

*Responsive Research:*  
**Competitive Scholarship  
Applications in the Medical and  
Health Sciences**

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# What is *Responsive Research*?

*Responsive Research* moves beyond the bounds of academia and describes programmes of research that are:

- *complex*
- *multi-sectoral*
- *responsive* to issues/problems/contexts that exist *inside* and *outside* traditional academic boundaries.

# Demonstrating *Research Impact* through responsive research practice:

Your application will go through a multi-stage, multi-disciplinary audience review process, as such, the application must be written with a *cohesive narrative* that gives critical contextual information that will be *understood across* all audiences.

A critical feature of *demonstrating* impact is the addition of evidence that supports your claims that the research you are proposing is innovative in that it is sufficiently complex; it will have impact across sectors; and is responsive to pressing issues both within and outside academia.

The research project summary is among the most important parts of the application. The application must explain a specific hypothesis of the research and the description of the applicant's role on the project. Applicants and their supervisor(s) should make sure that it provides a concise account of the *subject matter*, an *overview of each part of the research plan, specific project aims and the methodology*. The summary should reflect the *significance of the project*.

***Think: complex; multi-sectoral; responsive to both academia and beyond***

# KT vs iKT

- **KT:** *End of grant KT* is the classic way that researchers are accustomed to disseminating their research results by discussing results with peers, presenting at conferences, and publishing findings, generally once the bulk of the study has been completed.
- In contrast to end of grant KT, *integrated knowledge translation (IKT)* involves engaging and integrating those who will need to act on the findings, the *knowledge users*, into the research process. IKT requires researchers and knowledge users to develop partnerships and engage in a collaborative process with the overarching goal being the co-production of knowledge, its exchange and its translation into action. By integrating knowledge users at every stage, KT becomes woven into the process and researchers minimise the possibilities of unanticipated barriers that may occur when attempting to act upon results with stakeholders.

# How can we *evidence* that responsive research *will* occur?

**1. The 4 R's of engaged research – Developed by Kirkness and Barnhardt** (Kirkness, V.J. & Barnhardt, R. (1991). First Nations and Higher Education: The Four R's--Respect, Relevance, Reciprocity, Responsibility. Journal of American Indian Education, 30(3): 1-15.)

- **Relevant**
- **Respectful**
- **Reciprocal**
- **Responsible**

*actively listening to our partner*

**2.** Ask your supervisor informed questions about KT/iKT to get a sense of what KT/iKT strategy they use in their research programme, and what opportunities you will have as a trainee to engage in their iKT/KT plan.

**3.** Incorporate iKT or KT in your application as a means of demonstrating the depth and breadth of your proposed research. Do you have a place for a KT/iKT plan within your own research framework?

**4.** Thinking beyond your application- *who* will use this research? *How* will this research contribute to change both within and outside of academia?

# *Why* is demonstrating impact through responsive research framework essential to *your training*?

Because CIHR has determined that trainees of the future must be:

## **1. Research Leaders of Tomorrow** *(complex)*

who can lead high-impact, multi-disciplinary research in a rapidly evolving environment of advancing technologies and globalization

## **2. Leaders Across Knowledge Sectors** *(multi-sectoral)*

who can apply their scholarship and talent to lead innovation across different sectors of Canada's knowledge-based economy

## **3. Experts in Critical Priority Areas** *(responsive to needs within and extant to academia)*

who can establish and fill Canadian priority areas of specialized expertise and advance the frontiers of science

## *Demonstrating* that you know your institutional research environment:

1. Take the time to speak with your potential supervisor to understand what makes their lab unique in Canada and in the field. **(context)**
2. What infrastructure and resources does Western have that make this the very best place for you to engage in the research you are proposing?  
**(evidence to support context)**
  - For instance is there a specialized patient group that you will have access to?
  - Is there a link between your supervisor's lab/programme of research with an important non-academic partner: industrial/not-for-profit/end-user/clinicians?
  - Is there a collection of renowned researchers at Western working collectively in the area you are proposing to do research?



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