The Merit Indicators should be used in conjunction with the Peer Review Manual, which outlines how reviewers arrive at a rating.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Merit of the Proposal</th>
<th>EXCEPTIONAL</th>
<th>OUTSTANDING</th>
<th>VERY STRONG</th>
<th>STRONG</th>
<th>MODERATE</th>
<th>INSUFFICIENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proposed research program is clearly presented, is extremely original and innovative and is likely to have impact by leading to groundbreaking advances in the area and/or leading to a technology or policy that addresses socio-economic or environmental needs.</td>
<td>Research excellence, accomplishments, and service are superior to others.</td>
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<td>Long-term vision and short-term objectives are clearly defined.</td>
<td>Contributions presented in the application are of high quality.</td>
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<td>The methodology is clearly defined and appropriate.</td>
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The application clearly demonstrates how the research activities to be supported are distinct from those funded (or applied for) by other sources.

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<td>Proposed research program is clearly presented, is high original and innovative and is likely to have impact by contributing to groundbreaking advances in the area and/or leading to a technology or policy that addresses socio-economic or environmental needs.</td>
<td>Contributions presented in the application are superior in quality.</td>
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<td>Long-term goals are clearly defined and short-term objectives are well planned.</td>
<td>The methodology is clearly described and appropriate.</td>
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Training philosophy and research training plans are of the highest quality: highly appropriate, clearly defined and expected to produce top quality results in terms of the overall approach and specific projects for HQP.

Training philosophy and research training plans are superior: highly appropriate, clearly defined and expected to produce quality results in terms of the overall approach and specific projects for HQP.

Training philosophy and research training plans are appropriate and clearly defined in terms of the overall approach and specific projects for HQP.

Training philosophy and research training plans are partially appropriate and partially defined in terms of the overall approach and specific projects for HQP.

Training philosophy and research training plans are not appropriate and not clearly defined in terms of the overall approach and specific projects for HQP.

Training philosophy and research training plans are below an acceptable level in terms of the research training environment provided and HQP contributions to research.

Most HQP move on to positions that require skills gained through the training received.

Most HQP move on to impactful positions that require skills gained through the training received.

HQP generally move on to impactful positions that require skills gained through the training received.

HQP generally move on to positions that require skills gained through the training received.

Some HQP move on to positions that require skills gained through the training received.

HQP rarely move on to positions that require skills gained through the training received.

 Past training is at the highest level in terms of the research training environment provided and HQP contributions to research.

 Past training is far superior to others in terms of the research training environment provided and HQP contributions to research.

 Past training is superior to others in terms of the research training environment provided and HQP contributions to research.

 Past training compares favourably with others in terms of the research training environment provided and HQP contributions to research.

 Past training is modest relative to others in terms of the research training environment provided and HQP contributions to research.

 Past training is below an acceptable level in terms of the research training environment provided and HQP contributions to research.

 Challenges related to equity, diversity and inclusion specific to the institution and field of research are clearly described.

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