



# The grant funding game:

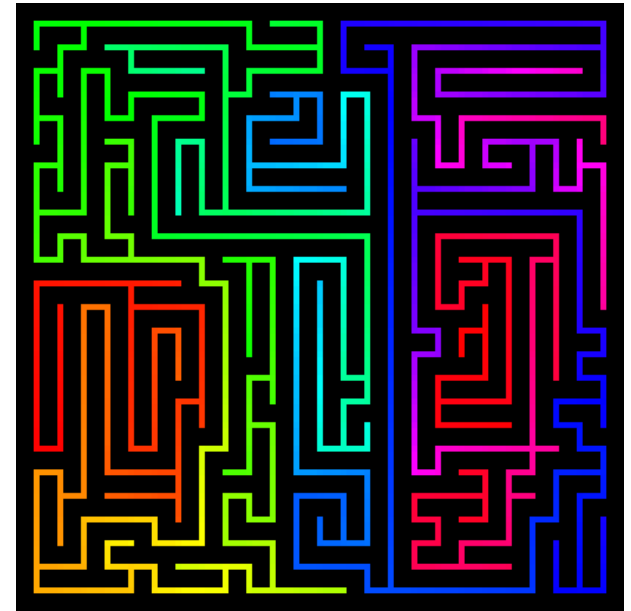
Strategies that might help your funding applications

William Ghali

Scientific Director, IPH

# Overview

- CIHR – general points
- Special competitions vs. open grants
- Choosing a committee
- Priority announcements
- Agencies other than CIHR
- Progress pages
- Response to reviews
- Renewals & rolling of grants
- External reviewers
- Main proposal: miscellaneous suggestions
- U of C internal peer review





# EYES HIGH

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# The grant resubmission game:

Strategies that might help you tap in  
the rebound

# Wisdom for the ages

Strategy relating to resubmission

- (Almost) always reapply
- Do NOT focus on grant score or ranking
- Rather – the wording of your SO notes
- Ask mentors/colleagues
- Usually much less work than original submission



# Strategic considerations relating to your grant budgets

Strategies that might help your applications  
(and/or avoid hurting your applications)

# Overview

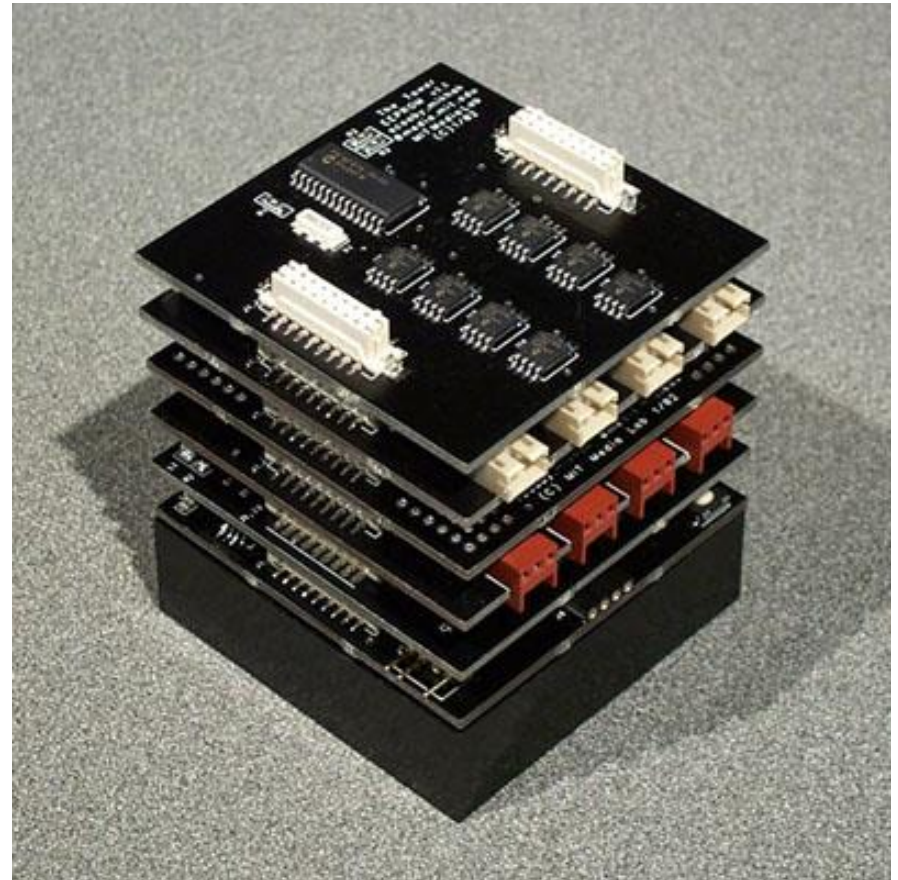
- Funding the research enterprise
- Review of CIHR regulations
- Strategy:
  - How/when budget is reviewed
  - For written justification
  - Use of the progress page (to describe leveraging and value)
  - Avoid angering reviewers
  - Some Calgary data



# The research enterprise

## Ingredients

- People
  - Faculty
  - Students
  - Grad students & fellows
- Infrastructure
  - Buildings/space/labs
  - Equipment
  - Data services
  - Research services
- Operating funds





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**Alberta  
Innovates  
Health  
Solutions**



**CIHR IRSC**  
Canadian Institutes of Health Research  
Instituts de recherche en santé du Canada

**Canada**  
Canada Research  
Chairs



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Canada Foundation for Innovation  
Fondation canadienne pour l'innovation



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# CIHR rules and regulations

- Salaries for personnel
- Expendables
- Minor equipment
- Major equipment not eligible
- Secretarial and administrative support not eligible
- Grant end dates (+ 1 yr)
- Tri-council reporting



# CIHR committee procedure

- Two main reviewers
- One reader
- Scores read out first
- Reviewer 1 speaks
- Reviewer 2 speaks
- Reader speaks
- Committee discusses
- Score proposed
- Score assigned
- THEN budget discussed...



# The budget justification pages

## **BUDGET JUSTIFICATION**

**William A. Ghali**

**CIHR PIN# 55680**

The overall cost for conducting this study is **\$434,920 over 3 years**.

Explanation/justification of our overall funding request is provided below:

### **Personnel – salaries:**

A full time study coordinator/research associate (1.0FTE) will be required for oversight of all aspects of this study. This individual will have numerous tasks, including the compilation and organization of study documentation, oversight of patient recruitment and follow-up, coordination of investigator meetings, organization of reporting, clinical trial registration with [www.clinicaltrials.gov](http://www.clinicaltrials.gov), etc. To cover this individual's salary, we are requesting \$75,000 in year 1 with corresponding benefits of \$16,500 (22%). Incremental yearly salary increases are budgeted for years 2 and 3. This quoted salary falls within the University of Calgary's salary guidelines for level 3 (senior level) technical group research associates, and permits us to competitively recruit an experienced clinical trials coordinator to oversee this study.

We will also require a second part-time research assistant (0.5FTE) for the intensive data collection activities that will occur in years 1 and 2 of the initiative. This individual will contribute to the conduct of surveys (of providers and patients) for the pilot evaluation that is to occur in year 1, and will also participate in the follow-up telephone calls to patients for determination of adverse event occurrence in the main clinical trial. This individual will also

# The budget justification pages

assist the lead study coordinator in study documentation, patient recruitment, and patient follow-up activities. A half-time salary level of \$27,000 with corresponding benefits of \$5940 is requested to cover the cost of this position in year 1. An incremental salary increase is budgeted for year 2 (after which the position ends and no more dollars are requested). The quoted salary falls within the University of Calgary's salary guidelines for level 2 technical group research associates.

We are also requesting \$7500 in each of years 2 and 3 to cover the cost of internal medicine physician consultants who will perform adverse event adjudication on clinical case records. A total of 30 half days of consulting time are anticipated, with budgeted amounts of \$500 per half day. During these half days, the clinician consultants will review case histories that will have been compiled by the lead study coordinator and/or the part-time research assistant. Advance preparation by those study personnel will allow us to use the consultants in a manner that is relatively cost-effective (i.e., with a modest overall budget impact of \$15,000) spread over years 2 and 3.

## **Research Trainees:**

We have followed the suggestion of the peer review committee from the March open grants competition and added a funding request of \$17,500 per year to cover the cost of a single MSc student training stipend for each of the three years. Earlier phases of this research have involved MSc and post-doctoral trainees, and we foresee continued opportunities for trainee involvement in both the pilot evaluation of the tool, as well as aspects of the clinical trial.

# The budget justification pages

## **Knowledge Translation:**

We are budgeting \$2500 in each of years 1 and 2, and \$5000 in year 3 for our ongoing knowledge translation activities. We do so recognizing that some of our ongoing knowledge exchange with Alberta Health Services will require travel to Edmonton where the provincial health authority's offices are based. We will also incur some costs from working with the W21C's director of communications in the preparation of briefing notes for Alberta Health Services decision-makers. A larger amount of knowledge translation funding is budgeted in year 3 because we anticipate more research dissemination costs at that time. This includes the cost of producing tailored briefing notes for selected agencies, as well as some potential academic publication costs (e.g, open access publication fees, conference submissions, etc).

## **Travel:**

We are also requesting \$2500 to cover the cost of travel to one scientific meeting in year 3 only.



# The summary of progress page

- A single page
- Opportunity to show that you are **READY!**
- Can include:
  - Prior studies
  - Networking
  - Collaborations
  - Pilot work
  - Training/skills obtained
  - **PARTNERED FUNDING**



The work that we propose in this funding application is an advanced step in a program of work for which considerable progress has already been made. This progress relates to four key elements of work that we briefly highlight here. These include: 1) creation of the Medical Ward of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (W21C) research and innovation ‘platform’; 2) environmental scanning and a completed systematic review of computer-enabled discharged communication interventions; 3) iterative prototype tool development through multi-disciplinary focus groups; and 4) a productive and highly collaborative working relationship with Alberta Health Services, such that the prototype tool that we developed through focus groups is now being constructed in the hospital information systems of Calgary region hospitals. We elaborate on each of these below.

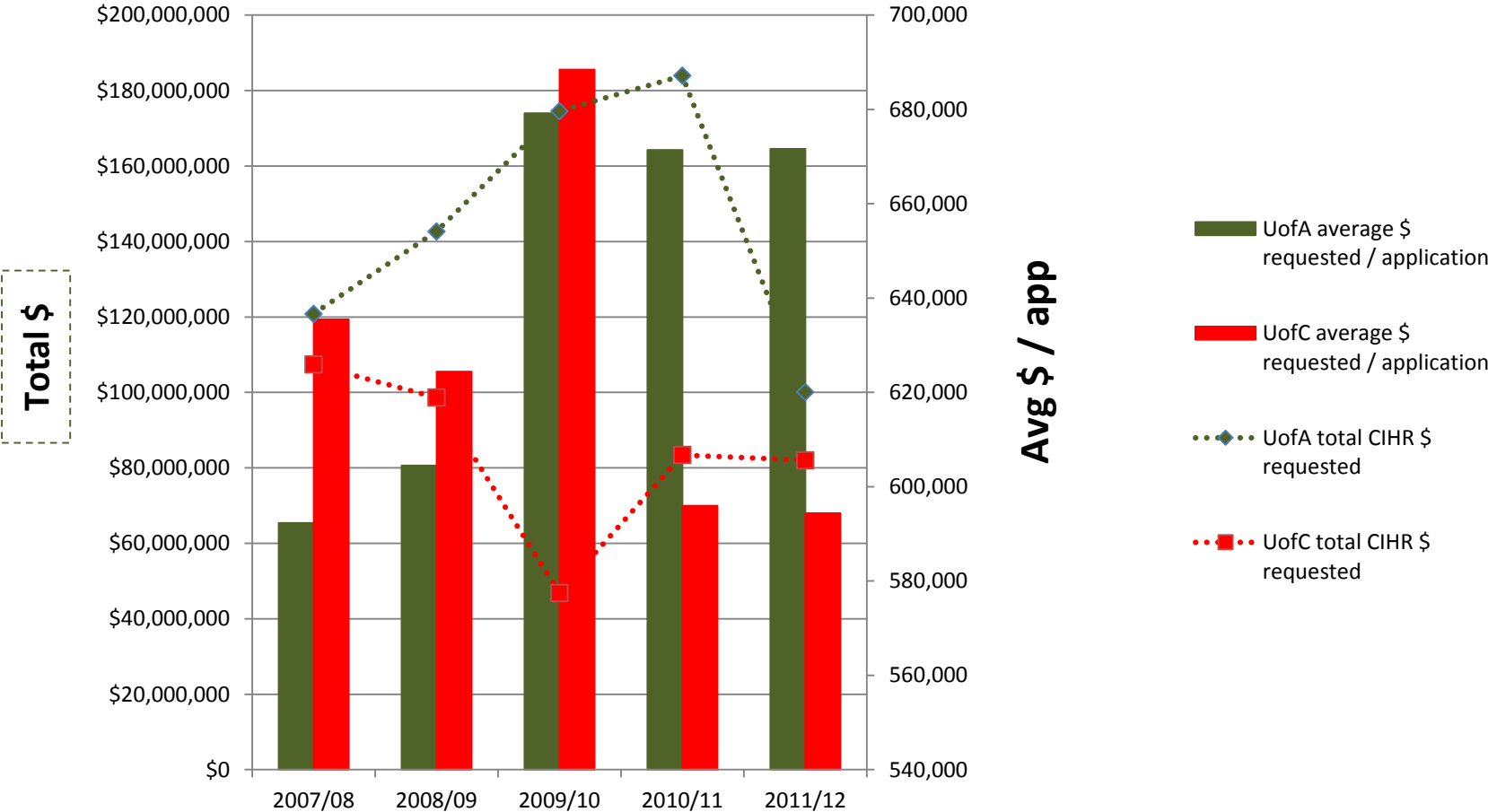
- 1) *Creation of the Medical Ward of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (W21C)*: The applicant’s team members are all members of the W21C research and innovation network. This is a multidisciplinary team of investigators based at the University of Calgary, with national and international collaborative linkages. The team’s thematic focus is on innovation for enhancing health system safety and quality of care. The program provides the network of researchers with state-of-the-art clinical and research infrastructure within which to undertake innovative research, and opportunities for unique interdisciplinary linkages that would not ordinarily occur in more traditional research environments. Reviewers can learn more about the W21C at [www.w21c.org](http://www.w21c.org).
- 2) *Completed environmental scanning and systematic review of existing seamless discharge tools*: Prior to beginning our own work in computerized tool development, we undertook a market scan to determine if there were any existing commercially available tools that possess the functionality that we envisioned for our seamless discharge tool. This exercise revealed that there were no existing

# Angering or annoying reviewers (with your budgets)

- Be reasonable
- Justify...justify...justify
- Know the rules
  - Equipment
  - Secretarial support
- Avoid excessive travel \$\$
- If budget huge, consider partitioning projects
- But also don't go too low...
- Remember possibility of trainee funding
- Other pearls?



# Calgary funding data

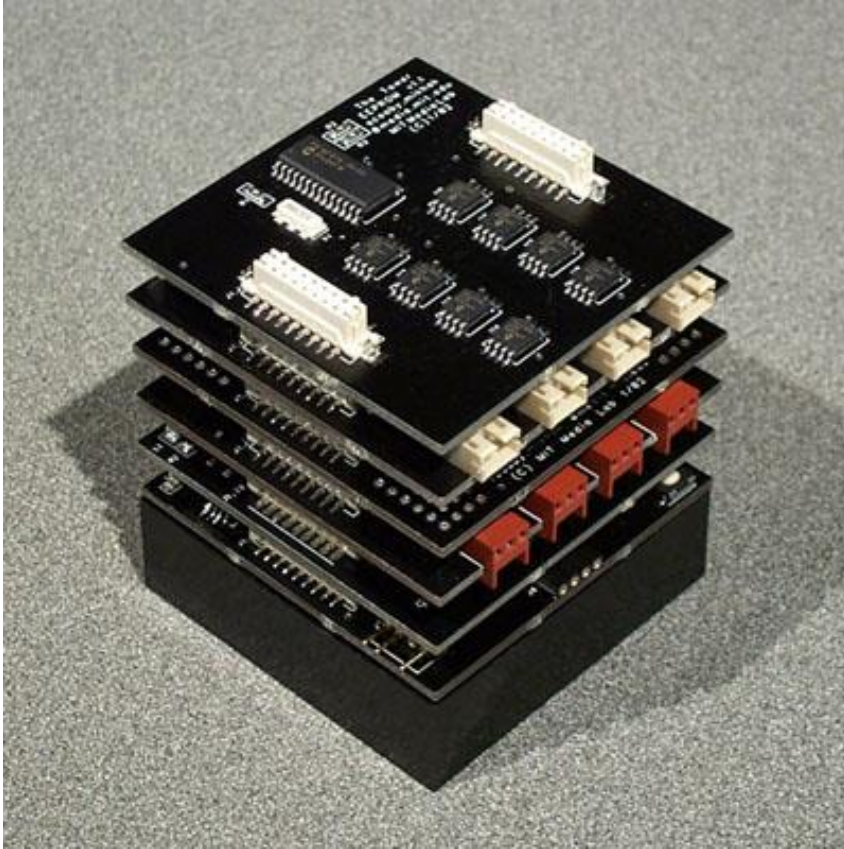


# Calgary funding requests

- A bit lower than comparators the last two years
- Reasons unclear
- Remember:
  - Trainee funding
  - Expendables
  - Salary scales and costly benefits (22%)
  - Diversify requests



# The research enterprise





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