



Research
Exchange Groups



Maximizing the Competitiveness of your Academic Funding Application

Newfoundland & Labrador Centre for
Applied Health Research
Research Exchange Group on Aging

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Newfoundland & Labrador Centre for
**APPLIED
HEALTH
RESEARCH**
www.nlcahr.mun.ca

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Especially for trainees

Get familiar with the territory



- Ask your supervisor if you can help review grants/awards/journal articles that she/he is reviewing.
- Provides context and enhances your ability to sort good from not so good.

2. Build a track record

<http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/>

Institute of Aging Awards and Prizes

The [Age+ Prize](#) recognizes excellence in research on aging carried out in Canada. Awarded annually to 10 to 15 authors of a published, scientific article on aging, the Age+ Award is aimed at graduate students, postdoctoral fellows and residents from all disciplines conducting research in aging.

[Travel Awards](#) IA provides travel funds for Masters and Doctoral students, and Post-doctoral fellows to present their work at a conference, workshop or symposium.

[CAG-IA Student Poster Competition](#): A prize is awarded for the best research posters at the Canadian Association on Gerontology Annual Scientific and Educational Meeting

Institute of Aging Summer Program

The CIHR Institute of Aging annual [Summer Program in Aging \(SPA\)](#)

CIHR Institute of Gender and Health Conference Scholarships
(total funds available: \$10,000)

IHSPR Travel Awards for Trainees and New Investigators



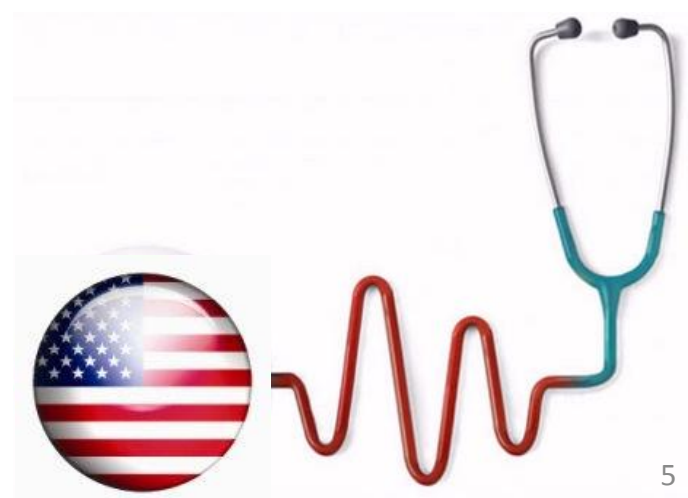
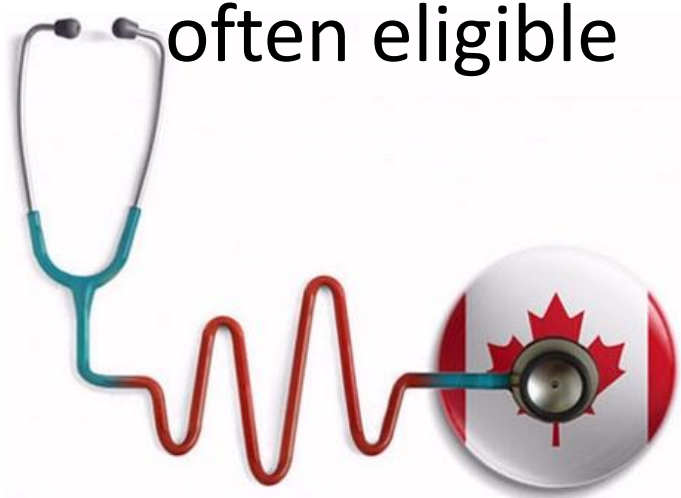


3. Strengthen your CV

- Get going on your publications and abstracts early.
- Present preliminary findings at a conference in which abstracts are peer-reviewed.
- Find colleagues to collaborate with or help out and ask to be listed as a co-author.
- Write and publish a review article.

4. Pick the right agency

- Start locally if funding is available
- Don't forget Health Canada, health charities, charitable foundations
- Considerable SSHRC and NSERC, not just CIHR
- Don't forget American funders; Canadians are often eligible



5. Pick the right competition

- Focused RFPs often easier than open competitions
 - At CIHR, check institute websites
- Some general competitions at CIHR have possible co-funding from ‘your’ institute(s)
- At NLCAHR, apply to both general and special competition (NL-HARP)
- At CIHR, pick the peer review committee carefully



6. Tailor your application to the program

- Read the program description and the evaluation criteria carefully; compare them
- Use the key words and concepts in both (and especially in the evaluation criteria)
- Tailor your language and content to the peer review committee
 - Try to find out whether reviewers are specialists or generalists
 - If not sure, write for both



7. Justify your request

- Why should they fund your application?
 - Use the literature review section to make an argument about why your contribution is necessary, important, innovative
 - Describe your proposed contribution clearly
 - Explain your methodology carefully; try to foresee objections, alternative approaches



8. Take the instructions seriously

Make sure to cross your
+s and dot your i's.



- Respect the word limits (overall and for each section)
- Use the headings suggested
- Put the right stuff into the right sections
- Pay careful attention to the required information and budget for KT

9. Write carefully

- Style matters: incomprehensible, sloppy prose can doom a brilliant application
- Work hard on the abstract and introduction
- Proofread and get external advice
- Give yourself enough time to get advice, rewrite, revise, edit
- Avoid acronyms as much as possible
- Avoid unnecessary repetitiveness



10. Find the right 'partners'

- For students, pick your referees carefully
 - Recent teachers or big supporters?
 - Academics or employers?
 - Big shots or familiars?
- For new faculty
 - Find PI's to take you on as Co-Investigator
 - Take seriously the need for non-academic partners
 - Take seriously the request to identify reviewers and conflicts



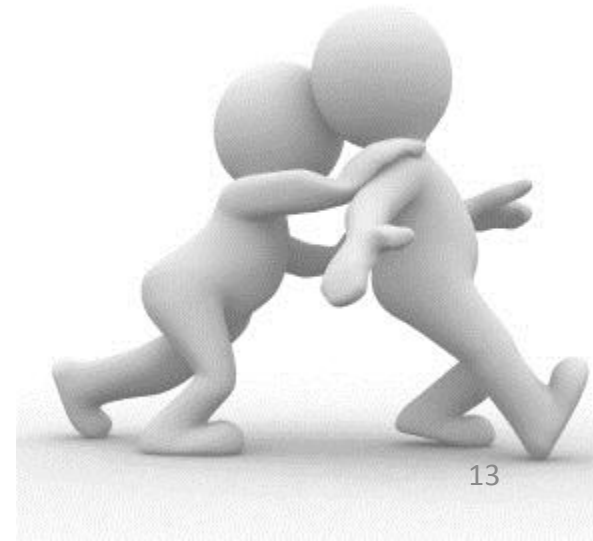
11. Sweat the Details

- The budget is important
 - Don't just go for the maximum
 - Follow the rules about what is fundable
 - Make sure the price is right
 - For equipment
 - For salaries and student stipends
- The methodology matters
- Start early; get input, criticism from others



13. Be realistic and persistent

- Find out the general success rate and the success rate for first applicants
- Keep on trying
- Take reviewers' comments seriously and respond to them explicitly and respectfully



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