

MRF Grants Review Committee

Terms of Reference

MUN Medical Research Foundation (MRF)
Faculty of Medicine, Memorial University of Newfoundland

MRF Grants Programs.

The MUN Medical Research Foundation (MRF) began in 1983 with the establishment of an endowment to assist the Faculty of Medicine to develop and maintain excellence in its programs of research.

The MRF Board of Directors currently oversees the awarding of a number of grants each year, utilizing funding from a variety of sources including income from the MRF endowment.

All areas of research and scholarship within the Faculty of Medicine are eligible to apply and receive MRF grants, and applications from all subject areas are encouraged.

The MRF Grants Review Committee.

MRF grants competitions are competitive. While success rates vary from competition to competition, on average, only one in three applications can be funded (e.g. 33%, 2012-2017).

A detailed review, discussion, and scoring of research proposals therefore plays a key role in deciding which grant applications are funded. This task is chiefly the responsibility of the MRF Grants Review Committee, which is composed of elected and appointed representatives from across the Faculty of Medicine (see below).

A key role of the MRF Grants Review Committee is to help ensure that the limited funds available to the MRF are directed to the most worthy and promising proposals in a fair and equitable manner. The scoring of applications is based on the overall excellence of the grant proposal, which may reflect many attributes including creativity/novelty, the likelihood of the project being highly productive, the possible impact of the project, and the potential for it to develop into an ongoing program of externally supported research (see application and review guidelines for further information).

Membership and Organization of the Review Committee

Members of the MRF Grant Review Committee will have their major appointment in the Faculty of Medicine and it is recommended that they have experience with research review. Appointments to the Grants Review Committee are made by the MRF Board of Directors, based on nominations as specified in the table below. An exception is the Member-at-Large position,

who is elected from within the Faculty of Medicine. The MRF Board of Directors selects the Scientific Officer of the Grants Review Committee for their experience with grant review and familiarity with the MRF grant review process.

MRF Grant Review Committee Composition:

Representative (voting)	Appointment Process
BioMedical Sciences (BMS) (one representative)	Nominated by the Associate Dean, BMS
Clinical Research (one representative)	Nominated by the Associate Dean, Clinical Research
Community Health and Humanities (CHH), (one representative)	Nominated by the Associate Dean, CHH
Dean's Representative (one representative)	Nominated by the Dean of Medicine
Member-At-Large (one representative)	Elected from within the Faculty of Medicine

Non-voting member	Appointment Process
Scientific Officer (one individual)	Appointed by the MRF Board of Directors.

Term of Appointment.

Grant Review Committee members will serve a two year term based on the academic year (ie. commencing September 1st and ending August 31st).

Grant Review Committee members may serve more than one term, but no more than two terms may be served consecutively.

Operations

Reviewers will be provided with written guidelines that outline their responsibilities, considerations for reviewing and scoring grant applications, and the general nature and timeline of the review process. Any questions or concerns that arise may be directed to the Scientific Officer and/or the MRF Board.

Reviewers will be responsible for scoring their assigned applications and producing a brief written summary of their critique of each application. Applications will then be discussed at the Committee level.

All voting members of the Grants Review Committee lacking a conflict of interest will participate in the final scoring of each application. All members of the Committee must be present (in person or by conference call) for Committee meetings to proceed, with the exception of brief periods in which a reviewer may leave the meeting to avoid a conflict of interest.

The Scientific Officer will normally Chair the meeting, and will provide the MRF Board with the scoring information and Scientific Officer notes for each application, and any feedback from the Grants Review Committee concerning the review process.

In time, a decision letter will be sent to each applicant from the Dean of Medicine. The decision letter will be accompanied by the Scientific Officer notes, the written reviews of the grant proposal, and the scores of the assigned reviewers.

Summary of Responsibilities

- To follow the guidelines provided for application review, scoring, and conflict of interest.
- To score assigned grant applications following a thorough review of their scholarly merit.
- To participate in the Committee's appraisal and final scoring of each grant application.
- To provide written comments for each assigned application that will serve as constructive feedback to applicants regarding the strengths and limitations of their research proposal.
- To flag applications that appear to be in conflict with MRF application guidelines.
- To provide constructive feedback to the MRF Board of Directors concerning the grants review process.