

Terms of Reference for the
Western College of Veterinary Medicine
Equine Health Research Fund

Last Revised: May, 2008
Approved at the WCVM Faculty Meeting

1.0 Preamble

1.1 In this document, 'EHRF' or 'the Fund' means the Equine Health Research Fund; 'WCVN' or 'the College' means the Western College of Veterinary Medicine; 'the Management Committee' or 'the Committee' means the Equine Health Research Fund Management Committee; 'the Advisory Board' or 'the Board' means the Equine Health Research Fund Advisory Board; 'Fellowship' means an Equine Health Research Fund Fellowship; and 'Fellow' means an Equine Health Research Fund Fellow.

The EHRF is a trust fund under the authority of the Board of Governors of the University of Saskatchewan. The Management Committee, defined and described in Article 4, is a committee of the faculty of the WCVN. The work of the Management Committee is aided by the Advisory Board which is defined and described in Article 5.

This document, containing Articles 1 through 9, was approved by the WCVN faculty at a meeting held on, November 3, 2004, and supercedes all documents of an earlier date.

1.2 History

In 1975 a review committee consisting of members of the WCVN, horsemen, and veterinarians recognized the importance of horses to western Canadians and the western Canadian economy. The committee indicated that equine studies and research should receive greater emphasis at the WCVN. However, it was acknowledged that funds available to support this objective were severely limited. Therefore, it was proposed that the goal of increasing equine research and advanced training in equine clinical studies at the WCVN be achieved through the creation of a fund supported by the equine industry. The EHRF was subsequently established in 1977.

The highest priority of the Fund was the initiation of the Equine Health Research Fund Fellowship Program. The other stated purpose of the Fund was the provision of grants to enable WCVN faculty members to conduct original research related to the horse. From 1977 until the mid-1980s the Fund also supported the WCVN Equine Nutrition Research Program. These activities were ultimately aimed at improving the health and health care of horses in western Canada.

Horse Health Lines, the Fund's newsletter, was first published in June 1981 with the purpose of providing current information on horse health topics of interest to the western Canadian equine industry. Emphasis was to be given to the results of research supported by the EHRF and other

news related to the Fund. *Horse Health Lines* continues to be a means of communication for the Fund.

In 1994, the Fund established an undergraduate student scholarship to support an undergraduate veterinary student during summers. Under the supervision of a WCVF faculty advisor, the student conducts research relating to horse health or welfare. Through their summer experience, students are exposed to careers in equine practice or research.

2.0 Purpose

The purpose of the EHRF is to support advanced training in equine veterinary science and original equine research at the WCVF.

3.0 Goals

The goals of the EHRF are to:

- 3.1 support advanced training of graduate veterinarians in equine veterinary science and research through the Equine Health Research Fund Fellowship Program;
- 3.2 provide grants and awards to support and encourage research relating to equine health;
- 3.3 encourage undergraduate veterinary student interest in equine research through undergraduate student scholarships and other activities; and
- 3.4 provide information relating to the health, management, and welfare of horses to veterinary practitioners and horse owners.

4.0 Governance: Terms of Reference for the Equine Health Research Fund Management Committee.

The activities of the WCVF EHRF will be directed by the Equine Health Research Fund Management Committee. The EHRF Management Committee is a committee of the WCVF faculty.

4.1 Membership of the Committee

Most members of the Management Committee are volunteers who are invited to serve by the existing Committee.

- 4.1.1 Normally, there are about eight invited members on the Committee. Invited members serve for a period of two years and may serve consecutive terms.

- 4.1.2 In addition to members who are invited to serve by the Committee, the Dean and Associate Dean (Research) are *ex officio* voting members, and the Director of Finance and Administration of the WCVM is an *ex officio* nonvoting member.
- 4.1.3 The Equine Club, an association of WCVM undergraduate students, will be invited to select a representative to serve on the Committee as a voting member and liaison between the two groups.
- 4.1.4 The managing editor of *Horse Health Lines* and the Alumni and Development Officer will be *ex officio* and nonvoting members of the Committee.
- 4.1.5 The secretary of the Associate Dean (Research) will be *ex officio* and a nonvoting member of the Committee, and will serve as secretary.
- 4.1.6 The Chair of the Committee will be elected annually by the voting members of the Committee at the first meeting following appointment of the members.
- 4.1.7 The membership and Chair of the Committee will be reviewed annually.

4.2 Functions of the Committee

4.2.1 Administrative

The Committee, in consultation with the Associate Dean (Research) of the WCVM, will annually review the:

- 4.2.1.1 purpose (Article 2), goals (Article 3), and priorities for the use of the EHRF in consultation with the Equine Health Research Fund Advisory Board and others;
- 4.2.1.2 Terms of Reference of the Management Committee (Article 4) and Advisory Board (Article 5);
- 4.2.1.3 Equine Health Research Fund Fellowship Program (Article 6);
- 4.2.1.4 guidelines for the application and allocation of grants in aid of research from the EHRF and make the final decision about funding of grant applications (Article 7);

- 4.2.1.5 EHRF undergraduate student scholarship program (Article 8); and
- 4.2.1.6 the EHRF graduate student research awards program.
- 4.2.1.7 The Committee will request the Dean's Office of the WCVM to prepare (a) an annual financial statement and (b) an annual budget for the Fund, with the Fund's fiscal year being January 1 to December 31. The Committee will be responsible for the approval and distribution of both documents, including presenting both documents to the Advisory Board for receipt.

4.2.2 Fund Raising

The committee, in consultation with the College Alumni and Development Officer and Associate Dean (Research) of the WCVM will annually review donations coming into the fund and fund raising activities. All donations are processed through the U of S Alumni and Development Office and WCVM Dean's Office.

4.2.3 Communications

The Committee will be responsible for disseminating information which is deemed important in promoting the financial stability of the Fund. This information may include, but will not be limited to, fund raising and the allocation of funds. *Horse Health Lines* is one form of communication.

5.0 Terms of Reference for the WCVM Equine Health Research Fund Advisory Board

The EHRF Advisory Board exists to provide guidance and assistance to the EHRF Management Committee.

5.1 Membership of the Board

- 5.1.1 Members of the Board will be appointed by the Dean of the WCVM upon the recommendation of the EHRF Management Committee.
- 5.1.2 Appointments are normally made for a period of three years and are renewable.

5.1.3 The Board will consist of:

- 5.1.3.1 representatives from each of the four western provinces to represent the racing sector, Equine Ranchers, and other equine interests;
- 5.1.3.2 a representative of the Western Canadian Association of Equine Practitioners;
- 5.1.3.3 the Dean and Associate Dean (Research) of the WCVM (*ex officio*);
- 5.1.3.4 the Chair of the EHRF Management Committee (*ex officio*);
- 5.1.3.5 the Director of Finance and Administration, WCVM, who will be a non-voting member of the Board and normally act as secretary; and
- 5.1.3.6 the managing editor of *Horse Health Lines* and the Alumni and Development Officer will be *ex officio* and nonvoting members of the Board.

5.1.4 Meetings of the EHRF Advisory Board may be chaired by the Dean or Associate Dean (Research), WCVM, or the Chair of the EHRF Management Committee.

5.2 Meetings

There will be at least one meeting of the Board each year. Normally, the meeting will occur within the three months following of the fiscal year end, i.e., in January, February, or March.

5.3 Functions of the Board

The Board will:

- 5.3.1 provide liaison between the equine interests in western Canada and the WCVM Management Committee;
- 5.3.2 assist with fund raising;
- 5.3.3 advise the Management Committee with respect to priorities for the use of the Fund; and,
- 5.3.4 at the first meeting of each year, receive, review, and comment on:

- 5.3.4.1 a report of the activities of the EHRF Management Committee;
- 5.3.4.2 a financial statement for the Fund;
- 5.3.4.3 a report on the fund-raising activities of the Fund;
- 5.3.4.4 a report on the EHRF Fellowship Program;
- 5.3.4.5 a summary of the applications for grants in aid of research for the current year;
- 5.3.4.6 a report on the EHRF undergraduate student scholarship program; and
- 5.3.4.7 a proposed budget for the Fund for the current fiscal year.

6.0 The Equine Health Research Fund Fellowship Program

Support of the EHRF Fellowship Program is the highest priority of the Fund.

6.1 Objective

The objective of the EHRF Fellowship Program is to improve the health and health care of horses in western Canada through the development of specialists in equine veterinary science.

6.2 Roles of the EHRF Management Committee

It is the responsibility of the Committee to:

- 6.2.1 determine, at the fall meeting of the committee, the number of Fellows to be supported and, in consultation with the Associate Dean (Research), seek nominations of suitable candidates for appointment as EHRF Fellows. The Associate Dean (Research) will send out a letter of solicitation. Nominations should be accompanied by letters of recommendation from the nominee's supervisor, and one other faculty member and a brief CV (no more than 3 pages) of the nominee, and a letter from the candidate stating goals and vision. Nominations will be received until March 15, through Department Heads;
- 6.2.2. ensure Fellows have program support similar to that provided to WCVI graduate students receiving Interprovincial Graduate

Student Fellowships, e.g., appointment to the most appropriate college department, an advisory committee, and a supervisor.

6.2.3 provide funding for the salary, the research project, and travel to appropriate scientific meetings.

6.2.3.1 In general, the amount of the Fellowship stipend will be at least equivalent to that of the Interprovincial Graduate Student Fellowship.

6.2.3.2 The program or research supervisor of each Fellow will be awarded funds to support the Fellow's research provided that the proposed research is in accordance with the EHRF guidelines and, if appropriate, receives approval by the University Committee on Animal Care and Supply. Suitable applications will be given first priority for research funding in the annual competition.

6.2.3.3 Each Fellow will be provided with a travel grant equal to that provided by an Interprovincial Graduate Student Fellowship. The purpose of the grant is to allow a Fellow to attend a scientific meeting at which the Fellow would be encouraged to present a paper or poster concerning a case report, case series, retrospective study, or the results of their research project. These travel grants can be carried over from one year to the next. Travel grants from the EHRF cannot be used to attend formal courses or informal educational externships. A letter of support from the chair of the Fellow's advisory committee must accompany the application for funds.

6.3 Conditions of appointment of EHRF Fellows

6.3.1 A Fellow must be a graduate of a recognized program in veterinary medicine.

6.3.2 A Fellowship will normally be of three years duration, but in exceptional circumstances may be extended to a maximum of five years. An appointment is made for a period of one year, is renewable, but contingent on the satisfactory performance of the Fellow.

6.3.3 Renewal decisions will be made by the EHRF Management Committee, in consultation with each Fellow's Advisory Committee,

and the Associate Dean (Research) of the WCVM.

6.3.4 Normally, Fellows will register in a postgraduate degree program with the College of Graduate Studies and Research. However, it is envisioned that some Fellows will not pursue a postgraduate degree at the University of Saskatchewan and it may be appropriate for a Fellow to, instead, enroll in a training program qualifying the Fellow to sit the certifying examination of a specialty group recognized by the American Veterinary Medical Association's American Board of Veterinary Specialties.

6.4 Responsibilities of the WCVM Department Hosting a Fellow

6.4.1 To appoint each Fellow in the department according to the provisions outlined in the Calendar of College of Graduate Studies and Research, University of Saskatchewan, and in this document.

6.4.2 Where appropriate, to ensure that a Fellow is enrolled in a postgraduate degree program with the College of Graduate Studies and Research, or a training program qualifying the Fellow to sit the certifying examination of a specialty group recognized by the American Veterinary Medical Association's American Board of Veterinary Specialties.

6.4.3 To ensure adequate supervision and encourage certification of the Fellow by the appropriate specialty board.

6.4.4 To ensure an orientation program is offered to new Fellows including an introduction to the structure of the host department, all other college departments and their faculty, the Veterinary Teaching Hospital, the College of Graduate Studies and Research and its procedures and, if appropriate, campus facilities, and housing in Saskatoon.

6.4.5 To assist each Fellow to develop expertise in equine health sciences and offer formal postgraduate courses to the Fellows.

6.4.6 To establish research programs important to the equine industry in western Canada to which Fellows may contribute.

6.4.7 To encourage each Fellow to participate in the teaching program of the host department and to ensure that each Fellow has opportunity for contact with the faculty from other departments.

6.4.8 To ensure that each Fellow takes advantage of available instruction in basic research techniques, experimental design, statistics,

scientific writing, and the evaluation of scientific papers.

6.4.9 Others, as may be suggested by the WCVM EHRF Management Committee.

6.5 Responsibilities of the Advisory Committee of each Fellow

6.5.1. Each Fellow's Advisory Committee will consist of one or more of the following. The Head or Graduate Chair of the host Department, who will be chair of the Advisory Committee; the Fellow's program supervisor; the Fellow's research supervisor; and other members considered appropriate by the Fellow and the Advisory Committee chair.

6.5.2 The chair of each Fellow's Advisory Committee, in consultation with the program supervisor will be responsible for calling meetings of the advisory committee at least every six months to discuss progress, problems, and requirements. The first such meeting should be held as soon as possible and no later than 45 days after the arrival of a Fellow at the WCVM.

6.5.3 The advisory committee should encourage independent study on the part of each Fellow, assist in formulating a long-term plan to meet individual objectives, facilitate enrolment in the College of Graduate Studies and Research, advise on course selection ensuring that instruction in fundamental research technique is included.

6.5.4 The program supervisor will:

6.5.4.1 be the day-to-day liaison person with whom academic, clinical, administrative, and research issues should be discussed;

6.5.4.2 assist each Fellow in the selection and the execution of the project.

6.6 Responsibilities of each Fellow

6.6.1 During their appointment, each Fellow will complete a suitable scholarly project approved in advance by their supervisor or supervising body, the EHRF Management Committee, and, where appropriate, the University Committee on Animal Care and Supply.

6.6.2 Each Fellow, in consultation with the department head or graduate chair, may suggest faculty members to serve on their advisory

committee.

- 6.6.3 At the first meeting of their advisory committee, each Fellow must state the objectives of their academic and research programs. Together with the Advisory Committee, Fellows will formulate a long term plan to achieve these objectives. The plan may be changed, if necessary, in consultation with the advisory committee.
- 6.6.4 Fellows are responsible for the after-hours and weekend duties assigned by their department head.
- 6.6.5. Fellows are expected to submit at least one scientific article suitable for publication in a refereed journal. This article may be a case study, a case series, a retrospective study, a review article, or the results of the research project.
- 6.6.6 Fellows will participate in the Fund's communication and development activities as agreed upon between the Chair of the EHRF Management Committee and each Fellow's program supervisor. All Fellows will contribute at least one article to *Horse Health Lines* and should expect to present a summary of their work to the Advisory Board and similar groups.
- 6.6.7 Others, as required by the WCVF EHRF Management Committee.

7.0 Grants in Aid of Research

In cooperation with the Associate Dean (Research) of the WCVF, and with the guidance the EHRF Advisory Board, the Fund will solicit applications for grants in aid of research, have the grants reviewed and ranked in priority, and allocate funds in accordance with the guidelines set out below.

7.1 Solicitation and Requirements of Applications

- 7.1.1 On an annual basis, the Fund will ask the Associate Dean (Research) of the WCVF to receive applications for grants in aid of research.
- 7.1.2 The deadline for receipt of applications will be November 15, except on occasions when November 15 is a Saturday or Sunday. On these occasions, the deadline will be the first Monday following November 15.
- 7.1.3 Application forms will be available from the WCVF Research Office. The forms will be available on paper and electronically. All applications must use the format and follow the instructions

provided with the application form. Completed applications should be submitted as a hard copy.

7.1.4 Only faculty members of the WCVM are eligible to hold grants from the EHRF. The Fund allows and encourages people who are not WCVM faculty members to serve as co-applicants and collaborators.

7.1.5 Ordinarily, only requests for grants up to \$30,000 will be considered. Budget items will receive approval in the following order of priority:

7.1.5.1 materials, supplies, animals, and animal housing;

7.1.5.2 salaries (e.g., undergraduate student or technician salaries);

7.1.5.3 travel assistance, of up to \$500.00, to attend an appropriate scientific meeting if presenting the results of the study, and publication costs, of up to \$500.00, to assist with the cost of having the results appear in an appropriate journal. Funds for publication costs would not be released with the research grant but upon request as and when publications are completed; and

7.1.5.4 equipment.

7.2 Review of Applications and Criteria for Priority

Applications for grants in aid of research will be submitted to the Associate Dean (Research) who will establish an expert panel to review the applications for their scientific merit, relevance, and compatibility with the research priorities of the Fund. The Expert Review Panel will consist of the Associate Dean (Research) as convener, a faculty member from the WCVM who is not applying for a grant and 3 external reviewers selected largely from veterinary researchers in Canada. Members of the Management Committee are invited to suggest names of reviewers for consideration by the Associate Dean (Research). Review by the panel of experts will be followed by a review by the Board.

7.2.1. Applications will receive greater consideration if, in descending order of importance, they represent projects of, or involving:

7.2.1.1 high scientific merit and appropriate budget;

- 7.2.1.2 an EHRF Fellow;
 - 7.2.1.3 WCVM graduate student(s);
 - 7.2.1.4 WCVM undergraduate students; and
 - 7.2.1.5 newly appointed WCVM faculty.
 - 7.2.1.6 studies with potential for future external funding.
- 7.2.2 Failure of an EHRF grant holder to comply with the reporting requirements outlined in the grant application will be considered in the evaluation of subsequent applications to the Fund.
- 7.3 Allocation of Funds, Conditions of Award, and Reporting Requirements
- 7.3.1 Final decisions about funding grant applications are made by the Associate Dean Research based on the advice of the Expert Review Committee and Board. Decisions will be made as soon as possible after the meeting of the Advisory Board and, normally, by March 1 of the year following the application deadline.
 - 7.3.2 The following will be made available to the management committee for information for the committee=s March meeting:
 - 7.3.2.1 summaries of all grant applications received on or before the most recent deadline,
 - 7.3.2.2 the final ranked list of applications, showing funding decisions.
 - 7.3.3 Funds are approved with the understanding that attempts have been or will be made to secure external funding for support wherever possible.
 - 7.3.4 Research projects will normally be funded on an annual basis.
 - 7.3.5 All expenditures must be consistent with the research and spending plan set out in the research grant application.
 - 7.3.6 Unexpended funds will be returned to the EHRF after three years from the date of the award unless a written request for an extension is received and approved by the Associate Dean (Research).

- 7.3.7 Any over expenditure of funds is the sole responsibility of the applicant.
- 7.3.8 Recipients of grants in aid of research from the Fund are required to formally acknowledge the financial support of the Fund in any presentation and publication of the results of the research, and to submit to the Associate Dean (Research), WCVM:
- 7.3.8.1 By November 15 of each year, a brief (not more than 400 words) progress report written in lay language that includes any deviation from the original research plan or proposed budget, and a justification for the changes;
 - 7.3.8.2 by May 1 of each year, an annual statement of receipts, expenditures, and commitments as of March 31 of the previous year;
 - 7.3.8.3 upon completion of the research, a brief (not more than 400 words) final report written in lay language; and
 - 7.3.8.4 a copy of the published paper(s) describing research supported by the Fund.
- 7.3.9 Failure to comply with the above conditions, including the timely submission of a final report, will adversely affect future applications to the Fund (see Article 7.2.2).

8.0 Undergraduate Student Scholarships

The Fund provides scholarships to WCVM undergraduate students to foster interest in equine research. Specifically, the program supports students during the summer to conduct research projects relating to horse health or welfare. The intent of the program is to provide an experience which will encourage undergraduate students to pursue careers in equine practice or research.

- 8.1 Only full-time undergraduate students enrolled in the veterinary program at the WCVM are eligible for support.
- 8.2 Applications are made in accordance with the procedures set out for Interprovincial Undergraduate Student Research Awards and using the same application form. Applications should be jointly prepared by the student and the member of faculty responsible for direct supervision of the student and project.

- 8.3 Applications will be reviewed by the Associate Dean (Research) and a subcommittee of the WCVM Graduate Education Committee. Primary consideration will be given to the overall value of the research, including:
 - 8.3.1 the quality of the research and experience for the student;
 - 8.3.2 the ability of the supervisor to provide adequate supervision and support; and
 - 8.3.3 the likelihood of the student to complete the project during the summer time period.
 - 8.3.4 The academic performance of the student will also be considered.
- 8.4 A student may apply more than once and may be supported for more than one year. However, an applicant who has been funded previously, and is seeking support for a second or third time, will need to demonstrate how the proposed experience will be different from that in the previous year.
- 8.5 The Scholarship provides financial support and benefits equal to that provided by an Interprovincial Undergraduate Student Research Award. Support will be provided for a maximum of four months. Support will also include funds provided to the host department to defray the expenses of the research project.
- 8.6 By September 1 of the year in which the scholarship was awarded, the student, with the assistance of the faculty supervisor, will prepare a poster on their activities for presentation at the Annual Summer Undergraduate Poster Day in early September. Students are also required to submit a one page assessment of their summer experience by October 1st of the year in which they received the award. Students and their supervisors are encouraged to submit their project results for publication.
- 8.7 Recipients of EHRF Undergraduate Student Scholarships should expect to be asked to present a summary of their work to the Advisory Board or similar group.
- 9.0 Equine Health Research Fund Graduate Student Research Awards
 - 9.1 The purpose of the Awards is to induce WCVM researchers and the graduate students they supervise to conduct research related to the horse or horse health.
 - 9.2 To be eligible, a graduate student in a thesis program must have their thesis research directly related or applicable to the horse or horse health. In the case of a graduate student in a non-thesis program, e.g., Master of

Veterinary Science, their research project (course number 992.6) must be directly related or applicable to the horse or horse health.

A graduate student may receive an Award in any year of their program of study and may receive multiple Awards during the completion of the same program of study. However, a graduate student cannot receive more than two Awards during the completion of a M.Vet.Sc. or M.Sc degree. A graduate student cannot receive more than four Awards during the completion of a PhD degree, including a combined M.Sc. and PhD degree. Awards may be in addition to other scholarships or financial support and will not require any additional work load.

9.3 The value of an Award will not be less than \$3,000.00. Up to 10 Awards will be made per year.

9.4 On an annual basis, the Fund will ask the Associate Dean (Research) of the WCVM to receive applications for Awards.

To be considered for an Award, a graduate student's supervisor should submit, to the Associate Dean (Research), a letter of application, university transcripts, a summary of the graduate student's research project or thesis, and a letter of support from the supervisor's Department Head by March 15. On occasions when March 15 is a Saturday or Sunday, the deadline for receipt of applications is the following Monday.

9.5 The EHRF Management Committee will select the Award recipients. In addition to the relationship of the project or thesis to the horse or horse health, the Committee will also consider the merit of the research project, and the applicant's academic performance and financial need.