

November 8th, 2017

**Description of The University of Saskatchewan
Saskatchewan Society of Occupational Therapists'
Research and Education Fund**

By the SSOT Donor Advised Committee Members

In October 2017, a competition was held for a grant from this Fund. This was the first time the competition involved criteria for a link with the University of Saskatchewan and it highlighted some unexpected issues. As a result there were no applicants that met the criteria for the competition though several individuals expressed interest. Fortunately, the U of S has agreed to re-run the competition with some minor changes to the criteria and a new deadline.

Background to the Fund:

In 1985 the Canadian Occupational Therapy Foundation encouraged provinces to establish Funds to support research by providing matching funds till they reached \$10,000. By 2003, only Saskatchewan, Newfoundland and Quebec were without such funds. That year an SSOT member, Margaret Tompson (she had received several awards from COTF) was diagnosed with leukemia and her future was uncertain so she decided to make a donation to start a Saskatchewan Fund. Another major donor at this time was Marilyn Conibear (nee Ernest) who had practiced in Saskatchewan between 1958-68. This was the start of the Saskatchewan Research and Education Fund commonly known as SREF.

Over the ensuing years, fund-raising was held and finally in 2011 SSOT Council awarded the first grant. Unfortunately, in 2013, COTF gave notice that they would be implementing a management fee for provincial funds. Provinces were faced with paying the fee, setting up their own charitable foundation, or transferring the money to another foundation. SSOT reviewed its options and felt only the last option was feasible and approached the University of Saskatchewan. Several meetings were held and in August 2015, the Trust document setting out the terms of the endowment was signed and SREF was transferred to the University of Saskatchewan. There were to be two key criteria for beneficiaries of the fund: They had to be practicing members of SSOT and secondly, they had to have some kind of link with the University of Saskatchewan.

Purpose of the Fund:

This important statement, contained within the Trust document, underlies the basic intent of the endowment to the U of S by the SSOT:

The Saskatchewan Society of Occupational Therapists wishes to support research and education activities that ultimately enhance the research experience of post-professional students and clinicians who are licensed to practice occupational therapy in Saskatchewan. This initiative will benefit Saskatchewan residents through enhancing evidence-based occupational therapy practice. The fund is meant to be donor advised and should encourage ongoing philanthropic support of these activities.

Organization of the Fund:

It is intended that there to be an annual competition to be announced in October, occupational therapy month. The deadline for applications will be sometime in the first week of the new year. The successful applicant will be notified by early March with the winner being highlighted at the SSOT annual meeting.

This Fund involves two committees: one spearheaded by the U of S and one by the SSOT. The U of S committee (The Fund Committee), within the College of Medicine, has the major responsibility for the Fund. This committee is responsible for ensuring the Fund is run according to the universities policies for such funds and the terms of the 2015 Trust document. The Associate-Dean for the School of Rehabilitation Sciences (formerly School of Physical Therapy) is the designated chair of this committee.

The SSOT committee is the Donor Advised Committee, in other words it advises the Fund Committee as to the wishes of SSOT. It proposes guidelines for the Fund, makes recommendations to the U of S Fund Committee as to who should be awarded grants. The SSOT committee is also responsible for on-going fund-raising in order to ensure the sustainability of the fund.

Eligibility criteria:

There are two key criteria:

a. Must be a practicing OT in Saskatchewan

Only SSOT members who are in possession of a license to practice in Saskatchewan are eligible to apply for this Fund. Non-practicing, retired, or restricted practice members are not eligible.

b. Must have a link with the University of Saskatchewan

The University of Saskatchewan is hosting the Saskatchewan Education and Research Fund on condition that there be some kind of link (past or present) with the university.

There are three ways to achieve this link:

- i. Be a graduate from a University of Saskatchewan program, in other words an alumnus. Taking a year or two of studies, without graduating with a University of Saskatchewan degree does not make you an alumnus.
- ii. Be enrolled in a program at the University of Saskatchewan or in a joint program, or in a program affiliated with the University of Saskatchewan.
- iii. Involved in research with a University of Saskatchewan faculty member. This research can be outside of a program of studies where the SSOT member is a clinician working with the faculty member on a research project. Or it can be a research project that is part of a student's program of studies at the University of Saskatchewan. Or it can be at another university where a U of S faculty member is part of the student's advisory committee providing an expertise that the student requires in order to more effectively carry out their research.