



Français	Contact Us	Help	Search	Canada
Home	Forms	Careers	Programs	Site Map

**Important**

SSHRC website off-line Tuesday, November 27, 6 p.m. to 12 a.m. (EDT)

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- > [About SSHRC](#)
- > [What's New](#)
- > [Apply for Funding](#)
- > [Using your Funds](#)
- > [Winning Research](#)
- > [Media](#)
- > [Proactive Disclosure](#)

International Community-University Research Alliances (CURA)—in Partnership with the International Development Research Centre (IDRC)

The International CURA collaboration is a joint effort between the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) and IDRC.

[Regulations Governing Grant Applications](#)

[Definitions](#)

Application deadlines	Value	Duration	Results announced	Apply
Letter of Intent: November 21, 2007	Letter of Intent Grant: Up to \$30,000		Letter of Intent: end of March 2008	Application form not available Web CV and instructions
Formal Application (by invitation only): October 22, 2008	Grant: Up to \$400,000 annually	Grant: Up to 5 years	Formal Application: February 2009	

[Context](#)

[Objectives](#)

[Description](#)

[Value and Duration](#)

[Eligibility](#)

[Evaluation and Adjudication](#)

[Administrative Regulations](#)

[More Information](#)

Context

As globalization, the communications revolution and other forces continue to reshape the world, communities are presented with an increasingly complex mix of opportunities and challenges with multiple social, economic and cultural dimensions. The phenomena transforming the lives of individuals and communities alike include changing patterns of employment and demands for skills in a knowledge-based economy, poverty and homelessness, an increasingly diverse social fabric, transformations in family life, changing values, young people entering the workforce, new constraints on organizations and public services, both urbanization and depopulation of rural areas, and new rules of business competitiveness.

Many of these challenges are best addressed at the local and regional levels by the local and regional groups that best understand the needs of, and the factors affecting, particular communities. In addition, issues which cut across geographic boundaries are also best addressed by postsecondary institutions working closely with groups that represent particular communities of interest. In service of these goals, stronger alliances between community organizations and postsecondary institutions both in Canada and in low- and middle-income countries (LMICs) can be enormously effective and yield important benefits for all.

Alliances between community organizations and postsecondary institutions in Canada and in low- and middle-income countries will foster new knowledge, tools and methods to develop the best strategies for diverse aspects of intervention, action research, program delivery and policy development that will be appropriate for our rapidly changing times. Public or private community and voluntary organizations represent major sources of expertise and innovation that are based on front-line experience. For their part, postsecondary institutions offer breadth and depth of knowledge and skills in the social sciences and humanities disciplines, which shed vivid light on the changing human condition and thereby offer new approaches to problem-solving.

IDRC and SSHRC believe that, by working together as equal partners in a research endeavour, Canadian and LMIC teams of postsecondary institutions and community organizations can develop new knowledge and capabilities in key areas, sharpen research priorities, provide new research training opportunities, and enhance the ability of social sciences and humanities research to meet the needs of communities in the midst of change. The International CURA program is designed to facilitate such collaborations across sectoral, organizational and international boundaries.

Objectives

The purpose of the program is to support the creation of alliances between community organizations and postsecondary institutions which, through a process of ongoing collaboration and mutual learning, will foster comparative research, training and the creation of new knowledge in areas of shared importance for the social, cultural or economic development of communities in Canada and in LMICs.

Specific objectives for the International CURA program are to:

- enable research teams from Canada and LMICs to undertake comparative and collaborative research;
- promote sharing of knowledge, resources and expertise between postsecondary institutions and organizations in the community;
- enrich research, teaching methods and curricula in postsecondary institutions;
- reinforce community decision-making and problem-solving capacity; and
- enhance students' education and employability by means of diverse opportunities to build their knowledge, expertise and work skills through hands-on research and related experience.

Description



An International CURA:

- provides co-ordination and core support for planning and carrying out diversified research activities that reflect the CURA program objectives, are centred on the targeted themes that are of mutual importance to the partners, and are closely related to their existing strengths; and
- is an institutional grant led by both a co-director from either a Canadian postsecondary or community organization, and a co-director from either an LMIC postsecondary or community organization.

Each International CURA's activities will include:

- a research component (short-term and long-term projects, action research, etc.);
- an education and training component (in the context of research projects, apprenticeships, activities credited as part of coursework, etc.); and
- a knowledge-mobilization component (workshops, seminars, colloquia, policy manuals and other publications, public lectures, etc.) that meets the needs of both academic and community partners.

The project partners jointly define an International CURA's research activities as well as the participatory arrangements under which individual researchers and research teams will carry out those activities nationally and internationally. Alliances are formed on the basis of equal partnerships between organizations from the community and one or more postsecondary institutions. Collaboration and co-ordination is provided by the co-directors based in Canada and in the LMIC.

The partners should continue to develop and refine the research activities and, in addition to strengthening the original alliance, should, where necessary, also recruit new partners during the period of the grant.

SSHRC and IDRC expect that partners will develop the capacity to work together effectively (i.e., community organizations will develop the capacity to shape research agendas, and postsecondary institutions will develop the capacity to work with communities).

In each International CURA, the partners will jointly define and bring together one or more academic disciplines in order to target one or more research themes.

The International CURA will support strategic research, dissemination, networking and partnership around four broad themes.

Environment and Natural Resource Management supports research on environment-health issues; environmental challenges associated with poverty in rural and urban settings; adaptation to climate change; and promoting the sustainable use and management of natural resources through the involvement of local communities.

Information and Communication Technologies for Development supports research on how ICTs can contribute to socio-economic development, and on ways communities can contribute to the information economy.

Innovation, Policy and Science supports research on systems of innovation; the impact of science, technology and innovation policies on development challenges; and enhanced social inclusion and multi-stakeholder participation in decision-making related to science and technology.

Social and Economic Policy supports research to inform key areas of public policy related to poverty reduction, equitable economic and social development, health, and human rights.

The co-directors from Canada and the LMIC will champion the International CURA's goals;

- provide leadership and contribute intellectual guidance for the development of the program of activities; and
- be supported by researchers, by graduate and undergraduate students (where possible), by the partner organizations, and, as needed, by professional staff.

IDRC and SSHRC plan to administer the program in a flexible manner and to anticipate that adjustments may be made as the program continues to develop.



Value and Duration

The International CURA program offers funding for up to nine Letter of Intent (LOI) grants and up to three formal application grants.

Applicants successful at the LOI stage are eligible for a development grant of up to \$30,000. The value of an LOI International CURA recognizes the additional costs of international collaboration. At the LOI stage, eligible expenses are limited to travel, workshops, meetings, secretarial support and communication and dissemination activities. Applicants should familiarize themselves with the regulations on [eligible and ineligible expenses](#), and both applicants and LMIC partners should familiarize themselves with [IDRC LOI budget eligibility](#). LOI applicants should also note [IDRC grant conditions](#).

A formal International CURA can receive funding of up to \$400,000 annually for up to five years. Up to \$200,000 will be available to the Canadian team, and up to \$200,000 will be available to the LMIC team. SSHRC funds will be directly disbursed to the Canadian teams and IDRC funds will be directly disbursed to the LMIC teams.

International CURA grants are subject to:

- SSHRC's and IDRC's fiscal ability to provide the support;
- satisfactory compliance with SSHRC's reporting requirements; and
- a positive SSHRC and IDRC mid-term (third-year) evaluation.

The International CURA grant may be used to cover non-physical infrastructure costs for the support and co-ordination of the research teams and for carrying out some of the research activities. International CURAs are expected to seek funding from sources other than IDRC and SSHRC to help support their research activities.



Eligibility

Country Eligibility

The list of LMIC's considered eligible under the International CURA program is listed in [Annex A](#).

Applicants

Institutional applications must be submitted jointly by the Canadian and LMIC co-directors. It is expected that International CURAs will be made up of one or more postsecondary institutions and one or more organizations from the community. "Community" may refer to either a geographic focus or a community of interest.

This requirement reflects the fact that International CURAs are international partnerships between Canadian and LMIC postsecondary institutions and organizations from the community, established jointly to develop and implement research activities. While there may be cases where a single community partner is appropriate, SSHRC and IDRC require that International CURAs involve a minimum of two community partners.

Institutions that propose to administer any grant awarded under this program must meet the requirements for the management of SSHRC (for Canadian teams) and IDRC (for international teams) funds, and hold or obtain institutional eligibility.

Federal, provincial, territorial and municipal government departments and for-profit organizations are not eligible to administer or receive International CURA funds. These organizations may participate in the research projects as [partners](#), and researchers from these organizations may participate as [collaborators](#).

Postsecondary Institutions

International CURAs must be closely associated with academic units (department, centre, faculty, institute) within the participating postsecondary institution or institutions. Specifically, an International CURA must:

- focus on an area of strength of the participating academic units as demonstrated, in particular, by a critical mass of researchers and students working in that area; and
- have identified, at the time of the application, a sufficient number of researchers who will be actively involved in the program.

Organizations from the Community

Eligible organizations from the community sector may include public, community or other organizations that are active in social, economic or cultural fields relevant to the International CURA's research and training objectives.

Multiple Applications

For this competition, any postsecondary institution or community organization will be able to hold both one SSHRC CURA and one International CURA LOI or formal grant if both types of applications are recommended for funding.





Evaluation and Adjudication

The International CURA program involves a two-stage application process:

1. Eligible applicants must submit, jointly with their partners, a **Letter of Intent** (LOI) application form.
2. Applicants whose LOIs are approved by the selection committee will be invited to submit, again jointly with their partners, a **Formal Application** form.

Only those applicants who are successful at the LOI stage will be invited to submit a formal application. Candidates so invited will be provided with the required application material and instructions for completing their proposals. They will also be offered development grants of up to \$30,000 to help in the preparation of the formal application, i.e., to round out their network of partners and program of activities, and to consolidate their collaborative activities. For development grants, eligible costs are limited to travel, workshops, meetings, secretarial support, and communication and dissemination activities.

Note: Neither the co-directors nor the lead organizations can be changed between the LOI stage and the formal application stage.

Letter of Intent web application

Deadline: November 21, 2007

An international and multi-disciplinary committee of both academic and non-academic leaders engaged in the CURA and International CURA competitions will adjudicate the domestic and international LOI and formal applications. International CURA applications will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- demonstrated relevance to the social, cultural or economic development of communities in both Canada and the LMIC;
- significance of the proposed activities to the objectives of one or more of the four themes;
- potential for significant outcomes, i.e., impacts on student training, capacity-building, curriculum development, new modes of service delivery, and community decision-making;
- soundness of the research approach (methodology), and justification of comparative research;
- quality of and rationale for the international teams;
- quality of the alliances among the participating institutions and organizations, including the nature of collaboration and commitment on the part of all partners;
- appropriateness of plans for the dissemination and mobilization of knowledge; and
- appropriateness of the budget for both the Canadian and LMIC team.

The selection committee will be free to suggest to successful LOI applicants ways

to strengthen their formal application. It could, for example, suggest the grouping of complementary applications, propose other possible partnerships or recommend additional sources for funding.

Formal Application

Deadline (by invitation only): October 22, 2008

Formal applications will have to provide:

- more extensive information on the research, training and knowledge mobilization activities, on the full budget requirements, on the co-directors of the International CURA and on the research teams in place (researchers, students and community);
- a framework for the ongoing evaluation of the International CURA (including performance indicators); and
- further information explaining the conditions under which each partner is participating and how the funds will be shared and administered.

For formal applications, the evaluation criteria are as follows:

- importance of the research question(s);
- rationale for and quality of proposed approaches to achieve the stated objectives of the International CURA;
- track records of academic and community-based partners, both individuals and organizations, in their respective fields of engagement;
- demonstrated quality and strength of local and international partnership (level of commitment and engagement throughout research cycle, clarity and balance of governance structure);
- suitability, scope and timing of proposed knowledge dissemination and mobilization activities;
- likelihood of producing significant results and impacts by the end of the five-year funding period;
- appropriateness of budget and capacity to leverage resources (financial and/or in-kind) from additional sources; and
- quality of evaluation framework and process: clarity and feasibility of specific measures (i.e., performance indicators) to meaningfully assess the performance of the International CURA.

Administrative Regulations



All Canadian and LMIC applicants and grant holders at the LOI competition stage must comply with the [IDRC Regulations Governing Grant Applications](#).

All Canadian applicants and grant holders at the formal application stage must comply with [SSHRC's Regulations Governing Grant Applications](#) and with the

regulations set out in the [Community-University Research Alliances section of the SSHRC Grant Holder's Guide](#).

All LMIC applicants and grant holders at the formal application stage must comply with the [IDRC Regulations Governing Grant Applications](#).

More Information

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Annex A: LMIC Eligibility

Afghanistan	Ecuador	Malaysia	South Africa
Algeria	Egypt	Maldives	Sri Lanka
Angola	El Salvador	Mali	St. Kitts and Nevis
Argentina	Equatorial	Mauritania	St. Lucia
Bangladesh	Guinea	Mauritius	St. Vincent and the
Barbados	Eritrea	Mexico	Grenadines
Belize	Ethiopia	Mongolia	Sudan
Benin	Fiji	Morocco	Suriname
Bhutan	Gabon	Mozambique	Swaziland
Bolivia	Gambia	Namibia	Syrian Arab
Botswana	Ghana	Nepal	Republic
Brazil	Grenada	Nicaragua	Tanzania
Burkina Faso	Guatemala	Niger	Thailand
Burundi	Guinea-Bissau	Nigeria	Togo
Cambodia	Guyana	Oman	Trinidad and

Cameroon	Haiti	Pakistan	Tobago
Chad	Honduras	Panama	Tunisia
Chile	India	Papua New	Turkey
China	Indonesia	Guinea	Uganda
Colombia	Jamaica	Paraguay	Uruguay
Congo, Republic of	Jordan	Peru	Venezuela
Costa Rica	Kenya	Philippines	Vietnam
Djibouti	Lao PDR	Rwanda	West Bank and
Dominica	Lesotho	Samoa	Gaza
Dominican	Libya	Senegal	Yemen
Republic	Madagascar	Seychelles	Zambia
	Malawi	Sierra Leone	Zimbabwe

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Important Notices