Institutional Grant Program (IGP)

Adjudication Process Guidelines

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Introduction

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.

Materials to Read Before Adjudicating Grant Applications

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

- IGP Call for Project Proposals
- IGP Guidelines
- IGP Application Form
- 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.

Adjudication Process

Applications Submitted

- The Archives Advisor uploads IGP applications to the SCAA intranet in the order in which they were received. When the deadline passes for submission of IGP application and all of the documentation (Quotes, Deeds of Gift, etc….) 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.

Review of Grants

- Grants Committee members will individually review each application against the adjudication criteria noted further in this document.

Adjudication Meeting

- This will take place by virtual meeting. 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 before discussion of that application begins. Those Committee members with a conflict of interest will be moved into a separate virtual room for the duration of the discussion on the application. **A Committee member who has declared a conflict of interest may never vote on the recommendations 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. As 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 application recommendations 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:

    - Project is OK for approval recommendation as submitted.
    - Project is OK but requires clarification/adjustment before it can be recommended for approval.
    - Project cannot be recommended for approval.

- Once all of the applications have been reviewed, the Committee will determine how much funds are potentially committed in the 'OK for approval recommendation' category and how many are used in the 'requires clarification/adjustment' category.
- At this point, the adjudication process may vary greatly depending on how much funds are available. The Committee will look at the overall applications submitted and weigh the prioritized adjudication criteria (see below) when deciding which applications will be pursued for clarification/adjustment. It is possible that all of the funds may be expended on 'OK for approval' applications at this stage and 'requires clarification/adjustment' applications may simply be refused. In addition, not all of the applications in the 'requires clarification/adjustment' 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/adjustment' group.
- 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 funds 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.

1. Clarification

- The Grant Committee Chair will prepare the requests for clairification/adjustment and have the Archives Advisor contact each applicant that the Committee has identified and explain the Committee's concerns.

2. Review of Clarifications

- The Archives Advisor will let the Committee know when the revised applications are received. The adjudication Committee will usually book a virtual 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 applications that are 'OK for approval' to see how much funds has been allocated. The Grants Committee must try to expend all the available funds. Where more applications have been received than there is money for, the Grants Committee may consider granting only a portion of the requested funds in a given application. If the Committee is considering approving only a portion of an application, they should make sure that the projects affected are still viable.
- Once the Committee has the final list of application recommended for approval, the work of the Committee is complete.

3. Approval of Grants

- The Chair of the Grants Committee will write up a report to submit to the SCAA Board of Directors with the list of the applications 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 applications as recommended by the Committee. The recommendations 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.

Adjudication Guidelines when Reviewing Individual Applications

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

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 and that all final reports from prior years have been received for each applicant. The Archives Advisor will provide a spreadsheet to the funds received in previous years through the IGP, in case this information becomes necessary to decide between applications.

Purchase of Supplies

Applications to buy archival supplies, as the whole application or as part of, for use with specific collections are eligible for funding. When reviewing applications that include supply purchases, Committee members should consider:

- 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 for later use.
- Does the amount of supplies requested match the extent of the collection being rehoused? If an institution requests 3000 photograph sleeves but they indicate that the photograph collection contains only 500 photograph prints they will need to adjust their application or provide clairification.
- What kinds of supplies are being ordered? Do those supplies make sense in the context of the project?
    - 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.
    - An institution orders 10 archival pens to label file folders but there's no indication that the institution is doing anything other than labelling regular file folders.
    - An institution orders a magnifying glass but the project is simply to re-house materials in new Hollinger boxes.
- 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. 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 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 storage solutions.

- 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 future materials.
- 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, overhead, or miscelleanous? 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? Are they asking for a $10,000 oversize scanner to scan 8"x10" photographic 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.

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)? 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?

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
https://www.scaa.sk.ca/fileadmin/scaa/storage/900-Grants/903-Grants_Committee_Files/2023-24/SCAA_Project-Time-Guidelines-2022_final.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.
- For projects involving description, has the applicant specified that the descriptions will be uploaded to MemorySask? This should be explicitly stated.

Outreach Projects

- Has the applicant stated explicitly that they will include SaskCulture, Sask Lotteries, and SCAA logos on any promotional items, exhibits, websites, etc.?
- If a project has published material as an outcome (Book, film, etc….) would any fiscal benefit be received by the institution or an individual? The IGP will not fund projects that benefit an individual.

Matching Grants

Applicants may use the IGP funds to match funds with another grant program. 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 do not. 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 separate a budget and timeline?
- 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 one funding amount. The SCAA cannot alter the amount granted at a later date when the other funding is determined.

Applications for Artefacts and/or Published Materials

The IGP Guidelines stipulate that applications should focus primarily on archival materials as defined in the IGP Guidelines. If the grant is primarily for work with artefacts 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 enough to archival materials and qualify for funding.
Artefacts and published materials can 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.

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 application is a request to digitize for preservation purposes, have they indicated why they need to digitize the items and how they will store the digital items once created?
- If the 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? If they are uploading the scans to MemorySask, metadata will be required. Have they included staff time for this?

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. 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.