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
- Eligible Expenses
- Financial Administration Guide

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:

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

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)
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

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<th>Eligible expenditure category</th>
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<td>Research Facilities</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 in FY 2015-16</td>
<td>Invest portion of Research Support Fund grant in operations, upgrades and maintenance of the AAC.</td>
<td>Increase volume of activity as measured by tests/procedures performed in 2015-16 by 5% as compared to 2014-15.</td>
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<td>Research Resources</td>
<td>Increase the volume of 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 in FY 2015-16</td>
<td>Invest portion of Research Support Fund to support new RDM process (staff and IT resources)</td>
<td>From a baseline established in 2014/2015 and increase volume of data and usage statistics on the RDM in FY 2015-16 by 10%.</td>
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<td>Management and Administration of an institution’s research enterprise</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 user training and testing of initial transaction in FY 2015-16</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>Completion of Phase 1 of a new system. Includes successful pilot testing of first module in FY 2015-16.</td>
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Regulatory Requirements and Accreditation

Increase level of monitoring of higher risk protocols and procedures to mitigate risk and ensure regulatory.

- Increase in numbers of identified protocols and processes requiring medical surveillance
- Increase in proactive reviews of all protocols under our Radiation Safety Program including review of department checklists and training packages.
- The development of a Designated Substance program including the assessment of designated substances in research.

1. Implementation of a comprehensive medical surveillance program that includes modules in the research areas of radiation, biohazards, and diving
2. Radiation Safety: Program reviewed, revised and implemented accordingly. Including completion of enhanced inventories and tracking mechanism, increase in laboratory inspections development of on-line refresher training.
3. Designated Substances Program: comprehensive assessment completed with input from various stakeholders including the joint health and safety committees, program rolled-out.

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

1. Radiation Safety Program reviewed, 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 decommissioned (aim= 100% labs identified decommissioned and 85% of action items closed).
2. Designated Substance Program implemented and training 100% completed to required stakeholders.
3. Biosafety program reviewed and revised,
Inspection schedule developed, 10% increase in inspections.

Intellectual Property and Knowledge Mobilization
To be one of Canada’s most inventive universities.
National ranking of universities by number of disclosures per faculty.
Invest portion of Research Support Fund to support faculty disclosures including communication, training, and support services to faculty.
Achieve top-five in national ranking.

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 [4] (pie graph by category)
- Impact Statements [5] (relevant to the FICP program which preceded RSF)
- Annual Outcomes Reports [6]

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

Links:
[4] https://www.uoguelph.ca/finance/reports/ficp-expenditures
[5] https://www.uoguelph.ca/finance/reports/ficp-impact-statements
[6] https://www.uoguelph.ca/finance/reports/ficp-outcomes-reports