



CARA's Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

Clinical Research

Established in 2013, the Clinical Research SIG facilitates networking, collaboration, and knowledge exchange among CARA members working in, or interested in, clinical research administration. Our members debate and discuss public policies governing clinical trials, promote best practices in clinical trial contract negotiation, stay up-to-date with new clinical research legislation and regulatory requirements, and identify funding sources to support the continuation and development of existing or new clinical research initiatives and opportunities. Within CARA, we strive to continuously improve knowledge of the overall clinical research environment by sharing our own expertise in webinars and at conferences and also recruit experts from our large professional networks internationally. We work together to facilitate clinical research professional development for the benefit of medical research that impacts us all.

Colleges, Institutes and Polytechnics

This new SIG welcomes any members interested in applied R & D and innovation at Canadian colleges, institutes, and polytechnics. Our members include research coordinators/facilitators, industry liaison personnel, project/program managers, finance and contracts administrators, commercialization experts, ethics professionals and managers. We welcome everyone, so please join us to share and expand your expertise through conference calls, emails, in-person events, webinars, and conference participation. The SIG was created with the intention of providing career and professional development opportunities for the rank-and-file administrators at the growing numbers of Canadian colleges, institutes, and polytechnics engaged in research and innovation.

Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

The goal of the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) SIG is to create a place for CARA members to share best practices, tips, and resources relating to equity, diversity and inclusion in the Canadian research environment. This SIG will provide a forum for professional growth, network building, and EDI advocacy.

Information Technology

Open to all CARA members.

The IT SIG serves both the tech-savvy and technophobic alike. It helps us navigate and understand the changing maze of information technology we encounter every day across the spectrum of roles represented by CARA members. Goals include: fostering discussion, sharing information, recruitment, and exploring the latest news in IT. Discussion may include general IT questions (at any level), deep-dives into a specific technology, or sharing of good practices and lessons learned.

Export Controls

Export Controls are seen in various types of contracts with government and industry sponsors. The Controlled Goods Program (CGP) is a stringent security system that regulates and controls the examination, possession or transfer of certain controlled goods. Anyone who deals with certain controlled goods in Canada is required to register with the CGP, including researchers contracting with industry and other non-academic partners. Goods and data governed by US International Traffic in Arms Regulations (ITARs) become subject to CGP when Canadian research institutions agree to ITAR terms and conditions in research agreements. Some examples of controlled goods that are covered by the program include certain firearms and ammunition, many different kinds of munitions, and aerospace, satellite and other goods and technologies that guide weapons systems. The CARA Export Controls group is managed through a list serve (exportcontrols@cara-acaar.ca) which includes research administrators and other stakeholders.

Grant Writers and Facilitators

The purpose of the Grant Facilitator/Writer SIG is to bring together CARA members who are interested in this particular focus of research administration work, provide opportunities for professional development and best practices; to promote this group and CARA to other individuals who may be associated with the research field but are not members of CARA. We also suggest names of members from inside and outside of academia who are involved in research administration and may not be aware of CARA; provide a forum for professional development, information sharing, and advocacy; assist with the creation of appropriate conference content; share best/worst practices in grant writing/facilitation; and share common challenges and resources developed for various programs (e.g. templates that list rules and regulations/criteria from funders).

Institution Contract Reviewers

The Institutional Contracts SIG was established in 2013 for contract negotiators at institutions. We have members from colleges, hospitals and universities as well as consultants and lawyers in private practice. Our members share questions and resources to help advance our knowledge and the profession. We use the CARA O3 platform to share templates, checklists, articles, publications and other contract-related resources. We work together to contribute to CARA's professional development offerings for those in contract negotiation. Our SIG community facilitates networking and is a great way to connect with your peers nationally. As a group we also promote the expertise of contract negotiators by collaborating on publications for the CARA Connection and the Process Pathways Poster Competition at CARA National. We invite you to join our dynamic and supportive community!

International Research

The CARA International Research Interest Group provides an information sharing forum for research administrators in Canada interested in either research with an international scope (ie. collaborative projects with international components) or in learning more about research funding opportunities from non-Canadian sources. The group has a broad focus and welcomes input and discussion from any CARA member with an interest in 'international' issues as they relate to university research.

Leadership

Our Leadership Special Interest Group supports leaders at all levels, offering tools, advice, coaching and mentoring to our peers so that we can all build effective teams and research portfolios.

We believe that the success of leaders in research administration is directly related to the quality and function of their internal and external professional relationships. We strengthen these relationships within our Special Interest Group, by improving our skills and knowledge on leadership theory, and sharing best practices on the complex research administration environment through CARA's professional development program. This includes webinars, workshops, conference sessions and serving as mentors and assessors for CARA's upcoming Certificate in Research Administration and Certificate in Research Management. Members of this SIG include Vice-Presidents, Deans, Directors and Managers and we also welcome those who aspire to these roles.

New Research Administrators

This SIG welcomes all CARA members in their first 2 years of research administration. Members discuss the role of research administration within their institutions and how they can contribute. They share some of their challenges, perspectives, resources, helpful experiences and shortcuts while expanding their networks and supporting each other.

Awards, Honours and Prizes

The Awards, Honours, and Prizes Special Interest Group supports the development of successful nominations to international, national, and regional awards and prize competitions. We believe that by sharing best practices, providing training opportunities, and offering networking opportunities that nominations for meritorious individuals will increase in both number and success rate. We encourage all levels of institutions to participate, whether a small college with a few nominations per year or a large university that has several Awards professionals on staff. We all have something to give and receive on the awards landscape and your participation is appreciated. Together we will focus on:

- Encouraging nominations from all Canadian colleges, universities, hospitals, and related eligible institutions
- Promoting and supporting the successes of all SIG members
- Sharing best practices and advice for achieving success in international, national, and regional award competitions
- Providing professional development opportunities and addressing topics of concern
- Arranging for networking opportunities through the National and Regional CARA conventions and where possible
- Engaging a network of skilled professionals with the intent to improve outcomes for all SIG members

Join the Awards, Honours, and Prizes SIG and help build a cooperative culture of research excellence in Canada.

Project Management

The Project Management SIG's members are involved in project management within a research administration context at many different levels - some offer project management support to research projects, others use project management methodologies/processes in their work, and others are interested in knowing more about project management and sharing tools, resources and best practices.

Small Institutions

The Small Institution's SIG includes members from colleges, hospitals and universities with a variety of responsibilities such as pre-award, post-award, contacts, financial management, policy development, and strategic planning. At small institutions, research administrators are often 'all things to all people' and their roles span all aspects of research administration. Our members share questions and resources to help advance our knowledge and the profession. We work together to contribute to CARA's professional development offerings where possible, and many of our SIG members are members of other SIGs as well. As a group we also promote the expertise of members, collaborating on publications for the CARA Connection and the Process Pathways Poster Competition at CARA National. We invite you to join our dynamic and supportive community!

CIHR

This new SIG welcomes any members interested in learning more about and sharing information on CIHR. With the significant changes that have been implemented in the last several years the funding environment at CIHR has dramatically changed. With these changes comes uncertainty amongst the research community. This SIG will give members the opportunity to share new best practices for their home institution, share any updates that they have received, give members the opportunity to ask questions, and in general give members the ability to take advantage of the large professional network CARA has to offer.

NSERC

This SIG welcomes any members interested in The Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), one of Canada's federal funding agencies.

SSHRC

This SIG welcomes any members interested in the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), one of Canada's federal funding agencies.

CFI

This SIG welcomes any members interested in the Canada Foundation for Innovation.

Finance

This SIG provides an information sharing forum for research finance administrators and any CARA member with an interest in research finance is welcome to join and participate in the discussions, networking and information sharing.