



GUIDELINES AND POLICIES FOR THE: RESEARCH PEER REVIEW COMMITTEE of the SCDAC/AAFC

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The Sick Cell Disease Association of Canada strives to improve the health and quality of life for all people with sickle cell disease and to find a cure.

**March
2015**

We will provide support, and work to increase knowledge, awareness and understanding among members of the sickle cell disease community including health care professionals

**Updated
Feb 2017**

We will create greater public awareness of sickle cell disease and of our organization



RESEARCH PEER REVIEW COMMITTEE (RPRC)- TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Research Peer Review Committee will advise the SCDAC /AFCC with respect to continuous quality improvement in the review process by reviewing submissions made in response to calls for competitive research proposals offered by the Sick Cell Disease Association of Canada (SCDAC/AAFC), rank the applications and will make recommendations to the SCDAC/AAFC Board of Directors on funding of the proposals. The final decisions regarding awards will be made by the SCDAC/AAFC Board of Directors. No appeals will be considered.

The principles inherent in the review process are identification of excellence, provision of equity of opportunity, and due diligence in the allocation of SCDAC/AAFC research funds. Members of RPRC may include academic clinicians, allied health professionals, patients and advocates

OBJECTIVES:

- a. Evaluate applications submitted to the research grant competitions and for traineeships, and make recommendations for funding to the SCDAC/AAFC;
- b. Monitor the application processes and protocols governing evaluation of applications to SCDAC/AAFC grant competitions;
- c. Make recommendations concerning pertinent aspects of the research grant competition process to the Research Advisory Committee.

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MEMBERSHIP AND TERMS OF OFFICE

The Committee shall not fewer than five members and not more than twelve members and shall be composed as follows:

a. **Chair and Support Chair:** The initial selection shall be done via survey. Thereafter, these roles shall be appointed by the SCDAC/AAFC Board of Directors based on a recommendation from the Research Advisory Committee and consultation with the chair of the RPRC. They shall be eligible to hold the position for a two terms of three years with yearly renewal. If the Chair resigns during the term, a successor will be appointed for the time remaining in that term. Chair and Support Chair shall ideally be individuals with strong research background in the field of hematology.

b. **Membership:** The initial members of the committee will be selected based on survey. Thereafter, the members of the committee will be appointed by the Research Advisory Committee in consultation with the Chair of the Peer Review Committee and will consist of individuals with relevant research interests, skills or experience. In choosing members, consideration should be given to varied representation from different disciplines (medical, nursing, physiotherapy, psychosocial). One or more members representing the patient and family member perspective may also be on the committee. The term of appointment for members shall be two years and members shall be eligible for re-appointments. To ensure continuity, efforts must be made to ensure that the majority of the Peer Review Committee members do not rotate at one time.

c. **Ex-officio:** The SCDAC/AAFC President/Executive Director will be a non-voting member of the Peer Review Committee to provide support, documentation and linkage with the SCDAC /AAFC Management and Board of Directors.

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DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Members will:

- a. undertake timely, transparent, fair, objective and thorough review of eligible applications;
- b. submit a written summary of their evaluations, including scores and critique of each application to the Chairperson of the Peer Review Committee;
- c. complete a conflict of interest statement for each grant application;
- d. participate in meetings/teleconferences to reach consensus on the award selection;
- e. submit feedback on the review process.

The Chairperson will:

- a. chair the meetings and delegate responsibilities;
- b. review the agenda and minutes for each meeting;
- c. provide written feedback and final ranking to each applicant, whether successful or not, based on written summaries provided by the Peer Review Committee members; summarized comments sent back to applicant would not indicate from whom a point of criticism came;
- d. report to the Research Advisory Committee on completion of each annual SCDAC /AAFC research grant competition cycle providing an appreciation of the review process itself, number and types of applications reviewed, profile of applicants, number of applications recommended, general strength and weaknesses of the applicants and the proposed projects and their alignment with SCDAC/AAFC research priorities;
- e. make funding recommendations to the RAC based on the review process so that funding offers can be made to the best ranked candidates.
- f. the supporting chair will step in to the role of the chair should the chair refuse or unable to fulfil duties effectively and in the same token, the chair may assign another support chair should the support chair be inefficient.

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The Committee will:

- a. solicit opinions from external reviewers, as required;
- b. provide a consensus evaluation of each proposal;
- c. make funding recommendations by ranking best candidates for each research program;
- d. review as needed the terms of reference and operating parameters of the Peer Review Committee;
- e. recommend membership in the Peer Review Committee;
- f. advise on the application and granting process;
- g. ask a member to resign if failed to attend at least 75% of meeting or if unable to carry out assigned duties without due justification or notice

CONFIDENTIALITY

The Peer Review Committee and its external reviewers maintain responsibility to the SCDAC/AAFC, the sponsors, investigators, and applicants that its deliberations and the information to which it becomes privy be treated with the utmost confidentiality by all its members

All materials viewed by members of the committee must be kept in the strictest confidence. These items cannot be circulated outside of the Peer Review Committee unless otherwise decided by the committee. Failure to honor confidentiality will be grounds for dismissal from the Peer Review Committee. Each Peer Review Committee member and external reviewer will sign a Confidentiality Agreement with the SCDAC/AAFC.

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TIMING, NOTICE OF MEETINGS & QUORUM:

The Committee shall meet in person or by teleconference at such other times as the Chair may require_ a minimum of two tele-conferences and one face to face meeting/year to review applications and make recommendations on awards is recommended. Unless otherwise agreed, notice of each meeting confirming the venue or mode of meeting, time and date, together with an agenda of items to be discussed, shall be forwarded to each member of the committee no fewer than 14 days prior to the date of the meeting. At least half of the members of Peer Review Committee must be present at a meeting to constitute a quorum.

AUTHORITY:

The Peer Review Committee is a standing committee of the SCDAC/AAFC. It reports through its Chairperson to the President/Executive Director to the Board of Directors; the Chairperson also keeps the Research Advisory Committee informed of the activities of the Peer Review Committee. The Research Advisory Committee is a separate entity, which also reports through the President/Executive Director to the National Board of Directors.

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