



Draft Policy on Access to CIHR-funded Research Outputs

The mandate of CIHR, as stated in *The CIHR Act* is:

“to excel in the creation of new knowledge and its translation into improved health for Canadians, more effective health services and products and a strengthened Canadian health care system.¹”

As such, CIHR has a fundamental interest in ensuring that research outputs are available to the widest possible audience. Researchers, educators, decision makers and others require access to the latest knowledge and research materials in order to build on scientific discoveries, inform policy, develop new technologies, and establish health-related standards and best practices.

CIHR’s policy promoting access to research outputs rests on the foundation of the *CIHR Act* and reflects the core values articulated in *CIHR’s Blueprint for Health Research and Innovation*, the organization’s strategic plan, which states that:

“the primary purpose of all research in the public domain is the creation of new knowledge in an environment that embodies the principles of freedom of inquiry and unrestricted dissemination of research results.²”

This policy was developed under the guidance of CIHR’s Advisory Committee on Access to Research Outputs and with input from public consultation.

Scope

This policy applies to all research outputs that have been financially supported in whole or in part by CIHR (herein referred to as CIHR-funded research), including industry-partnered research. A research output is conceptual or practical knowledge, data, information, or a physical or biological object developed during the course of CIHR-funded research, and is essential for reproducing results and for furthering research discoveries.

Research outputs covered under this policy are the following:

- i. peer-reviewed journal publications;
- ii. research materials; and
- iii. final research data.



Requirements for applicants of CIHR funding and grant and award holders

New and renewal applications for CIHR funding must now include a *Research Output Access Plan*. This plan must list anticipated research outputs, state how the applicant, grantholder, or award holder intends to make their research outputs accessible to others, or provide reasons for any restrictions on access to research outputs. Furthermore, grant and award holders have new responsibilities under the following outputs of CIHR-funded research projects:

1. Peer-reviewed Journal Publications

- CIHR requires grant and award holders to make every effort to ensure that their peer-reviewed journal publications are freely available. CIHR recognizes that there are several vehicles for delivering free access to research publications. And as such, we are providing two options for grant and award holders. Under the first option, grant and award holders must archive either final peer-reviewed published articles, or final peer-reviewed full-text manuscripts, immediately upon publication. Archiving must involve deposition in an appropriate open archives initiative-compliant digital archive, such as PubMed Central, or an institutional repository. A publisher-imposed embargo on open accessibility of no more than 6 months is acceptable.
- The second option allows grant and award holders to submit their manuscripts either to a journal that provides immediate open access to published articles (if a suitable journal exists), or to a journal that allows authors to retain copyright and/or allows authors to archive journal publications in an open access archive within the six-month period following publication.
- Book chapters, research monographs, editorials, reviews, or conference proceedings arising from CIHR-funded research are not covered under this policy. However, CIHR encourages grant and award holders to provide access to these and other forms of research publications where possible.
- CIHR recommends (but does not require) that grant and award holders consider retroactively archiving their most important articles subject to the copyright arrangements that apply to these articles.
- As a new requirement for “ Acknowledgement of CIHR's Support “, grant and award holders must now acknowledge the CIHR grant and award funding reference number(s) (FRN) in each publication that results from CIHR-funded research. Specifically, grant holders should include the following acknowledgement: “This work was supported by Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) grant(s) FRN: XXXXX.”

2. Research Materials

- Research materials are defined as research tools or resources that are useful to other grant holders for replicating results and furthering research discoveries. Examples of research materials include: *small molecules, organisms, viruses, cell lines, nucleic acids, purified enzymes, antibodies, reagents, source code and software, protocols, research tools for evaluation, questionnaires, interview guides, data abstraction forms, and manuals for patient services.*



- Grant and award holders are required to comply with reasonable requests for research materials arising from CIHR funding made by researchers, students, and trainees working within the not-for-profit research community once the specific research material has been cited in a journal publication. Furthermore, research materials should be provided to recipients of not-for-profit research institutions at cost and with as few restrictions as possible.
- Research materials may also be shared with the commercial (for-profit) research community following university and institution procedures regarding material transfer agreements.

3. Research Data

- Final research data refers to the factual information that is necessary to replicate and verify research results. Data can include original data sets, data sets that are too large to be included in the peer-reviewed publication, and any other data sets supporting the research publication. Research data is typically an electronic data set, and may include interview transcripts and survey results provided confidential data and subject privacy is protected. Research data does not include lab books and unpublished research protocols, or physical objects like tissue samples.
- Grant and award holders should strive to make final data sets, generally in electronic form, available upon request after the publication date of a peer-reviewed publication.
- For effective sharing of data, grant and award holders should ensure the quality of the data and have accompanying metadata (i.e. information that describes the characteristics of the data set) or codebooks.
- CIHR requires grant and award holders to deposit bioinformatics, atomic and molecular coordinate data, experimental data, as already required by most journals, into the appropriate public database immediately upon publication of research results.
- CIHR also requires grant and award holders to retain original data sets arising from CIHR-funded research for a minimum of five years after the last date of the “Authority to Use Funds” period of the grant. This applies to all data, whether published or not.
- The grant or award holder’s institution and research ethics board may have additional policies and practices regarding the preservation, retention, and protection of research data that must be respected.

Compliance

- Grant and award holders are reminded that by virtue of signing a CIHR application they accept the terms and conditions of the grant or award as set out in the Agency's policies and guidelines.³
- In the future, CIHR will consider a researcher's track record of providing access to research outputs when considering applications for funding, and will take into consideration legitimate reasons for restricting access.

References

¹ Bill C-13: The Canadian Institutes of Health Research Act. April 13, 2000.
<http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/22948.html>.



² Investing in Canada's Future: CIHR's Blueprint For Health Research and Innovation (2003/04 - 2007/08), Ottawa, January 2004. <http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/20266.html>.

³ 2005-2006 CIHR Grants and Awards Guide. <http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/805.html>.

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