



## 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]
- [Financial Administration Guide](#) [3]

### Definition of Indirect Costs

There are 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:

$$\text{Total Unit Costs} \times \text{Research \%} \times \text{Federal \%} \times \text{RSF Grant} / \text{RSF eligible costs}$$

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)

**Resources** (Library Operations, Library Information Resources, Central Computing Systems)

**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)

**Intellectual Property** (Catalyst Centre)

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 (2020/21)

Eligible expenditure category	Output	Institutional performance objective	Performance Indicator
<b>Research Facilities</b>	Invest a portion of Research Support Fund grant in operations, upgrades and maintenance of the Advanced Analysis Centre (AAC).	To increase the use of centralized research scientific equipment through the University's AAC (Advanced Analysis Centre) by offering cost- effective and efficient testing and experimental support services to researchers.	Continuous improvement in both volume of services processed, relevance of services provided and response times for research services across all AAC research service facilities.  Increase usage by researchers across campus (students, staff, faculty).
<b>Research Resources</b>	Invest portion of Research Support Fund to support new research data management (RDM) process (staff and IT resources)	To increase the volume of collection and improve the access to research data through a centralized research management data information system.  Increase the number of Data Management Plans (DMP) created by researchers. Increase the use of the Canada-wide tool DMP Assistant to create plans.	Increase in total number of data sets and associated code books captured in the RDM system each fiscal year.  Increase number of registered researchers and associated data management plans in the DMP Assistant system each fiscal year.
<b>Management and Administration of an institution's research enterprise</b>	Invest portion of Research Support Fund to support e-system development for the administration of grants and contracts.	Complete research information database 'rebuild' that houses grants and contracts information for use by Office of Research Services staff.	Continued automation and process improvement of research administrative processes for staff and reporting to stakeholders.
<b>Regulatory requirement and Accreditation</b>	Invest portion of Research Support Fund for salary support of personnel within	Continued implementation of the Post-Approval Review (PAR) program in support of	Terms of Reference for the post-Approval Review (PAR) program created and

	Animal Care Services for Post Approval monitoring	PIs and their research teams when conducting research involving animals.	approved by the Animal Care Committee; PAR Coordinator has met with PIs and/or conducted on-site events with 95% of UofG's PIs using animals in research.
<b>Intellectual Property and Knowledge Mobilization</b>	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.
<b>Eligible expenditure category</b>	<b>Target Outcome for 2019-20</b>	<b>Reported Outcome</b>	<b>Target Outcome for 2020-21</b>
<b>Research Facilities</b>	Increase total user fee income by 5% because as the equipment ages, maintenance costs increase. Income totals are dependent on factors out of AAC's control such as the success of U of G faculty in getting grants.	In 2018-19, the target for user fee income for the AAC was exceeded by over 15%. This total includes both internal and external income. Three AAC facilities exceeded their overall target user fee income by 15%, 4% and 47%, respectively. The other 2 met 75% of their target. Projected incomes will be adjusted in 2019-20.	Increase total user fee income by 5% because as the equipment ages, maintenance costs increase. Income totals are dependent on factors out of AAC's control such as the success of U of G faculty in getting grants.
	With the AAC under the umbrella of the Office of Research, it is hoped that awareness in AAC services will increase and result in increased usership. We will aim to support new faculty upon arrival to ensure the long term viability of the AAC as a core facility.	The total number of faculty members using the AAC increased by 4% from last year (157 to 163). It is encouraging that the proportion of faculty members that used more than one facility increased from 36% to 42% of users.	With the AAC under the umbrella of the Office of Research, it is hoped that awareness in AAC services will increase and result in increased usership. We will aim to support new faculty upon arrival to ensure the long term viability of the AAC as a core facility.
	An AAC Steering Committee (headed by the VP Research) was recently established to outline the future direction of AAC (eg. AAC director, funding support, equipment acquisition, grant applications). It is expected that facilities will be required to submit 5 y business plans to help this committee develop a new long-term sustainability model for the AAC. New budget models may be forthcoming.	External user fee income decreased significantly compared to last year (\$103,941 in 2017-18, \$76,886 in 2018-19) but the numbers are misleading. There was a large prepayment made in NMR 2017-18 that skews the overall tally. If the external income totals from 2014-17 are averaged, the external income total is slightly lower than that achieved in	An AAC Steering Committee (headed by the VP Research) was recently established to outline the future direction of AAC (eg. AAC director, funding support, equipment acquisition, grant applications). It is expected that facilities will be required to submit 5 y business plans to help this committee develop a new long-term sustainability model for the AAC. New budget models

2018-19. External income may be forthcoming. fluctuates as it is highly dependent upon factors over which the AAC has no control such as the economy and provincial budgets.

Although the AAC has been fairly consistent in user fee income totals, there will be continued variability in the yearly total user fee income due to such things as the availability of Tri-Agency funds, the global budget (for external users), the retirement of major users and the success of AAC grant applications to obtain new equipment (which can attract more users).

The AAC website has been upgraded and moved to the Office of Research server. All facility websites follow the same template which makes navigating in between sites much more fluid. AAC is now a separate unit in the University of Guelph (not associated with Colleges as in previous years), and as such separate safety documentation had to be created. This is shown in the newly created AAC Health and Safety Handbook. Documents will be regularly reviewed and updated by AAC Health and Safety representatives and inspections are set to begin in 2019-20.

**Research Resources**

Increase volume of data and usage statistics by 15%.

Increase usage statistics in FY2018-19 by 15%.

*NOTE: Figure projections for* Increase volume of data  
*FY2018-19 were based on* deposit and download by  
*the expectation of the* 15%.  
*release/finalization of the new*  
*Tri-Agency data management* Increase deposit statistics in  
*policy and this did not occur.* FY2020 - 21 by 20%.  
 Data sets: 28 new data sets Increase number of

		added in 2018-2019. The total size of deposited data was 78.28GB. Data sets number increased by 86%. This exceeded the target.	researchers using the DMP Assistant in FY2020 - 21 by 15%.
	Increase number of researchers using the DMP Assistant in FY2018-19 by 15%.	Usage statistics: Number of downloads during FY2018-19 was 4,127. Download number increased by 258%, exceeded the target.	Number of Library consultations done on research data management/DMP tool.
		DMP: There were 128 users in FY2018-19 and 119 plans created. *Note: this number also includes users and plans created as part of a course. More importantly: Food from Thought and Ontario Agri-Food Innovation Alliance researchers all have DMP requirements moving forward. The number of researchers increased by 412%. The number of users exceeded the target. The number of plans increased by 644%. This also exceeded the target.	
<b>Management and Administration of an institution's research enterprise</b>	Testing, piloting and rollout (go-live) of the second module, grants and contracts.	Significant progress was made on the development of the business process management tool (internal research database) for back office administrative data entry functions for grants and contracts processes. Go-live is scheduled for May 2019.	Roll-out (go-live) of back office business processing tool for grants and contracts for utilization by staff, stabilization of the tool (bug fixes), evaluation of the implementation, measurement of workflow improvements, refresher training for staff, and planning for future improvements and changes.
<b>Regulatory Requirement and Accreditation</b>	Initiate a committee of the compliance units (Research Risk, Ethics and Animal Care Services) to develop more consistent processes and identify improved	Committee of compliance units established with a mandate to share and implement best practices and apply a consistent approach in the processes of each unit.	Strengthen support for the Research Ethics Office through the addition of a second permanent research ethics coordinator position.
<b>Intellectual Property</b>	Maintain top five national ranking, in terms of inventions reported per research dollar.	For 2018-19, UG reported 206 inventions, with a 3-year average of 189. The 3-year average results in approximately 1 invention per	Maintain top five national ranking, in terms of inventions reported per research dollar.

\$0.8M of research, which places UG among the top Universities in the country in that category.

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

2019/20 - [Enhancing research ethics at U of G](#) [4]

2019/20 - [Turning research knowledge into action](#) [5]

2018/19 - Predatory journals: <https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/article/predatory-journals> [6]

2018/19 - Open Access: <https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/article/open-access> [7]

2017/18 - [New animal care program gives researchers better insights](#) [8]

2017/18 - [Using Data Management Plans will keep you research data safe and give your research more exposure](#) [9]

2016/17 - [New office will help UofG research get out to the world](#) [10]

2015/16 - [Technology and expertise that foster innovation](#) [11]

## 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](#) [12] (pie graph by category)
- [Impact Statements](#) [13] (relevant to the FICP program which preceded RSF)
- [Annual Outcomes Reports](#) [14]

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

### Links

[1] <http://www.rsf-fsr.gc.ca/home-accueil-eng.aspx#>

[2] <http://www.rsf-fsr.gc.ca/administer-administrer/expenditures-dependences-eng.aspx>

[3] <http://www.rsf-fsr.gc.ca/administer-administrer/guide-eng.aspx>

- [4] <https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/article/enhancing-research-ethics-u-g>
- [5] <https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/article/turning-research-knowledge-action>
- [6] <https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/article/predatory-journals>
- [7] <https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/article/open-access>
- [8] <https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/article/new-animal-care-program-gives-researchers-better-insights>
- [9] <https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/article/using-data-management-plans-will-keep-your-research-data-safe-and-give-your-research-more>
- [10] <http://www.uoguelph.ca/research/article/new-office-will-help-u-g-research-get-out-world>
- [11] <https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/article/technology-and-expertise-foster-innovation>
- [12] <https://www.uoguelph.ca/finance/reports/ficp-expenditures>
- [13] <https://www.uoguelph.ca/finance/reports/ficp-impact-statements>
- [14] <https://www.uoguelph.ca/finance/reports/ficp-outcomes-reports>