

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE SUMMARY

RESEARCH/CREATION IN FINE ARTS

Date: July 15, 2008

Context

In October 2002, SSHRC's Council approved a recommendation by the Standing Committee on Research Support to develop a pilot program in Fine Arts. The draft program description was submitted to the Council in March 2003, with these key features:

- 3-year grants to artist-researchers affiliated with Canadian universities
- a maximum of \$100,000 annually and \$250,000 over three years
- include Research Time Stipends

An evaluation of this Research/Creation Grants in the Fine Arts Pilot program was included in SSHRC's Risk-based Evaluation Plan for 2006-2007 to 2008-2009 in order to provide SSHRC senior management and the Council with evidence to base a decision to renew the program once the 5 year competition pilot phase had ended. The level of risk for this program was considered relatively high given its innovative goal to support the research and training components in the creation of literary and artistic works and to support artist-researchers, a new clientele for SSHRC.

This evaluation of the Research/Creation in Fine Arts program produced 11 recommendations as well as a number of suggestions to improve the program's efficiency.

On the basis of these, SSHRC management agreed to several changes, improvements and enhancements of the program as follows.

For each formal recommendation...

Recommendation	Management Response	Decision/Action
1. a) Maintain the pilot program for a minimum of two additional rounds, and b) conduct a summative evaluation following receipt of the grants by the successful candidates in the final round of pilot-phase financing. (p. 40)	a) A competition will be held in 2008-09. b) A summative evaluation will be organized for 2011-12, when SSHRC can expect to have the Final Research Reports of the pilot program's first three competitions.	a) Posting of the program in June 2008. b) Outline the summative evaluation by December 2008 to allow gathering of necessary information.
2. Revise the final report form to obtain richer information on outputs, impacts, and outreach of research/creation activities. Require that grantees submit a mid-term report in its pilot phase. (p. 40)	Rework the Research Creation program's Final Research Report, as a part of the SSHRC review of the final reports for its programs	Revised form online by April 2009.
3. A performance management system should be put in place and relevant performance indicators should be collected on a systematic basis. (p. 40)	Design an appropriate performance management system for the program.	In place by August 2009.
4. SSHRC should investigate the presence in the program design of the following barriers: level of participation and the decline of French-language applicants, university size, availability of students doing research, and regional distribution of grants.	SSHRC will ensure that promotion of the next call reaches more French-language institutions and small institutions.	Promotion of program in French-Language institutions by September 2008. The results of the competition will be monitored for French language participation and participation by small institutions and a report produced by June 2009.

<p>5. Develop a standardized selection and feedback form providing points for more detailed comments on selection criteria in addition to detailed qualitative feedback for each application. Provide more detail on actual criteria that were judged over simplified. (p. 41)</p>	<p>SSHRC program staff will assess the feasibility of changing the adjudication feedback method to ensure more detailed information reaches the applicants.</p>	<p>Appropriate changes will be implemented in the next adjudication. The new process and the lessons learned will be documented.</p>
<p>6. Within the financial envelope of the program, create a system of smaller grants to increase accessibility and to cater to the needs of applicants who have less costly or smaller scale research/creation projects. (p. 42)</p>	<p>SSHRC staff will modify the program description to make it clearer that applicants with smaller projects are welcome.</p>	<p>In place for the posting of the new program description in June 2008.</p>
<p>7. The list of disciplines that currently serve to determine eligibility should be examined critically after each competition by the selection panel, which should then make recommendations on categories that might be added or removed. (p. 42)</p>	<p>SSHRC staff will modify the program description to make it clearer that the list of artistic disciplines cited is not exclusive.</p>	<p>In place for the posting of the new program description in June 2008.</p>
<p>8. Examine the definition of research/creation and of artist-researcher until there is a satisfactory level of consensus reached on these operational definitions as well as issues surrounding methodologies and theory (p. 42)</p>	<p>SPJI and SSHRC will discuss this issue with the next peer review committee in order to improve these operational definitions.</p>	<p>A progress report will be prepared by April 2009.</p>

9. Develop a communication strategy that provides more means for results to be shared in the broader community and amongst applicants and grantees. This communication strategy could be centered on a Web portal for research/creation. (p. 42)	SPJI will explore the idea of setting up a web portal for the Research/Creation program. Part of this portal could be designed to exchange this information.	A feasibility and progress report will be prepared within by April 2009.
10. In the Executive Summary, there is a suggestion "that SSHRC provide artist-researchers with greater flexibility for the inclusion of all types of creative projects in their application [CV]." (p. ii)	SPJI staff will modify the program description to make it clearer that a broad variety of projects are welcome.	In place for the posting of the new program description in June, 2008.
11. It is suggested that SSHRC make a clearer case for the importance of collaboration (fourth program objective) among artist-researchers. (p.i)	SPJI staff will modify the program description to make it clear that a broad variety of collaboration is welcome.	In place for the posting of the new program description in June, 2008.

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