



Natural Sciences and Engineering  
Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en sciences  
naturelles et en génie du Canada

Canadian Institutes of  
Health Research

Instituts de recherche en  
santé du Canada

Social Sciences and Humanities  
Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en  
sciences humaines du Canada

Greetings,

This is to advise you of important changes regarding stipends for students and postdoctoral fellows paid from grants from the three federal research granting agencies.

As you are aware, the federal research granting agencies (NSERC, CIHR, SSHRC) have in the past followed different practices with regard to the level of stipends which can be paid to students and postdoctoral fellows. Over the years we had heard from institutions and researchers that these different practices were too rigid, may limit the researchers' ability to recruit students and provide them with compensation that was competitive and fair, made it difficult to manage interdisciplinary teams and increased the administrative burden on institutions. Thus, in March 2011, as part of the ongoing effort to harmonize policies across the three agencies, the agency Presidents agreed that granting agency regulations on support for students and trainees paid through grants should be removed.

The removal of these regulations will address the concerns we had received over the years.

Therefore, beginning September 2011, the policies and practices of the three agencies will be harmonized, and specific minima or maxima pertaining to stipends paid from grants will no longer be in effect. The *Tri-Agency Financial Administration Guide* will no longer stipulate the value of stipends that can be paid from grants. In addition, the agencies will remove the restriction on providing supplements from grants ("top-ups") to award holders.

Many institutions have already set policies on minimum support packages, where stipend support can be assembled from various sources. In other instances, collective agreements may come into play. The granting agencies encourage institutions to continue to ensure that students and postdoctoral fellows are appropriately compensated, commensurate with the important contributions that they make to the research environment of the institution.

Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions pertaining to this new policy.

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