



Research Awards Committee

Terms of Reference (TOR)

1. Mandate

- a. The Research Awards Committee (RAC) is responsible for reviewing and adjudicating eligible applications submitted to the Canadian Friends of Sufi Arts, Culture, and Knowledge™ (CFSACK®) Research Awards Program and for making funding recommendations to the CFSACK Board of Directors.
- b. The RAC conducts its work in accordance with the program guidelines approved for the relevant award cycle, these Terms of Reference, and applicable CFSACK policies.
- c. The CFSACK Board of Directors retains final authority over the approval of Research Awards.

2. Committee Composition

- a. All RAC members, including the Chair and external experts, are appointed by the CFSACK Board of Directors (Board). The Chair is selected for their expertise and leadership qualities but is not a Board member.
- b. The committee comprises one board member to ensure board representation and up to five external experts appointed to provide specialized knowledge in fields relevant to CFSACK's mission.
- c. External experts are crucial for bringing diverse perspectives and deep expertise to the evaluation process.
- d. Members serve a two-year term, with the possibility of unlimited renewals, as decided by the Board.
- e. The Chair of the RAC has a tie-breaking vote in the event of a tie.
- f. To ensure impartiality, committee members must refrain from ranking or reviewing applications from students they supervise directly or indirectly.

3. Call Planning

- a. CFSACK will announce a maximum of one funding call annually, aligning with strategic planning and budget availability.

- b. Funding opportunities are advertised at least one month before the application deadline, utilizing CFSACK's website, social media platforms, and direct communications for wide dissemination.
- c. Detailed terms and guidelines for the research grants can be found on the CFSACK website and are also provided along with the offer letters sent to successful applicants.
- d. The Board establishes funding categories and amounts based on CFSACK's financial resources and strategic objectives.
- e. Applicants are required to submit a concise project title and summary for potential public sharing, including publication on the CFSACK website.

4. Committee Processes

- a. The Chair proposes and approves the evaluation criteria for each grant type, reflecting CFSACK's strategic priorities.
- b. In collaboration with the Treasurer and Board, the RAC determines the funding amounts for each application and ensures that the budget is fully utilized in compliance with fiscal policies.
- c. The RAC ensures all CFSACK policies and agreements are followed throughout the funding process.
- d. Funding recommendations and justifications are submitted to the Board for approval at least five days before the scheduled meeting.
- e. The Board has the final authority to review and approve the RAC's recommendations.
- f. Successful applicants are informed in writing within five working days of Board approval, and grants are subsequently recorded and disbursed according to the approved procedures.

5. Committee Standards

- a. Confidentiality is paramount in the handling of application materials and deliberations.
- b. The RAC respects the intellectual property rights and copyrights of all applicants.
- c. Conflicts of interest are to be declared early and managed by the RAC Chair according to CFSACK's established policies.
- d. Due to their roles, RAC members are not eligible to apply for grants from CFSACK to avoid potential conflicts of interest.

6. Applicant Standards

- a. No individual can receive more than one CFSACK award at a time within a single award term.
- b. Eligibility is limited to undergraduate students, master's students, doctoral students or candidates, and postdoctoral fellows who are enrolled at or formally affiliated with an eligible Canadian or U.S. post-secondary educational, research, or cultural institution, in accordance with the eligibility requirements established for the applicable award cycle.
- c. Previous awardees must have satisfied all reporting requirements from earlier grants to be eligible for new funding.
- d. Grant recipients are encouraged to disseminate their findings through CFSACK-sponsored events or other scholarly channels.
- e. Applicants must coordinate with their host institutions when proposing research projects.
- f. All awardees are bound by their grant award agreements' specific terms and conditions.
- g. The RAC oversees the adherence to award conditions and the completion of reporting requirements by the grant recipients.