensure that MSFHR is accountable to the government of the province of British Columbia for the money it invests in health research. The vast majority of MSFHR's review processes are associated with assessing funding applications and making funding recommendations. MSFHR also periodically convenes review panels to assess its programs and/or processes, and make recommendations for improvement. [Read the Infrastructure Programs Review Process](#) (PDF)

Review Panels

Stage 2 Review Panel

Dr. Alain Beaudet (Chair), MD, PhD

President and CEO, Fonds de la recherche en santé du Québec (FRSQ)

Dr. Paul Armstrong, MD

Professor, Department of Medicine (Division of Cardiology), University of Alberta

Dr. Richard Friesen, PhD

Executive Director and Head, Department of Medicinal Chemistry, Merck Frosst Centre for Therapeutic Research

Dr. Antoine Hakim, MD, PhD, FRCPC

Professor and University Chair, Neurology, University of Ottawa;
Director, Neuroscience Research, Ottawa Health Research Institute;
CEO and Scientific Director, Canadian Stroke Network;
Scientific Director, Heart and Stroke Foundation of Ontario Centre for Stroke Recovery

Mr. Olaf Koester, MBA, RPh

Director, Drug Management Policy Unit, Corporate and Provincial Program Support, Manitoba Health

Dr. Gilles Paradis, MD, MSc, FRCPC

Professor, Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics and Occupational Health, McGill University

Dr. Katherine Siminovitch, MD, FRCPC

Professor, Department of Medicine, University of Toronto

Dr. Robyn Tamblyn, PhD

Professor, Department of Medicine and Epidemiology, McGill University

Ms. Vlatka Tustonic, BComm & CompSci

Lead, Innovation & Strategic Alliances, Saskatoon Health Region

Dr. David Wishart, BSc, MPhil, PhD

Professor, Departments of Computing Science and Biological Sciences, University of Alberta

Stage 1 Review Panel

Dr. Alain Beaudet (Chair), MD, PhD

President and CEO, Fonds de la recherche en santé du Québec (FRSQ)

Dr. Paul Armstrong, MD

Professor, Department of Medicine (Division of Cardiology), University of Alberta

Dr. Elspeth Murray, BSc, MBA, PhD

Associate Professor and Director, Queens Centre for Business Ventures, School of Business,
Queen's University

Dr. Gilles Paradis, MD, MSc, FRCPC

Professor, Department of Epidemiology, Biostatistics and Occupational Health, McGill University

Dr. Matthew Spence, MD, PhD

former President and CEO, Alberta Heritage Foundation for Medical Research (retired)

Dr. Robyn Tamblyn, PhD

Professor, Department of Medicine and Epidemiology, McGill University

Dr. David Wishart, BSc, MPhil, PhD

Professor, Departments of Computing Science and Biological Sciences, University of Alberta