

Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute COVID-19 Policy Regarding Awards

The Shastri Indo-Canadian Institute (SICI) continues to closely monitor all available information on the COVID-19 pandemic, as well as the policies and advisories being issued by the Government of India and by the Government of Canada and the provinces.

The health and well-being of everyone associated with SICI, particularly including the award-holders under SICI programs, is always the first and overriding priority of the Institute.

All SICI award-holders are expected to follow the guidance of the respective governments, and (where applicable) of their home universities, with respect to international travel. In this context, the following policies apply until further notice:

- (1) No international travel, whether for research purposes or to take up a study award, is permitted under SICI programs as long as the applicable restrictions persist. In the event that, for existing award-holders, changes in travel plans may incur forfeiture of non-refundable travel costs, this will be an acceptable expense under SICI programs.
- (2) In the event that existing award-holders are able to carry out by virtual means any study, research, or other activity that comes within the parameters of their award and legitimately fulfills its objectives, it will be permissible to claim any expenses incurred in doing so and to adjust project budgets accordingly. This provision is subject to submitting the normal documentation for expenses, and limited by the maximum amount of the award.
- (3) Because of the limitation of SICI's expenditures within any given fiscal year, it cannot be guaranteed that any unused funds can be carried forward beyond the maximum term of any award, although representations are currently being made in this regard.
- (4) With the upcoming launch of a new round of SICI award programs, it is recommended that anticipated activities be capable of being carried out virtually for the first 12 months of any given award proposal. Should travel restrictions be eased in time to permit in-person interactions, and should health and safety considerations make such arrangements acceptable to the participants, then they may proceed. Likewise, in the case of applications for a two-year program, non-virtual activities may be proposed for the second year, with the understanding that if travel restrictions persist into that year then the provisions of policies (2) and (3) above will apply.
- (5) It is possible that temporary or permanent adjustments to program requirements may be made in order to allow greater scope for virtual activities, and to expand the opportunities for students within that context. All applicants are therefore requested to take especial care to ensure that the application requirements under which they submit proposals are those that are fully current, and not those of a previous year.

SICI stands ready to offer advice, assistance, and support to all program participants. The SICI offices in Calgary in Delhi have reduced its in-person interactions to minimal therefore, will be coordinating these services virtually and may be contacted:

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