

Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies  
The University of British Columbia

# Exploratory Workshop Grant Pre-Award Guidelines

Preparing an Application



PETER WALL INSTITUTE  
FOR ADVANCED STUDIES  
THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA | VANCOUVER

May 2012

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The Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies supports basic research through interdisciplinary initiatives that have the potential to make important advances in knowledge. The Institute brings together researchers from the University of British Columbia with distinguished scholars from around the world to conduct fundamental research drawing upon and contributing to a wide range of diverse disciplines. The Institute aims to create a community of scholars, composed of outstanding researchers across the whole campus, who will contribute significantly to the intellectual life of the University. Of overriding concern in all Institute activities is excellence in research characterized by being fundamental, interdisciplinary, innovative, and unique.

— **Board of Trustees**

April 1998

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# Introduction

## Purpose

The objective of the Exploratory Workshop program is to bring together researchers from a wide range of disciplines at UBC and invite them, along with distinguished experts from outside the University from geographically diverse areas, to jointly assess basic research, and research possibilities with major potential impact. Interdisciplinary discussion and exchange are encouraged. Workshops must be specifically created for the competition. A goal of each workshop is, where possible, to further develop that research into the basis of a book, special journal issue, or an application for major research funding, such as the Institute's Major Thematic Grant, for which holding an Exploratory Workshop is essential.

## Format

Typically, the workshop entails a meeting of 25 to 35 scholars over the course of several days at the Peter Wall Institute, with external participants staying at the Institute's residence rooms or other residential facilities on campus. Advance planning ensures that a committed core group of UBC researchers will actively participate along with invited external scholars. Graduate student and post-doctoral fellowship participation is encouraged. Some aspects of the workshop, such as a keynote address or distinguished panel, must be open to the public.

For a smaller workshop, making papers available to participants ahead of the workshop works well. The author does not present the paper. The leadoff discussant begins with a brief summary and critique of the paper, followed by – again – a brief response from the author. The majority of the time can then be devoted to general discussion.

For a larger workshop, breakout sessions to independently assess aspects of the workshop theme or to concentrate on specific research approaches to it, before reporting back to the full group can be helpful.

Registration for all participants can be helpful in a number of ways. In addition to being a gauge for attendance and helping with catering arrangements, registration can further aid workshops dealing with sensitive subject matter. (A registration fee, however, may not be charged.)

### Eligibility

All grants funded by the Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies require a UBC Vancouver base. Tenure stream Faculty members in any academic unit at UBC are eligible, as are UBC Emeriti and Faculty Members on leave.

There can only be one Principal Investigator for a Wall Exploratory Workshop. Co-investigators and/or co-organisers are permitted but the PI will be the official contact and signing authority and awardee.

### Funding

The Exploratory Workshop Grant provides funding of up to \$25,000 that can be used for travel (economy fare only), accommodation (4 guest rooms and one guest suite available at the Institute for up to three nights free of charge if available at the time of booking), food and receptions, modest salaries for student and/ or staff support, publicity, materials, and subsidies for subsequent manuscript/proposal preparation. Items not available for Institute funding include Business or First Class air fare, stipends for participants, or off-campus meals, accommodation, and activities (except on negotiation). These must be funded from other sources.

### Expectations

Of overriding concern in all Institute activities is excellence in research characterized by being interdisciplinary, innovative and unique. The Institute focuses on basic, rather than applied, research. Exploratory Workshops must be held within 12 months of receiving the award. Applications must specify the anticipated outcomes of the workshop and include a knowledge translation plan, which specifies the intended audience(s), the means of involvement and communication, and the intended post-grant follow-up.

### Scope

Exploratory Workshop applications should present clearly defined research questions and demonstrate the uniqueness or innovativeness and interdisciplinarity of the proposed topic. A broad-based set of outstanding experts with international perspective should be suggested as participants. The workshop format should foster interaction, the exchange of ideas, and promote discussion. There should be at least one clear public session/talk and at least one closed working session. Graduate student and post-doctoral fellowship participation is encouraged.

### Web Site and Publicity

As part of the essential publicity the Institute will develop and host a web site and create a poster for the event. The web site should be used as a focal point for UBC and external participants as well as communicating the project to a broader audience. The Institute will disseminate and discuss publicity options on an individual application basis.

### Facilities

Exploratory Workshops are expected to be held in the conference facilities of the Peter Wall Institute, UBC Vancouver. The Institute's conference rooms are available free of charge. The Institute's guest rooms are available free of charge for up to three nights if available at the time of booking; for additional nights, please check the web site for rates. Both must be booked in advance. If there are anticipated dates for the workshop, the conference and residence rooms should be tentatively held even prior to applying for the award and the award notice. Arrangements for alternate campus venues during the workshop must be discussed. The Institute's conference rooms are equipped with audio visual equipment though it may be required that additional or specialty items are hired from external sources to accommodate certain requests. Specialty items must be budgeted for.

All catering is handled exclusively by Sage Catering Services. Please contact Sage Catering directly (822-0429). Sage Catering can provide estimated catering costs for budgeting purposes.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## Application Procedure

**Q.** Can my workshop be part of another event?

**A.** It depends. Discuss with the Director.

**Q.** Can UBC core participants in my research proposal submit their own applications?

**A.** Yes.

**Q.** I am having difficulties matching UBC experts with my research topic. What should I do?

**A.** Please discuss the option of holding a Theme Development Workshop with the Institute's Director.

**Q.** Can I involve graduate students in my workshop?

**A.** Yes, the Institute encourages graduate student involvement beyond workshop administration. Graduate students can be involved as participants; however, they should not be listed on the application as UBC core participants.

**Q.** I have to commit to a time to hold the workshop to accommodate external speakers. What should I do?

**A.** Put a hold on the facilities until notice of award.

## Budget

**Q.** In preparing the budget, do we account for the Institute's facilities?

**A.** The Institute's conference facilities are free of charge for all funded events. The Institute's guest rooms are available free of charge for up to three nights. The Institute can suggest suitable alternatives for larger lecture halls for special events, such as a large public lecture, or additional residential rooms.

**Q.** Are there any typical costs associated with the budget that are often overlooked but should be included?

**A.** Secure someone who will assist with the administration of the workshop. Take a modest salary into account as a cost in the budget.

B u d g e t ( c o n t i n u e d )

- Q.** What kinds of “support staff” does the Institute financially support for a workshop?
- A.** Support staff can include rapporteurs (graduate students or postdoctoral fellows), specialized secretarial services for workshop administration, or professional facilitators.
- Q.** We are inviting graduate students to join the workshop. Can we include these people in the overall food budget?
- A.** Budget for graduate participation expenses under the category “Graduate Students.”
- Q.** On the application form it says that the Institute will create a website for the workshop. How elaborate a website is this?
- A.** The Institute creates a basic website to promote the workshop based on information from you, provided more than two months in advance. The website may be used for the posting of workshop papers and the final report. For specific technical requirements and goals that go beyond the scope offered it may be required to secure external funding to accommodate costs of special requests. Discuss options with the Institute.
- Q.** May we charge a registration fee?
- A.** No, registration should be free (though may be limited), but it is possible to ask audience members to pay part or all of the costs associated with meals and receptions, or to have a cash bar at receptions; or to limit meals to invited participants.

# Issues Frequently Raised by the Adjudication Committee

## Research

- The research questions need to be more sharply delineated.
- The proposal needs to demonstrate the uniqueness, innovativeness, or interdisciplinarity of the topic or approach.
- A list of critical references to the research would be helpful.
- The potential follow-on (what the workshop is expected to lead to) is not clear.

## Participants

- International perspective and participation should be broadened.
- A better balance among international participants should be achieved, for example, too heavy a focus on North American participants.
- The disciplinary base should be broadened.
- A larger set of UBC participants should be identified who are related to the topic and might broaden or sharpen the goals.
- UBC researchers with important contributions from other fields should not be shut out.
- Direct participation of graduate and post-doctoral students should be enhanced.
- Cultural diversity among participants should be ensured for topics lending themselves to exploring cross-cultural aspects.

## Budget

- Food charges are too high per person, per day for a workshop.
- Graduate students and support staff will need stipends.
- Administrative stipends should be more modest.
- Travel charges are too modest (especially in high season).

## Workshop Format

- The format looks more like a conference (in size and length of presentations and the emphasis on the “high flyers”) than the type of interactive workshop, open to the exchange of ideas, the Institute aims for.
- A mix of public sessions and closed working sessions should be achieved.

# Contact Information

## Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies

### D i r e c t o r

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### R o o m B o o k i n g s

T (604) 822-8377  
E [reservations@pwias.ubc.ca](mailto:reservations@pwias.ubc.ca)

## Catering

#### **Sage Catering**

T (604) 822-0429  
E [catering@sage.ubc.ca](mailto:catering@sage.ubc.ca)  
W [www.sage.ubc.ca](http://www.sage.ubc.ca)

## Suggested Alternate Accommodations on Campus

#### **Vancouver School of Theology**

T (604) 822-6398  
E [vstconf@vst.edu](mailto:vstconf@vst.edu)  
W [www.vst.edu/housing](http://www.vst.edu/housing)

#### **Westcoast Suites**

T (604) 822-1000  
E [reservations@housing.ubc.ca](mailto:reservations@housing.ubc.ca)  
W [www.ubconferences.com](http://www.ubconferences.com)

#### **Green College**

T (604) 822-8660  
E [gc.reception@ubc.ca](mailto:gc.reception@ubc.ca)  
W [www.greencollege.ubc.ca](http://www.greencollege.ubc.ca)

#### **St. John's College**

T (604) 822-8788  
E [sjc.reception@ubc.ca](mailto:sjc.reception@ubc.ca)  
W [www.stjohns.ubc.ca](http://www.stjohns.ubc.ca)

Founded in 1991, the Peter Wall Institute for Advanced Studies is the senior research institute at the University of British Columbia. It supports basic research through collaborative, interdisciplinary initiatives that have the potential to make important advances in knowledge. It brings together scholars from UBC with distinguished researchers and experts from around the world to investigate fundamental research drawing upon and contributing to a wide range of diverse disciplines.

Of overriding concern for all Institute activities is excellence in research characterized by being fundamental, interdisciplinary, innovative, and unique.