MICHAEL SMITH FOUNDATION
FOR HEALTH RESEARCH

BC's health research funding agency

2020 **REACH** COMPETITION

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

DEADLINE: **SEPTEMBER 28, 2020, 4:30 P.M. PT**

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Application Questions

Award Administration Questions

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1. **What is the difference between the MSFHR Convening & Collaborating (C^2) and Reach awards?**

Although the C^2 and Reach Programs both fund knowledge translation (KT) activities related to health research, each program supports distinct KT activities at different points in the research process:

CONVENING & COLLABORATING
(C^2) PROGRAM

Support the co-development
of research activities

REACH PROGRAM

Support the dissemination
of health research outputs

The C^2 Program is designed to bring researchers and research users together to co-develop research aligned with the five BC health system priorities; for the purpose of this award, this is defined as KT activities that occur earlier in the research process, i.e. integrated KT.

In contrast, the Reach Program is designed to support the dissemination of research outputs within the context of an established body of knowledge; for the purpose of this award, this is defined as KT activities that occur near the end of the research process, i.e. end-of-grant KT.

Applicants should take the time to consider which funding opportunity is most relevant to their proposed activity, event or tool. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure the content of their Reach application aligns with the objectives of the program.

2. **What is research evidence?**

Research evidence involves the explicit documentation of methods, peer review and external scrutiny that helps provide a means to judge the trustworthiness of findings, and offers the potential to assess the validity of one claim compared to another. For example, research articles, case studies, systematic reviews, meta-analysis, etc.

3.   What does "uptake" of research evidence mean?

Research uptake refers to the processes through which a diverse set of audiences, including policy-makers, practitioners and other researchers, use research evidence to inform practice or decision-making. Research uptake is most likely to occur when there is communication and dialogue between researchers and research users to ensure the research conducted produces evidence that is both relevant and useful to the research users.

4.   What is stakeholder engagement?

Stakeholder engagement is the process of ensuring that the appropriate people are identified and involved throughout the planning and/or implementation of — in the case of the Reach competition — the dissemination activity, so they are in a position to inform activity development and application, or so they can make use of the research evidence that has been communicated to them to inform and/or improve further health research, practice and/or policy-making.

5.   Who qualifies as a researcher?

For the purposes of this award, a researcher is an individual who is eligible to hold research operating funds as either a principal or co-investigator at the time the award competition closes. MSFHR defines operating funds as research funding from an organization that uses a peer-review process for making funding decisions and is accessible to all researchers in BC. In order to be the **primary applicant**, i.e. the one who launches and submits the application, an individual must be a researcher that holds an appointment at an eligible host institution[1], that is, a BC university, health authority, or research institute that holds a memorandum of understanding with MSFHR.

6.   Who qualifies as a research user?

For the purposes of this award, a researcher user is any individual who might use, benefit, or be impacted by the results of research, but are not necessarily involved in their production. These include, but are not limited to health professionals, patients, family members, community leaders, decision makers, other researchers, etc. At least one research user must be included as a team member, and designated as a co-lead in the Reach award application.

7.   Who qualifies as a research/health professional trainee?

MSFHR is aware trainee appointments can differ in name and requirements depending on the institution. For the purposes of this funding opportunity, a trainee is defined as any individual involved in formal research and/or clinical training that is under the supervision of an independent investigator. These typically include, but are not limited to, undergraduate and

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[1] For a list of current eligible institutions, see http://www.msfhr.org/sites/default/files/MOU_List.pdf.

graduate students, post-doctoral fellows, clinical fellows, etc. At least one BC research/health professional trainee must be included as a team member in the Reach award application.

8.   **What are MSFHR's expectations of a trainee being included in a "meaningful" way?**

The co-leads need to consider engaging the trainee beyond passive activities, for example:

- Engaging them to develop innovative means of collaborating with research users or engaging the audience of the dissemination event.
- Mentoring them to engage and develop relationships with champions/key opinion leaders.
- Providing the opportunity to craft the message, and assemble the information for an event program, or the final report to MSFHR.

9.   **Can the trainee also qualify as the research user co-lead member of the team?**

Yes, provided the individual meets the eligibility requirements for both.

10.   **If the entire funding envelope for the current competition is not expended, will the balance be added to the budget of the next competition to increase the success rate?**

Residual funds from the current Reach awards competition will not be added to the budget envelope of the next Reach awards competition. The budget envelope for all MSFHR programs are determined on an annual basis and are dependent on funds received from government and MSFHR's Board of Director's approval.

11.   **Will MSFHR reveal the score of my reach award application?**

The final score is not revealed as per MSFHR's standard practice, although a quartile ranking will be provided. In addition, as feedback to applicants, a summary of the reviewers' comments is also provided.

12.   **Is there a limit to how many times I can apply for the Reach award?**

As long as applicants meet the eligibility criteria of this funding opportunity, they can apply to each annual award competition. However, applicants may only serve as the primary applicant on <u>one</u> application, but can be included in up to <u>two</u> applications total <u>per competition</u>. Activities or events that are part of an annual series (e.g., annual conference, seminar series, etc.) may only be funded once through the Reach program, if eligible.

13.   **Can I apply for a Reach award and C^2 award in the same competition year?**

Yes, as long as proposed activities are sufficiently different, align with the purpose and objectives of each program, and are associated with different research projects.

14. **If I am applying to the Reach award to support my dissemination event, can I also request sponsorship support from MSFHR?**

No. Events funded by the Reach award are not eligible for MSFHR sponsorship.

15. **Where can I find information on or examples of KT and/or research evidence dissemination?**

The KT section of MSFHR's website contains a link for KT resources that can assist both researchers and research users in their exploration of KT methods, including methods of KT evaluation.

16. **Is an integrated KT (iKT) plan an eligible topic for a Reach award application?**

No. iKT is an approach to doing research that applies the principles of KT to the entire research process. The Reach award provides direct funding for a dissemination event, tool or activity for the express purpose of knowledge transfer or exchange of pre-existing research evidence, i.e. near the end of the research process (end-of-grant KT). Development of an iKT plan would be eligible for C^2 award funding.

17. **When does a dissemination event funded by the Reach award need to occur?**

All dissemination events or activities must be completed within a 12-month period from the start of funding. In the event that not all funds are expended within the 12-month period, a no-cost extension may be requested for up to six months. For more details, refer to the *Conditions of Award*.

18. **Can dissemination events or activities funded by the Reach award be held outside of British Columbia?**

No. All outputs supported by this funding opportunity must be based within British Columbia.

19. **Is providing salary support/buy-out time for myself or salary/stipend support for my trainees an eligible expense?**

No. The focus of the Reach award is to provide funding support for the development and implementation of a research knowledge dissemination event, activity or tool. Only partial or full salary support related to buy-out/release time for **research users'** participation as team members or key meeting participants is considered an eligible expense.

20. **Can trainees or other research staff be hired to coordinate Reach award-related activities?**

It is a general expectation that the researcher will have operating funds to cover the expense of the trainees and staff. However, for services directly related and integral to the success of the proposed work described in the Reach award application, research trainees and staff can

be funded through this award, but applicants must clearly position payments as a **one-time** expense for services rendered. These costs would therefore be considered eligible under "Services and Supplies" (see **Appendix A** in the competition guidelines). This must be clearly articulated in the budget template included in the Reach award application.

21. **Individuals employed within BC government ministries and departments are not eligible to apply as a co-lead. What does this mean?**

    Due to the nature of the source of our research program funding, we cannot allow funds to be awarded to individuals who work **directly** within the BC government. This includes those who are employed within BC government ministries or departments. This does not apply to individuals who are employed by organizations or institutions who receive provincial government funding, e.g. health authorities, school boards, non-profit agencies, etc. If you, or someone on your proposed application are unsure of their status as a BC government employee, please contact MSFHR Help Desk (604.714.6609; helpdesk@msfhr.org) for more information.

22. **Is there a limit as to how many team members are included in an application?**

    No. However, teams must include one researcher and one research user as co-leads, and include at least one research or health professional trainee. The role of all team members named in the application must be fully described, and justification for their inclusion on the team must be included.

Award Administration Questions

1.   Can I renew my Reach award?

No. The award is not renewable.

2.   Can I defer the start date of the Reach award?

No. The Reach award is not deferrable.

3.   How much time do I have to respond to an offer of the Reach award?

Successful award recipients will have to accept or decline the offer of funding within the date stipulated on the award notification letter (typically 10 business days).

4.   What documents will I need to provide before I can start my award?

A copy of the *Award Acceptance Form* signed by you and a representative from the host institution must be uploaded in PDF format to MSFHR ApplyNet.