



Canadian Consortium on Neurodegeneration in Aging

CCNA Investigator Members

Policies and Procedures for Membership

Version 1.0

Approved on September 22, 2016 by the CCNA Research Executive Committee

Version 1.1.

Approved on May 4, 2017 by the CCNA Research Executive Committee

Version 1.2

Administrative changes only - July 26 2017

1. Introduction

A particular strength of the Canadian Consortium on Neurodegeneration in Aging (CCNA) is the diverse and talented group of investigators who do the vital work of the Consortium.

CCNA Investigator Members have a variety of other affiliations and responsibilities. They serve as faculty members in post-secondary institutions across the country, and many belong to other research groups. None solely have organizational allegiances with CCNA. Their personal research programs typically incorporate activities not supported by CCNA and may be quite distinct from it; they will seek and hold research funding and trainee support from a variety of other Canadian and non-Canadian granting agencies or companies for these other aspects of their research programs. Investigators affiliated with CCNA must clearly communicate both internally and externally to granting agencies, foundations, government, elected representatives, post-secondary institutions, companies, and media when they are engaged in a CCNA activity and when they are not. It is equally important that funders understand that the contribution made by CCNA Investigator Members to the work of CCNA is only a portion of their total research activities.

Approximately 340 Canadian scientists contributed to the application to the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) that led to the creation of CCNA. These researchers represent the initial cadre of CCNA Investigator Members. Their CCNA membership will need to be renewed periodically. It is essential for CCNA to welcome new investigators into the organization. This is to develop new areas or approaches of inquiry, continue with and potentially expand current research activities, and renew

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the organization. This has to be done in an organized manner that furthers the interests of CCNA. The process of vetting applicants has to be explicit and fair. Likewise, a similarly explicit and fair process for terminating membership of investigators is needed.

2. Criteria for CCNA Investigator Members

CCNA Investigator Members must:

- a. Contribute to CCNA's mission, goals, and objectives; and
- b. Abide by CCNA's policies and procedures.

In addition CCNA Investigator Members must meet the CIHR definition for an independent researcher (<http://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/34190.html>):

- c. Autonomous regarding their research activities; and
- d. Have an active academic or research appointment which:
 - i. Allows the individual to engage in independent research activities, supervise trainees, and publish the research results; and
 - ii. Obligates the individual to conform to institutional regulations concerning the conduct of research, the supervision of trainees, and the employment conditions of staff paid with CIHR funding.

In situations where there is uncertainty whether an applicant for membership meets these criteria, the CCNA Membership Committee (MC), a standing committee appointed by the CCNA Research Executive Committee (REC), will make a recommendation on this to the REC who will make the final decision.

3. Benefits of Membership

Membership does not mean that funding will be received from CCNA. Benefits of membership include:

- a. Belonging to the premier national investigator-driven research hub for all aspects of research involving the neurodegenerative diseases that affect cognition in aging – including Alzheimer's disease. CIHR and many partners support CCNA. It is the Canadian component of the CIHR Dementia Research Strategy;
- b. With the agreement of the lead for the relevant unit, having the right to join a CCNA Team, Platform or Cross-cutting Program;
- c. Having the ability to apply to funding competitions restricted to CCNA Investigator Members;
- d. Privileges afforded to CCNA investigators as it relates to publications and access to data and biological samples (for details please refer to the CCNA Publications and Data Access Committee (PDAC) and Biological Samples Access Committee (BSAC) policies, available at <http://ccna-ccnv.ca/en/researcher-resources-policies/>);

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- e. Having the opportunity to establish collaborative relationships with other CCNA investigators through a variety of informal and formal mechanisms; and
- f. Having the right to participate in all CCNA activities that are open to Investigator Members and obtain other membership benefits created for CCNA investigators.

4. Current Members

Central Administration of CCNA maintains a list of all current members of CCNA (available at <http://ccna-ccnv.ca/en/about-us/>). Anyone not included on that list as of October 1, 2016 will have to apply for membership to join CCNA. The membership list will be kept updated to reflect new members, resignations, and terminations of membership.

5. Resignation/ Termination of Membership

- a. Resignation without reason can take place at any time by sending a signed letter to the Chair of the CCNA REC, indicating the desire to resign from CCNA;
- b. Failure to renew CCNA Investigator membership (see below); and
- c. Termination of CCNA Investigator membership can take place if the investigator breaches Tri-Council policies for responsible conduct of research, repeatedly fail to comply with the CCNA Policies and Procedures, or purposely undermines CCNA. Notice will be given by the REC, and the individuals will have the right to appeal their termination. An *ad hoc* CCNA Appeal Committee consisting of two REC members and two non-REC CCNA Investigator Members (one of whom will chair the Appeal Committee) will be struck to hear the appeal and make a recommendation on termination to the REC. The final decision on termination is made by the REC.

6. Application Process for New CCNA Investigator Member

- a. The CCNA MC consisting of two REC members (one of whom will chair the Committee) and two non-REC CCNA Investigator Members will be appointed by the REC to review applications (both new and renewal – see next two sections) for membership and make a recommendation to the REC about the suitability of candidates. Applications are only reviewed when all the required information has been provided;
- b. MC members will not review applications, and will be excluded from all discussions relative to applications, if they are in one of the following real, perceived, or potential conflict of interest situations:
 - i. The MC member is a relative or has a close professional or personal relationship with the applicant;
 - ii. The MC member is in a position to gain or lose financially/materially from the applicant becoming a CCNA Investigator Member;
 - iii. The MC member has had long-standing scientific or personal differences with the applicant; or
 - iv. The MC member feels for any reason unable to provide an impartial review of the application.

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- c. Evaluation criteria will include the personal attributes of the individual and a determination of whether their addition will help in achieving the mission, goals, and objectives of CCNA. The final decision on the application is made by the REC;
- d. Applications for membership are to be sent to CCNA Central Administration (ccna@ladydavis.ca) and will be forwarded to the Chair of the MC. Applications will consist of:
 - i. A letter from the applicant, addressed to the Chair of the MC, requesting membership in CCNA. This letter should explain why membership is desired and what their membership will add to CCNA – specifically how their work aligns with CCNA, proposed collaborations (e.g., what Team, Platform or Cross-cutting Program, if any, they would like to join), and/or new area or approach they would propose to bring to the Consortium. The applicant will also have to attest that they will abide by all of the CCNA Policies and Procedures (available at <http://ccna-ccnv.ca/en/researcher-resources-policies/>);
 - ii. Letters of support from two CCNA Investigator Members including the Lead/co-Lead of the CCNA Team, Platform or Cross-cutting Program (if any) the applicant proposes to join. These letters must explain why the appointment would be advantageous to the CCNA research program in general and, in particular, to the identified CCNA Team, Platform, or Cross-cutting Program (if any) the applicant proposes to join; and
 - iii. A curriculum vitae (Canadian Common CV format).
- e. A REC member or a CCNA Theme, Team, Platform, or Cross-cutting Program Lead/co-Lead can invite a researcher to become an Investigator Member. If the individual accepts the invitation, they will have to submit a full application, including two letters of support from CCNA Investigator Members (one of which would be from the CCNA leader who invited the researcher to join), a letter summarizing why they are interested in joining CCNA and what they could offer the organization (this could include noting what Theme, Team, Platform, or Cross-cutting Program they would like to join with the support of the relevant Lead/co-Lead) and a curriculum vitae (Canadian Common CV format); and
- f. It will be possible for new CCNA Investigator Members to be unaffiliated with respect to an existing CCNA Team, Platform, or Cross-cutting Program. This will enable CCNA to accommodate investigators who could, for example, assist the Consortium in developing new areas of research (which will be kept track of by the MC). To ensure that these individuals do not become isolated within the organization, they will be assigned to a CCNA Theme.

7. Renewal of CCNA Investigator Membership

Current CCNA Investigator Members can remain members, as long the Consortium exists, if they renew their membership on a periodic basis (frequency will be determined by the REC). In the renewal of their membership, the CCNA Investigator Member must indicate that they continue to want to belong to the Consortium and meet criteria for CCNA investigator membership.

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