SSHRC≡CRSH

RESULTS-BASED ACTION PLAN

for Implementation of Section 41 of the *Official Languages Act*

2009-12

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GLOSSARY

Action plan: SSHRC's Results-Based Action Plan for Implementation of Section 41 of the *Official Languages Act*:

– demonstrates SSHRC's commitment to fulfill its role and responsibilities under section 41 of the *Official Languages Act* (OLA);

– establishes a link between the priorities of official-language minority communities (OLMCs) and SSHRC's mandate; and

– documents in a structured way the actions and activities SSHRC plans to undertake to contribute to the development of OLMCs and the promotion of official languages.

Activities: Actions or work undertaken to produce outputs; what we do to reach results, with a direct link to results.

Official Languages Act: Section 41 of the OLA commits federal institutions to taking positive measures to:

– enhance the vitality of the English and French linguistic minority communities in Canada and support and assist their development; and

– foster the full recognition and use of both English and French in Canadian society.

Federal institutions subject to the Accountability Framework for the Implementation of Sections 41 and 42 of the *Official Languages Act* (commonly called "designated institutions") are required to submit an annual or multiyear action plan, as well as an annual report on results, to Canadian Heritage.

Official-language minority communities: OLMCs are French-speaking communities living in a territory or province other than Quebec, and English-speaking communities living in Quebec. These are the "English and French linguistic minority communities in Canada" referred to in section 41 of the OLA.

Outputs: Direct products or services resulting from the activities, policies, programs or initiatives of an organization.

Indicators: Elements of meaningful information used to measure progress towards achieving expected results. Indicators can be quantitative (resulting from data collection) or qualitative (resulting from the observation of a phenomenon).

Results/progress: Changes or effects directly attributable to the activities, policies, programs or initiatives of an organization.

Stakeholders: In addition to Canadian Heritage, various stakeholders have an interest in SSHRC's activities related to section 41; these include, in particular, the Senate and House of Commons standing committees on official languages, the Office of the Commissioner of Official Languages, OLMC organizations, and organizations working in the area of university-based research in the social sciences and humanities.

RESULTS-BASED ACTION PLAN

IMPLEMENTATION OF SECTION 41 OF THE
OFFICIAL LANGUAGES ACT
2009-12

GENERAL INFORMATION

Federal institution: Website:	Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca
Minister responsible:	The Honourable Tony Clement, minister of industry
Senior official(s) responsible for implementation of section 41 of the OLA (e.g., assistant deputy minister or official languages champion):	Chad Gaffield, president, SSHRC Carmen Charette, executive vice-president, SSHRC
General mandate of federal institution:	– Promote and support university-based research and training in the social sciences and humanities; and – Advise the minister on related matters.
National co-ordinator responsible for implementation of section 41: Exact title: Telephone: Email:	Erin Skrapek Coordinator, Corporate Operations, SSHRC 613-944-5326 erin.skrapek@sshrc-crsh.gc.ca
Regional co-ordinators (if any):	N/A

Summary of Progress Expected
During the Period Covered by the Action Plan

SSHRC is the federal agency that promotes and supports university-based research and training in the humanities and social sciences. Through its programs and policies, SSHRC enables the highest levels of research excellence in Canada, and facilitates knowledge-sharing and collaboration across research disciplines, universities, and all sectors of society. Created by an act of Parliament in 1977, SSHRC is governed by a council that reports to Parliament through the minister of industry.

SSHRC implements its mandate by awarding research funding on the basis of open, transparent, national competitions and a rigorous peer-review process that assesses the academic excellence and scientific merit of applications for funding. An international blue ribbon panel of experts recently carried out an independent assessment of SSHRC's peer-review system and found that it is "up to the best practices and highest international standards."[1]

In accordance with its mandate and its strict peer-review selection criteria, SSHRC programs are accessible to all humanities and social sciences researchers affiliated with eligible institutions; its programs cannot have quotas based on the applicant's language or type of community and cannot be restricted to certain geographic regions. Peer-review committee members are selected in a manner that ensures equitable representation of expertise, official languages, gender, regions, and institution size.

In meeting its commitments under section 41 of the OLA, SSHRC plans to undertake a wide range of activities in the following areas for the years 2009-12: awareness, consultations, communications, co-ordination and liaison, funding and program delivery, and accountability.

Awareness

SSHRC will develop and put into action a policy statement on its implementation of section 41 of the OLA. It will significantly increase the amount and quality of information provided to its staff, senior management and governing council on SSHRC's responsibilities as a designated agency regarding section 41 of the OLA, and of the value and importance of taking into account the realities of official-language minority communities (OLMCs) in SSHRC activities and decisions.

Consultations

SSHRC will consult with the senior administrators newly appointed as SSHRC Leaders at OLMC universities on how SSHRC may best address the concerns, priorities and needs of OLMC researchers in accessing SSHRC's available funding programs and promoting linguistic duality in Canada. SSHRC will continue to participate in forums and events that provide opportunities to share information and ideas with researchers from OLMC institutions.

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[1] See the Blue Ribbon Panel on Peer Review's report at
http://www.sshrc.ca/site/about-crsh/publications/peer-pairs_e.pdf.

Communications

Communications activities provide OLMC researchers with up-to-date and relevant information on available programs, enabling them to take part more effectively in SSHRC programs. Information on SSHRC activities regarding implementation of section 41 of the OLA will be created and updated regularly on SSHRC's website. SSHRC will also disseminate information through various channels on research projects related to official languages in Canada and undertaken by OLMC researchers.

Co-ordination and Liaison

SSHRC will continue to participate on various committees related to official languages research and the implementation of section 41 of the OLA. SSHRC will also assess opportunities to harmonize activities related to section 41 with its partner agencies, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR).

Funding and Program Delivery

SSHRC will undertake a management review of its 2004-07 Official Languages Research program (a joint initiative with Canadian Heritage). It will also assess SSHRC's mechanisms for capturing statistics and reporting on research funded on official languages issues and by OLMC researchers, and ensure these are as robust as possible. In addition, it will undertake visits to OLMC universities on a rotating basis to ensure researchers at these institutions are well informed of available opportunities for SSHRC funding and of application processes. Finally, it will provide information to its peer-review committees on SSHRC's responsibilities under section 41 of the OLA.

Accountability

SSHRC's day-to-day operations contribute, within the limits of its mandate, to the following objectives: providing access to funding for researchers in OLMC institutions, and funding research related to official languages and bilingualism that can promote linguistic duality in Canadian society. In accordance with the reporting requirements, SSHRC will submit a detailed annual review of its activities to Canadian Heritage and share this review with other stakeholders.

DETAILED ACTION PLAN

A.   Awareness
      (In-house activities)

Expected result: Increased awareness among SSHRC staff and management about their responsibilities with respect to section 41 of the *Official Languages Act*		
Planned activities to achieve expected result	**Expected outputs**	**Indicators** to measure progress toward achieving expected result
• Develop and put into action a policy statement on SSHRC's implementation of section 41 of the OLA • Develop and implement an evaluation framework for SSHRC's implementation of section 41 of the OLA • Include information on section 41 of the OLA in orientation sessions for new and existing SSHRC staff • Include information on section 41 of the OLA in orientation material for SSHRC's governing council and committees • Make annual presentation to SSHRC senior management and directors on SSHRC's progress against the action plan • Develop and post information on section 41 of the OLA on SSHRC's intranet for staff	• Policy statement developed and implemented • Evaluation framework implemented • Information on section 41 of the OLA included in orientation sessions and materials • Annual presentation made to senior management and directors • Information posted on SSHRC intranet	• Number of information sessions provided on section 41 of the OLA • Concrete promotion actions taken (e.g., number of messages sent to co-ordinators and employees) • Number of meetings, workshops and conference calls organized • Number and percentage of employees aware of their responsibilities concerning section 41 of the OLA, and degree of awareness of that commitment • Volume of relevant information added to SSHRC's orientation materials and intranet

B.   Consultations
(Sharing of ideas and information with OLMCs)

Expected result: Increased knowledge and inclusion of OLMC concerns in the development of SSHRC's corporate strategies and policies		
Planned activities to achieve expected result	**Expected outputs**	**Indicators** to measure progress toward achieving expected result

• Consult SSHRC Leaders at OLMC universities to identify issues related to:
 	
  - Barriers that researchers at OLMC institutions face with respect to accessing SSHRC grants and fellowships;
  - Research capacity at OLMC institutions; and/or
  - Other issues related to SSHRC's services and programs (e.g., communications and outreach needs)
 	
• Continue to participate in forums and events organized by SSHRC's various stakeholder groups (including the Congress of the Humanities and Social Sciences, the Canadian Association of University Research Administrators, the Association francophone pour le savoir, and the Association des universités de la francophonie canadienne) that facilitate the sharing of information and ideas with researchers from OLMC institutions
	• Information received from SSHRC Leaders on particular concerns of OLMC researchers
	
	• Survey undertaken, results assessed and further action determined
	
	• SSHRC staff participating in events (organized by various stakeholder groups) that include researchers from OLMC institutions
		• Number of consultations with SSHRC Leaders per year
		
		• Level of OLMC participation and inclusion
		
		• New consultation strategy established between SSHRC and representatives from OLMC institutions

C.   Communications
(Transmission of information to OLMCs)

Expected result: SSHRC's broader community is better informed about linguistic duality and OLMCs in Canada		
Planned activities to achieve expected result	**Expected outputs**	**Indicators to measure progress toward achieving expected result**
• Develop content on SSHRC's public website related to official languages, such as details on funded projects, opportunities for engagement, and SSHRC's policy statement on its implementation of section 41 of the OLA • Publish articles in *Bulletin 41-42* and *Dialogue* (SSHRC's e-newsletter) on SSHRC-funded projects related to official languages and/or by researchers from OLMC universities • Work with OLMC universities to promote media stories on SSHRC-funded research • Include mention in SSHRC annual reports and other corporate documents on SSHRC's implementation of section 41 of the OLA	• Website information developed • Articles published in *Bulletin 41-42* and *Dialogue* • Potential media stories promoted to OLMC universities • Information included in SSHRC's annual reports and other corporate documents	• Degree of use of SSHRC's web-based information related to official languages • Degree of OLMC access to up-to-date information • Quality and relevance of content of material disseminated • Level of visibility of SSHRC programs and processes • Level of visibility of SSHRC-funded research on official languages issues and by OLMC researchers • Level of mutual co-operation, exchanges and interaction between OLMCs and SSHRC contacts, and degree of knowledge about each other's mandates • Frequency of updates to SSHRC website reflecting OLMC input and interest • Level of use of communication tools

D.   Co-ordination and liaison
    (Internal co-ordination and liaison with other government institutions—does not include funding)

Expected result: Co-operation with multiple partners to enhance OLMC development and vitality and to share best practices in supporting research on official languages		
Planned activities to achieve expected result	Expected outputs	Indicators to measure progress toward achieving expected result
• Participate on interdepartmental Coordinating Committee on Official Languages Research • Participate in meetings between national co-ordinators responsible for implementation of section 41 of the OLA • Participate in meetings of CIHR's Consultative Committee on Official Languages • Initiate discussion with sister funding agencies NSERC and CIHR on possibilities for harmonization among the three agencies in their approach to implementation of section 41 of the OLA	• Interdepartmental meetings held, public and private contacts developed • Information gathered regarding best practices in the implementation of section 41 of the OLA • Information gathered regarding possibilities for tri-agency harmonization in the implementation of section 41 of the OLA, and possible next steps determined	• OLMCs' view of improved co-operation • Conduct of regular meetings • Increased number of issues subject to a collaborative partnership • Extent to which constructive practices are shared and, where possible, implemented

E.   Funding and program delivery

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<td colspan="3">Expected result:
OLMCs and researchers studying issues related to linguistic duality make up part of SSHRC's regular clientele and have adequate access to SSHRC programs and information</td>
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<td><u>Planned activities</u> to achieve expected result</td>
<td><u>Expected outputs</u></td>
<td><u>Indicators</u> to measure progress toward achieving expected result</td>
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Undertake a management review of the 2004-07 Official Languages Research and Dissemination program
Assess ways to improve SSHRC's ability to capture statistics on funding to SSHRC-funded researchers and students based at OLMC institutions, and statistics on SSHRC-funded research on official languages issues
Undertake university visits (on a rotating schedule) to OLMC universities, including affiliated OLMC institutions within non-OLMC universities, to provide information on available programs and application processes
Provide information to peer-review committees on SSHRC's responsibilities under section 41 of the OLA

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Management review undertaken of 2004-07 Official Languages Research and Dissemination program, recommendations reviewed, and further action determined
Assessment undertaken of SSHRC's ability to capture statistics related to OLMCs and official languages research, recommendations reviewed, and further action determined
Visits undertaken to OLMC universities and affiliated institutions
Guidelines for peer-review committees adapted to include information on SSHRC's responsibilities under section 41 of the OLA

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Assessment and support of participation by OLMC researchers in SSHRC's programs
Assessment of number and type of research projects related to linguistic duality in Canada
Number of SSHRC visits to OLMC universities and affiliated institutions
Volume of relevant information added to orientation materials for peer-review committees

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F.   Accountability

Expected result: Improved accountability on SSHRC results in the implementation of section 41 of the OLA; responsibilities under OLA section 41 fully integrated in SSHRC's policies and programs/services		
Planned activities to achieve expected result	**Expected outputs**	**Indicators** to measure progress toward achieving expected result
• Monitor progress through various means, including results-based section 41 action plans and achievement reports • Incorporate objectives of section 41 of the OLA into SSHRC's internal evaluation processes	• Annual status report produced on SSHRC's implementation of section 41 of the OLA • Objectives of section 41 of the OLA included in SSHRC's performance measurement strategy, relevant evaluations, annual reports and internal audits	• Scope of progress on the implementation of section 41 • Degree of SSHRC's compliance with requirements • Improved statistics resulting from assessments

DISTRIBUTION LIST

In addition to being submitted to Canadian Heritage, SSHRC's action plan is also available to interested parliamentary and community stakeholders, including those listed below.

– **Clerk of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Official Languages**
– **Clerk of the Senate Standing Committee on Official Languages**
– **Commissioner of Official Languages**
– **Community organizations** (OLMC and other interested organizations)
    - Canadian Association of University Research Administrators
    - SSHRC Leaders at OLMC universities
    - Association francophone pour le savoir
    - Association des universités de la francophonie canadienne
    - Canadian Federation for the Humanities and Social Sciences

SSHRC's action plan is also available online at:
http://www.sshrc.ca/site/about-crsh/publications/pub_corporate_reports-pub_rapports_organisationnels-eng.aspx

SIGNATURE OF SSHRC'S PRESIDENT

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Chad Gaffield, President   **Date**