The Canadian HIV Observational Cohort Collaboration (CANOC)
Community Investigator (CI) Program
2019-2020

I. Program goals – What does the CI Program want to achieve?

The Community Investigator (CI) Program supports CANOC's goal of improving treatment quality, health outcomes, and engagement with care for individuals living with HIV in Canada. Through the application of a participatory research approach, the CI Program aims to enhance the quality of research conducted and to improve opportunities for knowledge dissemination and application of research findings. The strategies utilized by the CI Program to achieve this include:

- engage community members and scholars in collaborative research initiatives to promote research agendas that reflect community aspirations and visions of change;

- create opportunities for capacity building and reciprocal learning between Community Investigators and scholars; and

- pursue knowledge translation and exchange activities that make research findings more readily available to community organizations and individuals living with HIV.

II. Who is a CI and what is the scope of the CI role?

CANOC uses an all-inclusive understanding of the term community. Community Investigators can be anyone with an interest in the HIV/AIDS field, such as individuals living with HIV, activists, community workers, policy-makers, students, etc.

CANOC will help to facilitate a matching between CIs and scholars in order to facilitate a project that aligns with their goals and interests. Potential projects include development of a manuscript, conference presentation, a knowledge exchange project related to an ongoing research initiative, or a specified research project goal of a CI.

III. What are the expectations of the CI and supportive team members?

Community Investigators
CIs are expected to work on at least one major research project throughout the one-year duration of the program. Potential contributions include:
- collaboration on a pre-existing CANOC project
- design a research question and preparation of a data request form
- manuscript development
- publications in non-academic media outlets (e.g. journals, blogs, etc.)
- community workshops
- research panels
- conference presentation
- other projects developed in collaboration with the CI's research team

CIs are expected to submit a final report outlining their research and community engagement activities during their funding period, including a list of any publications, presentations or workshops. The report should be submitted within 4 months of completion of the funding period and consists of a brief description of activities (approximately 1 page).

CIs will receive support from a variety of individuals on the CANOC team, including other CIs. Opportunities for CIs to network with each other and share experiences will be provided through regular teleconferences.

CANOC Principal Investigator/Supervisor
CIs will be supervised by a CANOC Principal Investigator. The PI Supervisor will be required to approve any significant changes to the project and will meet with the CI to review progress throughout the year.

CANOC Scholars and other potential research partners
Recipients of the CANOC Scholarship Program will provide a primary point of contact for ongoing feedback and support of the CIs' research project. CANOC Scholars in any given year will have different academic backgrounds and interests and will be matched to the research project accordingly.

Alternatively, CIs may choose to partner with a non-CANOC graduate scholar. Identification of a graduate-level research partner may be achieved with the assistance of the PI Supervisor in order to form a three-person team consisting of the CI, PI Supervisor and scholar.

CANOC Research Coordinator and CANOC Research Assistant
The CANOC Coordinator will provide orientation materials; circulate manuscripts drafts, posters, and other items for review; and assist with matching CIs and scholars when needed. The Research Assistant will track CI Hours, manage administrative aspects of the program and facilitate the organization of the monthly webinar series and regular teleconferences.

The CI Program is designed to have a team-based approach. CIs are encouraged to reach out to their supervisor, the matched scholar, the CANOC coordinator and Research Assistant, as well as other CIs as frequently as needed.

IV. What additional resources and support mechanisms will be made available for CIs?

CIs and scholars will also be provided with additional resources describing participatory research approaches and providing guidance to enable a supportive working relationship and knowledge exchange process for the CI Program.

The CANOC Community Investigator + Scholar Knowledge Exchange Seminar Series is an interactive, web-based series that will support the development of research skills. The series will use a needs based approach, with topics corresponding to current CI goals and interests. Opportunities will be provided for partnership building and knowledge sharing, including opportunities for CIs and Scholars to co-present on their work to other research teams.

V. What are the procedures for preparing posters, presentations, manuscripts, or other media using CANOC data?

If the project includes a data request form, communication between the CI, PI, scholar, analyst, statistician, CANOC Coordinator will be arranged prior to submitting the form and at the release of the results. This is to clarify intent and interpretation from the beginning for greater efficiency.

Any posters, presentations, manuscripts, etc. prepared, using CANOC data will require approval and drafts must be submitted to the CANOC Coordinator at least 10 working days before any deadlines.

All presentations should include a CANOC logo and mention of CIHR funding and CTN support (with logos). The CANOC Coordinator can provide updated logos, references, poster and slide templates, as well as review posters/presentations/manuscripts to ensure that an appropriate acknowledgements section is present.

The CANOC award should be acknowledged as: "NAME was supported through a

CANOC Community Investigator Award, a joint program of CANOC and the CIHR Canadian HIV Trials Network (CTN242)"

VI. How are CI project timelines determined?

Timelines will be decided upon with the PI Supervisor according to the proposed project and goals. An individualized learning plan and timeline template will be provided to facilitate this process (adapted from the Engage Research Capacity Building Program).

VII. How are CIs compensated for their time?

CIs will be expected to commit 200 hours throughout their tenure, during which they will be compensated for a total of $5000 plus travel expenses. CIs will be given regular bi-weekly payments and submit their hours to track how many are being used.

VIII. What funding is available for conferences and travel?

CANOC CIs are eligible for conference funding (up to the amount of $2500), if they are awarded an oral or poster presentation—funds permitting. If seeking CANOC funding for a conference, please send the CANOC coordinator a written request outlining:

- Amount of funding requested (including budget breakdown)

- A paragraph outlining your interest in attending the conference and mention of other travel funding applied for

The CANOC Coordinator will process these requests through the BC-CfE, according to the BC-CfE travel guidelines and inform the CI about approvals and protocols. CANOC community investigators should always seek out additional travel funding sources, including conference scholarships. There is often separate funding available for community members.