



Feast Centre for Indigenous STBBI Research  
Centre du festin traditionnel de recherche autochtone sur les ITSS

## Addressing concepts of Gender and Gender Analysis in Research Proposals

If you are reading this guide, you may be in the process of developing or refining a research project proposal for the Feast Centre. An essential part of a rigorous research proposal will include addressing and analysing gender within the context of your research. This guide will provide a brief introduction to gender and gender analysis and pose some questions you can ask yourself to inform your research proposal. It is expected that research proposals will integrate concepts of sex and gender into their research proposals where appropriate.

Sex and Gender in Research according to the CIHR

According to the CIHR, there is “significant evidence to demonstrate that biological and social differences between women, men, girls, boys, and gender-diverse people contribute to differences in their health. Sex (biological attributes) and gender (sociocultural factors) influence our risk of developing certain diseases, how well we respond to medical treatments, and how often we seek health care. Accounting for sex and gender in health research has the potential to make health research more rigorous, more reproducible and more applicable to everyone.” (CIHR, <https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/50833.html>). We encourage you to make use of the guides provided by the CIHR on their website, when drafting and refining your research proposals for the Feast Centre, as we are a CIHR funded research institute in addressing concepts of sex and gender and gender analysis. Integrating concepts of sex and gender into research proposals, as outlined by CIHR, is important to assess how diverse gendered people or groups are affected by STBBI. Strong applications will include a robust Indigenous gender analysis in the context of your research proposal. The CIHR website includes rich resources in incorporating gender analysis into different areas of research: <https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/50836.html>

There are resources available on the CIHR website on how to integrate concepts of sex and gender into your research proposal, and guides that speak to the importance and the impacts of doing so. The CIHR webpage, “What is Gender, What is Sex/” (<https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/48642.html>) is a good place to start. How is sex and gender addressed within the context of your research proposal? Where are you drawing your understanding of these concepts from? Within the context of your research, you may want to draw out these concepts further, through a decolonized, Indigenizing lens. Asking yourself some questions to guide a deeper understanding of these concepts:

- What do concepts of sex and gender mean in relation to STBBI research?

- How do concepts of sex and gender intersect with other aspects of identity or socio-economic status?
- How might your proposal account for people of multiple genders, gender diverse, 2Spirit or Trans individuals participating in your study?
- How might your research be interrogating different issues related to Indigenous STBBI using a gender lens?
- How are you bringing in further research and resources to inform how you are addressing gender in your research proposal?

If you feel that your proposal does not require the inclusion a gender analysis, how are you addressing why these considerations are not relevant to and thus excluded from your proposed research? As outlined by Hankivsky, Springer and Hunting (2022, 213-214), ask yourself the following questions to consider the exclusion of gender or gender analysis:

- How might the exclusion of gender or gender analysis be a limitation of your research proposal? Given existing knowledge in the relevant literature, are there plausible gender and/or sex factors that could be considered?
- Does your literature review and cite prior studies that support the existence (or lack) of significant differences between genders?
- Does your literature review indicate how previous past research has taken gender or sex into account?

When planning your research proposal, if you consider gender to be important to your proposed research, you might ensure your research design centres concepts of sex/ gender in the following ways (Hankivsky, Springer & Hunting, 2022, 213-214):

- Does your research question(s) reference sex/gender by addressing relevant groups or phenomena such as differences between the experiences of various identified gender groups or seeking to understand a gendered experience (such as masculinity for example)?
- Is your research methods appropriate to capture gender or sex-based factors, or is it possible to collect data that are disaggregated by gender or sex?
- Are inclusion and exclusion criteria justified in respect to sex/ gender?
- How are your data collection methods appropriate for an investigation of sex/ gender?
- How do your research methods for data collection and analysis capture the interactions and relationships among health determinants such as broader social structures and sex/gender?
- Have you identified and addressed relevant ethical issues to the proposed research with respect to sex and/or gender?

### **What is an Indigenous Gender Analysis?**

The Feast Centre for Indigenous STBBI Research supports community led Indigenous STBBI research, which in mobilizing Indigenous and decolonizing methodologies, effect the co-creation of new Indigenous research knowledge. This work is central to Indigenous People's and

allied researcher's efforts counter the oppressive and colonizing processes that continue to accompany much STBBI research (Varcoe and McKenzie 2022). It is important to consider how "Colonial processes and discourses were and continue to be used to affect Indigenous communities and bodies in multiple and complex ways that are racialized, gendered, and classed" (170). An Indigenous informed gender analysis may address and take into consideration how gender identity and/or gender roles are affected by colonial structures and consider or analyse further impacts on Indigenous communities and bodies in complex and intersecting ways. For example, consider how Indigenous women's experiences are simultaneously gendered, racialized and classed within "historical and ongoing raced-based colonial" violence against Indigenous People's (Varcoe and McKenzie 2022, 170). Research may seek to explain for example, the imperative need for a gender analysis that make visible the interrelationships impacted by institutionalized heteropatriarchy within Indigenous women's health, including the ways colonial health systems have "marginalized Indigenous women, disrupted Indigenous women and men's relations, and erased traditional and contemporary Indigenous identities that do not "fit" this gender binary, including trans and Two-Spirit people" (170). In this example, Varcoe and McKenzie note that an intersectional approach does not automatically "imply a decolonizing approach" (170), which foregrounds the importance of developing a gender analysis grounded in and reflecting the knowledges of the diverse Indigenous communities or organizations you are working with, and within the context of diverse research projects within the four pillars of health research (basic science, clinical science, epidemiology, and social science).

Questions to ask yourself?

- How do people in the community or organization you are working with understand sex, gender, or gender identity? Are there terms in the language for understandings of gender?
- How are these concepts intersecting with or affected by other community or cultural identities, stories, histories, and relationships?
- How does the language used in your research proposal align with these community understandings and how participants may self-identify? What specific language is used in your proposal and where are you drawing your knowledge from? How do you understand these terms in your research and how are they understood in wider (Queer, Indigenous, STBBI health research) discourse?

### **Gender and Language**

It is important to use respectful and accurate language when discussing gender and gender identity in your research proposal. Referring to online guides such as the [GLAAD Media Reference Guide](#) will help ensure that the terminology you use is respectful and help inform how you use language when writing your research proposal. Some key points to remember:

- [The word "transgender" should always be used as an adjective.](#)
- [Use respectful and accurate terminology](#)

- [Ask and use language relevant to the community](#)
- Consider that language and its use evolves over time. Some words that you might use in addressing gender include:

afab (assigned female at birth)	Gender identity	Trans
Agender	Gender non-conforming	Transfeminine
amab (assigned male at birth)	Genderqueer	Transgender
Assigned sex	Imperialism	Transmasculine
Binary	Indigiqueer	Transmisogyny
BIPOC (Black & Indigenous People of Colour)	intersex	Transphobia
Cisgender	Lesbian	Two-Spirit (2S)
Colonialism	male	Two-Spirited
Eurocentric	masc	Trans
female	Non-binary (NB)	Transfeminine
femme	Pronouns	Transgender
Gender fluid	Queer	Transmasculine

## Resources Cited

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## Further Reading

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