SSHRC Workshop: Methodology
Agenda

- 1:30 to 2:15 p.m.
  - Tips, tricks and examples for:
    - Articulating your research questions
    - Framing your objectives
    - Presenting your methodology
- 2:15 to 3:00 p.m.
  - Q & A, discuss and share
- Optional: 3:00 to 4:00 p.m.
  - Working session
Detailed Description: SSHRC Instructions

- **Write your proposal in clear, plain language.** Avoid jargon, acronyms and highly technical terms. Not all committee members will have an intimate knowledge of the subject matter of all proposals.

- **Using the headings below,** describe the proposed research in enough detail to allow informed assessment by committee members:
  - Objectives
  - Context
  - Methodology

- Your detailed description **must address the Challenge and Feasibility evaluation criteria** listed in the funding opportunity description...
Detailed Description: a Few Other Things to Consider

- Core of the application
- Assessed using two of three evaluation criteria (challenge, feasibility)
- No external assessors for the IDG
- Perspective:
  - Imagine you are a reviewer
  - No *definitive* right way to present your proposal (but definitely a few wrong ways to go about it)
- Language and style are critical — variety; strong, inspiring verbs; active voice; confident; energetic; engaging
Research Questions / Statements

- Set the stage with a brief introduction:
  - What’s the problem?
  - Why should we care?
  - Communicate the importance of your work

- Articulate your proposed research as questions or statements — either format works as long they’re clear, succinct and achievable

- Use the research questions / statements to segue into the Objectives
  or
- Frame the objectives as research questions / statements
Objectives (What)

- What will your project do to address the problem?
- What will your project achieve?
- Are your objectives clear, concise, easily identified?
- Are they feasible (considering timeframe, resources, capacity of PI / team / personnel)?
- No magic number; typically two or three objectives maximum
Methodology (How)

- Detailed plan that outlines how you will achieve the objectives (who, what, where, when)

- Demonstrate it’s feasible — work plan, table, break down by year, activities, phases

- Justify the chosen methods

- Presentation *does* make a difference — logical, easy to follow, spacing, sub-headings, highlight key phrases and activities and tie them to objectives
Timeline

- A timeline is required for an IDG, but can be a strategic choice in IGs or other SSHRC applications.

- The timeline should state what tasks will be done at different stages of the project, and some PIs also include who will perform each task.

- Be specific: an unclear timeline may make the project seem unfeasible in the allotted time.
Gleanings from Successful Applicants

- Be creative; capture the reviewers’ attention
- Your application needs to be great, not just good; language is important
- Adjudication committees are interdisciplinary to varying degrees; simplify statements and avoid jargon to ensure your proposal is accessible
- The significance and benefits should jump off the page
- Give the nuts and bolts when describing community engagement
- Leave a bit of white space so reviewers can take a break
- Use the prescribed headings to make natural breaks in the text
- Most reviewers are reading applications on screen so you could use colour and figures
Resources

- U of S Internal Review
- U of S Research Facilitation
- U of S Grants Repository
- Research – Archived Resources
- SSHRC’s Resource Centre for Grants
- SSHRC Program Officers
  - insightgrants@sshrc-crsh.gc.ca (613) 996-6976
  - insightdevelopment@sshrc-crsh.gc.ca (613) 996-6976
- Previous U of S recipients and adjudicators

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