

Achieving a Sustainable Future for the Canadian Council of Animal Care (CCAC)

Stakeholder Engagement Process



Canadian Council on Animal Care
Conseil canadien de protection des animaux

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STRATEGIES

Executive Summary

Faced with significant funding reductions to the assessment and certification component of its Program (over the 2013 to 2016 timeframe), CCAC launched a collaborative national stakeholder engagement process in September 2013 to gather broad and targeted input from its stakeholders. CCAC's goal was to collectively develop a sustainable financial solution that was both equitable and acceptable to all of CCAC's stakeholders, while maintaining the overall effectiveness and integrity of its Program. Using an iterative approach, each phase of the engagement process was designed purposefully, to move from broad engagement on high level issues and options to more focused input on ways of addressing the sustainability challenges facing CCAC. Individuals from all of CCAC's key stakeholder groups –universities and colleges, research institutes, private industry, federal government, and non-governmental research funders (NGRFs) – actively participated in the process.

The process had three phases, each of which served strategic engagement purposes:

1. **Online Choicebook™** – Established a baseline of perspectives and attitudes around CCAC's services and how to address its funding challenges. Almost 500 of CCAC's stakeholders completed the Choicebook™.
2. **Web Conferences** – Engaged different stakeholder sector/groups to deeply explore their perspectives on CCAC's challenges and opportunities. Forty-eight individuals participated in the online web conferences (by invitation).
3. **Stakeholder Consensus Workshop** – Brought together stakeholders to collectively develop possible solutions/options for moving forward. Twenty individuals from key organizations/sectors participated in the full-day workshop (by invitation).

Five key findings emerge from a careful analysis of input gathered through the three phases of the stakeholder engagement process:

1. **Stakeholders highly value and strongly support CCAC's integrated program of standards development, assessment and certification:** All stakeholder groups expressed strong support and goodwill for CCAC and its services, with much support for the integration of standards development and assessment/certification overall. Most participants called for greater collective action from all stakeholders to help sustain CCAC and the animal care system. However, this sense of support and willingness to work together coexists with strong opposition to the CIHR/NSERC funding cuts.

2. **Stakeholders call for the fair distribution of costs to sustain the system:** Stakeholders felt very strongly about the principle of fair distribution of costs to sustain the animal care system in Canada. However, there are different views on how to operationalize fairness, particularly in allocating costs for the whole system across different groups/sectors. A fee-for-service model for institutions, which includes cost recovery for assessments/certification, received very little support.
3. **CCAC serves the “public good” and should therefore be supported by the government/public funds: Government should pay for “public good”:** There is strong opposition to proposed cost recovery options/approaches for addressing CCAC’s funding shortfall. However, the rationale underlying this opposition is not in doubting CCAC’s value; rather, it is the notion that CCAC is serving “public good.” Stakeholders felt strongly that the government should be responsible for providing adequate funding for all components of the Program.
4. **CCAC should find ways to increase efficiencies and reduce costs:** Largely as an alternative to cost recovery, some participants urged CCAC to examine ways to streamline service delivery and modify its mandate to reduce costs, particularly in terms of how it conducts assessments.
5. **Given the funding shortfall, CCAC should explore new business opportunities for revenue generation:** CCAC could look to the long term and leverage potential business opportunities to help address its funding shortfall, as well as strengthen its operations. Some participants suggested that CCAC transform its service offering/mandate, with the aim of increasing revenue generation.

Overall the results of the stakeholder engagement reveal a shared commitment to helping CCAC sustain its integrated standards, assessment and certification program so that it can continue to serve the animal welfare in science system. Stakeholders found common ground around the value of the CCAC program, in terms of the benefits it brings to quality research, competitiveness and broader public trust in the use of animals in science in Canada (ISO-like standard). This good will and respect is an asset that CCAC can leverage as it charts a course for its future. Stakeholders did not coalesce around a cost recovery model to address CCAC’s funding gap, as there were differing views around what they considered to be a fair allocation across the system. However, there was also recognition that what is required for the medium to longer-term is a new business model that reduces CCAC’s reliance on funding from the Tri-Council agencies. To that end, stakeholders expressed willingness and interest in helping CCAC to build that model, which could include a variety of ideas and options for revenue generation and cost efficiencies.

Contents

Executive Summary	i
1. Overview	1
2. Engagement Process and Participant Profile	1
3. Key Findings	7
4. Conclusions	14
 Appendices	
A. Web Conference Organizations	16
B. Stakeholder Consensus Workshop Organizations	17

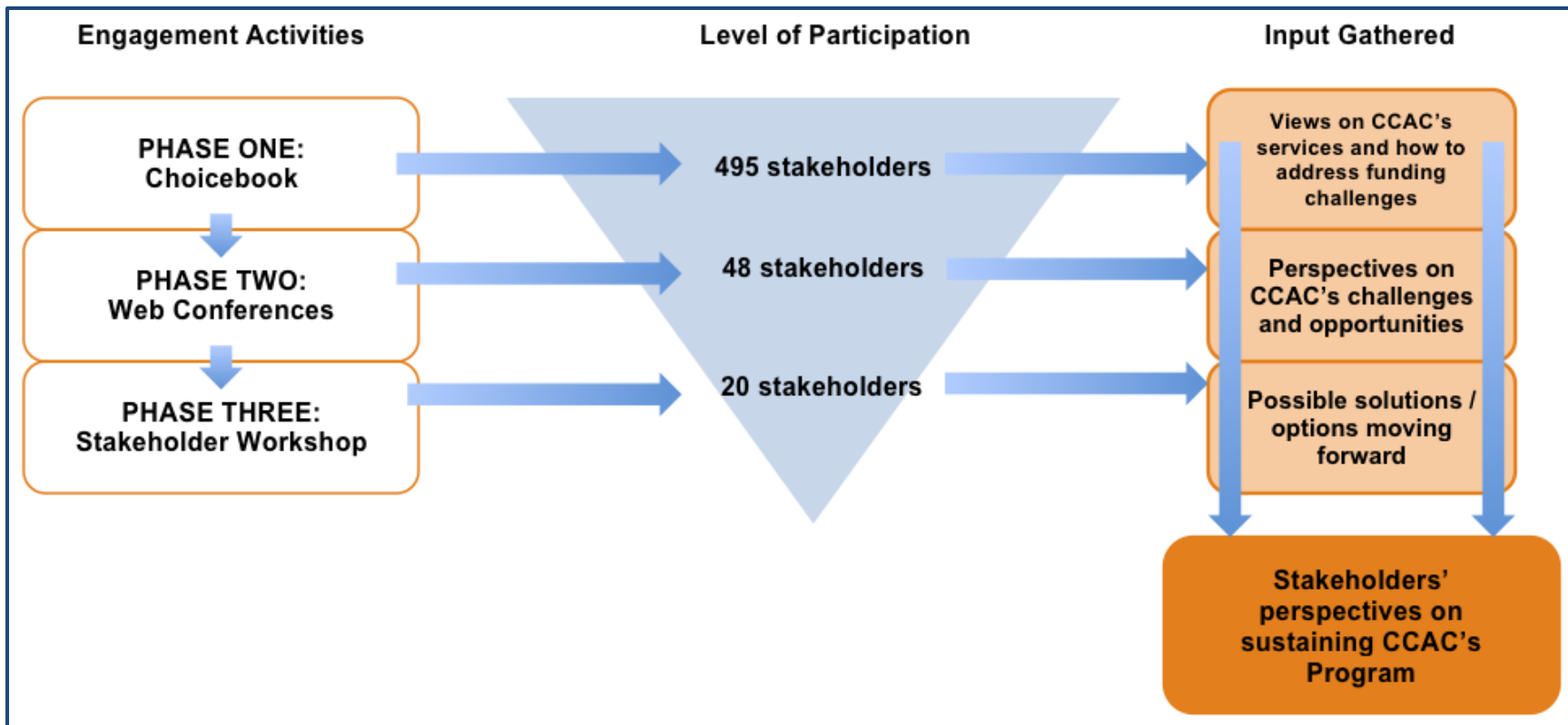
1. Overview

In the fall of 2013, the Canadian Council of Animal Care (CCAC) launched a collaborative national stakeholder engagement process to inform the development and implementation of a sustainable funding solution for the CCAC Program. This Program provides oversight of the ethical use of animals used in science through the development of standards and the certification of their implementation by institutions. Given impending Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR) and Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) funding reductions over a three-year span (2013-2016) for the assessment and certification component of this Program, CCAC sought broad and targeted input from its stakeholders – the institutions and organizations who affect and are affected by the Canadian system of animal-based science. The goal was to collectively develop a financial solution that was both equitable and acceptable to all of CCAC’s stakeholders, while maintaining the overall effectiveness and integrity of its Program.

2. Engagement Process and Participant Profile

To reach out to and engage CCAC’s key stakeholders, a three-phased engagement process was conducted in September and October 2013. CCAC hired Hill+Knowlton Strategies (H+K) – Canada’s leading strategic communications firm – to help develop and implement a process to meaningfully engage its broad range stakeholders. H+K’s Public Engagement and Research team is a leading group of public and stakeholder engagement practitioners, with deep experience, unique expertise, and effective methods and tools. Our portfolio includes successful completion of over 200 engagement and consultation projects. Over the past decade, our team has helped a broad range of clients address their needs through engagement, including federal / provincial / municipal governments and non-profit organizations. We worked closely with the CCAC throughout this project to design and deliver a meaningful engagement process and methodology.

Using an iterative approach, each phase of the process was designed purposefully, to move from broad engagement on high level issues and options to more focused input on ways of addressing the sustainability challenges. The information gathered from each phase was used to inform future discussions and engagement with stakeholders. The rationale for this process was to strategically focus stakeholders’ input, starting with a broad base in order to establish a baseline of attitudes and perspectives, and then moving to a more targeted group to help develop potential solutions and options for CCAC. Through this process, individuals from all of CCAC’s key stakeholder groups – including universities and colleges, private industry, federal government, and non-governmental research funders (NGRFs) – actively participated in the process, which is critical to the development of a solution that all stakeholders can accept.



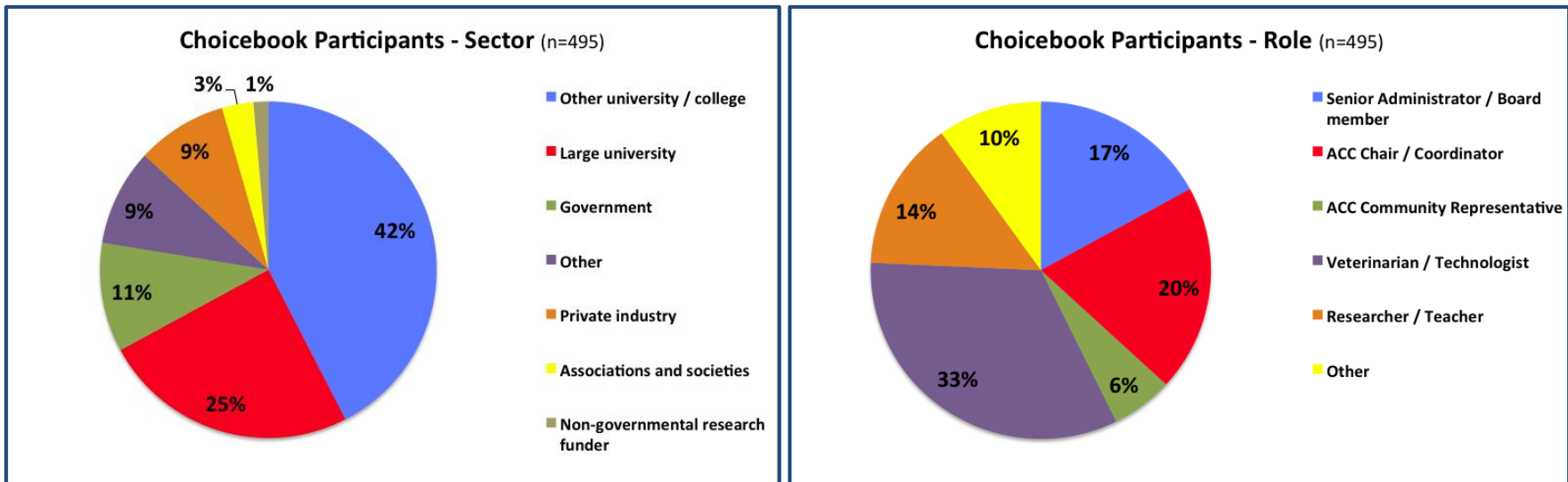
Phase One: Choicebook™

Approach – Gathering broad views on CCAC's services and the challenges ahead

CCAC's stakeholder engagement process began with the online Choicebook™ – H+K's online tool that engages participants to provide informed input and help inform decision-making through a highly accessible and interactive online experience. Unlike a traditional survey approach, it provides participants with pertinent background information on the issue before soliciting their opinions, and importantly, it seeks to understand the rationale for participants' choices. The value of the Choicebook™ is more informed participation. As noted, the Choicebook™ established a baseline of perspectives and attitudes from almost 500 of CCAC's stakeholders. This served to initiate or deepen the dialogue between CCAC and its stakeholders around the funding challenges, highlighted areas of common ground and divergence

between different groups, and informed the next iteration of discussions to better understand the stakeholders' views and explore potential solutions.

To provide important context for participants, this Choicebook™ supplied critical information on CCAC and its services (focusing on the CCAC Program), the current environment within which CCAC operates (e.g. R&D expenditures in the health field, animal welfare investments), the funding challenge, the concept of cost recovery and related options. Then through a mix of open- and closed-ended questions, the Choicebook™ gathered input on three key themes: 1) what constitutes an effective oversight system, 2) cost recovery, and 3) cost allocation. Participants provided a rationale for their choices and also offered additional comments / suggestions through open-ended questions.



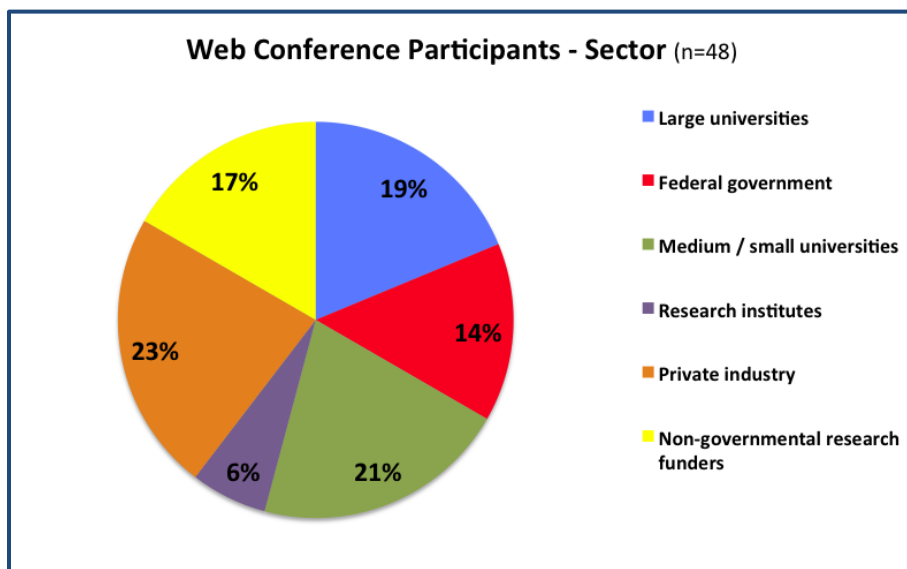
Participation

CCAC extended an invitation to a broad array of stakeholders, including organizations and individuals that are affected by or affect its Program (certified institutions from the private, public and not-for-profit sectors, Animal Care Committee members, health charities etc.). The Choicebook™ was open for two weeks from September 5 to 20, 2013. At the end of this period, a total of 495 individuals had completed the Choicebook™. The stakeholder group with the highest percentage of completed Choicebook™ was universities and colleges (67%), with one-quarter of them representing large universities. The pie charts below show the composition by stakeholder sector and by role. Of note is the high number of veterinarians and technologists (33%) and of ACC Chairs or Coordinators (20%). These individuals have high familiarity with the CCAC Program.

Approach – Exploring different perspectives on CCAC’s challenges and opportunities

During the second engagement phase, CCAC conducted four web conferences using the WebEx online technology. Each web conference was designed to engage representatives from one or two key stakeholder/sector groups: (1) the large universities and federal government laboratories; (2) the NGRF organizations; (3) medium/small universities, colleges and other research institutes; and (4) private industry firms. Informed by the Choicebook™ results, the web conference sessions afforded a venue to give stakeholder groups the opportunity to unpack and discuss the Choicebook™ results, more deeply explore the different stakeholders’ perspectives by probing key challenges and opportunity areas, and identify options for further consideration at the in-person stakeholder consensus workshop (the third and final phase of CCAC’s engagement process).

H+K provided professional facilitation, note-taking and technical support services for the web conferences. CCAC’s Chair or Vice-Chair and Executive Director provided upfront context setting and clarification throughout the session, but were primarily in listening mode. Two and a half hours in length, the four web conference sessions followed a similar process: key context-setting around CCAC’s funding challenges and its mitigation strategies to date; recap of the Choicebook™ key highlights; followed by a series of questions to gather input on key findings around the three themes: effective oversight system, cost recovery, and cost allocation. Before closing, participants took the opportunity to share their thoughts/advice on other possible options for consideration (including combinations of approaches) and articulate what avenues they thought CCAC should pursue.



Participation

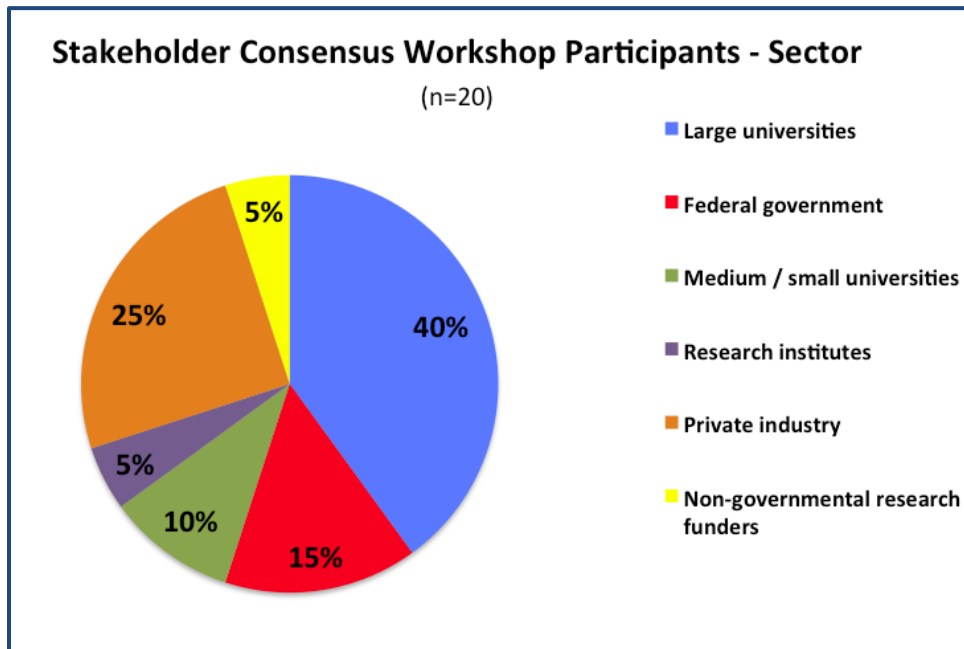
Taken together, 48 participants attended the four web conferences held on October 7-8, 2013. Individuals from different regions and various sized organizations were engaged in this phase to help develop a more fulsome understanding of the various perspectives across, as well as within, stakeholder sectors/groups. Additionally, these participants were carefully selected based on their significant impact on and/or interest in CCAC’s program, including having decision-making authority influence. To maximize discussion time, participation was capped at about 20 participants for each web conference.

In addition, CIHR and NSERC representatives attended as observers. Please refer to the appendix organization for the full list of web conference organizations by session and stakeholder group.

Approach – Developing possible solutions/options for moving forward

The third phase of the engagement process culminated in a full day, in-person stakeholder consensus workshop held in Ottawa on October 24, 2013. Informed by the findings from the previous two phases (Choicebook™ and web conferences), the intention of the workshop was to bring together key stakeholders (institutions who are certified by CCAC and who have a direct interest in the funding of assessment and certification) to work collaboratively toward a potential common ground solution to the funding challenge. Failing that, CCAC hoped to emerge from the workshop with a clear understanding of their stakeholders' preferences, concerns and interests moving forward. Given the sensitive nature of the funding issue, as well as the strength of some stakeholders' positions, the workshop was designed to emphasize understanding of different perspectives, collaboration, and constructive problem-solving.

Participation



Twenty representatives from all key stakeholder sectors and all regions of Canada participated in the workshop. Having diverse representation was important to develop the best possible option/solution for all of its stakeholders - this meant including institutions of varying size and from different geographic regions.

Additionally, it was critical to target individuals who had financial decision-making capacity within their organization and had participated in the web conferences. Having such individuals present was important to help maximize productive discussion to identify options and ideas to inform CCAC's business plan.

CIHR and NSERC representatives also attended the workshop and were able to offer historical context for the decision to reduce CCAC's funding, answer participant questions and speak to considerations around the development of a new business model for funding assessment and certification. Please refer to the appendix document for a full list of workshop organizations.

The CCAC Chair and Executive Director gave opening remarks to set the stage for the day's discussion. After participants shared their expectations and hopes for the day, the workshop focused on engaging stakeholders in two main activities. The first was defining the important principles for guiding CCAC's decision-making on its plan of action to address the funding challenge, with the goal of highlighting shared values and establishing common ground across stakeholders. The second activity was identifying and articulating the best possible options/approaches for addressing the funding challenges. Participants worked in small groups and plenary to generate, clarify, build on, group and prioritize their ideas for addressing CCAC's funding challenge. As with the web conferences, H+K provided professional facilitation, note-taking and reporting services.

Guiding Principles

During the stakeholder workshop, participants collaboratively developed a set of principles to guide CCAC's decision making on a plan of action to address its funding challenge.

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| <p>1. Efficiency/streamlined: Both the animal care oversight system and the CCAC Program should be efficient and streamlined. Operationalizing this principle should involve examining CCAC's organizational structure, its mandate, the services it provides, and how it delivers these services. This is critical for decreasing costs and enhancing efficiency, as well as ensuring the system's long-term sustainability and reputation.</p> |
| <p>2. Effectiveness/credibility: The animal care oversight system should be effective, credible, have integrity and be transparent. With this comes greater public understanding of CCAC's services and a solid reputation for the entire animal care system, including all of the stakeholders who use animals for research, testing and teaching. The value provided by CCAC's services and the research itself should be able to withstand scrutiny.</p> |
| <p>3. Fairness and equality: To be fair, the costs to support the CCAC Program and broader animal care oversight system should be shared equally by all stakeholders. This principle applies more broadly to the costs of the animal care in research system as a whole, and not just the cost recovery model to address CCAC's funding shortfall.</p> |
| <p>4. Value for services: CCAC should take an active role to ensure that its services provide stakeholders with value for their money, with consideration of the ability of certain organizations to contribute financially.</p> |
| <p>5. Partnership/collaboration: CCAC should establish stronger partnerships built on trust, which includes greater collaboration with stakeholders.</p> |

Options/Approaches

After reflecting on these guiding principles, participants worked together throughout the day to develop, discuss and prioritize four suggested options / approaches to address CCAC's funding gap. Participants individually prioritized the four options (each participant had three notes to cast for their preferred options). The results of their choices are as follows (the tally is shown in brackets):

1. Seek Tri-Council funding followed by development of a new funding model (21)

2. Streamline/modify services to reduce costs and find efficiencies (16)

3. Transform service offering/mandate to generate revenue (14)

4. Develop a fee-for-service assessment model (3)

3. Key Findings

Five key findings emerge from the stakeholder engagement process, which include participants' deliberations from the workshop, web conferences and Choicebook™.

1. Stakeholders highly value and strongly support CCAC's integrated program of standards development, assessment and certification
2. Stakeholders call for the fair distribution of costs to sustain the system
3. CCAC serves the "public good" and should therefore be supported by the government/public funds
4. CCAC should find ways to increase efficiencies and reduce costs
5. Given the funding shortfall, CCAC should explore new business opportunities for revenue generation

These key findings are elaborated upon below:

1. Stakeholders highly value and strongly support CCAC's integrated program of standards development, assessment and certification

Support for CCAC and integrated services: Throughout the engagement process, all stakeholder groups expressed strong support and goodwill for CCAC and its services. From an organizational perspective, the majority of Choicebook™ participants in all sectors agreed that CCAC delivers value to its stakeholders. Looking at CCAC's services, most Choicebook™ participants saw value in integrated services, as they agreed that CCAC should continue offering both standards development and assessment/certification services to have a successful Program. Likewise, most web conference and workshop participants expressed strong support for CCAC's integrated Program, noting that it has positively impacted their organizations and the quality of research conducted. Some participants referenced the relevance of ISO Standards, which they think demonstrates the value of keeping standards and certification together, while also providing a reference point for the level of quality that CCAC's Program should be aiming to achieve.

While the level of support for CCAC's services was strong overall, it is worth noting that participants from the large university sector and/or senior administrator (SA) roles were somewhat less insistent on the need for an integrated Program. The rationale for this position was explored during the web conferences, where it was suggested that this difference reflects a desire to decouple CCAC's services, with more focus on assessment/certification, rather than standards development. There was some discussion around using third party organizations instead of CCAC for assessment and certification, such as the Association for Assessment and Accreditation of Laboratory Animal Care (AAALAC). However, some participants cautioned that moving away from CCAC was problematic for several reasons, such as CCAC's credibility in the field, the costs of transition (e.g. some with AAALAC experience stated that it was not cheaper and included hidden costs), and regulatory requirements (i.e. eight provinces have amended regulations to their respective legislation to refer to CCAC standards).

Collective stakeholder action: Many participants demonstrated their support for CCAC and its services by calling for greater collective action from all stakeholders to help sustain CCAC and the animal care system overall. Participants from various sectors (i.e. government, medium / small university, NGRFs, private industry) voiced this sentiment in response to the "push back" from other stakeholders, particularly large universities. Some worry that if stakeholders don't collaborate to support CCAC, the result could be the imposition of a regulatory regime that is more costly and cumbersome. During the stakeholder workshop, some participants highlighted the value of CCAC's role in fostering a largely self-governing animal care system that, in comparison with other jurisdictions (e.g. UK and France), has given organizations greater

freedom and flexibility to conduct productive research. According to one private industry participant, this is a reason why stakeholders need to support CCAC. While some university participants agreed, in their view this is also a rationale for continued federal government/Tri-Council agencies' funding for CCAC's full Program.

A clear message emerging from the engagement process is that strong opposition to the CIHR/NSERC funding cuts (and more specifically, proposed cost recovery options for large universities) coexists with equally strong support for CCAC's Program and a willingness to work with CCAC and each other to achieve a sustainable future, both for the program and CCAC. In addition to expressing support for CCAC and its services, some of the participants (e.g. medium universities) commended CCAC for its consultation process, which they viewed as inclusive and constructive in bringing stakeholders together to collaborate around a way forward. Through this engagement process, CCAC sought to strengthen relationships with its stakeholders and encourage collaboration/partnerships.

2. Stakeholders call for the fair distribution of costs to sustain the system

Fair cost options for assessment: Stakeholders felt very strongly about the principle of fair distribution of costs to sustain the animal care system in Canada – this was a cross cutting theme throughout the engagement process. In the Choicebook™, the importance of fairness emerged in the responses participant gave to different user pay options. Across all sectors there was considerable support for passing on additional costs to institutions that require additional assessment visits due to probationary and non-compliance, as it leads to more work for CCAC. Additionally, a majority of stakeholders wanted consideration for an institution's ability to pay; although there was somewhat weaker support (i.e. agree rather than strongly agree) and substantive minorities disagreed (38% of large university participants strongly disagreed or disagreed). There was also little support for averaging costs across institutions, as it was not seen to be fair. While the most opposition came from private industry (70% disagreed), the majority of government and university participants also disagreed with this point. Lastly, the straight calculation approach did not garner majority support. The university sector was especially likely to disagree with this option, although government and private industry participants were more likely to support it.

Differing views on fair costs: As the engagement process unfolded, it became clear that stakeholders held different views on how to operationalize fairness, particularly with respect to allocating costs across different groups/sectors. In the web conferences, large universities were most strongly opposed to cost recovery, as they felt that they are already contributing significantly to support animal research and the animal care system. Their concerns were also expressed in the broader context of the plight of research funding for universities in general, with opposition to what they perceive to be the downloading of more costs to institutions and researchers. Some of the medium/small university and college participants shared similar concerns that increased indirect costs of research (e.g. CCAC assessment) would eventually

negatively impact their researchers and their work. Additionally, all of the NGRF participants stated that a cost recovery model was unacceptable for their sector because their organizations are not responsible for indirect research costs. They also noted that their donors' after-tax dollars are contributed voluntarily and are intended for direct research. Many felt that government and universities are ultimately responsible for paying for assessment/certification, as it is part of their obligation to provide a quality research environment. Notwithstanding the NGRFs' inability to provide indirect funding, they recognize the importance of CCAC's services and several offered to advocate on behalf of CCAC.

In contrast, some of the web conference participants were highly supportive of cost recovery for the CCAC Program. Some medium/small university and college web conference participants (including those with smaller institutions and/or newly developed research programs), noted that the CCAC Program is relatively inexpensive and helps ensure that research is conducted according to appropriate standards. Similarly, most federal government representatives were relatively open to the cost recovery model because of their familiarity and experience with cost recovery. Most private industry participants also strongly supported cost recovery, emphasizing that all stakeholders need to "step up" and pay their fair share (i.e. equitable to proportion of resources they use for assessment) to support CCAC. In their view, CCAC assessment is a necessary cost of doing business and should not be treated as an option for institutions. A few participants expressed particularly strong views around the need for large universities to contribute given that they receive and benefit from CCAC's assessment and certification services. However, it is worth noting that the views of some of the private industry workshop participants were tempered after learning more about the funding challenges universities face.

Clarifying assessment costs: To further define a fair cost recovery model for stakeholders, some medium/small university, college and private industry participants discussed the need to develop fair metrics/thresholds for calculating how much an institution pays for CCAC assessment / certification. Potential metrics include institution size (e.g. square footage), the amount of resources used, research dollars, and size of program. These types of metrics would help smaller organizations (e.g. community colleges) by imposing less, and more proportionate, costs to them. Additionally, some medium/small university and college participants suggested developing an explanatory matrix to outline the metrics/thresholds for institutions. This would help stakeholders better understand the cost recovery model, while also helping to inform their decision-making. Others were not keen on changing the costing model, noting that CCAC's current approach (based on the number of assessment days) is a practical and easy cost model.

Whole system costs: Workshop participants identified fairness/equality as a key principle to guide CCAC's decision making on its plan of action to address the funding challenge. As stated in earlier phases of the engagement process, participants felt that the costs to support the CCAC Program should be shared equally by all stakeholders. But for many participants, this principle is not restricted to the proposed cost recovery approach, but rather applies more broadly to the

animal research system as a whole. Most large university participants felt that the costs for the current system are not fairly shared across all stakeholders. They argued that large universities invest significant funds in building and maintaining research facilities but receive minimal support from the federal government and health charities. In their view, they are already paying their fair share.

Fee-for-service model/option: A small group of workshop participants developed a fee-for-service model for institutions, which incorporated cost recovery for assessments / certification. This model, conceived largely as a short-term option to “fix the funding crunch”, would be based on an institution’s cost per animal per assessment day. This option assumes that there is the possibility of including this type of incremental cost into research grant proposals, and that it would be acceptable to research funders. However, this option received very little support beyond the few participants who helped develop it. The large universities made a strong, clear statement (“cost recovery is not something the U15 can do”) in opposition to this option and cost recovery in general. As they noted – they are not willing to assume more costs, as they already have high costs to conduct research with animals, with which they do not receive adequate funding for already and have to rely on their own in-house budgets.

3. CCAC serves the “public good” and should therefore be supported by the government/public funds

Government should pay for “public good”: The opposition to proposed cost recovery options/approaches for addressing CCAC’s funding shortfall, particularly among large universities, remained strong in all phases of the engagement process. However, the rationale underlying this opposition is not in doubting CCAC’s value; rather, it is the notion that CCAC is serving “public good.” As a result, these stakeholders felt strongly that the government, and not institutions, should be responsible for providing adequate funding for all components of the Program. The Choicebook™ results revealed that the principle of cost recovery was found to be very contentious, especially among universities – less than a third (31%) strongly agreed or agreed that it is an effective way to deal with the shortfall (only 4% of large universities strongly agreed). Only private industry and government labs were more likely to agree than disagree with this point. Additionally, in the Choicebook™’s cost allocation exercise, a considerable share of costs was allocated to “Other”, rather than the other sectors identified (i.e. NGRFs, private institutions, academic and government institutions). This choice was particularly salient among SAs (allocating the largest share at 31%). In their rationale for this allocation, SAs were most likely to comment that the “Other” is government/Tri-Council agencies, who should bear greater costs because animal welfare in science is a “public good.” When asked to clarify this allocation to “Other” in the web conferences, many university and college participants agreed with the “public good” argument.

Reducing complete dependence on government funding: In the stakeholder workshop, while there continued to be opposition to cost recovery, participants did work to identify ideas and ways in which CCAC could reduce its complete

dependence on Tri-Agency funding for the longer term. The option (developed by participants) receiving the most support from participants was a phased approach that included a short-term reinstatement of CIHR/NSERC funding. For the medium to longer term, this option recommended examining the whole system to identify contributions and costs for a sustainable business model for the future. The basis of this option was consideration for the “big picture”, which means considering the benefits of animal research for society and the costs incurred by all stakeholders involved, both direct and indirect. In determining who is responsible for paying to sustain CCAC, many participants emphasized the importance of having the federal government provide adequate funding for CCAC, especially given the benefits of animal research and the high public interest in animal treatment. However, some participants think that the likelihood of CIHR/NSERC reinstating CCAC’s current level of funding is low, and for that reason were pushing for stakeholders to help close the funding gap and protect the Program by agreeing to contribute to the cost of assessment and certification services.

Maintaining an effective and credible system: As noted, workshop participants expect CCAC to apply the principles of effectiveness and credibility in coming to its decision on how to proceed. Their logic for advancing this principle is related to their view that the animal care oversight system should be effective, credible, have integrity, be transparent and inspire public trust and confidence in our animal care system. They see this as serving the national interest, in that our research can withstand scrutiny from the public and organizations, while also being competitive with other countries. They advanced this argument as part of their rationale for continued adequate funding for CCAC.

4. CCAC should find ways to increase efficiencies and reduce costs

Increase efficiency: The theme of identifying greater efficiencies in CCAC’s services emerged largely in response to the contested cost recovery options included in the Choicebook™. In the web conferences, participants from the large universities were most strongly opposed to the principle of cost recovery. As an alternative, they suggested that CCAC should examine ways to streamline service delivery and develop greater revenue generating services before embarking on cost recovery discussions with its stakeholders. Some also suggested that CCAC could perhaps modify its mandate to reduce costs. Workshop participants also identified the principles of efficiency and streamlining as key guideposts in developing an action plan for submission to the Tri-Agencies. To operationalize this principle, participants recommended that CCAC should examine how it delivers its services – particularly its assessments – to focus more on increasing efficiency internally and reducing its own costs.

Streamline/modify assessments: In line with this principle, one of the options developed by workshop participants and ranked in second place was streamlining/modifying CCAC services to reduce costs and find efficiencies, particularly those related to assessment activities. Participants suggested several ways for CCAC to be more efficient, three of which were

shared by others in the workshop. The first and most prevalent measure to increase efficiency is to reduce the frequency of assessment visits for an institution from three to five years, potentially using different levels of conditional compliance as a basis. A similar idea was raised in the web conferences with medium/small universities, colleges and research institutes, with the suggestion of having a level of maturity assigned to organizations based on the number of years of CCAC certification. According to this view, a simplified assessment process would result. However, some cautioned against this given how frequently animal use guidelines change.

The second suggested measure to improve efficiency with the assessment process was to establish an “insurance model”, which would essentially “put the resources where the problems are.” Within this model, high performing institutions would have diminished assessment costs (similar to auto insurance costs for having a good driving record). In contrast, non-compliance would result in increased assessment costs because more site visits would be required. However, one participant warned about the potential high costs associated with an appeals process. The third efficiency measure recommended was the use of proportionate/delegated reviews. In this model, CCAC would do an initial review of an institution, and then shift to delegated reviews for Category B protocols (i.e. little or no stress or discomfort). Other measures that were suggested included: making every second visit to an institution virtual or targeted (i.e. specific to areas with past problems or invasive research); having institutions’ staff participating more in facility inspection on an ongoing basis; and conducting non-scheduled/unannounced site visits.

5. Given the funding shortfall, CCAC should explore new business opportunities for revenue generation

Explore revenue generating services: A theme that emerged from both the workshop and web conferences revolved around potential business opportunities that CCAC might be able to leverage to help address its funding shortfall, as well as strengthen its operations. During the web conferences, large university participants (in the context of rejecting cost recovery options) argued that CCAC should be open to offering existing or new services to help generate revenue. On a related note, a few private industry participants also suggested that CCAC could explore fundraising options as a way to help sustain itself over the long term. According to this view, animal care is an issue that will appeal to the public. However, other participants had little confidence in the practicality of fundraising as a serious option. They agreed with CCAC’s perspective – while it may be a long-term option to help subsidize costs, it would be very difficult given the competitive environment and need for a sustained and reliable revenue stream to maintain the CCAC Program.

Long term business planning: At the workshop, some participants built on the revenue generation theme, suggesting that CCAC transform its service offering/mandate as an option for addressing its funding challenge. The main components of this option/approach are to temporarily freeze standards development as a way of reducing costs, and then develop revenue generating opportunities over the next fiscal year 2014-2015. One specific suggestion for fostering business

development was to expand CCAC's expertise by recruiting a board member and/or employee with a strong business development and/or marketing acumen to help sell the education and training components of CCAC's services to other stakeholders (e.g. Animal Care Committees) and those "outside of the stakeholder universe" (e.g. other countries, non-CCAC accredited institutions). Some participants were particularly supportive of the revenue potential for international accreditation. Most participants recognized that these types of options are inherently long-term oriented and don't address the short-term problem. Nonetheless, they felt that it should be explored now, in order to establish linkages between short and longer-term solutions for CCAC. Several other participants were concerned that costs to find board members and employees with the appropriate expertise may outweigh the revenue being generated, but others noted that CCAC may "have to spend some money to make money."

4. Conclusions

Overall the results of the stakeholder engagement reveal a shared commitment to helping CCAC sustain its integrated standards, assessment and certification program so that it can continue to serve the animal welfare in science system (research, testing and teaching). Stakeholders found common ground around the value of the CCAC program, in terms of the benefits it brings to quality research, competitiveness and broader public trust in the use of animals in science in Canada. This good will and respect is an asset that CCAC can leverage as it charts a course for its future. Workshop participants articulated a set of guiding principles that they believe CCAC must be mindful of as it builds its business plan, which must address a significant funding decrease from the Tri-Council agencies. It will be important for CCAC to reflect and speak to these principles (efficiency/streamlining, effectiveness and credibility, fairness and equality, value for money, and partnerships/collaboration) in its business plan.

Stakeholders did not coalesce around a cost recovery model to address CCAC's funding gap, as there were differing views around what they considered to be a fair allocation across the system. Cost recovery continues to be a contested option, especially for the large universities and NGRFs. However, there was also recognition that what is required for the medium to longer-term is a new business model that reduces CCAC's reliance on funding from the Tri-Council agencies. To that end, stakeholders expressed willingness and interest in helping CCAC to build that model. In addition, stakeholders also offered a variety of ideas and options for revenue generation and cost efficiencies, which CCAC has and will continue to consider carefully as part of its action plan.

A Note of Thanks

A word of acknowledgement and thanks is in order for all of CCAC's many stakeholders who participated in good faith in one or more phases of this engagement process. Your time, energy and contributions to help CCAC discern a path forward are very much appreciated. Your ongoing involvement will be crucial to CCAC in the months and years ahead as it transitions to a new sustainable business model. Thank you all.

Appendix A

Sustaining Canada's Oversight System for Animal Welfare in Science Stakeholder Engagement Process

A. Web Conference Organizations

Web Conference 1 – October 7, 2013

Grouping	Large universities and federal government laboratories
Number of Participants	15
Organizations	<p><i>Large universities:</i> Dalhousie University, Laval University, University of Manitoba, McGill University, Université de Montréal, Queen's University, University of Saskatchewan*, University of Toronto</p> <p><i>Federal government:</i> Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Department of National Defence*, Environment Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada</p>

Web Conference 2 – October 7, 2013

Grouping	Non-governmental research funders (NGRF)
Number of Participants	8
Organizations	Canadian Cancer Society*, Canadian Diabetes Association, Heart & Stroke Foundation of Canada, The Kidney Foundation of Canada, Multiple Sclerosis Society Canada, Parkinson Society Canada*

Web Conference 3 – October 8, 2013

Grouping	Medium / small universities, colleges and other research institutes
Number of Participants	14
Organizations	<p><i>Universities / colleges:</i> Grand Prairie Regional College, Laurentian University, University of Lethbridge, Memorial University*, Collège communautaire du Nouveau Brunswick, University of Prince Edward Island, Université de Sherbrooke, Thompson Rivers University, Trent University, University of Winnipeg</p> <p><i>Research institutes:</i> Institut de cardiologie de Montréal, Institut de recherches cliniques de Montréal</p> <p><i>*Federal government:</i> Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (participant attended due to scheduling challenges with the October 7 date)</p>

Web Conference 4 – October 8, 2013

Grouping	Private industry
Number of Participants	11
Organizations	AccelLAB, Amgen, Charles River Pre-Clinical Services Montreal, CiToxLAB, Feedlot Health Management Services*, Kingfisher International, Primus Bio-Resources, Qu Biologics, Sanofi Pasteur, Vivocore

*These organizations had 2 representatives present on the web conference.

Appendix B

Sustaining Canada's Oversight System for Animal Welfare in Science *Stakeholder Engagement Process*

B. Stakeholder Consensus Workshop Organizations

Large universities:

- University of Alberta
- University of British Columbia
- University of Manitoba
- McGill University
- Université de Montréal
- Queen's University
- University of Saskatchewan
- University of Toronto

Medium/small universities:

- University of Lethbridge
- Memorial University

Research institutes:

- Institut de cardiologie de Montréal

Federal government:

- Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada
- Defence Research and Development Canada
- Environment Canada

Private industry:

- Amgen
- Feedlot Health Management Services
- Kingfisher International
- Sanofi Pasteur
- Vivocore

Non-governmental research funders (NGRF):

- The Kidney Foundation of Canada