

# Criteria for Evaluating the **INTEGRATION OF SEX & GENDER** in CIHR Strategic Funding Initiatives



## **CHECKLIST**

[BIOMEDICAL & TRANSLATIONAL RESEARCH]

### LETTER OF INTENT STAGE

#### 1. Quality of the proposed research program

- Statement of any known sex differences in the biology or epidemiology of the disease under study
- Brief discussion of the influence of sex on the mechanism under study (e.g. genetic, sex hormone receptors, immune response)
- Clear articulation of whether or not the research question intends to examine sexual dimorphism
- Sample size considerations with respect to sex
- Description of additional ways in which sex/gender will be accounted for in research programs involving cells, tissues, animals and humans
- If sex/gender are being omitted, a scientifically sound justification should be provided

#### 2. Strength of the team

- Identification of a Sex and Gender Champion within the research team
- Evidence that the Sex and Gender Champion has credibility and research experience in sex and/or gender science as relates to the field of study (i.e. graduate training, publication history, and/or IGH core competency certificate in sex/gender methodology related to the topic under investigation)
- Appropriateness of the role described for the Sex and Gender champion (i.e. responsible for guiding the formulation of sex/gender-related research questions within the research proposal; assurance that experimental design elements, analysis, reporting and knowledge translation plans reflect gold standard in sex/gender approaches)

### SCORING OF THE LETTER OF INTENT

The appropriateness of the Sex and Gender Champion will be evaluated. Reviewers will be asked to assess whether sex/gender integration is:

**Outstanding:** extremely thoughtful integration into research question and proposal

**Excellent:** reasonably thoughtful integration into research question and proposal

**Good:** good integration, not compelling

**Fair:** incomplete integration

**Poor:** no mention of sex and gender, the omission is unjustified

### FULL APPLICATION STAGE

#### 1. Vision, rationale, and added value

- Clarity of the vision regarding the analysis and expected results/outcomes as they relate to sex and gender.
- Evidence of explicit consideration being given to achieving equitable health impacts across diverse patient/population sub-groups.

#### 2. Quality and appropriateness of research approach with respect to sex/gender

##### Literature review

- Clear articulation that the phenomenon/condition/disease under study has a different incidence or prevalence based on sex.
- A literature review that describes known sex differences, or lack thereof, in the research area under study.

##### Research question

- Clear articulation of the type of research question being considered with respect to sex/gender:
  - Identifying sex/gender differences
  - Explaining sex/gender differences
  - Establishing sex/gender similarities in the mechanism under study
  - Investigating sex-specific pathways underlying a common phenotype
  - Studying sex/gender as a confounder or interaction variable while testing the main study hypothesis

##### Study Design and Methods

- Scientifically sound justification for proposing a single-sex study, if applicable.
- Identification of the sex of the cells, tissues or animals being used, if applicable.
- Description of the method for documenting/controlling the hormonal status of experimental female animals, if applicable.
- Description of the method for including equal numbers of male and female human participants for translational research, if applicable.

##### Analysis & Reporting

- Description of the analysis and reporting plan for sex-disaggregated data, if applicable.
- Sample size calculations to show adequate power for a sex-disaggregated analysis, where appropriate.
- Inclusion of a statement that negative findings with respect to sex will be reported.

#### 3. Knowledge Translation Plan

- Description of how the knowledge translation strategies intend to maximize uptake by men and women/boys and girls; will the content/messages/products vary by sex or gender