



Guidelines for the Use of Research Grant Funds

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1. Responsibilities and Accountability

The OHTN has a responsibility to the people of Ontario to ensure that the public funds put in its trust are well managed. To this end, researchers are responsible for the effective, economical and efficient use of these funds and for reporting on them.

Roles and Responsibilities

Three partners carry out the administration of OHTN awards:

- **The recipient or grantee:** Awards are given to Ontario-based researchers in the field of HIV/AIDS research and are administered through sponsoring institution administration systems. The grantee authorizes expenditures in accordance with OHTN regulations as outlined in this guide or when imposed as a condition of an award, and with sponsoring institution policies. No one may initiate or authorize expenditures from an OHTN grant account without the grantee's delegated authority.
- **The sponsoring institution:** Each sponsoring institution establishes appropriate policies, controls and systems to ensure that OHTN policies and regulations are followed. The sponsoring institution has the right and responsibility to withhold approval of expenditures proposed by a grantee that contravene OHTN regulations or sponsoring institution policies. Administrative, personnel and accounting procedures must conform to the standards, practices and policies of the grantee's sponsoring institution. If a sponsoring institution suspects or has evidence that research funds have been used in an inappropriate manner, it must advise the OHTN without delay.
- **The OHTN:** The OHTN defines the conditions under which its grant and award funds may be used, monitors the use of the funds and the progress of the funded projects, and interprets its rules and regulations for the sponsoring institution and the grantee.

Direction of Research

Grantees holding an award for a specific research project must adhere to the activities specified in the grant application, unless previously and explicitly approved by authorized OHTN staff.

Residual Balances in OHTN Accounts

Completed project grants or OHTN grants that have not been renewed or extended or that have been terminated may contain residual balances of unspent funds. At the termination of the grant period, the sponsoring institution must return unspent funds to the OHTN. If the grantee makes a request at least 30 days before the end of the grant, the OHTN may give authority to use unspent funds to complete the project. A request for a no cost extension must clearly explain how the unspent balance of the award will be used.

Non-Compliance

Non-compliance with the regulations outlined in this Guide can result in the freezing or closing of the grant account(s) of an individual grantee or of all OHTN accounts at the sponsoring institution. If grant funds are used to pay expenditures contrary to OHTN policy, they will have to be repaid to the grant account or to the OHTN. Grantees who disregard the regulations outlined in this Guide, sponsoring institution policies, or principles of sound financial management risk losing OHTN funding. Fraudulent use of OHTN funds will be referred to the appropriate legal authorities.

Intellectual Property/Patents

The ownership of, and all rights to all industrial and intellectual property that shall come into existence as a result of activities supported in whole, or in part, by the funds made available by The OHTN shall be determined as follows:

1. If the sponsoring institution to which an award is made has an established policy with respect to such industrial and intellectual property, and the policy is acceptable to The OHTN, the ownership and rights to such industrial and intellectual property shall be determined in accordance with such policy.
2. If the sponsoring institution to which an award is made has no such established policy or if its established policy shall not be satisfactory to The OHTN, the policy with respect to industrial and intellectual property set forth as follows shall apply:
 - a. All such industrial and intellectual property, subject to the exceptions set out in subparagraphs (d) and (e) below, shall be the property of The OHTN.
 - b. The OHTN shall have the right to require that applications be made for patents, trade marks, copyrights, etc., with respect to any such industrial and intellectual property and to require that the necessary assignment of any right be made for this purpose.
 - c. No individual interest in any industrial or intellectual property will be recognized; the proceeds from such property, where arising from sale, royalty, licenses or otherwise, shall belong to The OHTN and will be used for the promotion of research in the field of HIV disease. Such promotion will not necessarily take place in the institution in which the property was generated.
 - d. If The OHTN elects not to seek patents, trademarks, etc., with respect to any such industrial or intellectual property, it will, on the request of the institution, release its interest therein.
 - e. The copyright in any book or scientific publication shall belong to the author subject only to the following reservations:

- i. With permission of the grantee, The OHTN shall have the right to reproduce in any publication that it sponsors any extract from published manuscripts as well as final reports and progress reports submitted by the grantee.
- ii. The following acknowledgment must be included: "This project was supported by a grant from The Ontario HIV Treatment Network (OHTN)."

Acknowledgements

In all publications resulting from research supported by The OHTN, the following acknowledgment must be included: "This project was supported by an award/a grant from The Ontario HIV Treatment Network (OHTN)."

2. Annual Funding of Awards

New Awards

Award notification letters are sent to applicants with a commitment for one year's funding, and indicating future annual installments, if any.

Payment of Grants

Grant funds are sent directly to a sponsoring institution financial officer for retention on the grantee's behalf and kept in an OHTN grant account. This arrangement relieves the grantee of most of the administration of the grant: the financial officer maintains custody of the grant funds, disburses salaries and other expenditures authorized by the grantee, and provides periodic reports to the grantee and OHTN on the status of grant funds.

The sponsoring institution may not disburse any funds on behalf of the grantee until all specified certification requirements, such as ethical review, animal care, biohazards, etc., have been met.

Subsequent Installments

Payment of subsequent installments of multi-year grants is contingent upon the timely receipt of the annual progress report.

Expenditures and Commitments Against Subsequent Installments

The OHTN is not responsible for the funding of any expenditures or commitments by grantees that exceed the total amount awarded by the OHTN.

3. Use of Grant Funds

Preamble

The following are guidelines to assist grantees and sponsoring institution administrators in their interpretation of the acceptable use of OHTN grant funds. The list of examples is not exhaustive. Grantees are encouraged to communicate with their relevant sponsoring institution contacts (e.g., financial officer, research grants officer). In the absence of a clear understanding of an OHTN policy, the sponsoring institution is to seek a ruling from the OHTN.

General Principles

OHTN funds must be used to contribute towards the **direct costs** of the research project for which the funds were awarded. The sponsoring institution provides for indirect or overhead costs, such as the costs associated with facilities and basic utilities, the purchase and repair of office equipment, administration fees, insurance for equipment and research vehicles, and basic communication devices such as telephones, fax machines, etc.

The funds must be used effectively and economically, and the expenses must be essential for the research supported by the award.

In the absence of an explicit OHTN policy, the sponsoring institution policy, e.g., per diem rates (travel), is to be applied. In the presence of both an OHTN policy and a sponsoring institution policy, the OHTN's policies override the sponsoring institution's policies. The OHTN relies on the sponsoring institution's research integrity and conflict of interest policies to ensure the accountable and responsible use of grant funds.

The sponsoring institution has the right and responsibility to withhold approval of expenses proposed by a grantee that contravene OHTN regulations or sponsoring institution policies.

Compensation-Related Expenses

Persons paid from OHTN grant funds are not considered OHTN employees, scholars or fellows.

Institutional non-discretionary benefits normally include long- and short-term disability insurance; life insurance; pension benefits; medical, vision and dental care benefits; and maternity leave.

Eligible Expenses

- Salaries, stipends and related federal, provincial and institutional non-discretionary benefits for work performed by research associates, research assistants, technicians and trainees being paid from a grant, e.g., undergraduate, graduate students, postdoctoral fellows. The rates of pay for research associates, research assistants and technicians shall be in accordance with the salary scale of the institution concerned.

Other types of eligible compensation-related expenses

- Clerical salaries **directly** related to dissemination activities, including manuscript preparation;
- Consulting fees;
- Fees paid to research subjects, such as modest incentives for participation, where ethically acceptable;
- Honoraria for guest lecturers;
- Subcontract costs;
- Scholarships to graduate students and postdoctoral fellows.

Non-Eligible Expenses

- Any part of the salary, or consulting fee, to the grantee or to other persons whose status would make them eligible to apply for OHTN grants (exceptions may be made in the case of Community-Based Research Capacity Building Fund projects);
- Administrative (or management) charges and fees (exceptions may be made in the case of Community-Based Research Capacity Building Fund and Community Scholar Award applications);

- Discretionary severance and separation packages;
- Payments under grants to practicing clinicians who wish to participate in the research on a part-time basis, or to individuals who wish to participate in the research as an investigator and who at the same time receive remuneration for teaching or service work.

Travel and Subsistence Costs

Eligible Expenses

Travel and subsistence costs (meals and accommodation) include reasonable, out-of-pocket expenses for fieldwork, research conferences, collaborative trips, archival work and historical research, for the grantee, research personnel, students and colleagues working with the grantee and visiting researchers.

- Air travel must be claimed at the lowest rate available, not to exceed full economy fare.
- Travel cancellation insurance
- Travel health insurance for research personnel who do not receive any such benefits from their institution and/or other sources
- Safety-related expenses for field work, such as protective gear, immunizations, etc.

Other types of eligible travel expenses

- Childcare or babysitting expenses while a nursing mother or single parent is travelling. The eligible cost for a single parent is limited to overnight child-care costs incurred while the grantee is travelling.
- Safety-related expenses for fieldwork, such as protective gear, immunizations, etc.

Non-Eligible Expenses

- Commuting costs between the residence and place of employment or between two places of employment.
- Relocation costs for research personnel.
- Passport and immigration fees.
- Costs associated with thesis examination/defense, including external examiner costs.
- Reimbursement for airfare purchased with personal frequent flyer points programs.

Sabbatical and Leave Periods

Eligible Expenses

- Direct research expenses, including research assistance, bench fees, and fieldwork expenses, when supported by appropriate documentation.
- Travel costs to attend a conference during a sabbatical leave.

Non-Eligible Expenses

- Costs of transporting research personnel to and from a grantee's sabbatical or leave location for supervisory or academic purposes.
- Costs of transporting the grantee to the home institution for supervisory purposes during a sabbatical leave.
- Living expenses during a sabbatical leave.
- Costs of relocation and subsistence associated with sabbaticals and other leaves, except where these have been explicitly identified in the application for the grant and approved by the OHTN.

Equipment and Supplies

Eligible Expenses

- Research equipment and supplies.
- Travel costs to visit manufacturers to select major equipment purchases.
- Transportation costs for purchased equipment.
- Extended warranty for equipment.
- Brokerage and customs charges for the importation of equipment and supplies.
- The costs of training staff to use equipment or a specialized facility.
- Maintenance and operating costs of equipment used for OHTN-supported research.

Non-Eligible Expenses

- Insurance costs for equipment;
- Costs of the construction, renovation or rental of laboratories or supporting facilities.

Computers and Electronic Communications

Eligible Expenses

- Computers, modems, and other hardware and software required for the research;
- Monthly charges for the use of the Internet from the sponsoring institution or the home, only when this service is required for the purpose of research and not normally provided by the institution free of charge;
- Cellular phones and digital personal assistants (e.g. Blackberry) will be permitted only in cases where they are necessary for data collection (must be justified).

Non-Eligible Expenses

- Standard monthly connection or rental costs of telephones;
- Connection or installation of lines (telephone or other links);
- Voice mail;
- Library acquisitions, computer and other information services provided to all members of an institution.

Dissemination of Research Results

Eligible Expenses

- Costs of developing Web-based information, including Web maintenance fees;
- Costs associated with the circulation of findings, i.e., through traditional media as well as videos, CD-ROMs, etc.;
- Page charges for articles published, including costs associated with ensuring open access to the findings;
- Costs of preparing a research manuscript for publication;
- Translation costs associated with dissemination of findings;
- Costs of holding a workshop or seminar, the activities of which relate directly to the funded research (including non-alcoholic refreshments or meal costs).

Services and Miscellaneous Expenses

Eligible Expenses

- Recruiting costs for research personnel, such as advertising and airfare for candidates, etc.;
- Costs for safe disposal of waste;
- Costs for the purchase of books or periodicals, specialized office supplies, computing equipment and information services not formally provided by the institution to all its academic and research staff;
- Costs involved in providing personnel with training and/or development in novel techniques required for the conduct of the research project;
- Hospitality costs (non-alcoholic refreshments or meals) for networking purposes in the context of formal courtesy between the grantee and guest researchers and research-related activities in the context of assemblies that facilitate and contribute to the achievement of the research objectives (e.g. grantee meeting with partners and stakeholders);
- Costs of membership in professional associations or scientific societies if necessary for the research program/projects;

Non-Eligible Expenses

- Costs of alcohol;
- Costs of entertainment, hospitality, and gifts, other than those specified above such as regular interactions with colleagues from the institution and personnel meetings;
- Costs related to staff awards and recognition;
- Education-related costs such as thesis preparation, tuition and course fees;
- Costs related to professional training or development, such as computer and language training;
- Costs involved in the preparation of teaching materials;
- Costs of basic services such as heat, light, water, compressed air, distilled water, vacuums, and janitorial services supplied to all laboratories in a research facility;
- Insurance costs for buildings or equipment;
- Costs associated with regulatory compliance, including ethical review, biohazard or radiation safety, environmental assessments or provincial or municipal regulations and by-laws;
- Sales taxes to which an exemption or rebate applies;
- Costs of regular clothing;
- Patenting expenses;
- Costs of moving a lab.

4. Administrative Matters

Transfer Procedures

Transferring Grant(s) to an Eligible Sponsoring institution

When a grantee moves from one eligible institution to another, the OHTN will consider a request to transfer a research grant(s) held by the grantee at the other institution provided that the grantee has obtained an eligible position at that institution. Should the request be approved, the research grant(s) held at the former institution will be transferred to the new institution and consequently all corresponding grant account(s) will be closed at the former institution.

The following documents should be forwarded to the OHTN:

- **From the former sponsoring institution:**
 - notification by the grantee stating the date of departure from the sponsoring institution;
 - a signed Statement of Account up to the date of departure; and
- **From the new sponsoring institution:**
 - a letter from the research grants officer, countersigned by the appropriate department head or dean, giving the date of appointment and academic status at the new sponsoring institution; and confirming that all requirements for research involving the use of animals, human subjects or biohazards have been met.

Termination Procedures

When a grant is being terminated, the procedure to be followed is determined by whether the termination is initiated by the grantee or the sponsoring institution, or by OHTN.

When a **grantee** ceases to be eligible to hold OHTN funding, or becomes unable to carry out the research for which the grant was awarded, the sponsoring institution authorities (usually the department head) must immediately inform the OHTN and submit the following documents on behalf of the grantee:

- the grantee's Statement of Account as of the date of departure or change in status, or as requested by OHTN;
- a detailed list of outstanding commitments made by the grantee prior to termination, including employment contracts/agreements for research personnel; and
- the grantee's forwarding address, if applicable.

The OHTN may approve the transfer of the grant to an eligible co-grantee or another eligible individual as suggested by the institution. Every effort will be made to ensure that the grantee is aware of, and is in agreement with, the transfer.

If **OHTN** terminates a grant, the grantee and sponsoring institution officials will be notified by the OHTN. The OHTN may terminate a grant when program requirements are not met (e.g., unsatisfactory progress) or when a grantee is unable to carry out the research or research related activities for which the grant was awarded. For research operating grants, the grantee must send OHTN the following information, immediately upon receipt of a notification of intention to terminate a grant:

- a Statement of Account as of the date of receipt of the letter announcing intention to terminate the grant; and
- the nature and amount of commitments against the grant.

Neither grantees nor other sponsoring institution officials may authorize any new commitments or expenditures from the grant account after the date of termination, a change in status, or other date indicated by OHTN.

The OHTN may, at the sponsoring institution's request, authorize the payment of outstanding commitments or proposed phase-out expenditures out of the residual funds.

The allowed phase-out period will be determined by OHTN. A standard phase-out period is 3-6 months.

Deferral of Installments / Annual Payments

Grantees who wish to defer OHTN's payment of future installments for up to one year must advise OHTN prior to the deferral date and provide a rationale for their request. Deferrals due to failure to submit progress reports do not qualify for the criteria stated below. Failure to submit progress reports prior to the start of the next fiscal year may result in loss of payment for that year of the award.

Deferring an installment/annual payment extends the life of the grant and allows the grantee to re-organize activities. The total of all deferral periods cannot exceed two years. The original grant end date will be adjusted accordingly.

The OHTN will also allow deferment of the start date of a grant for up to one year from the start date indicated in the description of the funding opportunity, provided the grantee has sought approval to defer the grant start date prior to the original start date.

Deferring installments/annual payments does not adversely affect the review of the grantee's next application, but rather demonstrates good fiscal management of grant funds.

The OHTN may defer, or even hold back, a grantee's next installment/annual payment if, in the sole discretion of the OHTN, it is judged that the grantee's build-up of funds has not been properly justified and that the need for funds has not been demonstrated or the issues identified during tenure.

Maternity, Paternity, Medical, or Care and Nurturing Leave

OHTN recognizes that extended leave (maximum one year) granted by the sponsoring institution may have an impact on an individual's research program, and offers the following options with respect to Research Grants:

- when an extended leave of absence has been taken, the grantee may request an extension of the term of the current grant for one or two years at a level up to but not exceeding the current amount, provided that there is only one grantee (i.e. one principal applicant) on the grant;
- such a request must include a justification for the amount requested and be endorsed by the sponsoring institution authorities;
- the grantee may request deferral of a grant installment for one or two years or may defer submission of a renewal application;
- the grantee may compete for a Research Grant in the usual way.

For other OHTN grants, provided all parties agree, approval may be given to defer an installment or extend the time required to complete a project owing to delays caused by maternity, paternity, medical, or care and nurturing leave. Grantees should submit a request in writing to the appropriate program division at OHTN.

Paid Maternity and Parental Leave

On request, eligible graduate students and postdoctoral fellows paid out of OHTN grants may be eligible for paid parental leave. Within six months of a child's birth or adoption in order to be the primary caregiver for the child, you may request a paid parental leave supplement at the current level of compensation from OHTN funds for up to six months, provided your sponsoring institution permits parental leave.

- You must obtain approval from your sponsoring institution prior to the start of your leave.
- The maximum period of paid leave is six months, even in cases of multiple births or adoption of more than one child at the same time.

- If both parents are supported by the OHTN, each parent may take a portion of the leave, for a combined maximum duration of six months.
- Contact your sponsoring institution to find out what documentation it requires to approve the paid parental leave. This may include birth, adoption or medical certificates.
- If leave is approved, your sponsoring institution will administer the supplement.
- Students or fellows who are eligible for employment insurance or other parental leave supplements from other sources do not qualify for parental leave supplements.

Students and fellows should contact the Office of Graduate Studies at their institution for information or to request a paid parental leave.

Sabbatical and Other Leaves

Grantees may be away on sabbatical leave for a period not exceeding one year. The grantee and/or the institution must inform the agency when a grantee is away on sabbatical leave for more than one year.

Grantees will continue to receive installments/annual commitments during the period of sabbatical leave. No additional funds will be given to cover the period of sabbatical leave.

For leave periods (sabbatical, unpaid leaves, etc.) that extend to a second year, grantees may request a deferral of that year's installment. Funding for the second year of leave and all subsequent installments will be frozen until confirmation is received that the grantee has returned to the sponsoring institution. If the leave extends beyond two years, previous years deferred and ongoing installments will be cancelled and the grant terminated without a termination phase-out period.

Note

The effective termination date will be the actual date when the second year of leave began.

Ownership of Items Purchased or Collected With OHTN Funds

Equipment

All equipment and material purchased or collected with OHTN grant funds belong to the grantee's sponsoring institution and not to the individual grantee. As owner, the sponsoring institution is responsible for ensuring that the equipment is used to support the research program of the grantee and co-applicants. Decisions on the use and management of the equipment should be made between the sponsoring institution and the grantee or user group.

The OHTN expects that the equipment will be made available to other researchers and students for their research when not in use by the grantee. Fees may be charged to these users to recover direct costs incurred.

Insurance must not be charged to OHTN grants. It is the sponsoring institution's responsibility to insure all its equipment and assets.

If OHTN-funded equipment is later sold, proceeds from the sale belong to the sponsoring institution and should be used for research-related purposes.

Collections or specimens

Scientifically valuable collections of human, animal or other specimens collected by a grantee with OHTN funds are the property of the sponsoring institution. They must be held in trust for the research community, which should have reasonable access to them. Such collections should be deposited as quickly as possible in an appropriate repository.

However, OHTN's policy on ownership of collections or specimens does not supersede any federal or provincial legislation on this issue.

The OHTN's intention is not to restrict standard and recognized procedures of exchange of material and specimens between researchers and institutions, but to better assure their continuing good condition and future availability.

Equipment Grants**Purchase of Equipment as Requested**

Equipment grants must only be used to purchase the specific equipment for which the grant was awarded. If the grantee wishes to purchase equipment different from that specified in the application, he or she must obtain written permission from OHTN prior to its purchase. The grantee may, however, buy a **model** different from that requested in the application without prior OHTN approval.

Installation or Relocation of Equipment or Material Outside the Sponsoring institution

Although equipment or material should be located at the sponsoring institution supporting the application, equipment or material purchased with OHTN grants may be installed at another location if specified in the application, or with the written consent of the sponsoring institution if relocation was not anticipated at the time of application. In approving such requests, sponsoring institutions must give consideration to the accessibility of the equipment by other researchers and research personnel.

Moving Equipment, Material, or an Unexpended Equipment Grant

If a grantee is moving to another Ontario sponsoring institution and wishes to take an awarded but unexpended Equipment Grant, or to move equipment or other material purchased with OHTN grant funds, the former sponsoring institution may give permission for such a move.

The OHTN encourages the sponsoring institution to accede to such a request provided the equipment is not necessary to other researchers at that sponsoring institution. If the request is granted, the former sponsoring institution should inform the new sponsoring institution and such assets belong to the new sponsoring institution.