MICHAEL SMITH FOUNDATION
FOR HEALTH RESEARCH

BC's health research funding agency

2019 **SCHOLAR** COMPETITION

EVALUATION CRITERIA

Track Record	Weighting – 50%

Assessment Criteria

Scientific productivity, originality and impact should be considered in the context of the norms of the research area and the applicant's experience. Early career researchers should be building a national and international reputation for excellence in their fields, and demonstrate exceptional promise for the future. Please assess the applicant's track record in context to their career stage, and potential for success based on the following:

- Consider the number, importance and breadth of special distinctions relative to education, training, and work experience.
- Consider receipt of prestigious awards or acknowledgements of academic achievements in both education and scholarship.
- Consider the applicant's experience in the proposed area of research and with the proposed methodology.
- Consider the applicant's scientific productivity throughout the research career, including primary authorship of peer-reviewed publications or other literature, and significant contributions to the field.
- Consider the applicant's body of work as a whole; is there clear demonstration of an independent research program, or the potential to develop an independent research program?
- Consider the level and amount of peer-reviewed grant funding obtained by the applicant.
- Consider the applicant's ability to successfully plan and engage in KT activities appropriate to the research (e.g. conference presentations, commercialization, communication with media, community advisory groups, workshops, podcasts, lay language summaries, etc.).
- Consider the applicant's capacity to recruit and train research trainees and other personnel.
- Assess the strengths, intellectual capacity and independence of the applicant, as described by the applicant's referees.
- *Additional criteria for KT science research proposal only:*
  - o Does the applicant hold or have held KT science funding?
  - o Does the applicant's publication record demonstrate a clear focus on KT science?

Assessment Descriptor	Score
Outstanding • There is evidence of a high number of prestigious and highly competitive prizes, awards, distinctions and grants. • The applicant shows a highly impressive record of independence, or potential for independence, in research demonstrating clear evidence of its conceptualization, design, analysis and reporting. • There is evidence of primary authorship of publications in high-impact peer-reviewed journals, and an impressive number of invited presentations at national and international levels. • Demonstrates exceptional practical experience in the proposed area of research and with the proposed methodology. • The applicant demonstrates exceptional experience in a variety of KT activities appropriate to the research. • The applicant demonstrates an impressive capacity to recruit and train research trainees and other personnel.	**4.5 – 4.9** **may be funded**

• The letters of reference are from highly reputable individuals, providing detailed assessments of the applicant's strengths, level of independence, and intellectual capacity, and are unanimous in their support for the applicant. • *For KT science research proposal only:* The applicant has an impressive record of funding for KT science, along with a substantial publication record in this area.	
Excellent • There is evidence of receipt of several important prizes, awards, distinctions and grants. • The applicant shows a promising record of independence or potential for independence in research, with strong evidence of contributions to its concept, design, analysis and reporting. • There is solid evidence of publication as a primary author in high impact publications in the field, and invited presentations at national and international events that are relevant to the field of research. • Demonstrates considerable experience in the proposed area of research and with the proposed methodology. • The applicant demonstrates strong experience in a variety of KT activities appropriate to the research. • The applicant shows strong capacity to recruit and train research trainees and other personnel. • High quality reference letters from credible and authoritative sources providing a reasonable assessment of the applicant's strengths, level of independence, and intellectual capacity. • *For KT science research proposal only:* The applicant demonstrates a strong understanding and history of KT science-related work, along with a consistent publication and funding record in the area of KT science.	**4.0 – 4.4** **may be funded**
Very Good • There is evidence of receipt of some academic recognition, prizes and grants, but fewer in number or from less competitive sources compared to other applicants. • There is some notable evidence of independence or potential for independence in the concept, design, analysis, and reporting of research projects. • Evidence of publication is good, but there are relatively few as the primary author and are generally restricted to lower-impact journals, and invited presentations are in relatively less influential forums. • The applicant demonstrates a suitable level of experience in the proposed area of research and with the proposed methodology. • The applicant demonstrates some experience in KT activities appropriate to the research. • The applicant shows some capacity to recruit and train research trainees and other personnel.	**3.5 – 3.9** **may be funded (above 3.8)**

• Reference letters are from credible sources and provide a positive, but general assessment of the applicant's strengths, level of independence, and intellectual capacity. • *For KT science research proposal only:* The applicant demonstrates an appropriate understanding and history of KT science-related work, along with a suitable publication and funding record in the area of KT science.	
Fair • Academic recognition, prizes, and grants received are limited, and restricted to local or non-competitive sources. • Research experience appears linked to the mentor's or supervisor's research, with limited evidence of independence or potential for independence. • The applicant shows limited primary authorship in mainly lower impact publications; invited presentations are primarily at the home institution and within the local research community. • The applicant demonstrates only partial and/or indirect experience in the proposed area of research and with the proposed methodology. • The applicant demonstrates limited experience in KT activities appropriate to the research. • The applicant shows limited capacity to recruit and train research trainees and other personnel. • Reference letters are from credible sources but provide limited details about the applicant's strengths, level of independence, and intellectual capacity. • *For KT science research proposal only:* The applicant demonstrates only a narrow understanding and limited history of KT science-related work, with very few publications and restricted funding relevant to the area of KT science.	**3.0 – 3.4** **not fundable**
Less than Adequate • Academic and research training only meets the minimum requirement at the scholar level — no awards, prizes or grants are described in the application. • Research experience is fully tied to mentor's or supervisor's research; no evidence of independent research. • Evidence of publications is inadequate: no primary authorship and publication limited to low impact sources; no evidence of invited presentations. • The applicant demonstrates little-to-no experience in the proposed area of research, or with the proposed methodology. • Little-to-no practical experience in KT activities. • The applicant shows no real capacity to recruit and train research trainees and other personnel. • Reference letters are brief, impersonal, and with little information about applicant's academic strength or research abilities. • *For KT science research proposal only:* The applicant provides no evidence of understanding or history of KT science-related work, with no legitimate publications or funding relevant to the area of KT science.	**0 – 2.9** **not fundable**

Program of Research	Weighting – 30%

Assessment Criteria

The applicant's program of research should cover the full duration of the salary award (five years). The application should demonstrate integration of one or more projects within the overall proposed research program. The description of the program of research should include details on specific aims, rationale, methodology, setting or location, information about collaborators, feasibility and a timeline. Consider the following when assessing the applicants' programs of research:

- The conceptual framework, design, and methods: are they adequately described, well-integrated, innovative, and relevant to the aims of the program of research?
- The nature and extent of research interactions and collaborative arrangements as they relate to the potential impact of the research and the professional growth of the applicant.
- The applicants' role in the design and conduct of the program of research: does the applicant demonstrate leadership as a mentor, in their ability to manage research, etc.?
- The feasibility of the proposed program of research, including recruitment of subjects, project timeline, and preliminary data, where available.
- The program of research is well-aligned with the applicant's skills and abilities.
- KT related activities are embedded within the program of research through, for example, researcher user[1] engagement, research dissemination and/or research uptake activities, both within and beyond the academic community.
- *Additional criteria for KT science research proposal only:*
  - Does the research proposal describe how the dissemination or implementation of research findings is being studied[2]?
  - Does the research proposal address the study of both the process and the outcomes of KT research though an overarching conceptual model or theory?
  - Will the research proposal add to the body of knowledge on effective KT?

Assessment Descriptor	Score
Outstanding - The program of research represents innovative and original leading-edge concepts, and describes hypotheses and methodologies that are of the caliber expected of a scholar who is at the forefront of the field. - The applicant is meaningfully and fully engaged with collaborators who are in a position to further inform and enhance the research program, and/or disseminate and utilize the research findings. - The applicant demonstrates unqualified leadership as a mentor, and as a manager to other researchers and their work as it relates to the larger program of research. - The feasibility and projected schedule for completing the program of research are clear and realistic.	**4.5 – 4.9** **may be funded**

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[1] Research users are the target audience(s) of research evidence. Research users are experts on their needs, environment and local context. Including research users as equal members of the research team will ideally result in more relevant research evidence and an increased likelihood of its use for the purpose of making informed decisions about health policies, programs and/or practices. A research user may include, but is not limited to, other researchers, policy makers, health care practitioners, decision makers, health care administrators, educators, patient user group, or health charity, and the public. [Adapted from Canadian Institutes of Health Research's 'Guide to Knowledge Translation Planning at CIHR: Integrated and End-of-Grant Approaches', www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/45321.html; accessed September 27, 2017].

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

• The program of research is perfectly aligned with the applicant's skills and abilities. • KT activities are highly appropriate and effective, occur throughout the research project within and beyond the academic community as appropriate to the program of research. • *For KT science research proposal only:* The proposed program of research provides a clear plan on how findings will be implemented and/or disseminated, clearly addresses the processes and outcomes through a coherent and effective framework, and will be an invaluable addition to the body of effective KT.	
Excellent • The program of research is of high quality, and presents concepts and methodology that are pertinent and highly innovative. • The applicant is actively engaged with collaborators who are in a position to further inform and enhance the research program, and/or disseminate and utilize the research findings. • The applicant demonstrates strong leadership as a mentor, and as a manager to other researchers and their work as it relates to the larger program of research. • The feasibility and projected schedule for completing the program of research evokes confidence that the research will be successfully completed within the stated time. • The program of research is well aligned with the applicant's skills and abilities. • KT activities are appropriate and effective, occur throughout the research project within and beyond the academic community as appropriate to the program of research. • *For KT science research proposal only:* The proposed program of research provides clear detail on how findings will be implemented and/or disseminated, clearly addresses the processes and outcomes through a coherent and effective framework, and will be a strong addition to the body of effective KT.	**4.0 – 4.4** **may be funded**
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 applicant is somewhat engaged with collaborators who are in a position to further inform the research program, and/or disseminate and utilize the research findings. • The applicant demonstrates aspects of effective leadership as a mentor, and as a manager to other researchers. • The proposed research is generally feasible with only minor concerns regarding the projected schedule for completion. • The program of research is mostly aligned with the applicant's skills and abilities. • KT activities are planned to occur throughout the research project within and beyond the academic community as appropriate to the program of research.	**3.5 – 3.9** **may be funded (above 3.8)**

• **For KT science research proposal only:** The proposed program of research provides evidence on how findings will be implemented and/or disseminated, clearly addresses the processes and outcomes through an appropriate framework, and will be a useful addition to the body of effective KT.	
Fair • The concepts and methodology presented in the research proposal are valid, but description of some concepts and methodology need more clarification. • The applicant plans future engagement with collaborators who are in a position to further inform the research program, and/or disseminate and utilize the research findings. • The applicant demonstrates some leadership as a mentor, and as a manager to other researchers. • The feasibility and projected schedule for completing the proposed research is adequate, but could use more detail. • The program of research is somewhat aligned with the applicant's skills and abilities. • KT activities are planned to occur, but for when and to whom is unclear, making their potential effectiveness suspect. • **For KT science research proposal only:** The proposed program of research provides some detail on how findings will be implemented and/or disseminated, addresses the processes and outcomes through a general framework, and will likely have a limited impact on the field.	**3.0 – 3.4** **not fundable**
Less than Adequate • The proposed research may be valid but its experimental design and methodologies are flawed, unclear and underdeveloped. • The applicant shows no evidence of engagement with collaborators who are in a position to further inform the research program, and/or disseminate and utilize the research findings. • The applicant demonstrates nominal leadership as a mentor, and as a manager to other researchers. • The feasibility and projected schedule for completing the research proposal is unrealistic. • The proposed research is mostly incompatible with the applicant's skills and abilities. • Little-to-no KT activity has been included in the proposal. • **For KT science research proposal only:** The proposed program of research provides no detail on how findings will be implemented and/or disseminated, fails to address the processes and outcomes of the work through any recognized framework, and will not contribute to the body of effective KT.	**0 – 2.9** **not fundable**

Environment and Support	Weighting – 20%

Assessment Criteria

It is vital for an application to demonstrate strong institutional support for the applicant's research development and productivity, and provide evidence of a commitment for at least 75 percent of their time to be protected for research. Other elements to consider include the following:

- Clear acknowledgment of support from the applicant's department head, or equivalent, for the required appointment, protected research time and a commitment of continued support post-award.
- Access to relevant thought leaders and collaborators, participation in research groups or networks, and availability of mentors.
- The relevant quality and practicality of the applicant's research environment for training.
- The availability and accessibility of personnel, facilities, and infrastructure required to conduct the proposed research.

Assessment Descriptor	Score
Outstanding • Unqualified commitment from the host institution to provide the required appointment and protected research time for the duration of award, as well as unconditional continuing support post-award. • The applicant has established relationships with distinguished thought leaders and relevant collaborators in the applicant's area of study, demonstrable participation and leadership in formal research teams/networks and has engaged with appropriate mentors for both research and career guidance. • The applicant's research environment is ideally set-up and well-equipped for the proposed research and provides exceptional resources and opportunity for staff and trainees. • Unequivocal and extensive evidence of physical and financial resources from the host institution (space, start-up funds and/or equipment) including human and financial support for the program of research and proposed KT activities.	**4.5 – 4.9** **may be fundable**
Excellent • Strong commitment from the host institution to provide the required appointment and protected research time for the duration of award, and continued support post-award. • The applicant has ready access to thought leaders and relevant collaborators in the applicant's area of study, demonstrates active participation and leadership in formal research teams/networks, and has identified mentors who can provide both research and career guidance. • The applicant's research environment is very well set-up and equipped for the proposed research and provides valuable resources and opportunity for staff and trainees. • Strong evidence of physical and financial resources from the host institution (space, start-up funds and/or equipment) including human and financial support for the program of research and proposed KT activities.	**4.0 – 4.4** **may be fundable**

Very Good • There is evidence of a firm commitment from the host institution to provide the required appointment and protected research time for the duration of award, and conditional commitment for continued support post-award. • The applicant has some access to recognized thought leaders and relevant collaborators in the applicant's area of study is mentioned, provides evidence of efforts to participate in formal research teams/networks, and general access to mentors who can provide research or career guidance. • The applicant's research environment is suitably set-up with some key equipment available for the proposed research, and provides some resources and opportunity for staff and trainees. • Some evidence of physical and financial resources from the host institution (space, start-up funds and/or equipment), including human and financial support for the program of research and proposed KT activities, is provided.	**3.5 – 3.9** **may be fundable (above 3.8)**
Fair • A generally positive, but tenuous commitment from the host institution to provide the required appointment and protected research time for the duration of award is provided, and only a vague assurance of support post-award. • The applicant has possible, but unconfirmed access to recognized thought leaders and relevant collaborators in the applicant's area of study, modest participation in formal research teams/networks, and some access to mentors. • The applicant's research environment is somewhat set-up for the proposed research, but is missing some key equipment/materials that will need to be outsourced, and provides limited resources and opportunity for staff and trainees. • Evidence of physical and financial resources from the host institution (space, start-up funds and/or equipment) is mentioned, but in ambiguous terms.	**3.0 – 3.4** **not fundable**
Less than Adequate • No stated commitment from the host institution to provide the required appointment and protection of time for the duration of the award, or afterwards is provided. • The applicant has no confirmed access to recognized thought leaders, relevant collaborators or mentors, and has provided no clear examples of participation in formal research teams/networks. • The applicant's research environment is inadequately set-up for the proposed research, and does not provide suitable resources and opportunity for staff and trainees. • No evidence of physical and financial resources from the host institution (space, start-up funds and/or equipment) is mentioned.	**0 – 2.9** **not fundable**

BC Health System Priorities
Assessment Criteria
MSFHR has allocated 30 percent of funding for the 2019 Scholar competition across the five BC health system priorities: 1. Enhance access to effective primary health care 2. Services for seniors with complex medical conditions 3. Mental health/substance use care 4. Services for patients needing surgery 5. Rural and remote health care services The actual allocation of funds across each of the five priorities will depend on the relevant applications received and the outcomes of the application review process. Applicants may choose to align their project with a BC Health System Priority to be considered for this 30 percent funding pool. Where applicants have indicated an alignment with a BC Health System Priority, reviewers are asked to confirm that the alignment is justified and provide a brief comment.

Mitacs Accelerate Application Proposal (if applicable)
Assessment Criteria
Refer to the Mitacs Accelerate application proposal (Part 1) upload, and the relevant section in Additional Information of the Scholar application form. The assessment of this information is not to be included in the overall score of the Scholar application, but rather considered separately. Please comment on the following elements as they relate to the Scholar project as a whole: • The proposed intern(s)'s role in the Scholar project is appropriate for their academic degree level, and beneficial to the intern(s)'s training and career development. • The proposed project involving the intern has no adverse effects on the environment.

EVALUATION CRITERIA