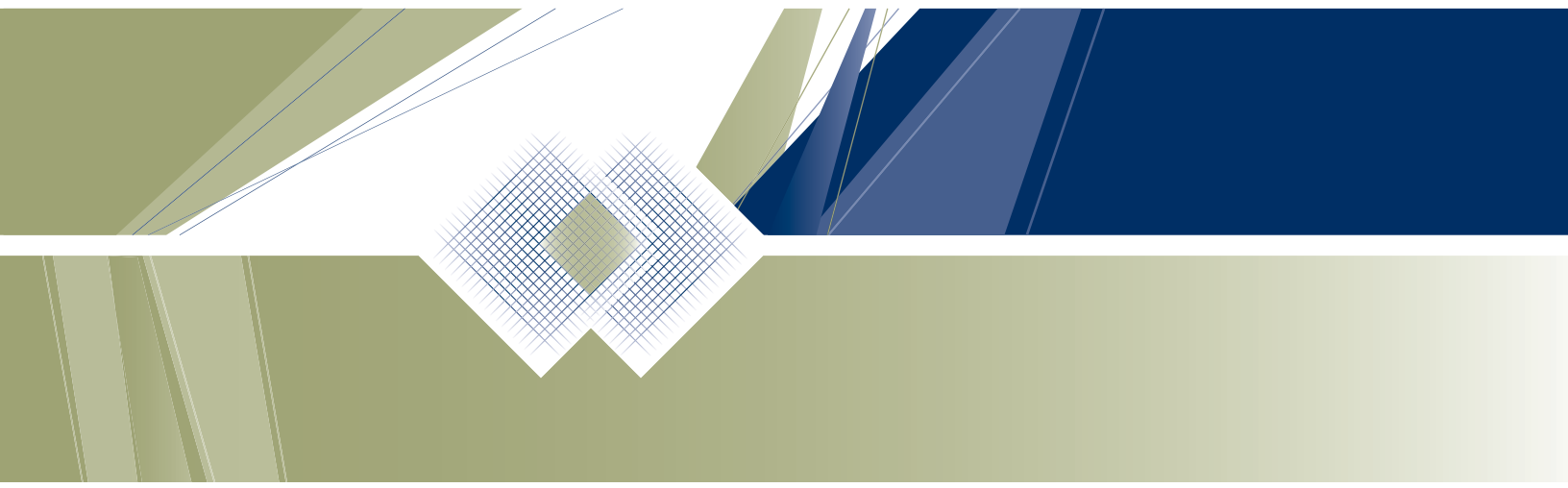




Office of the
Commissioner of
Official Languages

Commissariat
aux langues
officielles

The Role of Canadian Federal Research Funding Agencies in the Promotion of Official Languages



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Prepared for

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Summary

Introduction

The Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages initiated this study:

- To assist federal government research funding agencies in meeting their responsibilities under the recently revised provisions of Part VII of the *Official Languages Act*;
- To examine, under the grant application processes, the current situation of researchers in official language minority communities (OLMCs), especially those working at French-language or bilingual universities outside Quebec, as well as those who study linguistic duality and report on any obstacles they encounter;
- To prepare an inventory of initiatives by federal government research funding agencies and identify best practices; and
- To present recommendations and propose solutions that could help federal research funding agencies reinforce their research support programs, promote linguistic duality and encourage research in French in general.

Under Part VII, the *Official Languages Act* now obliges all federal institutions to take positive measures to enhance the vitality of the English and French linguistic minority communities in Canada, support and assist their development and foster the full recognition and use of both English and French in Canadian society.

This report examines measures implemented by federal research funding agencies to encourage research by members of OLMCs in general, as well as on subjects related to the development of these communities, and the promotion of linguistic duality.

Methodology

The data was collected using different techniques:

- A thorough document analysis;
- Telephone interviews with 40 university researchers: 38 from official language minority universities— Anglophone institutions in Quebec and Francophone or bilingual institutions elsewhere in Canada— and two from majority-language universities;
- Twenty in-person interviews with representatives from federal research funding agencies; and
- A one-day discussion forum in Ottawa in November 2006, during which university researchers and representatives from federal research funding agencies were invited to present and discuss the practices of federal research funding agencies and the obstacles to research funding as perceived by researchers.

Barriers

Among the barriers to their success in obtaining funding, researchers in OLMC institutions or studying issues related to official languages identified the following:

- The limited awareness of the full range of federal funding opportunities available;
- The predominance of English as the language in which research is published, especially in natural sciences;
- The language skills of reviewers assessing proposals in their second language;
- The low priority given to research concerning OLMCs or linguistic duality;

- The weakness or absence of research infrastructures in small bilingual and French minority-language universities;
- The evaluation standards of federal research funding agencies that do not take into account the particular circumstances of these institutions;
- The relative isolation (physical and intellectual) of researchers from peers with similar research interests;
- The complexity and variability of the agencies' application procedures and perceptions of very limited chances of success in annual research grant competitions; and
- The perception that competitions for grants favour the large majority-language universities.

Best practices

Certain practices initiated by federal research funding agencies offer promise in addressing these barriers. The productive exchange of experiences between researchers and representatives of these agencies addressed many pertinent questions, but also raised others. Discussions related to best practices and focused on the following themes:

- Active promotion and dissemination of information by agencies on funding and research programs available to OLMCs, their institutions and researchers working on issues related to official languages;
- Development of the capacity of federal research funding agencies to serve OLMCs in their own official language, particularly with respect to the bilingual abilities of peer review committees;
- Agency research funding strategies aimed at small institutions to develop research infrastructure, increase research capacity and promote greater support at small bilingual and official language minority institutions. Attention was directed to networking between researchers in OLMCs, the creation of research centres and the streamlining of administrative procedures;
- Commitment on behalf of the institutions to integrate and give OLMCs and linguistic duality research a higher priority in their research plans. A specific recommendation suggested the creation and funding of research chairs related to official languages;
- Programs aimed at OLMC researchers and research institutions (regardless of the discipline or topic of research);
- Programs to fund research relevant to OLMC issues and linguistic duality; and
- Monitoring the extent of research support for OLMC studies, institutes and researchers, which requires changes in statistical reporting by the agencies in collaboration with Statistics Canada, the Canadian Association of University Business Officers and the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada.

Conclusion

Researchers and representatives of the federal research funding agencies were forthcoming in suggesting a number of ideas and improvements to address the barriers facing OLMC researchers in obtaining funding. This collaborative approach provides an excellent starting point for finding innovative ways to encourage research by members of OLMCs and fostering research on linguistic duality.

Recommendations

Based on the findings in this study, the Commissioner of Official Languages is proposing nine recommendations, eight of which are addressed to the federal research funding agencies and one to the Canada Research Chairs Program. The recommendations to the agencies aim to achieve the following:

- Develop a targeted promotion strategy for the different types of research funding programs available;
- Ensure adequate evaluation in both official languages;
- Establish a specific funding mechanism targeted at small bilingual and official language minority universities to help sustain research capacity at the professor and student levels, and provide adequate administrative support;
- Set aside a specific funding envelope for small official language minority universities for the creation of research centres and to increase their partnership and networking capacity;

- Continue to streamline their application processes in consultation with university researchers;
- Develop a strategy to increase the awareness, knowledge and comprehension of peer review committee members about the particular circumstances and obstacles of researchers at small official language minority universities;
- Set aside stable funding for research on official languages issues and disseminate the results; and
- Keep disaggregated data on funding to official language minority institutions and for research on official languages issues.

In addition, the Commissioner of Official Languages also recommends that the Canada Research Chairs Program invite the universities to:

- Create and fund research chairs related to linguistic duality issues.

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1. Introduction

In the context of the obligations described in Part VII of the *Official Languages Act*, this report examines measures implemented by federal research funding agencies to encourage research by members of official language minority communities (OLMCs) in general, and on subjects related to community development, in particular the promotion of linguistic duality. The study looks at the experiences of researchers—Anglophones in the province of Quebec and Francophones in OLMCs elsewhere in Canada—applying for federal grants, regardless of their discipline. The study also involves researchers in minority- and majority-language institutions who seek support for research on official languages issues.

The present report is divided into five sections. The first section introduces the background, mandate, objectives and methodology of the research. Section 2 describes the obstacles to research funding as perceived by the sample of researchers surveyed. Section 3 presents the federal research funding agencies' overall evaluation and granting practices, as well as their existing programs for minority-language institutions or for research dealing with official languages issues. Section 4 builds on the previous sections and presents an overview of identified barriers and corresponding best practices. It also puts forward recommendations and proposed suggestions from the Commissioner of Official Languages. Finally, Section 5 contains some concluding remarks.

1.1 Legislative background

As an Officer of Parliament, the Commissioner of Official Languages is responsible for promoting the objectives of the *Official Languages Act* and ensuring they are carried out, as stated in subsection 56(1) (Part IX):

It is the duty of the Commissioner to take all actions and measures within the authority of the Commissioner with a view to ensuring recognition of the status of each of the official languages and compliance with the spirit and intent of this Act in the administration of the affairs of federal institutions, including any of their activities relating to the advancement of English and French in Canadian society.

A key priority of the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages is the vitality of OLMCs. The adoption by the Parliament of Canada in November 2005 of amendments to the Act significantly reinforced the nature of the government's obligations.

Federal institutions, including federal research funding agencies, must take positive measures to support the development and enhance the vitality of OLMCs, as well as promote linguistic duality in Canadian society. Accordingly, the activities of all federal government departments, institutions and agencies must now encompass and promote the fundamental principle of linguistic duality and review their policies and programs in light of the new provisions of the Act to ensure that OLMCs receive benefits comparable to those of majority communities. These obligations are now subject to review by the courts.

Under section 41 of the Act:

41. (1) The Government of Canada is committed to (a) enhancing the vitality of the English and French linguistic minority communities in Canada and supporting and assisting their development; and (b) fostering the full recognition and use of both English and French in Canadian society.

41. (2) Every federal institution has the duty to ensure that positive measures are taken for the implementation of the commitments under subsection (1). For greater certainty, this implementation shall be carried out while respecting the jurisdiction and powers of the provinces.

1.2 Objectives of the study

In this context, the study has the following four objectives:

- Examine how federal government institutions that fund research can be more effective in their implementation of Part VII of the *Official Languages Act*;
- From the perspective of present grant application processes, examine the current situation of researchers, especially those working in OLMC settings, regardless of their area of expertise, as well as researchers who study linguistic duality, with a focus on reporting on any obstacles or challenges they encounter;
- Prepare an inventory of initiatives available to researchers from federal research funding agencies, identify best practices and encourage the exchange of these practices among the agencies concerned; and
- Draft recommendations and propose solutions that could help federal research funding agencies reinforce their research support programs, promote linguistic duality and encourage research in French in general, assist official language minority researchers and institutions, and strengthen the ability of federal research funding agencies to support the development of OLMCs.

A further in-depth study could look in more detail at the research funding application process, including the sources, subjects, and assessment and selection criteria. This study was limited to examining current barriers faced by researchers and proposing solutions to invigorate research support programs.

1.3 Methodology

The methodology was established in order to give an overview of existing measures taken by federal research funding agencies to encourage research by members of OLMCs in general as well as research on the development of these communities and the promotion of linguistic duality in particular. It also aims to paint a broad picture of the obstacles to research and funding as perceived by the

researchers themselves. The data collection, which was conducted between January 2006 and June 2007, entailed several techniques:

- An in-depth document analysis of government sources and funding agencies' Web sites;
- Forty telephone interviews with researchers who were also sent an electronic questionnaire beforehand: 38 were from official language minority universities (Anglophone in Quebec and Francophone or bilingual elsewhere in Canada) and two were from majority-language universities;
- In-person interviews with 20 representatives of federal research funding agencies; and
- A one-day discussion forum in Ottawa on November 17, 2006, whose aim was to allow researchers and representatives from the funding agencies to present and share information and best practices intended to reduce the barriers restricting the promotion of linguistic duality and OLMC development.

1.3.1 The researchers

This study targets two populations. The first group encompasses researchers in OLMC settings all over Canada, regardless of their field of expertise, more specifically Francophone or bilingual researchers who publish in French and work in Francophone or bilingual universities outside of Quebec and researchers working in Anglophone universities in Quebec. The second group is made up of researchers working on issues relating to official languages.

In order to faithfully reproduce the global research population, a non-probabilistic sampling technique (purposive snowball sampling) was chosen.¹ The following parameters were used to identify researchers: disciplinary interests, gender, seniority, the general ability to describe the experiences of colleagues as well as their own, and whether they had published in the minority official language of their geographic area (see Table 1). This not only ensured an institution-wide academic overview, but also helped secure the willing participation of the researchers .

1 Strategic key informants (e.g., presidents, principals and rectors of OLMC universities) were contacted because of their privileged knowledge of their respective universities and asked to identify researchers who corresponded to the identified characteristics and the purpose of the study. These researchers were then approached to participate in the interview process.

The list of proposed names was then validated by comparing it with a list of names of researchers known to regional representatives of the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages. The final list of recommended researchers satisfied the requirement that those nominated constituted a fair sampling of reputable academics from OLMCs across Canada as well as those who conduct research on various official languages issues (e.g., Canadian language laws, language policy, linguistic duality or OLMCs).

Overall, 40 researchers responded to requests for a telephone interview. Prior to the interview, they all received an electronic questionnaire. Two interviews were conducted in person to pilot test the questionnaire. Exceptionally, two researchers from majority-language universities were also asked to participate in the study since their research deals specifically with official languages issues.

Table 1 – Higher education institutions from which researchers were selected

A. Institutions in minority situations	
- Université Sainte-Anne, Pointe de l'Église, Nova Scotia	- Royal Military College of Canada, Kingston, Ontario
- Université de Moncton, Moncton, New Brunswick	- Glendon College, Toronto, Ontario
- Bishop's University, Lennoxville, Quebec	- Laurentian University, Sudbury, Ontario
- Concordia University, Montréal, Quebec	- University of Sudbury, Sudbury, Ontario
- McGill University, Montréal, Quebec	- Université de Hearst, Hearst, Ontario
- Dominican College of Philosophy and Theology, Ottawa, Ontario	- Collège universitaire de Saint-Boniface, Winnipeg, Manitoba
- University of Ottawa, Ottawa, Ontario	- Institut français, University of Regina, Regina, Saskatchewan
- Saint Paul University, Ottawa, Ontario	- Campus Saint-Jean, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta
B. Institutions in majority situations	
- Université Laval, Québec City, Quebec	- University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan

It should be noted that three-quarters of the respondents interviewed also submitted written answers and other supplementary information to at least some of the questions. The questionnaire covered the following elements:

- Knowledge of federal research funding agencies;
- The extent to which researchers are applying for funding, the rate of success of their applications and the amount of research funding received by OLMC researchers and by those working on official languages issues;
- The positive and negative aspects of the application process;
- The amount of research carried out in French;
- Their perception of the linguistic capability of peer review committees;
- Current research on projects or activities related to official language minority situations or to linguistic duality;

- Types of financial assistance from federal research funding agencies that could assist current projects;
- The identification of any barriers to success they encountered as members of OLMCs or as researchers working on matters relevant to linguistic duality; and
- Recommendations or suggestions to federal research funding agencies and institutions to help promote and improve access to grant programs, remove barriers to the equitable allocation of research funding, and encourage and promote research on official languages issues.

1.3.2 The federal research funding agencies

The researchers that were interviewed provided the list of federal government sources of research funding. The 20 agencies most frequently mentioned were selected to be interviewed (see Table 2).

Table 2 – Research funding agencies identified by researchers (in alphabetical order)

- Canada Council for the Arts	- Institut de recherche Robert-Sauvé en santé et en sécurité du travail (Quebec)
- Canada Foundation for Innovation	- International Development Research Centre
- Canada Research Chairs Program	- Department of Justice Canada
- Canadian Heritage	- Library and Archives Canada
- Canadian Institutes of Health Research	- Millennium Scholarship Foundation
- Canadian International Development Agency	- National Research Council Canada
- Citizenship and Immigration Canada	- Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council
- Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade	- Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada
- Human Resources and Social Development Canada	- Western Economic Diversification Canada
- Indian and Northern Affairs Canada	
- Industry Canada	

The federal research funding agencies were sent a letter from the Commissioner of Official Languages in which chief executive officers were invited to designate a representative for an in-person interview. A series of semi-structured interviews then followed. Prior to the interviews, each representative received a questionnaire that they were asked to complete. The interviews allowed the information gathered from the document analysis to be completed or validated.

1.3.3 Document analysis

The study of the relevant documents and Web sites of government and funding agencies, in addition to interviews with key representatives from the federal research funding agencies, led to the collection of data on the following themes:

- Research funding programs offered and their promotion;
- Access to programs;
- Associated application processes;
- Processes used to evaluate grant applications and to choose the peer committee members who read research proposals;
- Grants offered to support researchers in official language minority situations or intended to encourage research on linguistic duality issues;
- Strategic planning for new programs and efforts to address the particular challenges faced by OLMC researchers and any innovative programs specifically designed for them; and
- Best practices that have produced positive results in the application of Part VII of the *Official Languages Act*.

1.3.4 Discussion forum

On November 17, 2006, the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages hosted a forum that brought together university researchers and representatives from federal research funding agencies to exchange information on the challenges faced by researchers, discuss best practices from agencies and consider proposals to improve the current situation.

Eight of the 40 researchers who participated in this study (six from official language minority institutions and two from majority-language institutions) and representatives from 12 of the 20 federal departments and agencies that fund research attended the forum.

The program allowed participants to reflect on the barriers faced by researchers who apply for federal financial support, discuss existing best practices within agencies and consider avenues for improved agency performance in light of the requirements of Part VII of the *Official Languages Act*.

This diversified data collection allowed a picture to be drawn of university research and funding in OLMC settings, regardless of the discipline, as well as research in the field of linguistic duality.

1.4 Considerations

The goal of this study was to provide a broad overview of the reality as perceived by researchers in OLMC settings, as well as those who study issues related to official languages. The goal was neither to study the differences within the population of university researchers at the national level, nor to evaluate the federal research funding agencies' compliance with the *Official Languages Act*.

As previously indicated, the sampling criteria aimed to include a large spectrum of disciplines and other well-defined parameters that reflect the realities of researchers in OLMC settings or those studying issues relating to linguistic duality. In spite of the established criteria, researchers in the social sciences and humanities disciplines were overrepresented. As such, even if the sample of researchers allows an accurate reflection of a range of concerns and barriers that the target population faces, which is the main purpose of this study, it does not allow for meaningful statistical comparisons between the perceptions of researchers across disciplines.

One of the limitations of this overrepresentation from the social sciences and humanities disciplines is that it is not possible to verify whether or not funding applications submitted in French receive the same treatment according to the areas of expertise covered by the different federal research funding agencies.

As for possible explanations for the large proportion of researchers from social sciences and the humanities, the lack of undergraduate and graduate programs in science and engineering in some higher education establishments in minority settings, the primary vocation of universities in OLMCs and the preponderance of English as the working language (for research and publication) in these disciplines may be at play.

It must also be added that not all minority-language institutions are created equal. While Concordia, McGill and Bishop's universities are Anglophone minority-language universities in Quebec, they are very different in size, vocation and overall allocation of research funds from most Francophone OLMC universities across Canada. This is especially the case with Concordia and McGill. This study is not a comparison of Francophone and Anglophone OLMC institutions. It does, however, allow us to gain an understanding of some of the issues faced by Anglophone researchers in Quebec when conducting research and applying for funds in the language of their choice.

2. Official language minority community researchers: Perceived barriers

This section examines the current situation and major barriers perceived by researchers when applying for federal research grants.

2.1 Issues studied

The major themes addressed during interviews with the researchers are as follows.

- **Access to research funding:** This involves the degree to which researchers and universities benefit from current research funding programs. While relevant information in this regard was also obtained from the federal research funding agencies, the survey of researchers and in-person interviews examined the extent to which they are aware of available funding sources, have the means to apply for them and have been successful in obtaining them.
- **Ability of federal research funding agencies to serve official language minority communities (OLMCs) in both official languages:** A key component of this study is the extent to which federal research funding agencies respond to the needs of OLMCs and are able to evaluate the projects submitted in their language. Success would be indicated by such measures as the language skill levels of peer review committees, the ability of agency staff to reach out to institutions and researchers in both official languages, and the assurance that applying for financial support in either official language would not diminish the chance of success.
- **Programs targeted at OLMCs:** The survey of researchers and in-person interviews also examined the extent to which current programs are aimed at OLMCs or support research on linguistic duality in OLMC settings.
- **Awareness in OLMCs of available research funding:** The survey given to researchers working in OLMC settings or on official languages issues also questioned their awareness of available research funding programs.

2.2 Knowledge and experience

While the sample of 40 researchers interviewed does not statistically represent the entire population of professors working in every OLMC in Canada, an analysis of their responses to the questionnaire and the supplementary material they submitted nevertheless resulted in numerous findings that are applicable to the experiences of many academics in official language minority institutions or working on official languages issues.

Participating researchers were very experienced and knowledgeable, most having earned the academic rank of full or associate professor. As a further indicator in this regard, all but one had at one time applied for funding from at least one federal agency, while about one-third had received two or more grants. Although 10% of the researchers interviewed had never received funding, 20% are currently funded from a federal government source and another 60% have obtained funding in the past five years.

Although Quebec Anglophone researchers from McGill, Concordia and Bishop's universities (all of whom had received funds from at least one federal government source over the past five years) were more likely than their Francophone minority colleagues elsewhere in Canada to have received support for their research, both groups are highly aware of what the grant application process entails. Therefore, the barriers that they describe should not be dismissed as exaggerated or misrepresentative.

2.3 Barriers as perceived by researchers

Based on the extensive feedback provided by the researchers who were interviewed, the following major barriers to success in obtaining a grant or contract from a federal government source were identified.

2.3.1 Awareness of the available funding

Apart from Canadian Heritage and the three granting councils, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), the National Science and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), federal government sources of research funding (see Table 2) are comparatively unknown to researchers in OLMCs. If official language minority researchers are unaware of the availability of funds from other sources, these programs are as inaccessible as if they did not exist.

Most researchers who were interviewed identified SSHRC as their best-known source of funding. Among researchers who had obtained money from a federal government institution for current or past research proposals, SSHRC was the most commonly identified source of funding. This is not surprising, given the researchers who were interviewed mainly worked in the humanities and social sciences.

About half of the researchers also named CIHR as a federal government source of research support (although it was sometimes identified by its former name, the Medical Research Council), followed by NSERC and Canadian Heritage.

Given the culture in which humanities and social sciences researchers operate, they are less likely to apply to research councils unrelated to their area of specialization. It is therefore not surprising that these researchers could only identify a few other federal government institutions that fund research. At least 30% of the participants were unaware of national sources of funding other than SSHRC, CIHR, NSERC or Canadian Heritage. Table 3 shows this limited awareness and provides a summary of the total number of sources identified by the researchers.

Table 3 – Federal government funding sources identified by researchers (N=40)

No. of Sources Identified	Researchers	
	%	N
Less than 3	20%	8
3 to 4	50%	20
5 to 6	12%	5
7 to 8	12%	5
More than 8	6%	2

Generally reflecting the greater information resources available in larger institutions, Anglophone researchers were better informed on this subject, with most being able to name five or more potential sources of federal government research support. Alternative sources of research funding that were identified included provincial government, non-government and even private sector agencies.

In conclusion, official language minority researchers appear to have a limited awareness of the vast range of federal government sources of research funding. The nature and area of the research conducted by most Francophones in minority situations reflects a dependence on grants from SSHRC and Canadian Heritage. In fact, almost 80% have never applied anywhere else. Together with CIHR and NSERC, they account for over 90% of the overall application experience of the researchers interviewed.

2.3.2 Language of publication

Researchers who work and want to publish in French see the predominance of publishing opportunities in English as a disadvantage. This is especially true in natural science disciplines, where English prevails as the language of choice for those who wish to be read and cited worldwide. As can be expected, this situation does not apply to Anglophone official language minority researchers in Quebec who publish in English, the predominant language

in North America and most scientific journals. This corroborates the responses of natural sciences and engineering researchers, who indicated that they experienced greater success in applying for grants when their proposals were submitted in English.

2.3.3 Language skills of peer review committees

The scientific community depends strongly on the peer review process, not only for grant applications but also for articles submitted for publication. The scientific community has a vested interest in ensuring the integrity and quality of the peer review process. Peer review is the international standard for assessing scientific excellence and it is generally perceived as the best system available for this purpose. However, the dependency on English-speaking evaluators to assess proposals submitted in French was also viewed as an important barrier by researchers who want to work in French.

Half of the French-speaking researchers experienced problems in the federal government grant application process and questioned the linguistic ability of evaluators reviewing proposals in their second language. Documented experiences of refusals that clearly misunderstood the intent of proposals written in French cast serious doubts on the language skills of reviewers whose first language is English. This limitation was confirmed by those who have served as evaluators and as members of peer review committees.

In addition to questioning the self-assessed functional bilingualism of peer committees, researchers also mentioned obstacles related to the predominant number of committee members from large university settings, regardless of language. This problem was mostly signalled by researchers from small Francophone universities in minority settings. They resent the lack of sensitivity regarding their particular situation and the additional barriers they face, which they feel are poorly understood by peers from large university settings. Comments in this regard ranged from suspicions about the effectiveness of review committees composed entirely of members from large universities to claims of outright bias.

This criticism should not be misunderstood. None of the researchers interviewed oppose the peer review process that the granting councils employ to evaluate funding proposals. It is quite the opposite. Both the competitive nature and the prestige associated with an award from one of the federal research funding agencies were repeatedly acknowledged as positive aspects of the allocation process. Minority official language researchers would not support watered-down procedures distributing funds to research projects that are of questionable quality or incapable of meeting competitive standards. Nevertheless, the researchers that were interviewed feel the system has its limitations, especially for researchers from small institutions in minority settings. They argue that the committees favour certain types and areas of research and researchers who work in English are at an advantage. Setting aside disciplinary biases, which are discussed later, complaints expressed by Francophone minority researchers included:

- The absence on many committees of reviewers from official language minority academic communities outside Quebec;
- The untested competency of self-identified bilingualism among peer review committee members;
- Unilingual Anglophones adjudicating applications submitted in French; and
- The meagre explanatory comments written in French, and sometimes even written in English, that accompany refusals (notably when proposals have been submitted for external review in English by Francophone researchers who try to work in their second language).

In addition to raising the very serious question of competence in the reading and comprehension of information written in one's second language, Francophone researchers in OLMCs also expressed doubt about the ability of their "passively bilingual" peers to appreciate the corresponding cultural nuances, values and sensitivities associated with a minority situation, which transcend a simple ability to communicate. Whether from Quebec or elsewhere in Canada, Francophone researchers attributed the frequency of rejections to the difficulty of obtaining competent expert reviewers who are fluent in the language of their proposals—especially in highly specialized fields.

No analogous comments were received from Anglophone researchers in Quebec.

2.3.4 Lack of priority given to official languages issues

The scope of this study does not include determining what would constitute sufficient support of social sciences and humanities research in order to permit the funding of all good quality research proposals dealing with official languages issues. SSHRC does, of course, fund many proposals deemed to be of high quality and accords them an appropriate priority. Nevertheless, all researchers, English and French, from large and small universities in Quebec or elsewhere in Canada and working on projects related to linguistic duality all share a common perception: over many years, funding sources have consistently accorded a very low priority to research subjects related to linguistic duality. As a result, peer review committees and external evaluators have been reluctant to recognize the importance of such proposals when ranking them with other priorities in the various related disciplines. Furthermore, Francophone researchers working on OLMC issues shared the perception that Quebec Francophone researchers, and Anglophone researchers in general, do not view the type of research that they conduct in a favourable light.

As noted, all researchers whose scholarly interests deal with official languages issues complained of the long delay—still evident in certain federal research funding agencies and their peer review committees—in acknowledging the relevance of their research. Indeed, evidence submitted from actual evaluations clearly documents how certain pertinent proposals were dismissed for being of supposedly limited interest to Canadian national priorities, regardless of the long-standing preoccupation with official languages issues in this country. (See section 3.5.2 for a discussion of research priority-setting.)

Unfortunately, while a few researchers mentioned positive strategic initiatives related to linguistic duality issues (such as SSHRC and CIHR), these are comparatively recent and were unknown to the majority of the researchers interviewed.

A number of participants had had their proposals rejected because sociolinguistic, socio-cultural, linguistic, bilingual policy, religious and other subjects of concern to OLMCs were considered of little relevance. In some cases, the evidence shows an obvious lack of interest in minority French-language issues outside Quebec by Francophone majority-language reviewers. In other cases, submissions relevant to both Anglophone and Francophone OLMCs were dismissed for failing to consider all Canadian ethnic minorities.

No less frustrating to some researchers who were interviewed is SSHRC's practice of adjudicating a project worthy of funding, but withholding support on the basis of insufficient funds. Assigning proposals the "sufficient quality, but no funding" grade of "4A" is viewed as a poorly camouflaged euphemism for saying that a project is not as important as others that do receive financial support from the federal government. Notwithstanding limited funds, given the assessment of quality that their proposals received, researchers conclude that they would have been funded if proposals related to linguistic duality and OLMCs had been accorded the priority they deserve.

Some of the reasons researchers attribute to the lack of priority given to linguistic duality issues include:

- The interdisciplinary nature of research on linguistic duality;
- Limited documentation and information, as well as the absence of a long-established history of research in these areas;
- Poor awareness among peer review committee members of the need for this research and of the issues involved;
- Lack of OLMC representation on peer review committees and associated decision-making bodies;
- Insufficient support from OLMC institutions and the insufficient influence of their decision-making bodies;
- The relatively small number of researchers dedicated to research on linguistic duality and OLMCs;
- The close relationship between linguistic duality and OLMC issues with specific challenges, such as health care, education and immigration, affecting the population as a whole, which adds to the complexity of proposals and necessitates multidisciplinary research teams; and
- Confusion concerning the types of research eligible for funding in such areas, including the priority given to basic as compared to applied research.

2.3.5 Lack of institutional support

Although they face the same barriers as those previously discussed, all official language minority research communities are far from equal in the competition for scarce research funding. Researchers working in the smallest institutions typically encounter more challenges than their colleagues at McGill, Concordia, the University of Ottawa, or even the Université de Moncton. Some of their problems are quite different from those experienced by researchers in the larger centres or in small majority-language universities.

The lack of an established research culture in small minority-language institutions is reflected in the comments of researchers, which included the following:

- Need for more time to encourage the development and success of research projects, which would necessitate reduced teaching workloads;
- Lack of secretarial and administrative expertise and support to prepare proposals that compete with professionally produced grant applications submitted by colleagues from larger universities; and
- The limited number of graduate programs, which would otherwise provide a source of research assistants.

Until quite recently, with the early exception of McGill University, the allocation of rewards and resources to the primarily undergraduate programs of OLMC academic institutions gave precedence to teaching over research. A number of the researchers interviewed—all from the smallest institutions—cited time constraints due to heavy teaching loads and participation in institutional governance and committee work as having a negative influence on their ability to participate in federal government research funding competitions. Six and even seven half-courses per academic year are common for professors at small minority-language and bilingual institutions. In comparison, colleagues employed by large majority-language institutions teach two half-courses per semester with further reductions in their course load to encourage research productivity. In addition, minority Francophone researchers at smaller institutions, particularly those working at bilingual universities, are involved in extensive committee work. Under such circumstances, a shift in the operational and financial context in which smaller bilingual and official language minority universities evolve would clearly be required to permit the development of a research culture.

In addition, funding application review committees must, understandably, be convinced that a research project can be accomplished in the manner in which it is proposed. The lack of resources available at small institutions for that purpose suggests significant impediments to obtaining funding, particularly when the standards for assessment are set and

judged according to measures and contexts familiar to peers from the largest universities in the country. In this regard, 20% of the researchers interviewed, all from minority-language institutions outside Quebec, shared the opinion that reviewers from big universities favour their colleagues in other large institutions, both English and French.

The few researchers that were interviewed who had never applied for a grant to support their research or no longer applied for grants were all employed at small Francophone institutions. They viewed competing against their counterparts from large universities as overwhelming and noted the ineligibility of their own institutions for certain funding. However, in their opinion, poor infrastructure support was the main reason for the lack of research capacity in their academic communities.

2.3.6 Lack of consideration for the particular circumstances of researchers in official language minority community settings

A critical mass of researchers in any given discipline, which is common in large universities and necessary to mentor, assist in preparing proposals and contribute to the successful realization of research projects, is frequently absent in small institutions where a researcher may be the only expert in a particular field, if not in a whole discipline.

While most funding opportunities are open to individual researchers, the perception is that federal research funding agencies have a tendency to fund large team proposals that also favour large universities with a greater pool of researchers from which to create a team. This practice reduces the overall amount of funding available for proposals submitted by individuals. Small institutions are also less likely to have the advantageous mix of both new scholars, who receive special consideration for funding by the granting councils, and seasoned researchers, whose productivity can balance out the track record of potentially less experienced team members.

There is also some debate in the research community regarding the preferred level of specificity of the evaluation criteria and the extent to which evaluation criteria should

be defined. This has implications for OLMC institutions in that some criteria, such as the size of the institution, could favour certain OLMC researchers. Finally, although success rates vary by program, rates that are too low can be discouraging for both institutions and researchers.

In conclusion, researchers working in small minority institutions perceive an uneven playing field in the grant application process. They see themselves as being at a disadvantage when their applications are measured by the same standards as those from larger universities. Specific examples include expectations and requirements concerning the number and scope of academic programs offered, prior publishing record, the reputation of researchers, the availability of graduate students, the depth of research expertise in each discipline, the existence of teams of experts as opposed to individual researchers and pre-existing infrastructure as opposed to infrastructure to be developed in the future.

On the positive side, researchers noted the favourable weighing of criteria by the three granting councils to encourage new researchers and the initial consideration given to smaller institutions by certain agencies such as the Canada Foundation for Innovation.

2.3.7 Physical and intellectual isolation

It would be a serious oversimplification to attribute the barriers facing small bilingual and French minority-language institutions exclusively to their small size. Their differences in comparison to small majority-language universities must be appreciated in order to fully understand the contexts in which they operate. Discussions with representatives of the Association of Colleges and Universities of Canada and the Conference of Rectors and Principals of Quebec Universities easily drew several obvious distinctions.

Small English-language institutions are usually affiliated or federated with large Anglophone universities that share their language of operations and from which they derive certain advantages in terms of their research. They are generally located in or close to major metropolitan areas, which

facilitates travel and co-operation with research colleagues. Such proximity is not characteristic of the small French universities in Quebec because they are all constituent members of the Université du Québec system, which supports them in their research efforts and allows them to benefit from significant federal government research funding.

In contrast, official language minority researchers outside Quebec frequently work at institutions that are not only smaller, but are also either bilingual or associated with majority English-language universities. Their geographic distance from French-language colleagues interested in the same subject is significant, adding cost and complexity to personal contact and research collaboration, new electronic communication technologies notwithstanding. Not surprisingly, networks between these researchers are far less established.

2.3.8 Complexity and variability of application procedures

The complexity and variability of application procedures associated with obtaining research funding from federal government sources is another perceived barrier. Some researchers (8 of the 40) were of the opinion that the forms, deadlines and other requirements involved in drafting and submitting research proposals are too complex and time-consuming, especially in the social sciences and humanities. Examples of specific issues identified by these researchers included:

- The lack of clear criteria and clarity in what is required to submit a successful proposal;
- The lack of available information to prepare proposals where preparatory research would be necessary;
- Frequent changes to programs and in the personnel administering them;
- The lack of transparency in the process;
- Inadequate feedback or explanations of the reasons for rejecting a proposal;
- Too many rules and too much bureaucracy; and
- The lack of reviewers with expertise in certain research areas.

On the encouraging side, researchers identified a number of positive features of current application processes, for example:

- The peer-reviewed evaluation of applications;
- The availability and accessibility of funding agency personnel to meet with researchers and provide advice and support;
- Clear rules in certain competitions;
- The responses to questions posed in either official language;
- The availability of information and forms on federal research funding agencies' Web sites; and
- The feedback provided by certain funding sources.

2.3.9 Bias toward large majority-language universities

The perception persists among some researchers that, given the negligible chances of obtaining significant research funding from a federal government agency, applying for a competitive application process is not worth the effort.

As reasons for their current disinterest, the small number of researchers interviewed who had never been awarded a research grant from a federal funding source cited other job priorities that prevented them from spending the time necessary to prepare a suitable application and the lack of a research profile that would impress a funding agency. A few others (all from small official language minority institutions outside Quebec) concurred that the chances of obtaining funding from a federal government research funding agency were minimal, and that in any case, the amounts that could be awarded would be insignificant. The specific roadblocks to success identified by these researchers included:

- Stiff competition from the larger universities;
- A perceived low future success rate based on their past funding track record;
- A lack of time to prepare applications;
- Difficulty in assembling a research team;

- Funding program preferences for projects submitted by interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary teams rather than individual researchers;
- Too many applicants for too little money, especially in the humanities and social sciences;
- Research qualifications that are perceived to be inadequate;
- The excessively stringent eligibility criteria set by federal research funding agencies; and
- Insufficient institutional research infrastructure support.

2.4 State of research relevant to official languages issues

As might be expected from published academics, every researcher interviewed was able to respond positively to questions about work planned or in progress that would result in publication, with or without funding from a federal government source. The nature of many of these projects is directly related to the interests, issues and concerns relevant to the promotion of the linguistic duality and the vitality of OLMCs.

Among the examples of research either currently completed, in progress or identified as part of their future plans, participants mentioned a wide range of topics and initiatives, including Francophone history, literature and cultural practices; health; senior citizens; music; military matters; and bilingualism among senior citizens. Under current conditions, many of these research initiatives, which are often launched by researchers working in official language minority institutions, may never obtain the grants necessary to carry them out because of the low priority accorded in the past to research on OLMCs and linguistic duality.

The analysis that follows in Section 3 examines the funding environment and prospects for improvement based on interviews with representatives from federal research funding agencies. Questions were related to the outcomes of grant competitions, existing programs, standards and adjudication processes, and innovative approaches and best practices employed to fulfill the federal government's commitment to the development of OLMCs and the promotion of linguistic duality in Canada.

In conclusion—OLMC researchers identified a number of barriers to obtaining research funding (see Table 4), including limited awareness of funding sources, the language fluency of peer review committees, the low priority given to research on official languages, weak institutional support and their relative isolation from the rest of the academic community.

Table 4 – Summary of perceived barriers by researchers

Researcher's limited awareness of available funding
Language of publication
Language skills of peer review committees
Lack of priority given to official languages issues
Lack of institutional support
Lack of consideration for the particular circumstances of researchers in OLMC settings
Physical and intellectual isolation
Complexity and variability of application procedures
Bias toward large majority-language universities

3. Federal research funding departments and agencies: Practices and processes

This section examines the present federal funding environment and its key players. It also presents findings regarding the funding available to researchers from official language minority community (OLMC) institutions and those who study linguistic duality issues. The following key questions are addressed:

- **How much research funding is currently being directed to OLMC institutions and OLMC-related research?** What are the key sources of federal research funding in Canada? How much funding are OLMC institutions and researchers receiving? How many applications do the agencies receive from OLMC institutions and researchers, and what are the rates of success?
- **Do agency policies and procedures address the needs of OLMCs?** Do the grant application evaluation processes of the different agencies ensure that the needs of OLMCs are being addressed? What abilities do the peer review committees have to evaluate applications in both official languages? What measures are the agencies taking to promote research funding in OLMCs or on linguistic duality?
- **Do agency programs address the needs of OLMCs?** Do the research funding agencies have any programs that are directed specifically at promoting OLMC-related research? What, if any, research programs focus on linguistic duality? Do the agencies have specific programs for small institutions? Are the agencies considering the development of new programs to address the needs of OLMCs or to promote research on linguistic duality?

3.1 Key players

This section presents a summary of the key players involved in providing research funding or involved in supporting researchers in OLMC institutions or studying OLMC-related issues. They include the following groups:

- **The federal research funding agencies:** The main federal research funding agencies (the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), the Canada Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) and the Canada

Foundation for Innovation (CFI)) fund research through grants and contributions to institutions and researchers, typically through a peer review process.

- **Federal departments and agencies:** Departments and agencies must implement section 41 of the *Official Languages Act* and interact with OLMCs as part of their departmental mandates. Departments also contract research to universities and researchers and collaborate with Canadian Heritage and other departments on funding projects related to OLMCs and linguistic duality.
- **Universities in OLMCs:** Universities establish research priorities through their research committees, provide research support services to their researchers, submit grant applications to the federal research funding agencies on behalf of their researchers and ensure that researchers meet professional standards. They also contribute to research projects and provide the infrastructure to support research projects. Outside Quebec, these universities are members of the Association des universités de la francophonie canadienne (AUFC), which, among other things, serves as a catalyst to support research.
- **Researchers:** Researchers prepare and submit grant applications to the federal research funding agencies. They may also be called upon to participate in peer review committees established by the federal research funding agencies.
- **OLMCs:** Communities include organizations and associations representing different interests. They may request certain types of research or use the results of research to help develop policy options.
- **Department of Canadian Heritage:** Canadian Heritage coordinates the role of departments and agencies in meeting their obligations under section 41 of the *Official Languages Act*. It is also active in funding research projects in collaboration with funding agencies and the OLMCs. This is discussed in section 3.8.2.

The following sections describe the roles of the major research funding agencies, other federal departments and agencies, and private research foundations in the research funding process.

3.2 Federal research funding departments and agencies

3.2.1 The main research funding agencies

Although numerous sources of federal research funding are available, Statistics Canada data on federal government payments to the higher education sector for research in science and technology indicates that, on a strictly dollar value basis, most funding comes from four federal research funding agencies (NSERC, CIHR, CFI and SSHRC). Table 5 shows that in 2005, these four agencies provided roughly 92% of the \$2.8 billion funded. Funding has increased more than threefold over the past 10 years. Note that these tables do not include funding provided by research foundations such as the Canada Research Chairs Program or the Millennium Scholarship Foundation, nor does it include research undertaken within federal departments or contracted by departments.

Table 5 – Federal government payments to the higher education sector for science and technology, by department or agency, 1996–1997 to 2005–2006 (in millions)

Department/ Agency	1996–1997	2000–2001	2005–2006
NSERC	\$413	\$504	\$791
CIHR (formerly MRC)	\$221	\$350	\$699
CFI	-	\$183	\$550
SSHRC	\$75	\$114	\$544
Other federal departments and agencies	\$185	\$169	\$221
	\$894	\$1,320	\$2,805

Source: Statistics Canada. *Federal Government Expenditures and Personnel in the Natural and Social Sciences*, 2006, p. 25.

The mandates for these four federal research funding agencies are as follows.

- **NSERC:** NSERC was created in 1978 to support basic research in science and technology (other than the health sciences) through discovery grants and strategic projects in partnership with universities, governments and the private sector. NSERC is a separate employer and reports the Minister of Industry.
- **CIHR:** This agency was created in June 2000 by an act of Parliament with a mandate that includes bio-medical research, clinical research, research related to health systems, health services, health of the population, societal and cultural dimensions of health, and environmental influences on health. CIHR reports to the Minister of Health and has 13 institutes located across the country, each led by a scientific director.
- **SSHRC:** SSHRC is an arm's-length federal agency that promotes and supports university-based research and training in the social sciences and humanities. Created by an act of Parliament in 1977, SSHRC is governed by a 22-member council that reports to the Minister of Industry. SSHRC-funded research fuels innovative thinking about real life issues, including the economy, education, health care, the environment, immigration, globalization, language, ethics, peace, security, human rights, law, poverty, mass communication, politics, literature, addiction, pop culture, sexuality, religion and Aboriginal rights.
- **CFI:** Created in 1997, CFI's mandate is to strengthen the ability of Canadian universities, colleges, research hospitals, and non-profit and non-governmental research organizations to carry out world-class research and technology development that benefits Canadians. CFI funds up to 40% of the eligible costs of a research infrastructure project.

3.2.2 Federal departments and agencies

In addition to the aforementioned federal research funding agencies, federal departments and agencies also either fund or carry out research in-house. These departments and agencies can be grouped into the following categories.

- **Federal departments and agencies that do research in-house:** A number of departments and agencies carry out research in-house in partnership with the private sector, university researchers and other research funding agencies. In 2006–2007, the total budget for in-house federal research carried out by departments and agencies was \$2.2 billion dollars. Examples of research centres located across the country working in close collaboration with university researchers include the National Research Council (budget of \$693 million), Defence Research and Development Canada (budget of \$255 million) and other departments such as Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada and Natural Resources Canada. The National Research Council was interviewed as part of this study. It appears that very little of this research goes toward research on OLMC issues.
- **Federal departments that fund research on a contract basis:** A number of federal departments and agencies fund research projects on a contract basis to support policy development. Examples of departments that fall into this category, and which were interviewed as part of this study, include the Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, Human Resources and Social Development Canada (HRSDC) and Industry Canada. Contracting for research follows the same contracting rules that apply to the purchase of other professional services. Typically, the research conducted by these departments is decentralized to responsibility centre managers and is therefore difficult to quantify. Research is often closely linked to the policy function within the department and is not necessarily in areas that are of interest to researchers.
- **Federal departments that fund research as part of other programs:** In a number of cases, research is only one component of the overall funding for more

complex programs and is therefore difficult to quantify. For example, the Canadian International Development Agency provides funding support to universities for international development projects through the Universities and Colleges Program.

- **Departments that provide funding support to OLMCs and fund research on official languages issues:** The Department of Canadian Heritage and other federal departments fund university-based and private sector research on official languages issues. This is intended to better understand and explain minority realities as distinct from majority needs and realities, and to examine issues related to second-language education and the promotion of linguistic duality. Such research is conducted by Canadian Heritage under the Official Languages Support Program. Canadian Heritage also funds several research programs. More details are provided later in this report.

On the other hand, Canadian Heritage's Official Languages Secretariat is responsible for the coordination of the Official Languages Program (OLP) and for the comprehensive evaluation of the federal government's programs and policies in support of Canada's linguistic duality. In this context, research on official languages allows for the collection, pooling and analysis of data, leading to a better understanding of the situation of OLMCs and to a detailed assessment of the overall impact of government policies and programs in the area of official languages and linguistic duality. This coordination role is intended to help the government maintain an overall approach, which is adapted to the complexity of the OLP's governance structure.

Reporting to the Assistant Deputy Minister Committee on Official Languages, the membership of the Coordinating Committee on Official Languages Research (CCOLR) includes broad representation from a number of agencies and departments interviewed in the course of the present study. Given the important role it plays in the development of public policy and its complementary role in the evaluation of OLP components, research is a crucial axis of coordination. The CCOLR evaluates the current state of research on official languages, reports back on data and information gaps and serves as a strategic mechanism at the senior management level of government to increase awareness of the importance of official languages research

in the development and evaluation of policies and programs. In addition, the CCOLR ensures a leadership role in the collaboration between federal, provincial and territorial, community and academic partners concerned with official languages research. It should be noted that this committee does not fund OLMC research but encourages departments to do so and promotes creating ties between government and researchers.

3.2.3 Other research programs

Other programs that receive at least partial funding from the federal government also provide funding for research. In addition to CFI, as previously noted, two other programs were reviewed as part of this study.

- **Canada Research Chairs Program:** In 2000, the Government of Canada created a new program to establish 2000 research professorships—Canada Research Chairs—in universities across the country by 2008. The Canada Research Chairs Program invests \$300 million a year to attract and retain some of the world’s most accomplished and promising minds. By helping Canadian universities and their affiliated research institutes and hospitals become world-class centres of research and research training, the Chairs Program contributes to enhancing Canada’s competitiveness in the global, knowledge-based economy, improving Canadians’ health and enriching our social and cultural life.

- **The Millennium Research Program:** This program was launched by the Canadian Millennium Scholarship Foundation in 2001 to assist it in carrying out its mandate to improve access to post-secondary education and provide students with the educational opportunities they need to prepare themselves for the future. The Research Program advances the study of barriers to post-secondary education and the impact of policies and programs designed to alleviate them. It ensures that policy-making and public discussions involving opportunities in higher education in Canada are properly informed by rigorous analysis and empirical evidence.

Summary—A number of federal departments and agencies provide funding for research or undertake research contracts with universities and researchers; however, most of the research funding comes from a small number of agencies. This implies that any improvements and best practice initiatives to help serve OLMCs should be aimed primarily, but not exclusively, at the main federal research funding agencies (NSERC, CIHR and SSHRC).

3.3 Research communities

The community served by federal research funding agencies is very large. Table 6 provides approximate information on the size of the research community supported by the agencies in terms of the number of institutions and the number of researchers served.

Table 6 – Approximate size of communities supported by federal research funding agencies (2005)

Agency	Number of Researchers	Number of Institutions	Number of Grants and Awards (yearly)	Types of Institutions
SSHRC	6,000	130	8,000	Mainly universities and colleges
NSERC	11,000	90	3,600	Mainly universities, some colleges
CIHR	9,000	250	8,000	Universities, hospitals, not-for-profit institutions
CFI	20,000	130	600	Universities, hospitals, colleges

Source: Data taken from agency Web sites and public documents.²

² The data was taken from the following Web sites: www.sshrc.ca, www.nserc.ca, www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca and www.innovation.ca.

3.4 Official language minority community post-secondary institutions

3.4.1 Institutions associated with official language minority communities

The OLMC institutions that participated in this study (see Table 1) fall into four distinct categories, which affects their relationship with the funding agencies and their ability to access research funding:

- Francophone institutions outside Quebec, including the Université Sainte-Anne, the Université de Moncton, the Université de Hearst, and the Collège universitaire de Saint-Boniface;
- Francophone institutions outside Quebec that are part of larger Anglophone majority universities: the Institut français at the University of Regina and the Campus Saint-Jean at the University of Alberta;
- English institutions in Quebec: McGill, Concordia and Bishop's universities. As large universities, McGill and Concordia have well-established research capabilities and already receive significant research funding support.
- Bilingual institutions in primarily Anglophone environments outside Quebec. Most Ontario OLMC institutions, such as Laurentian University, the University of Ottawa and the Royal Military College of Canada, fall into this category.

3.4.2 Research funding received by institutions in official language minority communities

Information on funding levels gathered by Statistics Canada on behalf of the Canadian Association of University Business Officers (CAUBO)³ indicates that OLMC institutions received a total of \$352.3 million for research (see Table 7), which represents roughly 12.6% of the total \$2.8 billion given by federal research funding agencies to all universities in Canada in 2005–2006 (see Table 5).

If the Anglophone universities in Quebec are excluded, the percentage of federal funds supporting research in official language minority institutions across Canada is slightly more than 4% of total research funding. According to Statistics Canada data:

- The Université Sainte-Anne in Nova Scotia received 0.2% of the federal government funds designated to support university research in the province. Together with the grants received by the Université de Moncton, the two Francophone institutions in the region received 3.8% of the total allocated to universities in the Atlantic provinces.
- The three Anglophone minority-language universities in Quebec (McGill, Concordia, Bishop's) fared considerably better, receiving 42.5% of federal government research support earmarked for universities in that province.
- In Ontario, federal government research funding (a very significant majority of which would be designated for research done in English) for the larger bilingual universities in the province—Ottawa and Laurentian—in addition to the very modest funding received by the smaller institutions amounts to 14.3% of the total funding received by universities in the province.⁴
- The Collège universitaire de Saint-Boniface received no research funding from federal government sources in 2004–2005.⁵

Most institutes and researchers in OLMCs received their funding support from either CIHR (\$109 million), NSERC (\$66 million), CFI (\$54 million), Canada Research Chairs (\$28 million) or SSHRC (\$22 million). Other federal departments and agencies provided 19.4% of total funding, which may explain in part why the researchers that were interviewed identified a number of federal departments and agencies as sources of funding.

3 Canadian Association of University Business Officers. *Financial Information of Universities and Colleges, 2004–2005*. Statistics Canada, Ottawa: 2006, p.19; and p. 176-301.

4 No data was available for the Royal Military College, the Dominican College or Glendon College (within York's research budget).

5 No data on the funds received by the Institut français in Saskatchewan or the Campus Saint-Jean in Alberta was available.

Table 7 – Federal research funding to official language minority institutions – 2004–2005 (thousands \$)

Institution	SSHRC	Health Canada	NSERC	CIHR	CFI	Canada Research Chairs Program	Other Federal Sources	Total
Université Sainte-Anne	5	0	0	0	0	118	29	152
Université de Moncton	700	52	838	54	359	483	3,478	5,964
McGill University	8,729	2,182	36,318	78,846	28,969	17,992	39,041	212,077
Concordia University	4,695	0	8,882	1,824	2,849	1,890	4,902	25,042
Bishop's University	149	0	168	0	45	200	36	598
University of Ottawa*	7,550	1,937	17,172	28,232	21,183	6,219	19,133	101,426
Royal Military College of Canada	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Laurentian University*	223	144	3,013	37	273	1,450	1,731	6,871
Dominican College of Philosophy and Theology	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Saint Paul University*	70	0	0**	0	0	0	0	70
University of Sudbury	0	0	0**	0	0	0	0	0
Université de Hearst	0	0	0**	0	0	64	0	64
Glendon College	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Collège universitaire de Saint-Boniface	0	0	0**	0	0	0	0	0
Institut français, University of Regina	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Campus Saint-Jean, University of Alberta	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Total	\$22,121	\$4,315	\$66,391	\$108,993	\$53,678	\$28,416	\$68,350	\$352,264

Source: Canadian Association of University Business Officers. *Financial Information of Universities and Colleges 2004–2005*. Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 2006.

n/a: no data available in the CAUBO report.

* Funding for both French and English research combined.

** Not eligible for the agency's funding programs.

3.4.3 Research chairs received by institutions in official language minority communities

The number of research chairs provided to researchers in OLMCs is another indicator of the level of funding support received by OLMC institutions (see Table 8). As of December

2005, 213, or 12.6%, of the 1,698 research chairs granted overall in Canada were granted to OLMC institutions. Most of these chairs are at McGill, the University of Ottawa and Concordia. Fully 194 applications (91%) were submitted in English, compared to 19 (9%) submitted in French.

Table 8 – Number of research chairs granted to official language minority institutions between 2000 and 2005

Institution	Number of Chairs	English	French
McGill University	121	117	4
University of Ottawa	48	42	6
Concordia University	22	22	0
Université de Moncton	6	1	5
Royal Military College of Canada	4	4	0
Université de Hearst	1	0	1
Université Sainte-Anne	1	0	1
Collège universitaire de Saint-Boniface	1	0	1
Bishop's University	1	1	0
Campus Saint-Jean, University of Alberta	1	0	1
Glendon College	0	0	0
Laurentian University	7	7	0
Dominican College of Philosophy and Theology	0	0	0
Saint Paul University	Eligible through parent university (University of Ottawa)	x	x
University of Sudbury	Eligible through parent university (Laurentian University)	x	x
Institut français, University of Regina	0	0	0
Total	213	194	19

Source: Canada Research Chairs Program (www.chairs.gc.ca), August 2007.

Summary—With the exception of the large English-language universities in Quebec—McGill and Concordia—and recognizing that most of the grants allocated to the bilingual institutions elsewhere in Canada support research conducted in English, Francophone OLMC institutions are not receiving large amounts of funding for research chairs.

3.5 Agency processes

The extent to which the policies and procedures of the federal research funding agencies respond to the needs of OLMCs was also examined. The concerns raised by researchers regarding the evaluation of applications were noted earlier, as were the rigorous processes the agencies have put in place to assess funding applications. Their common characteristics are discussed below. It should be noted that the examples and best practices are self-reported by the funding agency representatives.

3.5.1 *A strong focus on excellence*

All federal research funding agencies and researchers emphasized excellence. The general view of the agencies is that allocations of research funding should be based solely on excellence. Some agencies also believe that programs should be national in scope and that OLMC institutions and researchers should not be granted preference. These agencies fund institutions and researchers who are in minority-language situations because they are experts in their field and their applications have been found to have merit through the peer review process.

In the case of federal departments carrying out research on a contract basis (as opposed to funding grants for research), the focus is typically on acquiring the services of an institution or a researcher that best meets the requirements specified in the statement of work included in the request for proposals and contractual arrangements.

3.5.2 *Research priority setting by governing bodies*

Each research funding agency typically has a process for establishing research priorities (e.g., through governing bodies comprised of external representatives or individual institutes). Members of governing bodies are distinguished

individuals selected from the private and public sectors and universities, and represent a wide range of backgrounds and disciplines. A certain percentage of research funding is often researcher-driven while the balance is reserved for strategic initiatives or specific partnerships. Priorities are set after all stakeholders are consulted and the emerging issues that will be facing the Canadian population are taken into consideration.

Within federal departments, research priorities are generally established as part of a research plan (e.g., the Social Development Knowledge Plan at HRSDC) or the regular business planning cycle and are closely linked to policy development or program priorities.

Too often, as the Commissioner of Official Languages has noted in the past, language dimensions are not considered when federal departments are developing their research plans to support policy or program development. Given their responsibilities, it is important that departments examine this dimension and develop research on the vitality of OLMCs to understand the fundamental conditions that influence their development and to incorporate this knowledge when developing and evaluating programs.

3.5.3 *Application processes for research funding*

Every year, the federal research funding agencies receive thousands of funding applications. Steps taken to facilitate the application process include the following:

- **Streamlined application forms:** Some agencies allow for an abbreviated form of application (e.g., letter of intent).
- **On-line applications:** Some agencies are making a major effort to process grant registrations and applications and provide funding-related information on-line.⁶ The intent is to make the application process and forms easily accessible over the Internet and allow for collaboration on administrative tasks. Information on applicants is retained in a database.
- **Increased co-operation between agencies:** To assist researchers who have to submit applications to multiple programs to obtain funding for cross-disciplinary projects, some agencies and research organizations are

⁶ For example, CIHR launched ResearchNet, its first pilot project for electronic submissions, in 2004. While the system still experiences hiccups near competition closing dates when large volumes of users are on-line, it is an important tool for researchers in large or small settings.

co-operating with each other by requesting a common resumé, as well as co-operating in requesting proposals. There is also a trend toward multiple application agreements and other forms of collaborative arrangements between agencies.

- **Coaching:** Some agencies make staff available to assist researchers with the application process.
- **Allocating funding to institutions:** CFI, for example, established an allocation designed for the incremental operating and maintenance costs of infrastructure projects, with a different evaluation committee for smaller institutions.
- **Wide range of types of funding support:** Funding support is provided through a wide range of mechanisms, including open competitions, joint initiatives and strategic research projects. It is available for a range of purposes, including grants to institutions and individual researchers, collaborative research and development, technology transfer, research networks, research agreements, research chairs, research communications, scholarships, special research fellowships, training, exchange programs, and equipment and facilities.
- **Service standards:** Some agencies have set service standards. For example, one agency has developed and published a set of standards, established baselines and targets for improvement, and conducted surveys with their main clients regarding their satisfaction levels.
- **Client relationship managers:** One funding agency has established coordinators to act as client relationship or account managers for groups of institutions. The relationship manager acts as the key contact point for the institution and is available to address issues and provide support.

For research in federal departments, researchers respond to requests for proposals. The research proposals are then evaluated according to regular contracting processes.

3.5.4 Peer review processes for evaluating applications

Funds are normally awarded on a competitive basis following the evaluation of applications by independent expert peer review at a national level. Each research application is evaluated by a peer review committee composed of a number of volunteer reviewers who write detailed reports on the strengths and weaknesses of each proposal. The agencies ensure a certain mix in their peer review committees in terms of expertise, regional representation, sex and language (typically 8–10 members serve on each committee). Some agencies also ask experts in specific fields to review applications and use a two-tier system whereby applications are reviewed one at a time by experts in specific fields (i.e., external referees or assessors) before they are submitted to the peer review committees. Through a consensus seeking process, the peer review committees arrive at a final rating for each proposal.

The key objectives of these review processes are excellence, independence and clarity. Agencies often post their peer assessment policy and process on their Web site. Some agencies (such as CFI) have established separate peer review committees for small and large institutions.

The peer evaluation process is not without its challenges. For example, there is a constant need for new evaluation committee members, and finding members who have both the specialized expertise and competency in both official languages is often difficult. This is especially true given the highly specialized nature of some research areas, the limited number of experts in the fields and the need to avoid conflicts of interest and maintain anonymity.

3.5.5 Ability of peer review committees to evaluate applications in both official languages

All the federal research funding agencies are committed to serving institutions and researchers in both official languages and using different approaches to ensure that peer review committees can fully assess applications in both official languages.

- Ensure minimum representation of both official languages on evaluation committees:** Typically, agencies operate bilingual peer review committees based on the self-declared functional bilingualism of reviewers. To assess applications submitted in French, peer review committee members are required to be functionally bilingual. Some agencies ensure that a minimum number of members on committees evaluating French applications are Francophone. The percentage of applications that are received in French should be taken into consideration: 19% of applications to SSHRC are submitted in French compared to 7% at NSERC. This may be due to the predominant use of English in publications by the natural sciences and engineering community or the number of small Francophone OLMC institutions who are not eligible for funding because they do not have science and engineering programs.
- Develop representation of both official languages in databases of experts:** All the federal research funding agencies ensure that a “functional” bilingual capacity among reviewers is maintained. The agencies typically maintain large databases of experts in various specialties (e.g., over 30,000 in SSHRC, over 134,000 at NSERC). Some agencies track the percentage of experts in their databases who are functionally bilingual. For example, at NSERC, roughly 18% of experts in their database are able to speak, read or write in French. However, this is based on self-assessment and none of the agencies test the language skills of their external experts.
- Organize both French and English evaluation committees:** This is the approach taken by the Canada Council for the Arts, in order to encourage equity in the allocation of subsidies for artistic endeavours. Although it is not used to fund research, this model could serve as an example for other federal research funding agencies concerned about the equitable treatment of OLMCs.
- Provide translation and interpretation services:** The Canada Council for the Arts translates applications and also provides simultaneous interpretation for evaluation committees. Some agencies also provide interpretation services, but they are rarely used by evaluation committees.
- Provide information and context sheets:** Although it is used for arts subsidies and not research grants, the Canada Council for the Arts prepares information and context sheets to provide juries with background information on the situation of Francophone artists working outside of Quebec. This helps to increase jury members’ awareness and ensure they are informed of the challenges facing OLMC artists and organizations.

Example 1 – Mechanisms used by NSERC to ensure the bilingual capacity of peer review committee members

In 2005–2006, the Discovery Program received over 3,000 applications (6% written in French) and had over 16,000 external reviewers in its database, 300–350 selection committee members and 27 selection committees. Selected external referees must be able to evaluate applications in the language in which they are written. Some 7.5% of external referees are Francophones. Selection committees reviewing French applications must include at least two members whose first official language is French and as many bilingual members as possible. Fourteen percent of selection committee members are Francophone, and 34% are bilingual and can review both French and English proposals.

Simultaneous interpretation is also available for committees, if necessary. Comments are made to applicants in their language of choice.

Source: Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council, *Investing in People, Discovery and Innovation*. Presentation at the discussion forum held on November 17, 2006.

Summary—Evaluation processes are in place to ensure an objective and open evaluation of research funding applications. There is increased co-operation between federal research funding agencies, and efforts are being made to streamline application processes. Agencies have pursued a variety of approaches to ensure that peer evaluation committees can function in both languages. However, no actual testing of language skills is carried out.

3.6 Promotion of research funding to official language minority communities

All agencies conduct promotional activities to increase awareness of their programs. Mechanisms in place to promote research programs include:

- **Site visits to the institutions:** Agencies typically make periodic visits to the institutions, although the frequency of the visits appears to vary from annually to every few years. No clear strategy exists for the small universities and while some researchers commented favourably on the availability of granting council representatives, French-speaking researchers stated that their contact with representatives was less likely to be in person than over the telephone or through correspondence. Even if visits by representatives of the various federal research funding agencies to university campuses across Canada are greatly appreciated, they rarely occur at the small institutions, where the small number of researchers present in one place discourages the expenditure of time and money for travel outside major population centres.
- **Regional information sessions:** Agencies conduct periodic information sessions at both large and small institutions located in large urban centres and small communities.
- **Regional offices:** Some federal research funding agencies have established regional offices. For example, NSERC has recently established regional offices in Moncton, Winnipeg and Vancouver to promote and create greater awareness of their programs and help bring people from head office to the regions more often. (Each regional office has a staff of three or four people.) Similarly, CIHR has 13 institutes located across the country. Nevertheless, the evaluation of research applications tends to be for the most part centralized at a national level.
- **Bilingual staff and program literature:** The agencies serve the communities by providing services, programs and literature on their Web site in both official languages, as required under the *Official Languages Act*.

- **Working with associations:** Some associations, such as the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (AUCC) and CAUBO, represent all universities, while others, such as the Association des universités de la francophonie canadienne (AUGC), represent OLMC institutions. These associations contribute to raising awareness about the research funding programs offered.
- **Client relationship managers:** Some agencies have designated a coordinator as the key contact person for each institution. Each institution in turn establishes a liaison point for communications with the agency.
- **Supporting research networks:** The network of 19 National Centres of Excellence, established by the Government of Canada in 1989 to mobilize researchers in the university, public, private and non-profit sectors, has been successful in promoting innovation and knowledge transfer in the areas of health and human development, advanced technologies, engineering, manufacturing, natural resources and the environment.

Summary—Federal research funding agencies use a variety of mechanisms to promote their programs, and some are striving to build their regional presence. They might use agencies that fund other sectors (e.g., the Canada Council for the Arts) and that have been pro-actively consulting OLMCs as examples to assess their needs.

3.7 Programs aimed at small institutions

Certain federal research funding agencies have programs in place for small institutions and new researchers. NSERC has had a program in place for small universities since 2003–2004 entitled Research Capacity Development in Small Universities. The program is intended to help small universities address barriers to research productivity in terms of equipment, infrastructure and research staff. SSHRC also has a modest budget in place to support capacity building in small universities. In addition, it has conducted round tables to address the issue of helping younger researchers and adjusted its evaluation process to reflect the circumstances of new researchers and increase their chances of success. Another example is CFI, which has also customized its programs to reflect the needs of smaller institutions.

Example 2 – Mechanisms used by CFI to customize their programs to the needs of the smaller institutions

When CFI was first created in 1997, it considered the needs of smaller universities in co-operation with the AUCC. CFI evaluated the research capabilities of all the institutions and set aside an allocation for each institution that was proportional to its research portfolio. Institutions could apply for funding within this allocation. CFI also added colleges and small universities to the scope of institutions. CFI funding to date for infrastructure projects has been \$26.4 million for 54 projects at colleges and \$162.8 million for 710 projects at universities.

CFI eventually changed its programs so that smaller institutions could compete with the larger institutions because smaller institutions wanted access to more funding. The foundation created separate evaluation committees for colleges, smaller universities and other institutions.

Source: Information provided by CFI and a presentation by CFI at the discussion forum held on November 17, 2006.

Summary—Some federal research funding agencies have put programs in place for small institutions and new researchers. An opportunity exists to further help small institutions develop their research capacity.

3.8 Programs promoting research in official language minority communities or on official languages issues

During this study, the extent to which existing programs target OLMCs, or fund research on linguistic duality and OLMCs, was also examined. The federal research funding agencies do not generally have programs that are specifically intended to support researchers in official language minority situations. However, some agencies have undertaken initiatives that address the needs of OLMCs in their particular area of research.

Example 3 – CIHR's implementation of an initiative to deliver health services to OLMCs

CIHR established an initiative for OLMCs to promote the study of the health determinants and specific needs of these two official languages groups to increase the number of researchers interested in these issues and to ensure that newly created

knowledge is transmitted to researchers and clinicians in order to improve the health of the Canadian population. In addition, it established a consultative committee on OLMCs that was made up of representatives from large and small universities and hospitals. Its mandate is to provide strategic and expert advice to CIHR on the OLMC health research agenda and to draft an action plan to develop competitive research capacity. To ensure success, CIHR committed human and operational resources as well as \$1.5 million in research funds. Two competitions for research funds have been held, one in December 2005 and one in 2006. To foster awareness of the challenges facing OLMCs and increase the interest of young researchers in this domain, summer institutes were also planned. One was offered in 2003 and another is planned for 2008, while a session dedicated to OLMCs was included in the CIHR 2006 Summer Institute.

Source: Canada Institutes of Health Research, *Promotion of Official Languages: Practices in the Institutes for Health Research in Canada*. Presentation at the discussion forum held on November 17, 2006.

Example 4 – Industry Canada's funding support to OLMCs to better understand their situation

Industry Canada has provided project funding for Franco communauté virtuelle to ensure information technologies are available to Francophone communities. Industry Canada has also developed new tools to better implement section 41 and to increase horizontal co-operation in supporting OLMCs. One initiative in particular involved the production of a CD-ROM to increase awareness among managers of departmental programs and services. The tool helps them understand the geographic distribution of the communities. The first phase of the project includes 490 maps that indicate OLMC locations according to certain defined criteria. The second phase will extend the criteria and provide a more complete picture of the communities' socio-economic characteristics. The Department would like to create as comprehensive a tool as possible by seeking input on the information to be included from other federal institutions, such as Canadian Heritage and HRSDC. Industry Canada also conducts market research on its investments and its regional development agencies related to OLMCs.

Source: Information provided during an interview.

3.8.1 Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada

In terms of the main federal research funding agencies, research on linguistic duality issues falls under the purview of SSHRC. SSHRC funds research on issues pertaining to linguistic duality and OLMCs through the range of its investigator-framed and targeted programs. Although it can be difficult to identify and track all of the research that relates to these themes, SSHRC produces, as part of its annual status report on the implementation of section 41 of the *Official Languages Act*, a list of research projects that have been awarded grants related to these themes. In the 2006–2007 Status Report,⁷ SSHRC reported that approximately \$2.4 million was awarded for research and related activities in the area of linguistic duality and official language minority issues.

Included in the \$2.4 million are the projects that SSHRC funded through the Official Languages Research and Dissemination Program. This targeted program was a joint initiative with the Department of Canadian Heritage and provided \$3 million in funding over a three-year period from 2004 to 2007 (see Table 9). SSHRC and Canadian Heritage each contributed roughly 50% of the funds. The Official Languages Research and Dissemination Program was a pilot project that lasted three years.

Example 5 – The Official Languages Research and Dissemination Program developed by SSHRC and Canadian Heritage

In 2001, SSHRC held a consultation on its five-year strategic plan. One major theme and priority area identified was that of culture, citizenship and identity. Beginning in 2003, negotiations were undertaken with the Department of Canadian Heritage about the possibility of developing an initiative related to official languages. This led to the launch of the Official Languages Research and Dissemination Joint Initiative Program in 2004. SSHRC and Heritage Canada each agreed to contribute \$500,000 to each year of the program.

The objectives of the program were to foster collaboration between researchers with respect to policies and practices in official languages, and to ensure that the results of the research are disseminated and used. The focus of the program is on training in the language of the minority, second language learning, governance and community development, and linguistic duality. Examples of the themes pursued in 2006 include: distance learning in a minority language, issues with respect to ethnic and cultural diversity, challenges faced by OLMCs and strategies they can pursue, ways in which Canadian society currently supports official languages legislation policies and programs, and the role of minority-language schools as a catalyst within the community.

The success rate of applications has been high. Over the three years of the program, 52 grants were awarded out of a total of 97 applications (a success rate of 54%), providing total funding of \$3 million (\$1.5 million from each partner). The breakdown of awards by language of application was the following: in 2004–2005, 41% were in French and 59% were in English; in 2005–2006, 71% were in French and 29% were in English; and in 2006–2007, 61% were in French and 39% were in English.

Source: Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, *The Official Languages Research and Dissemination Joint Initiative Program: A Joint Initiative of SSHRC and Canadian Heritage*. Presentation at the discussion forum held on November 17, 2006.

Based on information obtained from SSHRC, Table 9 summarizes SSHRC awards by institution over the three years of this program. Some 18 institutions received a total of 52 awards, representing about \$3 million. The University of Ottawa received the most awards (17 or 33% of funding), while 10 institutions received one or two awards. The average value of the award was approximately \$58,000.

7 Available at www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/web/home_e.asp.

**Table 9 – SSHRC funding under the Official Languages Research and Dissemination Program 2004–2005 to 2006–2007
Awarded by region and administering organization**

Region and Organization	2004-2005 Awards		2005-2006 Awards		2006-2007 Awards		2004-2005 to 2006-2007 Awards			
	Number of Projects	Total \$	Number of Projects	Total \$	Number of Projects	Total \$	Number of Projects	Total \$	% of total	Average \$
Atlantic										
Memorial University	-	-	1	50,000	-	-	1	50,000	1.9%	50,000
University of Prince Edward Island	-	-	1	50,000	-	-	1	50,000	1.9%	50,000
Université de Moncton	1	47,900	2	83,768	2	79,000	5	210,668	9.6%	42,134
Quebec										
Bishop's University	1	14,495	-	-	-	-	1	14,495	1.9%	14,495
Université Laval	1	92,940	-	-	-	-	1	92,940	1.9%	92,940
McGill University	2	196,645	1	30,024	-	-	3	226,669	5.8%	75,556
Université de Sherbrooke	-	-	1	50,000	-	-	1	50,000	1.9%	50,000
Université du Québec à Montréal	1	95,900	2	93,703	-	-	3	189,603	5.8%	63,201
Ontario										
Lakehead University	1	71,145	-	-	-	-	1	71,145	1.9%	71,145
University of Ottawa	5	444,157	5	205,619	7	306,906	17	956,682	32.7%	56,275
Queen's University	1	88,983	-	-	-	-	1	88,983	1.9%	88,983
York University	3	215,197	1	50,000	-	-	4	265,197	7.7%	66,299
Manitoba										
Collège universitaire de Saint-Boniface	-	-	2	72,600	-	-	2	72,600	3.8%	36,300
Alberta										
University of Alberta	3	245,030	-	-	2	99,956	5	344,986	9.6%	68,997
University of Calgary	-	-	1	35,300	1	16,400	2	51,700	3.8%	25,850
British Columbia										
University of British Columbia	1	99,700	-	-	-	-	1	99,700	1.9%	99,700
University of Northern British Columbia	1	50,000	-	-	-	-	1	50,000	1.9%	50,000
Simon Fraser University	1	99,956	-	-	1	23,905	2	123,861	3.8%	61,931
Total	22	1,762,048	17	721,014	13	526,167	52	3,009,229	100%	57,870

Source: Data provided by SSHRC.

3.8.2 Department of Canadian Heritage

Canadian Heritage works with associations, community groups and universities that are active in research related to official languages and linguistic duality issues. From the researchers' perspective, all of the following sources of funding are attractive, since community groups that receive such funding can then sub-contract them to conduct the research. Examples of research programs in which Canadian Heritage partners with community groups and federal research funding agencies, such as SSHRC, include the following:

- **Virtual Scholar in Residence Program:** This program, which has been in place since 2004–2005, funds one researcher per year to work with Canadian Heritage's Official Languages Support Programs Branch to advance research on minority-language community issues. Each year, proposals are received from researchers, a peer review is carried out by a SSHRC jury, discussion and negotiation takes place between the researcher and the Department of Canadian Heritage, and a research program is established with negotiated deliverables. For example, in 2006, Professor Janet Mosher from Toronto was chosen as the Virtual Scholar in Residence and was awarded \$50,000 for her research project *Access to Justice: A New Policy Framework*.
- **The AUFC:** Canadian Heritage has provided funding to this group over the past 15 years (\$7.3 million from 1990–1991 to 2005–2006) for networking, infrastructure and developmental activities to encourage greater coordination and capacity in post-secondary teaching and research.

- **Réseau de la recherche sur la francophonie**

canadienne: As part of its 2007–2012 action plan, the AUFC recently presented a support plan for research on Francophone minority communities, thereby carrying out one of the components of its mission: research, teaching and services to the community. With the financial support of Canadian Heritage and the Government of Quebec through the Secrétariat aux affaires intergouvernementales canadiennes, the AUFC aims to increase the research capacity of researchers in its member universities and is working with various groups to meet this objective.

- **The Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistic**

Minorities: A \$10 million endowment was provided in 2002–2003 to establish a national institute at the Université de Moncton with the mandate to conduct research on official language minorities. Money from the endowment enables the Institute to conduct independent research and carry out research projects for government departments and community-based organizations.

Information presented by Canadian Heritage at the November 17, 2006 discussion forum suggests that, as a topic of research, Quebec's Anglophone communities have received very little attention. From 1998–1999 to 2002–2003, SSHRC-funded research on these communities was negligible: just 8% of funds that went to projects targeting OLMCs studied Anglophones in Quebec. Between 2004–2005 and 2006–2007, not a single research grant application was received in three rounds of competitions for the Canadian Heritage-SSHRC joint initiative on English-speaking communities. Apart from the Eastern Townships Research Centre at Bishop's University, no centre or institute attached to a Quebec university focuses on the English-speaking communities in Quebec.⁸

8 Canadian Heritage presentation at the discussion forum held on November 17, 2006.

The study conducted by the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages in 2006 entitled *A Sharper View: Evaluating the Vitality of Official Language Minority Communities* also noted that there are no research networks in Quebec looking at issues related to the vitality of the English-speaking community and recommended the creation of a research institute to specifically carry out research on the Anglophone communities of Quebec and to foster networking. As well, the study noted that there is generally little emphasis in Quebec's Anglophone universities on research on the vitality of the province's Anglophone minority. (See section 4.5.)

3.8.3 Canada Research Chairs

Between 2000 and 2005, a total of 1,698 Canada Research Chairs were awarded. Of these, 213 were awarded to OLMC institutions for research in all disciplines.⁹

SSHRC, which administers the Canada Research Chairs Program on behalf of the three granting councils, provides a sample of active Chairs whose research focuses on linguistic duality and official language minority issues in its annual status report. In 2005–2006, SSHRC provided a list of 14 Chairs who carry out research in this area. Examples include the following:

- **University of Calgary:** A study of second-language input (i.e., what learners see and hear in the process of learning a second language) and how different types of input affect the learning process;
- **Collège universitaire de Saint-Boniface:** An ethno-historical study on the culture of Manitoba's Métis, with a focus on the issue of identity;

- **Université de Moncton:** A study of Acadian and Québécois literature and of selected texts from Ontario and the West;
- **Université Sainte-Anne:** An oral literature laboratory for conserving and analyzing the oral heritage of Francophone and Acadian minority communities in Canada and the rest of North America; and
- **University of Ottawa:** A scientific study of bilingual speech in immigrant communities, African-American English in Nova Scotia and how spoken French has evolved over the centuries.

The subject matter of research chairs is determined by the universities, who must present a strategic research plan to the Canada Research Chairs Program. This confirms the key role that universities play in supporting research related to OLMCs and linguistic duality.

In conclusion—Most federal research funding comes from a small number of agencies (NSERC, CIHR and SSHRC). With the exception of the large English-language universities in Quebec, OLMC institutions are not receiving large amounts of funding. The agencies generally have similar processes in place to evaluate research funding applications, have been working together to streamline application processes and use a variety of mechanisms to promote their programs. Ensuring the bilingual capabilities of peer evaluation committees is a challenge. Agencies have taken initial steps to help small institutions develop their capacity to conduct research, and some have established programs directed specifically to promoting research related to OLMCs and linguistic duality. A summary of best practices is presented in Table 10.

⁹ See www.chairs.gc.ca.

Table 10 – Summary of best practices identified by federal research funding agencies

Actively promote and inform researchers about available funding
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult with official language minority institutions and the Association des universités de la francophonie canadienne to determine their needs • Make more frequent visits to the universities • Use a wide range of information dissemination strategies to increase the visibility of the funding programs • Maintain direct contact with the researchers • Pursue an integrated approach to providing information on research funding programs across all government agencies
Develop the capacity of federal research funding agencies to serve researchers in their own official language
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase the bilingual capacity of peer review committee members • Raise the awareness of peer review committee members about the circumstances and challenges of OLMCs • Identify a champion within the research funding agency • Provide staff training to federal research funding agencies
Establish research funding strategies that target small institutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tailor funding support to the circumstances of the small bilingual and official language minority universities and develop a range of funding support instruments for small institutions • Encourage more networking among researchers in official language minority institutions • Create research centres
Streamline funding administrative processes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use letters of intent for major research projects to simplify the application process and to identify potential research projects • Explore other tools to simplify the application process
Establish programs that target research on official languages issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dedicate funding for research on official languages issues • Reinforce federal interdepartmental coordination for research on official languages • Support the dissemination of research results • Give priority to OLMC researchers • Establish an advisory board comprised of university representatives involved in research on official languages issues • Monitor research support to OLMC institutions
Engage the institutions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate official languages and linguistic duality into university research plans • Encourage universities to establish research programs on OLMCs and linguistic duality • Develop the capacity of universities to review applications in French

4. Best practices and recommendations

As stated previously, the objective of this study was to sketch a picture of perceived barriers to research and funding in official language minority community (OLMC) settings or on linguistic duality as a research subject. One of the purposes of this study was also to catalogue the best practices of federal research funding agencies with respect to their role in applying Part VII of the *Official Languages Act*. Another was to propose solutions and make recommendations. The present chapter sets out to do just that. This section builds on the previous two, which presented the obstacles identified by the researchers on the one hand, as well as the best practices as presented by the federal research funding agencies themselves on the other. Section 4 also includes recommendations by the Commissioner of Official Languages, recognizing that under Part VII all federal research funding agencies share the federal government's responsibility to take positive measures to enhance the vitality of OLMCs and assist in their development and promote linguistic duality in Canadian society.

As shown in the report, some agencies are already taking steps to implement their responsibilities under Part VII. The objective is not to single out any particular research funding agency. Instead, the aim of the following section is to look at existing practices, identify areas for improvement and suggest ways for moving forward. As such, the suggestions and recommendations in this section should be considered as valuable tools to help federal research funding agencies meet their obligations of promoting linguistic duality in Canadian society and research in French, support official language minority researchers and institutions, and enhance the ability of federal research funding agencies to contribute to the development of OLMCs. It must also be added that these suggestions and recommendations are pertinent to the respective agencies to the extent that they fit with the agency's mandate and area of intervention.

This section is based on the literature available in this subject area, input from the researchers and agencies, and feedback obtained from both groups during the forum held by the Commissioner of Official Languages in Ottawa on

November 17, 2006. An attempt was made to identify which agency practices and initiatives relative to OLMCs have produced positive results, which have been less successful and what efforts have been made to address the particular challenges, obstacles or problems encountered by official language minority researchers. Each of these best practices is described in further detail in the pages that follow.

Finally, it is worth noting that the Association des universités de la francophonie canadienne (AUFC), a network of 13 institutions whose mission is to promote post-secondary teaching in Francophone minority communities in Canada, recently developed their action plan for 2007–2012, which focuses on supporting its research community and the internationalization of member institutions.

As part of this action plan, the AUFC created an advisory committee on research in June 2006, and last fall hired a research coordinator. The financial support the committee received allowed it to define the subject and strategic areas of research in terms of the Canadian Francophonie and develop a strategy to enhance researchers' ability to obtain funding from research funding agencies (especially those whose primary areas of interest concern Francophone minority communities). To that end, the research coordinator interviewed some 75 researchers who are interested in this field. A support plan for research on Francophone minority communities was adopted by the members of the AUFC on May 31, 2007, and the priority activities of this plan are already being implemented. The findings and conclusions of this plan are similar to the findings of this study. The AUFC will therefore be in a position to contribute to the implementation of the Commissioner's recommendations.

As the AUFC wants to play a connecting role between OLMC researchers and the federal funding agencies, it will be important to examine the final results of its study and determine how it can be used to support and implement the Commissioner's recommendations.

4.1 Actively promote and inform researchers about available funding

Researchers generally have limited knowledge and awareness of the full range of sources of federal government research funding available to them. The federal research funding agencies could be more proactive in promoting and disseminating information on funding programs available to universities and researchers in OLMCs. The most prevalent practices as well as suggestions made to improve the level of communications with universities and researchers include the following:

- **Consult with official language minority institutions and the AUFC to determine their needs:** Meet with official language minority institutions and the AUFC to ensure that funding programs are aligned with their needs.
- **Make more frequent visits to the universities:** Conduct information sessions on the programs available and their eligibility criteria and describe new programs. The need for more visits was cited repeatedly by researchers. The agencies would need to target the small universities where the research infrastructure and overall research culture are much more limited.
- **Use a wide range of information dissemination strategies to increase the visibility of the funding programs:** Federal research funding agencies should provide information on the areas of research that they see as a priority, the amounts of research funding available, the program eligibility criteria and the selection criteria so that researchers can increase their chances of submitting a successful proposal. In addition, they should clearly identify where institutions and researchers need to go for funding support. Dissemination strategies could include the Internet, personal contacts, the media, research expositions and shows, workshops, the distribution of videos as well as collaboration with other institutions and the AUFC.
- **Maintain direct contact with the researchers:** The federal research funding agencies need to go beyond the research offices of the larger universities to ensure that information reaches OLMC researchers more directly. For example, agencies could send program funding information directly and regularly to individual researchers.

- **Pursue an integrated approach to providing information on research funding programs across all government agencies:** This could be facilitated by coordinating the promotion and communications efforts of the various research funding agencies (e.g., through joint expositions at universities and the creation of a single Web site that would identify all sources of funding for a particular area of research).

Recommendation 1

The Commissioner of Official Languages recommends that federal research funding agencies develop a targeted promotion strategy to better inform official language minority community researchers and institutions, in a timely and direct manner, of the types of funding programs to which they can apply, as well as the total amount of funding available by program.

4.2 Develop the capacity of federal research funding agencies to serve researchers in their own official language

In order to integrate linguistic duality into the overall culture of research funding, and into the way that the agencies conduct their business, the following practices could be used.

- **Increase the bilingual capacity of peer review committee members:** Ensure that both language groups are adequately represented in peer review committees, that there are a sufficient number of members who are highly proficient in French and that experts in research on linguistic duality and OLMCs are present on those committees when needed. A number of best practices have been identified in this report.
- **Raise the awareness of peer review committee members about the circumstances and challenges of OLMCs:** Ensure that members of evaluation committees are aware of the specific context of conducting research in an OLMC institution, and of the federal agencies' objectives and obligations in this regard.

- **Identify a champion within the research funding agency:** This champion would promote the interests of the French-language research community to peer review committees. For example, some researchers that were interviewed went as far as to suggest the creation of a French section within the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) that would focus on the research needs of the Francophone research community.
- **Provide staff training to federal research funding agencies:** This would target senior management in the agencies, members of evaluation committees and program officers, and focus on the needs and circumstances of OLMCs.

Recommendation 2

The Commissioner of Official Languages recommends that federal research funding agencies ensure adequate evaluation in both official languages by:

- a) having both official language groups properly represented and an adequate number of members who are highly proficient in French and who can fully comprehend and review applications submitted in French;
- b) establishing evaluation mechanisms to objectively assess the language capabilities of peer review committee members; and
- c) establishing a recourse mechanism to which researchers can turn if they consider their application was not adequately processed because of language barriers.

4.3 Establish research funding strategies that target small institutions

OLMC institutions and researchers need to develop their capabilities if they wish to be successful in accessing research funding and compete with larger institutions. The federal research funding agencies have a role in helping them do this.

- **Tailor funding support to the circumstances of the small bilingual and official language minority universities and develop a range of funding support instruments for small institutions:** Research funding programs need to recognize the limited capabilities of the small universities in terms of graduate programs, available research time and overall resources, and need to be sufficiently flexible to acknowledge the special circumstances of small official language minority universities. The agencies should set research funding aside for the smaller institutions (or for official language minority sub-units in the larger universities) and for smaller research teams that do not have the capabilities of research teams at the large universities. This funding support could serve a number of purposes:

- o **Support the development of infrastructure in small universities** to coach and support researchers in submitting applications for funding and to train researchers in OLMCs so they can improve their skills in developing research proposals. This should especially help new researchers, who are often employed in smaller universities and need to develop their capabilities. For example, funding could be used by research services offices to help researchers in OLMCs prepare funding applications. The ultimate objective would be to enable researchers in smaller universities to reduce their teaching workloads and focus more on research.
- o **Target funding for undergraduate universities** in order to encourage students to apply for grants and undertake research at an earlier stage. Such a strategy would not only develop research capacity in these universities but could also encourage more students in OLMCs to pursue graduate studies.
- o **Provide technical support to researchers**, for example, by holding preliminary consultations with researchers who wish to submit a research project, by organizing workshops in the smaller universities that could stimulate ideas on research proposals or by providing funding support that could help researchers prepare research proposals.

Small institutions face particular circumstances (e.g., fewer or even no graduate programs, fewer professors and therefore few collaboration possibilities, heavier teaching and administrative loads, less available research time, fewer overall resources and less institutional support), and researchers perceive that federal research funding agencies favour the large majority-language universities.

Recommendation 3

The Commissioner of Official Languages recommends that federal research funding agencies establish a specific funding mechanism, in addition to other basic funding (e.g., for research capacity building), targeted at small bilingual and official language minority universities to help sustain research capacity at the professor and student levels, and provide adequate administrative support.

- **Encourage more networking among researchers in official language minority institutions:** Networking could help create a critical mass so that researchers in minority-language communities can become more competitive in obtaining funding for research proposals. Specific suggestions include:
 - **Provide funding to support the creation of networks for new researchers from different small institutions:** Federal research funding agencies and OLMC institutions should encourage the creation of research teams that would enable new researchers to work with more experienced research teams that are already in place in order to help them through mentorship programs, submit their first applications and obtain funding support. Agencies should also provide funding to researchers from different institutions so that they can work together on an inter-university basis to submit winning research applications. In addition, funding should be provided to enable OLMC universities to share the expertise necessary to help them prepare research funding proposals, improve the quality of their applications and facilitate the completion of research projects. Overall, researchers indicated a need for more coordination and collaboration among the federal research funding agencies.

- **Create research centres:** The creation of research centres in official language minority institutions that focus on specific research areas deemed important for them would enable the smaller institutions to share specialized research resources and expertise (e.g., the Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistic Minorities). The smaller universities cannot afford to develop competencies in all research areas and, at the moment, cannot take advantage of certain research funding programs because they do not have the competencies in these particular research areas that are necessary to apply for research funding. Experienced mentors could help those researchers in smaller universities who have less experience in submitting applications for research funding. These research centres could also promote networking with well-known research networks and also pursue research specific to OLMCs and linguistic duality issues.

Researchers in OLMCs are often isolated and do not always benefit from the expertise of more experienced colleagues, which can make them less competitive in obtaining the funding requested for research proposals, and that they are often not on equal footing with other universities in national networks.

Recommendation 4

The Commissioner of Official Languages recommends that federal research funding agencies set aside a specific funding envelope for small official language minority universities to:

- a) create research centres, based on their strategic plans; and
- b) increase their capacity to partner with existing and well-known research networks.

4.4 Streamline funding administrative processes

While recognizing that the agencies have established application processes in place, simplification of these processes would support the interests of researchers in OLMCs. Specific suggestions for improvement include the following:

- **Use letters of intent for major research projects to simplify the application process and to identify potential research projects:** Simplified and streamlined application processes and shorter application forms, such as letters of intent, when pertinent to do so, could help researchers by requiring them to commit less time and effort to the preparation of a formal detailed proposal.
- **Explore other tools to simplify the application process:** For example, make use of staged applications, common resumés between agencies, multiple application programs, on-line applications, coaching for researchers, etc. Additional mechanisms could include:
 - **Ensuring better coordination between the programs of the various research funding agencies,** so that programs are cohesive and complementary and that a coordinated approach is taken to the scheduling of application processes;
 - **Making funding support available to OLMC institutions through specific grants,** so that researchers in the social sciences can carry out successful research projects requiring smaller dollar amounts;
 - **Showing flexibility in the research application processes,** for example, in terms of program eligibility requirements, eligible expenses and the amount of institutional investment required; and
 - **Increasing the transparency of research funding practices and processes,** particularly in the application process, in clarifying selection criteria and the rationale for decisions, and in ensuring that evaluation criteria are fair and reflect the unique circumstances of OLMC researchers.

Researchers have indicated that application processes and procedures are complex and vary between agencies and that selection criteria are not always transparent.

Recommendation 5

The Commissioner of Official Languages recommends that federal research funding agencies continue to streamline their application processes in consultation with university researchers.

Smaller OLMC universities have a limited number of graduate programs and researchers, which in turn have limited time and resources to devote to research and little support to help prepare and fine tune their grant applications compared to their counterparts from larger institutions.

Recommendation 6

The Commissioner of Official Languages recommends that federal research funding agencies develop a strategy to increase the awareness, knowledge and comprehension of peer review committee members about the particular circumstances and obstacles of researchers at small official language minority universities.

4.5 Establish programs that target research on official languages issues

In order to establish specific programs aimed at encouraging research in OLMCs and on official languages issues (such as the Canadian Heritage-SSHRC pilot program from 2004 to 2007) and in order to place a higher priority on such research, the following suggestions could be taken into account.

- **Dedicate funding for research on official languages issues:** Before funds can be specifically targeted at research on OLMCs and linguistic duality, they need to be given greater recognition as a separate research discipline by both funding agencies and federal departments. Greater stability in funding requires well-defined programs. In addition, there needs to be increased recognition by federal research funding agencies of linguistic duality as a distinct theme in research funding allocations and of the interdisciplinary nature of research on linguistic duality and OLMCs.

- **Reinforce federal interdepartmental coordination for research on official languages:** This can be done through the interdepartmental working group on official languages research and through reinforcing research partnerships with universities and research institutes.

- **Support the dissemination of research results:** The federal research funding agencies, federal departments and official language minority institutions should develop a communications strategy that aims to better integrate and communicate research findings, knowledge transfer and the greater visibility of research results within the research community and among the general public. These findings could be published in scientific journals or on-line revues. Funding support could foster the creation of a journal on OLMC research, or assist researchers in publishing and distributing French-language research papers. Money could also be made available to help communicate the existence of research funding programs and to support the development of OLMC research projects.

- **Give priority to OLMC researchers:** This would involve researchers who submit funding applications on issues affecting OLMCs or who are affiliated with official language minority institutions. Programs could also be developed to encourage researchers to become more closely connected through research networks and to work in partnership with OLMCs.

- **Establish an advisory board comprised of university representatives involved in research on official languages issues:** An advisory board could provide suggestions and feedback on actions that have been taken and encourage research on linguistic duality and OLMCs.

Current research funding levels might not be sufficient to sustain present research efforts, develop research capacity where it does not exist or allow the government to fulfill its commitment to official languages. Furthermore, research on official languages issues seems to be a low priority.

Recommendation 7

The Commissioner of Official Languages recommends that federal research funding agencies, in collaboration with the Department of Canadian Heritage, examine how to set aside stable funding to be used exclusively for government and university research on official languages issues and for the dissemination of the results of that research, as part of the renewal of the *Action Plan on Official Languages*.

- **Monitor research support to OLMC institutions:** The federal research funding agencies, the Coordinating Committee on Official Languages Research and Canadian Heritage's Official Languages Secretariat should monitor progress in addressing the needs of researchers who study official language minorities. This could be readily accomplished by examining the research statistics reported by Statistics Canada and the Canadian Association of University Business Officers (CAUBO) each year. The task would be facilitated if a few minor enhancements were introduced to the research funding tables, for example, keeping separate statistics for all OLMCs and bilingual and majority institutions, keeping separate statistics for French and English grant applications, breaking down the "other federal" reporting category to reveal the other federal government research funding sources and reporting the amounts allocated to research chairs for OLMC universities.

Recommendation 8

The Commissioner of Official Languages recommends that federal research funding agencies, in collaboration with other organizations (such as Statistics Canada and CAUBO), keep disaggregated data on funding to official language minority institutions and for research on official languages issues, including:

- a)** separate data for total research grants awarded to official language minority universities, majority universities and bilingual universities;
- b)** separate data for the number of English and French grant applications; and
- c)** separate data on amounts allocated to research chairs for official language minority and bilingual universities.

4.6 Engage the institutions

In order to increase the amount of research that is carried out on OLMCs and linguistic duality, it must become a priority on both government and university research agendas. Universities are key players since they provide financial and technical support to researchers, and the Canada Research Chairs Program also has a role to play in this area. The academic reward system and support infrastructure of universities must recognize research focused on OLMCs and linguistic duality as a priority, and provide incentives to publish in French whenever possible or through the translation of work conducted in French. Specific strategies include the following:

- **Integrate official languages and linguistic duality into university research plans:** Senior leadership in the universities must actively foster and encourage this research. Researchers must be rewarded for carrying out research with community groups (as opposed to traditional peer-evaluated research supported through the federal research funding agencies). For example, SSHRC has developed the Community-University Research Alliances program, which has not yet been used extensively by OLMCs. University publications can be used to help disseminate research results.
- **Encourage universities to establish research programs on OLMCs and linguistic duality:** Bilingual universities could direct part of their research funding to official language minority researchers in the university who publish in French. To help this process, university research support services administrators and staff should develop an institutional ability to work in both official languages.
- **Develop the capacity of universities to review applications in French:** Applications must be reviewed and approved by the university, but universities outside Quebec are often unable to review French applications prepared by official language minority researchers.

Recommendation 9

The Commissioner of Official Languages recommends that the Canada Research Chairs Program create and fund research chairs related to Anglophone and Francophone official language minority communities and linguistic duality, taking into account in the selection, assessment and renewal process and the special circumstances in which these research chairs will operate. Universities should keep separate data for research chairs allocated to researchers who study official languages issues.

In conclusion—Researchers and agencies identified a number of best practices to actively promote and inform researchers of available funding, develop the ability of research funding agencies to serve researchers in their official language, establish funding strategies that target small institutions, streamline funding application processes and direct research programs at official languages and linguistic duality issues. Universities also have a role to play in integrating these themes into their research plans and fostering programs on official languages and linguistic duality.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Conclusion

Information gathered through an extensive document analysis, interviews with researchers and representatives of federal research funding agencies, as well as content from a day-long forum with both groups has led to a myriad of excellent ideas and several promising best practices. This could help address the limitations of funding presently allocated to researchers from official language minority institutions and those who conduct research in subject areas related to the development of their communities and the promotion of linguistic duality. This effort should inspire federal research funding agencies to initiate concrete measures reflecting the new obligations of federal institutions under Part VII of the *Official Languages Act*. Indeed, after participating in this project, federal research funding agencies should be willing to introduce improvements that would benefit researchers concerned with official languages and linguistic duality.

Simply stated, the fundamental question addressed in this study was one of equity, both horizontal and vertical. A guarantee of horizontal equity ensures that equals are treated equally. In this respect, statistics reflecting federal government support of English-language university research in Quebec confirm that Anglophone minority-language researchers, particularly those in the pure and applied sciences, fare as well as their majority official language colleagues elsewhere in Canada. An identified exception to this kind of equity treatment is the historically poor reception reserved for research proposals involving official language minority communities and linguistic duality, whether submitted in English or in French, by researchers working inside or outside Quebec, not to mention the lack of research conducted on the Quebec Anglophone minority.

The barriers to equitable federal support by minority Francophone researchers outside Quebec also points to a problem of vertical equity. In these cases, researchers in unequal situations are not treated equitably. This inequity stems from a *one size fits all* approach, where federal government research funding sources fail to acknowledge the differences that put researchers in small bilingual and official language minority institutions at a disadvantage relative to their colleagues employed in majority official language universities.

5.2 Recommendations

The Commissioner of Official Languages recommends that federal research funding agencies:

Recommendation 1

Develop a targeted promotion strategy to better inform official language minority community researchers and institutions, in a timely and direct manner, of the types of funding programs to which they can apply, as well as the total amount of funding available by program.

Recommendation 2

Ensure adequate evaluation in both official languages by:

- a)** having both official language groups properly represented and an adequate number of members who are highly proficient in French and who can fully comprehend and review applications submitted in French;
- b)** establishing quality control mechanisms to objectively assess the language capabilities of peer review committee members; and
- c)** establishing a recourse mechanism to which researchers can turn if they consider their application was not adequately processed because of language barriers.

Recommendation 3

Establish a specific funding mechanism, in addition to other basic funding (e.g., for research capacity building), targeted at small bilingual and official language minority universities to help sustain research capacity at the professor and student levels, and provide adequate administrative support.

Recommendation 4

Set aside a specific funding envelope for small official language minority universities to:

- a)** create research centres, based on their strategic plans; and
- b)** increase their capacity to partner with existing and well-known research networks.

Recommendation 5

Continue to streamline their application processes in consultation with university researchers.

Recommendation 6

Develop a strategy to increase the awareness, knowledge and comprehension of peer review committee members about the particular circumstances and obstacles of researchers at small official language minority universities.

Recommendation 7

In collaboration with the Department of Canadian Heritage, examine how to set aside stable funding to be used exclusively for government and university research on official languages issues and for dissemination of the results of that research, as part of the renewal of the *Action Plan on Official Languages*.

Recommendation 8

In collaboration with other organizations (such as Statistics Canada and CAUBO), keep disaggregated data on funding to official language minority institutions and for research on official languages issues, including:

- a)** separate data for total research grants awarded to official language minority universities, majority universities and bilingual universities;
- b)** separate data for the number of English and French grant applications; and
- c)** separate data on amounts allocated to research chairs for official language minority and bilingual universities.

The Commissioner of Official Languages recommends that the Canada Research Chairs Program:

Recommendation 9

Create and fund research chairs related to Anglophone and Francophone official language minority communities and linguistic duality, taking into account in the selection, assessment and renewal process and the special circumstances in which these research chairs will operate. Universities should keep separate data for research chairs allocated to researchers who study official languages issues.

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