Social Sciences and Humanities
Research Council of Canada

Conseil de recherches en
sciences humaines du Canada

Implementation of Section 41
of the *Official Languages Act*

Multiyear Action Plan, 2005–2008

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada

350 Albert Street, P.O. Box 1610
Ottawa, Ontario, K1P 6G4
http://www.sshrc.ca

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Canada

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1. General Information

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC)	
Address	350 Albert Street P.O. Box 1610 Ottawa, Ontario K1P 6G4
Website	http://www.sshrc.ca
Minister Responsible	Minister of Industry
Senior Official Responsible for Implementation of Section 41 of the *Official Languages Act* (OLA)	Acting SSHRC President Dr. Stan Shapson
Mandate	• Promote and assist research and scholarship in the social sciences and humanities. • Advise the Minister of Industry on related matters
National Coordinator Responsible for the Implementation of Section 41 of the OLA	Boris Stipernitz
Title	Policy Analyst, Corporate Policy and Planning Division, Directorate of the Executive Vice-President
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Regional Coordinators	N/a
Period Covered by the Action Plan	2005 - 2008

2. Summary of Main Expected Results

2.1 Awareness

- Awareness at SSHRC (staff, management and governing Board) of bilingualism and official language minority questions as well as of related policy and program issues.
- Awareness at SSHRC of interdepartmental discussions and initiatives with a potential impact on research on bilingualism, on official language minority questions and on related policies and programs.

2.2 Consultation

- SSHRC programs, priorities and policies that are well-attuned to the opportunities and take into account the challenges of research on bilingualism and official languages minority questions, and related issues.

2.3 Communications

- Stakeholder and research communities that are well informed and aware of SSHRC programs and other initiatives related to research on bilingualism and official language minority questions, and related issues.
- Stakeholder and research communities and a general public that are well informed and aware of SSHRC-funded research on bilingualism and official language minority issues.

2.4 Coordination and Liaison

- Awareness at SSHRC and at interested government departments and agencies of research-related federal programs and initiatives dealing with official language minority issues and bilingualism.

2.5 Funding and Program Delivery

- SSHRC support of research on bilingualism and official language minority questions.
- SSHRC's client community is served in the language of their choice, either in English or in French.

2.6 Accountability

- Distribution and yearly updates of the Annual Status Report and the Multiyear Action Plan on the implementation of section 41 of the OLA.

3. Detailed Action Plan

3.1 General Information

<u>Mandate and Governance</u>
The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) is one of three federal granting agencies in Canada that support academic research. The Council's mandate is to promote and assist research and scholarship in the social sciences and humanities and to advise the Minister of Industry on related matters.[1] SSHRC reports to Parliament through the Minister of Industry, the Right Hon. David L. Emerson, who has certain statutory responsibilities regarding, and general oversight of, the Council.

SSHRC is governed by an independent 22-member Board, which the Governor-in-Council appoints to represent the interests of the academic, public and private sectors in all regions of Canada. The Board is chaired by SSHRC's President, who, as Chief Executive Officer, manages day-to-day affairs, has a direct relationship with stakeholders and the public, and is accountable for the administration of public funds and for delivering on the Council's mandate. Three vice-presidents and one director-general report to the President and are responsible, respectively, for Programs, Corporate Affairs, Knowledge Products and Mobilization, and Administrative Services.

<u>Research Funding through Open, Transparent, Peer-Reviewed, National Competitions</u>
SSHRC implements its mandate by awarding research funding after open, transparent, national competitions. The Council awards funding only after a rigorous peer-review process—the fairest and best-regarded method to allocate public funds for research—that assesses the scientific merit of the applications. In accordance with its mandate and its strict peer-review selection criteria (track record and competence of applicant; quality of the research proposal; etc.), SSHRC programs are accessible to all humanities and social sciences researchers.

<u>SSHRC and Research on Bilingualism and Official Language Minority Questions</u>
SSHRC programs can neither have quotas based on language nor can they privilege particular groups such as official language minority communities. Furthermore, Council programs must be national in scope and cannot be restricted to certain geographic regions. Finally, SSHRC can implement section 41 of the OLA only by supporting, through its programs, research projects on topics, which are covered by the *Act*.

The Council has two basic kinds of programs to support research and research training:

- "investigator-framed" programs, for which researcher defines the thematic area and the subject of their proposed research; and
- targeted strategic programs, for which SSHRC (and funding partner(s)) define the thematic area or mode of research, while the researcher proposes the subject.

Regarding investigator-framed programs such as *Standard Research Grants* (SRG), *Major Collaborative Research Initiatives* (MCRI) and research training programs, SSHRC does not know in advance what subjects applicants will propose to research. Regarding strategic programs, the Council targets research on social, economic and cultural issues of key importance to Canadians after consultations with its

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[1]   See the *SSHRC Act* (1977) at http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/S-12/index.html.

community and priority-setting exercises. SSHRC can target specific thematic areas such as bilingualism and official language minority questions through:

- strategic grants in accordance with its strategic priorities; or
- joint initiative programs with partners from government, the not-for-profit, public and private sector.

SSHRC's strategic priority areas usually last between three and five years and currently do include "official languages research", which is specifically targeted under the Council's *Official Languages Research and Dissemination Program*[2] to create new knowledge and expertise on related issues.

Within the framework outlined above, SSHRC supports, through all of its programs, research projects on many topics, including, for example, projects that address how to support and enhance the vitality of official language minority communities, and how to foster the full recognition and use of both English and French in Canada. In so doing, the Council serves its client community in both official languages and ensures the fair and equitable treatment of every application received in whichever official language.

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[2]   See http://www.sshrc.ca/web/apply/program_descriptions/official_languages_e.asp.

3.2 Awareness

Main Expected Results and Outcomes	Main Activities Planned	Indicators to Measure Results
Awareness among SSHRC staff of bilingualism and official language minority questions as well as of related policy and program issues.	Continued collaboration between the national coordinator responsible for the implementation of section 41 of the OLA and SSHRC staff to raise awareness of bilingualism and official language minority questions as well as of related policy and program issues.	Oral/written reports, briefings and general information sharing with SSHRC staff, management and governing Board regarding bilingualism and official language minority questions as well as of related policy and program issues.
Awareness among SSHRC management and governing Board of bilingualism and official language minority questions as well as of related policy and program issues.	Continued briefing of and advice to SSHRC's management and governing Board regarding bilingualism and official language minority questions and regarding related policy and program issues.	
Awareness at SSHRC of interdepartmental discussions and initiatives with a potential impact on research on bilingualism and official language minority questions as well as on related policies and programs.	Continued participation in the discussions and work of the interdepartmental network on national coordinators for the implementation of section 41 of the OLA.	Oral/written reports, briefings and general information sharing to SSHRC staff and management on discussions and work of the interdepartmental network of national coordinator

3.3 Consultation

Main Expected Results and Outcomes	Main Activities Planned	Indicators to Measure Results
SSHRC programs, priorities and policies that are well-attuned to and take into account the opportunities and challenges of research on bilingualism and official languages minority questions and related issues.	Continued consultations between SSHRC staff, stakeholders and the research community regarding: - research on bilingualism and official language minority questions; and - related issues.	Oral and written communication between SSHRC staff, stakeholders and the research community regarding: - research on bilingualism and official language minority questions and related issues; and - SSHRC policies, programs and priorities.

3.4 Communications

Main Expected Results and Outcomes	Main Activities Planned	Indicators to Measure Results
Stakeholder and research communities that are well informed and aware of SSHRC programs and other initiatives related to research on bilingualism and official language minority issues and related questions.	Continued communication with individuals, universities and associations, especially in official-language minority environments, to promote its programs and help support research on bilingualism and official language minority issues. Continuation of the well-established practice of distributing SSHRC program and other information to individual researchers, to universities and research institutes in official language minority regions such as the *Canadian Institute for Research on Linguistic Minorities*, Université de Moncton[3] and to associations such as *Regroupement des universités de la francophonie hors Québec* (RUFHQ).	Participation by stakeholders and researchers in SSHRC program competitions, initiatives and consultations about programs, priorities and policies.
Stakeholder and research communities and a general public that are well informed and aware of SSHRC-funded research on bilingualism and official language minority issues.	Continued and timely publication of information about funded research on bilingualism, official languages, and official-language minority communities in Canada.	Creation of new and updates of existing hardcopy publications and electronic information sources about SSHRC-funded research on bilingualism and official language minority issues.

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[3]   See http://www.umoncton.ca/icrml/default.htm.

3.5 Coordination and Liaison

Main Expected Results and Outcomes	Main Activities Planned	Indicators to Measure Results
Awareness at SSHRC and at interested government departments and agencies of research-related federal programs and initiatives dealing with bilingualism and official language minority issues.	Continued participation in the interdepartmental Coordinating Committee on Official Languages Research, which helps to identify research gaps, review existing and planned research, and which serves as a forum for exchanging views on research related to official language minority issues and bilingualism.	Attendance by SSHRC staff of meetings of the interdepartmental Coordinating Committee on Official Languages Research.
	Continued participation in the work and discussions of the national network of coordinators responsible for implementing section 41 of the OLA to exchange views on research related to bilingualism and official language minority issues.	Attendance by SSHRC's national coordinator of meetings of the national network of coordinators responsible for implementing section 41 of the OLA.

3.6 Funding and Program Delivery

Main Expected Results and Outcomes	Main Activities Planned	Indicators to Measure Results
SSHRC support for research on bilingualism and official language minority questions.	Maintenance of SSHRC programs that either specifically target research on bilingualism and official language minority issues or that permit the submission of applications for research projects on these themes.	Applications received for funding of research dealing with bilingualism and official language minority questions.
SSHRC's client community is served in the language of their choice, either in English or in French.	Continued receipt of applications for funding and provision of client services in either English or French in accordance with the provisions of the OLA to ensure fair and equitable linguistic treatment.[4]	Applications for funding submitted in either English or French and provision of all client services in both official languages.

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[4]   See http://www.sshrc.ca/web/apply/policies/g_languages_e.asp.

3.7 Accountability

Main Expected Results and Outcomes	Main Activities Planned	Indicators to Measure Results
Distribution and yearly updates of SSHRC's *Annual Status Report* and its *Multiyear Action Plan* on the implementation of section 41 of the OLA.	Yearly drafting and updates of SSHRC's *Annual Status Report* and its *Multiyear Action Plan* on the implementation of section 41 of the OLA.	Distribution and yearly updates of SSHRC's *Annual Status Report* and its *Multiyear Action Plan* on the implementation of section 41 of the OLA.

4. Communication Plan

4.1 Distribution List

Together with the *2004-2005 Annual Status Report*, the present *Multiyear (2005 - 2008) Action Plan on the Implementation of Section 41 of the OLA* will be distributed to:

- the Department of Canadian Heritage;
- the Office of the Official Languages Commissioner;
- members of Committee of Deputy Ministers on Official Languages[5];
- members of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Official Languages[6]; and
- members of the Senate Standing Committee on Official Languages[7].

4.2 Web Address of Federal Institution's Action Plan

In addition, both the annual report and action plan will be posted on the SSHRC website at http://www.sshrc.ca/web/about/publications/publications_e.asp.

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[5]   The Committee of Deputy Ministers on Official Languages is chaired by the Deputy Minister of Justice and consists of twelve more members, which included the Associate Secretary of the Treasury Board and the Deputy Minister of Canadian Heritage. See http://www.hrma-agrh.gc.ca/ollo/common/gov-gouv_e.asp.

[6]   For a list of the members of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Official Languages, see http://www.parl.gc.ca/committee/CommitteeList.aspx?Lang=1&PARLSES=381&JNT=0&SELID=e18_&COM=8987.

[7]   For a list of the members of the Senate Standing Committee on Official Languages, see http://www.parl.gc.ca/common/Committee_SenMembers.asp?Language=E&Parl=38&Ses=1&comm_id=595.

5: Signature of SSHRC Chief Operating Officer

Janet Halliwell,

Executive Vice-President and Chief Operating Officer

Date