Research Support Fund (RSF)

The Research Support Fund (replacing the Federal Indirect Cost Program) is a Government of Canada fund that helps
Canadian universities, colleges, and their affiliated research hospitals and institutes with the hidden costs of research.

- About the program [1]
- Eligible Expenses [2]

Definition of Indirect Costs

There a number of centralized institutional activities and services that support the research mandate of the University. These vary in scope and size but are critical to our success.

Institutional Activities and Support Services include the following areas:

- Library: operations and information acquisitions and resources
- Computing and Communications: computing infrastructure including central services, telecommunications and data services
- Physical Plant: utilities, housekeeping, maintenance, grounds, and planning services (excluding ancillary operations)
- Research Administration: Office of Research services including central animal services, grants and contracts administration and legislated requirements for reporting on grants and activities, communications and business development
- Central Support Services: a wide range of services ranging from payroll, accounting including research accounting, audit, environmental and occupational health, security services and purchasing to institutional costs such as legal and insurance costs

Each of these activities is vital to the overall effectiveness of the institution. Coordinating and delivering these services is a complex task and there are significant efficiencies to be obtained by managing them centrally.

Overview how University of Guelph Allocates the Research Support Funds grant

In general, the allocation of RSF to specific units that support research activity at the University is calculated as:

Total Unit Costs \( \times \) Research % \( \times \) Federal % \( \times \) RSF Grant / RSF eligible costs

Units containing University overhead costs are identified within the broad categories outlined as eligible by the RSF program. The specific units, by category, are as follows:

- **Facilities** (Utilities, Physical Resources, Waste and Chemical Resources, Advanced Analysis Centres)
- **Management and Administration** (Office of Research, Research Financial Services, Administrative Offices, Insurance, Research Admin Information Management System)
Regulatory (VP Research-General Risk, Animal Care Services, Environmental Health & Safety)

It is then determined what portion of the unit costs are used to support research activities, using various assumptions depending on the specific unit.

The total research costs determined above are prorated to reflect the portion of research that is federally funded using a three year average of total funding received from NSERC, SSHRC, CIHR and Networks of Centres of Excellences divided over total received from external sponsors (excluding RSF & CFI). This represents total costs eligible for RSF funding.

The actual amount of the RSF grant that the University receives does not cover the total amount of eligible costs, so the grant is attributed on a pro rata basis to the eligible costs of each of the units.

Performance Indicators and Target Outcomes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Eligible expenditure category</th>
<th>Output</th>
<th>Institutional performance objective</th>
<th>Performance Indicator</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research Facilities</td>
<td>Invest portion of Research Support Fund grant in operations, upgrades and maintenance of the AAC.</td>
<td>Increase the use of centralized research scientific equipment through the University’s AAC (Advanced Analysis Centre) by offering cost-effective and efficient testing and experiment support services to researchers.</td>
<td>Continuous improvement in both volume of services processed and response times for research services across all AAC research service facilities compared to previous fiscal year.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Resources</td>
<td>Invest portion of Research Support Fund to support RDM process (staff and IT resources)</td>
<td>Increase the volume of new collection and improve the access to research data through a centralized research management data (RDM) base information system</td>
<td>Increase in total number of data sets and associated code books captured in the RDM system each fiscal year.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Management and Administration of an institution’s research enterprise</td>
<td>Invest portion of Research Support Fund to support hiring of Project manager, system procurement and technical support to complete Phase 1.</td>
<td>Complete initial phase of the implementation of a new research application processing system to convert paper-based process into on-line paper-less system.</td>
<td>Completion of conversion design and planning and the creation of test system. Begin initial transaction in FY 2016-17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Regulatory Requirement and Accreditation</td>
<td>Improving the comprehensiveness of programs to increase monitoring of higher risk protocols and procedures to mitigate risk and ensure compliance as per regulatory</td>
<td>1. Review and/or development of Environmental Health and Safety related policies 2. Radiation Safety Program review,</td>
<td>• Number of policies reviewed, revised, consolidated and/or developed. • Increase in proactive reviews of all protocols under our</td>
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commitments and requirements.  

Revision and implementation continued focusing on x-rays and lasers. Including completion of enhanced inventories and tracking mechanisms, increase in inspections development of on-line refresher training.

3. Regulatory requirements: Continued communications and program updates to ensure compliance with new GHS-WHMIS requirements.

4. Creation of standardized lab inspection program.

| Intellectual Property and Knowledge Mobilization | Invest portion of Research Support Fund to support faculty disclosures including communication, training, and support services to faculty. | To be one of Canada’s most inventive universities. | National ranking of universities by number of disclosures per faculty. |
| Research Facilities | Increase volume of activity as measured by tests/procedures performed in 2015-16 by 5% as compared to 2014-15. | Overall, there has been a 9% increase in user fee income in 2015-16 as compared to 2014-15 (increases of 5.2% in internal income and 34% external income). | There is hope of increasing volume of activity and users by 5% next year but this is dependent upon how unsuccessful U of G faculty members are in securing grants to support their research. 84% of our total income for 2015-16 came from U of G users. |
| | | There was a 9.6% increase in the total number of U of G faculty users as compared to 2014-15 (14 in total, which could correspond to up to 50 new users when students and staff are factored in). | An improvement in the stability of the global economy will help retain our external industrial users. |
| Research Resources | From a baseline established in 2014/2015 increase volume of data and usage | Increase in number of: | Increase volume of data and usage statistics on the RDM in FY 2016-17 by 10%. |

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<th>Eligible expenditure category</th>
<th>Target Outcome for 2015/16</th>
<th>Reported Outcome</th>
<th>Target Outcome for 2016/17</th>
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Management and Administration of an institution's research enterprise

Completion of Phase 1 of a new system. Includes successful pilot testing of first module in FY 2015-16.

Phase 1 of the implementation of the new electronic administration system is well underway. A project manager was hired in July 2015, the system was purchased in August 2015 and system configuration and design of e-form for the first module, human ethics, is 80% complete.

Testing, piloting and rollout (go-live) of the first module, human ethics. System configuration and design of all e-forms for the second module, grants and contracts, 80% complete.

Regulatory Requirement and Accreditation

1. Establish a baseline for tracking number of participant established and increase Medical Surveillance Modules implemented.

2. Radiation Safety Program revised and implemented. All laboratory inspections completed (aim = 100%). Established baseline for number of participants who complete the on-line training in the required time frame. All laboratories identified as no longer active properly.

3. Designated Substance Program implemented and training completed to

1. Comprehensive Medical surveillance program implemented including biohazard, radiation and diving modules.

2. Radiation safety program reviewed, and revised with new radiation manual now pending review and approval by the regulator. Completion of enhanced inventories, and tracking mechanism. Completion of laboratory inspections. Inactive labs decommissioned. Online refresher training implemented.

3. Designated substance program established with assessments completed and under review for research - WHIMS-GHS compliance

1. Identification, review and/or development of all Environmental Health and Safety related policies to be undertaken

2. Additional Radiation Safety Officer to be hired to support the Radiation Safety Program. To facilitate compliance and improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the program, the review, revision and development of radiation safety policies, processes, operating procedures, checklists and training packages to be continued focusing on x-rays and lasers.

3. Regulatory requirements–
3. Biosafety program reviewed and revised, inspection schedule developed, 10% increase in inspections.

4. Biosafety program reviewed and revised. Inspection strategy and schedule established. - Standardized comprehensive lab inspection program.

Communications and program updates

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<th>Intellectual Property and Knowledge Mobilization</th>
<th>Achieve top-five in national ranking.</th>
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<td>For 2014 (most recent national data available), UG had more reported inventions per faculty than any other Canadian university.</td>
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Achieve top-five in national ranking.

Communication Stories related to use of Research Support Funds at the University of Guelph

2015/16 - Announcement: Launch of the Research Administration and Information Management System (RAIMS) [4]

2015/16 - Technology and expertise that foster innovation [5]

Reports by Fiscal Year

Click on one of the links below to view the University of Guelph's Summary of its use of the Research Support Funds by category, Impact Statements (relevant to the FICP program prior to 2015/16) and Annual Outcomes Report by fiscal year:

- Use of Funds [6] (pie graph by category)
- Impact Statements [7] (relevant to the FICP program which preceded RSF)
- Annual Outcomes Reports [8]

Source URL: https://www.uoguelph.ca/finance/report/research-support-fund

Links:
[5] https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/article/technology-and-expertise-foster-innovation
[6] https://www.uoguelph.ca/finance/reports/ficp-expenditures
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