SCAA Institutional Grants Program
Adjudication Process and Guidelines
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This document has been developed to assist the SCAA Grants Committee with the adjudication process for the Institutional Grants Program (IGP). Given that the experience level of Grants Committee members can vary greatly from year to year, this document is intended to serve two purposes: to provide some standardization in how applications are adjudicated from year to year and to be used as a training tool for new members to the Grants Committee.

A. Materials to Read Before Adjudicating Grant Applications

Grants Committee members should read the following materials before reviewing applications:

- IGP Application Form
- IGP Call for Project Proposals
- IGP Guidelines
- SCAA Project Time Guidelines
- SCAA's Diversity Plan

Even experienced members of the Committee should review these materials before adjudication as IGP guidelines may be revised and updated.

B. Adjudication Process

Step 1: Grant Applications are submitted

When the deadline passes for the submission of IGP grants, the Archives Advisor will load all of the completed application forms to the SCAA intranet. The Archives Advisor uploads the grants in the order in which they were received. When all of the documentation is up on the intranet, the Archives Advisor will send a note to the Grants Committee members indicating that the applications are ready for review.

Step 2: Review of Grants

Grants Committee members will individually review each application.

Step 3: Adjudication Meeting

This meeting can take place in person or over the phone. At the meeting, the Committee will go through each of the applications individually in the order in which they were received.

It is the responsibility of each Committee member to declare any conflict of interest. Any Committee members who have a conflict of interest with a particular application must declare this <u>before</u> discussion of that application begins. Ideally, those Committee members with a conflict of interest will either disconnect from the telephone line or leave the room. However, in some years, the Committee has been heavily weighted with experienced adjudicators from one institution. When this is the situation, members who declare a conflict of interest may participate in the general discussion about the application (ie. raise any concerns about the application that might be helpful for the consideration of other Committee members) but **a Committee member who has declared a conflict of interest may never vote on the approval/refusal of the application**.

The Archives Advisor will usually sit in on the Grants Committee adjudication meeting. The Archives Advisor is welcome to participate in the discussions about the applications. Because the Archives Advisor often works closely with applicants, the Archives Advisor can provide important context and clarification for the Committee. That said, the Archives Advisor does not vote on the approval/refusal of applications because the Archives Advisor has often assisted institutions with their applications.

After discussing an application, the Committee will vote to place an application into one of three categories:

1. Project is OK for approval as submitted.
2. Project is OK but requires clarification/adjustment before it can be approved.
3. Project cannot be approved.

Once all of the applications have been reviewed, the Committee will determine how many dollars are used in the "ok for approval" category and how many are used in the "requires clarification" category.

At this point, the adjudication process may vary greatly depending on how many dollars are available. The Committee will likely look at the overall applications submitted and weigh the prioritized adjudication criteria (see section D below) when deciding which applications will be pursued for clarification/adjustment. (For example, the prioritized adjudication criteria stipulate that it is preferred to give grants to smaller institutions so multiple applications from a larger institution, even if they are all slotted into the "ok for approval" category at this stage might wait to see if some of the "requires clarification" applications from smaller archives can be clarified and then approved). It is possible that all of the money may be expended on "ok for approval" grants at this stage and "requires clarification" grants may simply be refused. In addition, not all of the grants in the "requires clarification" category may require asking for clarification if there is not money available to fund all of the applications in this grouping. The Committee may ask for clarification from only the best of the "requires clarification" group (using the prioritized adjudication criteria in section D below).

The Committee may also decrease the amount of money requested by a particular application at this stage if the adjudication result indicates that some of the money requested cannot be justified.

For applications that require clarification, the Committee will set a deadline that the applicants must complete and resubmit their revised application by.

Step 4: Clarification

The Committee Chair will contact each applicant that the Committee has requested clarification from in writing (via email) and explain the Committee's concerns with the application. The Chair will also clearly indicate the deadline for the applicants to submit their revisions to the Archives Advisor. The Chair will also direct the applicants to contact the Archives Advisor if they have questions about the Committee's comments.

Step 5: Review of Clarifications

The Archives Advisor will let the Committee know when the revised applications are received. The adjudication committee will usually book a second phone meeting to go through the revised applications. If the revisions are good, the applications are moved into the "ok for approval" category. If the revisions are not sufficient, the Committee may either go back to the applicant for further clarification or deny the application.

As at the initial adjudication meeting, the Committee will look at the overall grants that are "ok for approval" to see how much money has been allocated so far. The Grants Committee must try to ensure that every dollar is expended if at all possible. Where more applications have been received than there is money for, the Grants Committee may also consider granting only a portion of the requested money in order to use all of the funds. If the Committee is considering approving only a portion of a grant application, they should make sure that the project will still go ahead even if the institution only gets a portion of the money requested.

Once the Committee has the final list of approved grants, the work of the Committee is complete.

Step 6: Approval of Grants

The Chair of the Grants Committee will write up a report to submit to the SCAA Board of Directors which is a list of the grants that the Grants Committee has recommended for approval. This report will include the name of each institution applying for a grant, a brief description of each project, and the amount of money recommended. The report will also include a list of each application received but rejected by the Committee along with a short explanation of the Committee's reason for refusal.

The SCAA Board will consider the report and vote to either approve or refuse the grants as recommended by the Committee. The grants go to the SCAA Board for final approval to avoid

allegations of conflict of interest, particularly in years where there are multiple Grants Committee members from one institution.

C. Adjudication Guidelines when Reviewing Individual Applications

When reviewing grant applications, there are a number of criteria for Grants Committee members to consider. The SCAA is responsible to SaskCulture and the Lotteries fund for how this money is allocated. It is the responsibility of the Grants Committee to ensure that all approved grants meet the criteria and purposes of the IGP. The following sections include items to consider when reviewing grant applications. This is not an exhaustive list of all of the things that may need to be considered for each application but, hopefully, this will assist Committee members with the sorts of questions they should be asking when they review IGP applications. If the answers to these questions are unclear, then the Committee may either refuse the grant or ask the applicant for clarification on those points.

1. Institutional Eligibility

Committee members do not need to worry about checking institutional eligibility. The Archives Advisor and SCAA office will check each application to make sure that the applicant is a member in good standing with the SCAA. They will also check that all Final Reports from prior years have been received for each applicant. The Archives Advisor will provide a spreadsheet to the Committee members showing the eligibility status of each institution along with the amount of money received in previous years through the IGP, in case this information becomes necessary to decide between applications.

2. Purchase of Supplies

Applications where an institution simply wants to buy archival supplies to re-house specific collections are eligible for funding. Other applications will include the purchase of supplies along with other expenses (ie. they are rehousing a collection and scanning it at the same time). The questions in this section will be relevant for those applications as well. When reviewing applications where supplies are being purchased, Committee members should review for the following:

- Has the applicant listed the specific collections being rehoused and the extent of those collections? The IGP will not fund supplies that are going to sit in a supply closet in case the institution needs them.

- Do the amount of supplies requested match the extent of the collection being rehoused? For example, an institution requests 3000 photograph sleeves but they indicate that the photograph collection contains only 500 photograph prints.

- What kinds of supplies are being ordered? Do those supplies make sense in the context of the project? For example:
    o An institution requests 30 oversize Hollinger boxes, but has given no indication that the collection includes oversize material or that it would require that number of boxes.

- o An institution orders 10 special "archival" pens to label file folders but there's no indication that the institution is doing anything other than labelling regular file folders.
  - o An institution orders a magnifying glass but the project is simply to re-house materials in new Hollinger boxes.
  - o **TIP:** If the institution has provided a quote for archival supplies from a vendor (ie. CarrMcLean) and you are unsure what the item being ordered actually is, you can often go to the vendor's website and look up the item.

- Has the institution provided a current quote from the vendor for all items that they are planning to purchase? Grants cannot be approved without quotes for all items that will be purchased.

- Does the quote include all taxes and shipping fees? The IGP will cover those expenses and they can be significant for large orders. If the institution has requested less than the maximum grant amount and not included those fees, the Grants Committee may suggest the applicant adjust the application to include those expenses, if they choose.

- If they are requesting the purchase of a large item such as a map cabinet, have they clearly indicated the extent of oversize materials that require this type of storage?

- If they are requesting the purchase of a large item such as a map cabinet or shelving, do they have a permanent home for their collection? If not, the Committee generally would not fund the purchase of large items like map cabinets or shelving. If an institution lost their space or ceased to exist, these items would likely become the property of a private individual so the Committee usually only funds major storage items for institutions with permanent storage space.

- If they are requesting new shelving for existing collections in their holdings, have they provided a global assessment or conservator's letter indicating that new shelving is required for those collections? Have they indicated the extent of the collection that will be moved to new shelving? The IGP will not fund the purchase of shelving for materials not yet acquired.

- If they are requesting specialized conservation equipment for a particular collection, have they included documentation from a conservator showing that this equipment is required?

- If they have asked for a specialized item (for example, a tool that heats up to remove tape), does the institution have someone on staff who is qualified and knowledgeable to use this item safely without damaging archival materials?

- Have they requested funding for furniture such as desks, chairs, or "overhead"? These items are not eligible.

- If they are requesting scanners or other computer equipment for the project, does the equipment match the needs of the project? (For example, are they asking for a $10,000 oversize scanner to scan 8x10 photograph prints?)

- If they are requesting scanners, printers, or other computer equipment for the project, have they clearly explained why they need new equipment in order to complete the project?

- Is the amount requested for supplies an even number (for example $100)? Applicants are required to provide exact quotes from the vendor for items to be purchased. The IGP will only fund the amount needed to buy the item(s) not the amount estimated.

3. Salary Requests

When institutions are planning to process collections, digitize items, or do an outreach activity, they often apply for funding to cover salaries. These are questions that Committee members should keep in mind related to salary requests:

- Have they asked for funding to pay for the salary of a permanent full-time employee? This is not eligible under the IGP.

- If they have asked for funding to increase the hours of a part-time employee, have they clearly indicated that the hours are being increased to work on this specific project?

- Have they provided the hourly rate for the staff person being hired (including any benefits)?

- Have they given an indication of the duties of the staff person being hired?

- Have they provided a timeline of how many hours the staff person will spend on each phase/task of the project (if the project involves multiple phases/tasks)? For example, in a processing project, the staff person will spend a certain number of hours on arrangement, a certain number of hours on description, etc.

- Have they provided a timeline of when the staff person will start and complete the project?

4. Records Processing

When institutions request money to process a collection, they are expected to use the "Project Time Guidelines" created by the SCAA and available on the website. Grants Committee members should familiarize themselves with these guidelines (//scaa/storage/900-Grants/903-Grants_Committee_Files/2019-20/IGP_Guidelines/00c_scaa_project-time-guidelines.pdf) and use them when assessing these applications. Some questions to consider:

- How do the hours proposed by the applicant match with the Project Time Guidelines created by the SCAA?

- If the hours proposed do not match the Project Time Guidelines, has the institution justified the difference?

- If the applicant has included "appraisal" as part of the time spent on the processing project, have they also reduced the amount of material to be arranged, described, and physically processed? Including appraisal time often means that the institution does not believe they will be keeping all of the materials in the collection so if time is allocated for appraisal, some of the materials will likely be discarded. This will lower the amount of material to be dealt with in subsequent stages of processing and the timelines should reflect this. That said, it's often difficult for institutions to know exactly how much material might be removed so while this is a factor to keep in mind when assessing the timelines, particularly if the institution has given an indication of how much material might be discarded, it's not necessarily something that would disqualify a project or require a major revision.

- Has the applicant included time to create a finding aid?

- Has the applicant specified that the descriptions will be uploaded to SAIN? This should be explicitly stated.

5. Outreach Projects

- Has the applicant stated explicitly that they will include SaskCulture and Lotteries fund and SCAA logos on any promotional items, exhibits, websites, etc.?

6. Matching Grants

Applicants may use the IGP funds to match funds with another grant program (such as Young Canada Works). In most cases, IGP applicants will not know if they are going to receive this other funding at the time they apply for the IGP. As a result, the SCAA requires that these applicants include two budgets in their application: one for if they receive the other funding and one for if they don't. Both budgets should be requesting the same amount from the SCAA IGP. The SCAA wants to know how the institution will spend IGP money if they do get the other grant and if they don't get the other grant.

- Has the institution provided two separate budgets?

- Has the institution explained how the project will change if they do/don't receive additional funding?

- Has the institution applied for the same amount of money from the SCAA regardless of the status of the other grant(s)? The Grants Committee can only approve an application for <u>one</u> amount of money. The SCAA cannot alter the amount granted at a later date when the other funding is determined.

7. Applications for artifacts and/or published materials

The IGP Guidelines stipulate that applications should focus primarily on archival materials (as defined in the IGP Guidelines) in an institution's holdings. If the grant is primarily for work with artifacts and/or published materials, the Grants Committee may refuse the request. Published materials are a bit tricky here. If the applicant can demonstrate that the published materials are rare or unique, the Committee may agree that they are similar to "archival materials" and qualify for funding.

Artifacts and published materials can certainly be included with other archival materials for rehousing, processing, digitization, conservation, and outreach projects but they should not be the primary focus of the project.

8. Digitization projects

Some institutions will request money to digitize collections either for preservation or access purposes. (Digitization may not be considered a preservation activity for all formats). Some questions to consider for these requests:

- If the grant application is a request to digitize for preservation purposes, have they indicated why they need to digitize the items?

- If the grant application is a request to digitize for preservation purposes, have they indicated how they will store the digital items once created?

- If the grant application is a request to digitize for access purposes (ie. to put online), have they indicated that they have dealt with any copyright concerns for the collection?

- If the applicant is uploading digital items and descriptions online, have they indicated how they are handling the metadata for the digital items? For example, if they are uploading the scans to SAIN, metadata will be required. Have they included staff time for this?

D. Adjudication Guidelines for Grants Overall

Once the individual applications are reviewed, the Committee may need to assess the applications as a group against the overall criteria for the IGP. The IGP adjudication criteria (in order of priority) are:

1. Diversity aspect
2. Projects that support arrangement and description, conservation, digitization, outreach, or access to

archival materials

3. Quality of project

4. Smaller institutional members receive priority over archives will well-established funding structures

5. Archives that have not previously received an IGP

6. Participation in the SCAA Grant Writing webinar

One goal of the IGP is to spread the funding around to as many institutions as possible so institutions who have applied for more than one grant should receive consideration for additional applications only once the rest of the applications have been approved or refused.