

## CIORA Grant Terms of Reference

### Goals

1. To support research initiatives related to all Rheumatic Diseases in one or more of these 3 categories:
  - a. Awareness/Advocacy/Education
    - i. Health Economics/Sustainability of Health Care/Quality Improvement\*
  - b. Early Access for all Rheumatic Diseases Patients
  - c. Multi-Disciplinary Care Teams
2. To establish all Rheumatic Diseases as important diseases in Canada.

\*A new area under Awareness/Advocacy/Education has been added. This sub-pillar includes Health Economics/Sustainability of Health Care/Quality Improvement. Proposals within this area can include (but are not limited to) cost effectiveness, evaluating care using quality indicators, systems to sustain health care

### Scope

CIORA has established funds for the conduct and evaluation of endeavors in Canada for all Rheumatic Diseases. The stipend attached to the grant will depend on the merit and budget of the project. CIORA provides one-year funding to a maximum of \$75,000 and two-year funding to a maximum of \$120,000. A one-year proposal should have measurable outcomes at the end of one year. Applicants can reapply for funding for subsequent project phases; the application should describe the probability of this project to secure additional funding if required and have a sustainable impact. A limited number of two year grants will be considered with funds released on a yearly basis after review of a detailed progress report. All grants are peer reviewed and grants are awarded based on the recommendation of the CRA Research Committee and dependent on available funds. A member of the CRA (in good standing) must be the PI or co-PI for submitted grants.

### Structure

The grant application deadline is midnight on **March 30, 2018**  
Awarded grants will be announced in **June 2018**

Proponents must indicate their intention to submit a project proposal by providing a Letter of Intent (LOI). This mandatory letter will be used for planning purposes to improve the overall efficiency of the project evaluation process. Specifically, it will help the CRA to identify, at an early stage, potential reviewers, any conflicts; the number and type of projects in specific categories; and the resource requirements for the review committee. All LOI's will be reviewed to ensure eligibility and applicants will be notified if it does not meet the criteria.

*CIORA reserves the right to approve or decline awards without explanation or justification.*

The grant application must be no more than 10 pages. The 10 pages includes: proposal, budget, references, images, letters of support and appendices (excluding CVs).

### **Components of the grant proposal:**

1. **Scientific Abstract** (maximum 500 words): Describe the project.
2. **Lay Summary** (maximum 350 words)
3. **Research proposal:** The research proposal, impact, feasibility and sustainability sections have a 3,000 word limit combined (approximately 6 pages). The maximum score during the review process is listed beside each section.
4. **Background and objectives** = 5 points
5. **Methods** = 25 points (5 points each)
  - I. Specific aims/hypothesis
  - II. Description of the study population
  - III. Study design/implementation
  - IV. Outcome measures (including measurable and evaluable outcomes)
  - V. Statistical plan (including sample size justification). Expertise of a methodologist is recommended.
6. **Impact, as measured by expected results, project deliverables and dissemination**=10 points

**7. Feasibility and sustainability =10 points**

Applicants must demonstrate scientific and technical feasibility (e.g. research team, role of PIs/co-PIs, recruitment, acquisition of data, access to necessary equipment, etc.). They must address limitations and pitfalls. They must also demonstrate realistic timelines and milestones. Optionally, applicants who submit projects that rely on existing resources (e.g. databases, established research infrastructure, equipment) and collaborators may submit letters of support to provide further evidence of feasibility. Finally, applicants must provide evidence of sustainability i.e. what happens when the grant is over?

8. **Description of how this project leverages other funding** (if applicable). All candidates must declare all potentially overlapping grants with full disclosure so the committee can decide if funding needs to be altered. If the proposal submitted is part of a larger project that has received prior CIORA funding or funding from another source, provide a description of how this project leverages other funding.

9. **Budget** – detailing the total funds required for the endeavour and the amount requested from CIORA. Upload one budget per grant in either word or excel format. Budgets must be well-justified and for a maximum of one year of funding (for one year grant) and for a maximum of two years of funding (for two year grant). Abstract submission costs and /or publication fees, up to a maximum of \$1000. The budget will not include travel for abstract presentation to any meeting. Refer to [Fundable & Non-Fundable Items](#) spreadsheet for more details.

**10. References**

11. **CVs** - An abbreviated CV from a maximum of 5 key applicants (maximum 2 pages for each applicant), which should include the applicant's credentials, all awarded grant funding and publications (total and those over the last 5 years). The remaining co-applicants can just be listed on a table and include names, degrees, position (including university, if applicable), areas of expertise and role on the project.

12. **Letters of Support** - Applicants who submit projects that rely on existing resources (e.g. databases, established research infrastructure, equipment) and collaborators may submit letters of support to provide further evidence of feasibility

**13. Acknowledgements**

I. The Principal Applicant(s) must confirm that all investigators are aware of the application and agree to be an applicant or co-applicant on the CIORA grant as submitted.

II. The Principal Applicant(s) must confirm that they cannot apply for another grant as a Principal Applicant until the final progress report has been approved on this grant. *Please note that this is applicable to past applicants.*

## Terms of Reference

All proposed project funding is for Canadian research and funds must be spent in Canada. The Principal Applicant or co-applicant **must be a rheumatologist practicing in Canada and a member of the CRA.**

### Criteria for Judging:

The research project will be reviewed by the CIORA Review and Research Committees and must be pertinent to rheumatic diseases in one of the three categories outlined below. If the proposed project is outside the scope of the declared categories, it will not be considered. The applicant or co-applicants will not be involved in the peer review process. Priority may be given to grants that can leverage additional funding.

### Sustainability:

The objective is to ensure that all projects are sustainable. For example, a hospital might provide space, time from Allied Health Professional; a local charity might join as a partner. Letters confirming support are highly recommended.

### Accountability:

A one-page progress report must be submitted to the CRA Research Committee 18 months after the one year grant is awarded. 10% of the approved Grant will be withheld until the progress report is submitted and approved as sufficient.

A one-page progress report must be submitted to the CRA Research Committee 12 months after the two year grant is awarded. Funds will be released as follows:

- Grant Maximum of \$75,000 (less 10%) for the first year
- 10% from first year + Max \$45,000 (less 10%) for the second year
- Remaining 10% (from 2<sup>nd</sup> year) upon completion

The progress report will be provided to successful applicants prior to the due date. This progress report should clearly state the outcomes achieved to date.

### Grant Maximum:

The limit of the grant will be **\$75,000** for a one year grant and **\$120,000** for a two-year grant. A limited number of two year grants will be considered with funds released on a yearly basis after review of a detailed progress report. *As this is a peer reviewed grant from CIORA, no institutional overhead will be paid.*

## **Acknowledgement:**

All presentations and publications made possible by this grant must acknowledge CIORA funding.

**Specific Terms of Reference for Each Category** (*please note that CIORA does not fund basic science research or any basic science component*):

### **a. Awareness/Advocacy/Education:**

**Awareness:** Proposals should build awareness and understanding for Rheumatic Diseases similar to other chronic disorders such as cancer, diabetes and multiple sclerosis.

Possible Outcomes:

Earlier referrals, more appropriate referrals, more patients' adherent to DMARDs, etc.

**Advocacy:** Proposals should impact government policy to ensure support for Rheumatic Diseases initiatives.

Possible Outcomes:

Joint funding from another source for testing a model of care, coherent criteria for access to medications across provinces, private insurers, etc.

**Education:** Proposals should involve the development of educational tools and curriculum for medical schools, education of allied health professionals, co-management educational strategies for other physicians / health care professionals for rheumatology patients, education of patients with Rheumatic Diseases and/or education for rheumatologists to do any of: 1) improve knowledge and/or care for Rheumatic Diseases ; 2) attract more physicians to the specialty of Rheumatology, 3) develop co-management tools / strategies, and 4) develop patient education programs for Rheumatic Diseases.

Possible Outcomes:

More appropriate referrals to Rheumatologists, increased number of patients diagnosed with Rheumatic Diseases, improved care for patients with Rheumatic Diseases, increase the number of Rheumatologists, better understanding by patients, the public and government.

## **NEW SUB-PILLAR**

### **Health Economics/Sustainability of Health Care/Quality Improvement:**

Proposals within this area can include (but are not limited to) cost effectiveness, evaluating care using quality indicators, systems to sustain health care

#### Possible Outcomes:

Determining cost effective treatment, determining the most useful outcomes to collect on patients with rheumatic diseases, changing attitudes towards stewardship of ordering tests and prescribing, determining the effectiveness of the Choosing Wisely campaign.

### **b. Early Access for Rheumatic Diseases Patients:**

Develop early access programs for people with Rheumatic Diseases across Canada.

#### Possible Outcomes:

More patients will be diagnosed with Rheumatic Diseases at an early stage as compared with regions where the pilot programs are not in place.

### **c. Multi-Disciplinary Care Teams:**

Establish the multi-disciplinary approach to the treatment of all Rheumatic Diseases in Rheumatology practices across Canada. There must be a physician committed to the team with an interest in Rheumatology (Physician Champion).

#### Possible Outcomes:

This approach should result in timely treatment and regular patient follow-up by enlisting the involvement of supportive health professionals. Better care of patients with Rheumatic Diseases should be demonstrated.

Proposals must contain the following:

There must be a combination of a minimum of **two disciplines** from the following list as part of a core multi-disciplinary team. Preference will be given to therapist(s) with post-graduate training in Rheumatology:

- Occupational therapist
- Physical therapist
- Registered nurse, nurse practitioner
- Pharmacist
- Social Worker
- Kinesiologist
- Psychologist
- Dietician
- Family MD

For the above, there should be an Administrative Champion to facilitate Program development and outcome monitoring and responsiveness to the CRA Research Committee.

The measurements and outcomes identified must be explicitly stated and a timetable of committed milestones.

***If you have any questions or require further information, please contact:***

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