MICHAEL SMITH FOUNDATION
FOR HEALTH RESEARCH

Discover. Connect. Engage.

2018 HEALTH PROFESSIONAL-INVESTIGATOR COMPETITION

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Last updated: **September 13, 2017**

Elements that are taken into consideration when applications are reviewed:

- The proposed research project is being assessed as an integral part of the applicant's career development as an independent researcher within the health system. MSFHR's funding is ultimately for the researcher – we do not fund the research proposal per se.
- Career interruptions can occur for reasons such as pregnancy, early child care, illness or elder care, which can influence opportunity for clinical activities, research output and other related knowledge production.
    - Interruptions in one's research career can also occur due to residency training and full-time clinical practice.
- Different disciplines and environments offer different opportunities for research output and forms of knowledge production.
- Reputation of the applicant's host institutions should not affect the evaluation of the applicant.
- When assessing research contributions, please consider the following:
    - Different disciplines and environments offer different opportunities for research contributions, publications and other forms of knowledge production.
    - Focus on the quality and impact of published works and contributions to grey literature, not simply the number.
    - Applicants are advised to describe their contribution in multi-authored or collaborative works.
    - For academic publications, journal impact factors can vary from discipline to discipline and do not necessarily indicate the quality of their individual publications.
- All applicants are encouraged to include a range of appropriate traditional and non-traditional knowledge translation (KT) activities in their research proposal in one of two ways:
    - As components of the research proposal (the practice of KT).
    - As the focus of the research proposal (KT science).
        i. Applicants will declare themselves in this category but the final decision will be made by MSFHR. These applicants will be evaluated against additional KT science criteria.

Each application is rated in the following three evaluation areas: track record (35%), research proposal (45%), and research environment and support (20%).

All applications will be reviewed by MSFHR staff for eligibility for the health professional-investigator award competition prior to being submitted to the review panel.

Track Record	Weighting – 35%
Assessment Criteria The applicant should provide evidence of a track record that shows a committed interest in research. Please assess the applicant's track record within the context of their career stage, and determine the applicant's potential for sustained research success based on the following: • Consider the number and prestigiousness of awards and acknowledgements for leadership and career achievements • Consider the applicant's research and professional activities and contributions (including publications, policy papers, government reports, issue papers, etc.); has the applicant provided examples of how their activity could or has led to a change in policy and/or practice? • Consider the applicant's clinical or management capabilities and achievements • Consider the quality of the applicant's mentorship and supervisory experience and activities • Assess the applicant's ability to successfully plan and engage in KT activities appropriate to the research (e.g. publications, communication with decision-makers, community meetings, practice guidelines, research forums, presentations, etc.). • **Additional criteria for KT science research proposal only:** Do the applicant's previous contributions or clinical activities demonstrate a clear focus on KT science?	
Assessment Descriptor	**Score**
Outstanding • There is evidence of a high number of prestigious awards and acknowledgements for leadership and career achievement relative to the applicant's career stage. • The applicant has made several contributions that have significantly impacted their field, and provides evidence of exceptional professional achievements. • The applicant demonstrates remarkable clinical capabilities and highly creative advancement in their clinical field. • The applicant demonstrates significant and detailed evidence of mentorship and/or supervisory abilities. • The applicant provides abundant evidence of highly effective KT activities. • **For KT science research proposal only:** The applicant demonstrates an exceptional understanding and history of KT science-related work.	**4.5 – 4.9**

Excellent • There is evidence of receipt of several important awards and acknowledgements for leadership and career achievement relative to the applicant's career stage. • The applicant has made important and impactful contributions to their field and provides consistent evidence of professional achievements throughout their career. • The applicant demonstrates substantial clinical capabilities and creative advancement in their clinical field. • The applicant demonstrates very strong and consistent evidence of mentorship and supervisory abilities. • The applicant provides strong evidence of effective KT activities. • **For KT science research proposal only:** The applicant demonstrates a strong understanding and history of KT science-related work.	**4.0 – 4.4**
Very Good • There is evidence of an above average number of awards and acknowledgements for leadership and career achievement relative to the applicant's career stage. • The applicant has made notable contributions in their field and provides evidence of some professional achievements. • The applicant demonstrates a relatively strong level of experience and potential for advancement in the proposed area of research. • The applicant provides a few strong examples of mentorship and supervisory abilities. • The applicant provides some evidence of effective KT activities. • **For KT science research proposal only:** The applicant demonstrates an appropriate understanding and some past evidence of KT science-related work, with the potential for more in future activities.	**3.5 – 3.9**
Good • There is evidence of awards and acknowledgements for leadership and career achievement, but relatively fewer in number and/or from less competitive sources. • The applicant has produced a modest number of contributions to their field relative to their career level, and provides some evidence of professional achievements.	**3.0 – 3.4**

• The applicant demonstrates some experience and creativity in the proposed area of research. • The applicant provides adequate examples of mentorship and supervisory abilities. • The applicant provides evidence of KT, although detail is lacking. • **For KT science research proposal only:** The applicant demonstrates a basic understanding and relatively few instances of KT science-related work.	
Less than Adequate • There is little to no evidence of receipt of any significant or competitive awards or acknowledgements. • The applicant has made no significant contribution or impact in their field and provides no examples of professional achievements. • The applicant demonstrates no practical experience in the proposed area of research. • The applicant lists no significant examples of mentorship or examples of supervisory abilities. • The applicant provides little to no evidence of KT activities. • **For KT science research proposal only:** The applicant demonstrates no understanding or past evidence of KT science-related work.	**0.0 – 2.9**

Research Proposal	Weighting – 45%

Assessment Criteria
The research proposal should clearly describe details on the objectives, rationale, methodology, setting or location, mentorship, collaborators (if applicable), and a timeline. Assessment should be based on the following:
• Consider the conceptual framework, design, methods and analyses: are these clear, adequately described and developed, and well-integrated into the research proposal?
• Consider the potential for advancement of knowledge: does the proposed research address a need or gap in health research, or generate evidence that informs best practices for health or health services delivery in BC?
• Is the proposed research feasible within the initial three-year time frame of the award and does it include consideration for future direction of study?
• Are KT-related activities embedded within the research proposal?
• Is the proposed research well-aligned with the applicant's knowledge and abilities?
• If applicable, are the roles of additional research personnel adequately described and justified?
• **Additional criteria for KT science research proposal only:**
  ○ Does the research proposal describe how the dissemination or implementation of research findings is being studied[1]?
  ○ Does the research proposal address the study of both the process and the outcomes of the KT research?
  ○ Will the research proposal add to the body of knowledge on effective KT?	

Assessment Descriptor	**Score**
Outstanding • The proposed research is exceptionally well-designed and developed. • The proposed research has exceedingly high potential for knowledge advancement and identifies an extremely significant health research gap or method of implementation that will have a substantial and broad impact on health and/or the health system. • The feasibility and projected schedule for completing the research proposal are clear and realistic. • There is an impressive and effective plan for incorporating KT activities within the research proposal. • The proposed research is perfectly aligned with the applicant's skills and expertise.	**4.5 – 4.9**

[1] Refer to Proctor *et al.* (2012) Implementation Science, 7:96 for additional KT science research proposal criteria.

• The proposal provides clear and detailed justification for the inclusion of research personnel, if applicable. • **For KT science research proposal only:** The proposed research proposal provides a clear plan on how findings will be implemented and/or disseminated, clearly addresses the proposed outcomes and will be a significant addition to the body of effective KT.	
Excellent • The proposed research is of high quality with well-articulated rationale, design and outputs. • The proposed research has strong potential for knowledge advancement and identifies an important health research gap or method of implementation that will have a strong impact on health and/or the health system. • The feasibility is sound and the projected schedule for completing the research proposal is realistic. • There is a clear plan for effective KT activity. • The proposed research is well-aligned with the applicant's skills and abilities. • The proposal provides appropriate justification for additional research personnel, if applicable. • **For KT science research proposal only:** The proposed research proposal provides clear detail on how findings will be implemented and/or disseminated, addresses most of the proposed outcomes and will be a great addition to the body of effective KT.	**4.0 – 4.4**
Very Good • The concepts and methodology presented in the research proposal are pertinent and well-presented, and generally support the goals of the proposed research. • The proposal shows some potential for knowledge advancement and identifies a health research gap or method of implementation that will have a notable impact on health and/or the health system. • The proposed research is generally feasible with only minor concerns regarding the projected schedule for completion. • A suitable plan for effective KT activities is provided. • The proposed research is mostly aligned with the applicant's skills and abilities.	**3.5 – 3.9**

• The proposal provides adequate justification for the addition of research personnel, if applicable. • **For KT science research proposal only:** The proposed research proposal provides evidence on how findings will be implemented and/or disseminated, but lacks some detail. It addresses many of the proposed outcomes and will be a useful addition to the body of effective KT.	
Good • The proposed research is valid, but description of some concepts and methodology need more clarification. • The proposal shows some potential for knowledge advancement, and identifies a health research gap or method of implementation that will have a limited impact on health and/or the health system. • The feasibility and projected schedule for completing the proposed research is adequate, but could use more detail. • There is evidence of KT activity, although its effectiveness is unclear. • The proposed research proposal is somewhat aligned with the applicant's skills and abilities. • Justification for additional research personnel is provided, but with limited detail, if applicable. • **For KT science research proposal only:** The proposed research proposal provides limited detail on how findings will be implemented and/or disseminated, and addresses only some of the proposed outcomes. Its contribution to the body of effective KT will have limited impact.	**3.0 – 3.4**
Less than Adequate • The proposed research may be valid but its experimental design and methodologies are flawed, unclear and underdeveloped. • The proposed research does not appear to have the potential for advancing knowledge in the area and fails to identify any health research gap or method of implementation that would have an impact on health and/or the health system. • The feasibility and projected schedule for completing the research proposal is unrealistic. • Little to no KT activity has been included in the proposal. • The proposed research is mostly incompatible with the applicant's skills and abilities.	**0.0 – 2.9**

• There is little to no justification for the inclusion of additional research personnel, if applicable. • **For KT science research proposal only:** The proposed research proposal provides no evidence on how findings will be implemented and/or disseminated, fails to address the proposed research outcomes and does not contribute to the body of effective KT.	

Research Environment and Support	Weighting – 20%
Assessment Criteria It is vital for an application to demonstrate strong institutional support to the applicant's research development and productivity. Assessment should be based on the following: • Consider the quality of the support the applicant will receive as expressed by the applicant's department head or equivalent. • Consider the availability and accessibility of personnel, facilities and infrastructure required to conduct the proposed research: is the proposed research environment appropriate for the research proposal, including KT activities? • Consider the applicant's access to relevant thought leaders and other knowledge resources: is adequate mentorship and/or continuing research education available? • Is there evidence of organizational resources (e.g. human and financial) that would support the proposed research? • Are the applicant's reference letters from reputable individuals in the field, and do they show evidence that the applicant has the characteristics and skills necessary to successfully carry out a research proposal?	
Assessment Descriptor	**Score**
Outstanding • There is unqualified commitment from the host institution to provide the required protection of time and research appointment needed to take up the award. • The research environment is ideal for the proposed research, including KT activities, which provides all necessary personnel, facilities and infrastructure required for success. • The applicant has already established strong connections with mentors or experts in the field to enhance the required expertise needed for the proposed research. • There is unqualified support for physical and financial resources from the host institution. • The letters of reference are from highly reputable individuals and are unanimous in their support for the applicant.	**4.5 – 4.9**

Excellent • There is strong and clear commitment from the host institution to provide the required protection of time and research appointment needed to take up the award. • The research environment is first rate, providing most of the necessary personnel, facilities and infrastructure required for success. • The applicant has ready access to, and has established some contact with, experienced mentors and thought leaders in the applicant's area of study. • There is considerable evidence of physical and financial resources from the host institution. • The letters of reference are from respected individuals and are very strong in their support for the applicant.	**4.0 – 4.4**
Very Good • Commitment from the host institution to provide the required protection of time and research appointment is evident. • The research environment is suitable, but lacks some of the necessary resources required for success. • The applicant has complete access to mentors or experts in the applicant's area of study, but is working to establish direct connections. • There is evidence of suitable physical and financial resources from the host institution. • The applicant's letters of reference are mostly positive in their support for the applicant.	**3.5 – 3.9**
Good • Commitment from the host institution to provide the required protection of time and research appointment is present, but tenuous. • The research environment is somewhat serviceable, but lacks some key resources for the proposed research and associated KT activities. • Access to mentors or experts in the field is difficult in the current research environment, but the applicant is making an effort to establish connections. • There is some evidence of physical and financial resources from the host institution, but it is unclear to what extent. • The letters of reference are somewhat positive in their support for the applicant.	**3.0 – 3.4**

Less than Adequate • There is little to no commitment from the host institution to provide the required protection of time or research appointment needed to take up the award. • The research environment is inadequate for the proposed research or any associated KT activities. • The applicant has little to no access to mentors or experts in the applicant's field of study, and provides no indication that an effort is being made to find and/or connect with them. • There is no evidence of support from the host institution for physical or financial resources. • The letters of reference are generally vague or unsupportive of the applicant.	**0.0 – 2.9**