Research Support Fund (RSF)

INFORMATION HAS MOVED: Information on the Research Support Fund and Institutional Project Grant has been moved to: https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/discover-our-research/facts-and-figures/research-support-fund [1]

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 [2]
- Eligible Expenses [3]
- Financial Administration Guide [4]

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 X Research % X Federal % X 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)

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 (2021/22)

Eligible expenditure category	Output	Institutional performance objective	Performance Indicator
Research Facilities	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).
Research Resources	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.
Management and Administration of an	Invest portion of Research Support Fund to support e-	Identify system requirements and complete Request for	Continued automation and process improvement of

institution's research enterprise	system development for the integrated administration of animal ethics, human ethics, biosafety and grants and contracts.	Proposal (RFP) process.	research administrative processes for staff and reporting to stakeholders.
Regulatory requirement and Accreditation	Invest portion of Research Support Fund for salary support of personnel within Animal Care Services for Post Approval monitoring	Continued implementation of the Post-Approval Review (PAR) program in support of PIs and their research teams when conducting research involving animals.	Continue to implement the full PAR program focusing on direct support to researchers and their team by involving PAR in the review of all AUP annual renewals, developing refinement in animal user, and offering PAR services with species and procedure expertise that will also add to PAR's goal of encouraging and modelling best practices in animal-based research.
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.
Eligible Expenditure Category	**Target Outcome for 2020-2021**	**Reported Outcome 2020-2021**	**Target Outcome 2021-2022**
Research Facilities	The Advanced Analysis Centre (AAC) set a target user fee income of $673 000 for 2020-21 which represents a 5% increase from the previous year.	The COVID-19 global pandemic (March 2020 onwards) altered usual operations due to imposed shutdowns and operational restrictions. This resulted in unattainable user fee income targets for some AAC facilities. The total number of faculty members using the AAC remained relatively consistent, but overall usage of the facilities decreased. It is expected that this will be reversed once normal operations resume. User fee income from external clients decreased by over 50% in this current fiscal year. The large decrease was anticipated as operational restrictions, sample shipping/acceptance issues and reduced staffing impacted both external clients and the core facilities.	Once University operations are fully re-established following the pandemic, AAC expects to realize a 5% annual increase in total user fee income.

		The resumption of normal operations should cause external income to rebound back to target levels. This year, extra support was provided by the Canada Research Continuity Emergency Fund (CRCEF).	
Research Resources	Increase volume of data and usage statistics by 15%. Increase deposit statistics in FY2019-20 by 20%. Increase number of researchers using the DMP Assistant in FY2019-20 by 15%. Increase number of library consultations done on research data management / DMP tool.	Data deposits: 27 new data sets added in 2019-20. Data deposit volume was 8.9GB. Dataset number decreased by 3.57%. This did not meet the target. Usage statistics: Number of downloads during FY2019-20 was 49,780. Download number increased by 1,108.38%, which exceeded the target. Note that this large download increase coincides with the research of Google Dataset Search. DMP: There were 206 users in FY2019-20 and 172 consultations.	Increase volume of data deposit and download by 15%. Increase deposit statistics in FY2020 - 21 by 20%. Increase number of researchers using the DMP Assistant in FY2020 - 21 by 15%. Increase number of Library consultations done on research data management/DMP tool by 15%.
Management and Administration of an Institution's Research Enterprise	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.	The back-office processing tool for grants and contracts was rolled out to office staff in February 2021, and Office of Research Services staff are successfully using it to administer grants and contracts and record data important for institutional reporting. The Change Advisory Board (CAB) meets biweekly to review improvements and changes. Improvements have been released every two weeks since the tool was launched.	Identify system requirements and complete Request for Proposal (RFP) process for the fully integrated administration system for animal ethics, human ethics, biosafety and grants and contracts.
Regulatory Requirement and Accreditation	Terms of Reference for the Post-Approval Review (PAR) program created and approved by the Animal Care Committee; and PAR	The Post-Approval Review (PAR) program was implemented in support of PIs and their research teams when conducting research	Continue to implement the full Post-Approval Review (PAR) program focusing on direct support to researchers and their team by involving

	Coordinator has met with PIs and/or conducted on-site events with 95% of U of G's PIs using animals in research.	involving animals. The Terms of Reference (TOR) for the PAR program was created and approved by the Animal Care Committee. PAR Coordinator has met with PIs and/or conducted on-site events as per TOR.	PAR in the review of all AUP annual renewals, developing refinement in animal user, and offering PAR services with species and procedure expertise that will also add to PAR's goal of encouraging and modelling best practices in animal-based research.
Intellectual Property and Knowledge Mobilization	Maintain top five national ranking, in terms of inventions reported per research dollar.	U of G reported 184 inventions, and a 3-year average of 188. The 3-year average results in approximately 1 invention per $.85M of research, which places UG among the top universities in the country according to that metric.	Number of inventions per research dollar in comparison to other institutions in Canada.

Institutional Project Grants - Performance Indicators

2020 - 2021 IPG Indicators and Outcomes [5]

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

2020/21 - Two University of Guelph technologies receive Innovation of the Year Award 2020 [6]

2020/21 - Federal fund supports U of G research activities affected by COVID-19 pandemic [7]

2019/20 - Enhancing research ethics at U of G [8]

2019/20 - Turning research knowledge into action [9]

2018/19 - Predatory journals: https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/article/predatory-journals [10]

2018/19 - Open Access: https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/article/open-access [11]

2017/18 - New animal care program gives researchers better insights [12]

2017/18 - Using Data Management Plans will keep you research data safe and give your research more exposure [13]

2016/17 - New office will help UofG research get out to the world [14]

2015/16 - Technology and expertise that foster innovation [15]

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 [16] (pie graph by category)
- Impact Statements [17] (relevant to the FICP program which preceded RSF)
- Annual Outcomes Reports [18]

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

Links
[1] https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/discover-our-research/facts-and-figures/research-support-fund [2] http://www.rsf-fsr.gc.ca/home-accueil-eng.aspx# [3] http://www.rsf-fsr.gc.ca/administer-administrer/expenditures-depenses-eng.aspx [4] http://www.rsf-fsr.gc.ca/administer-administrer/guide-eng.aspx [5] https://www.uoguelph.ca/finance/sites/default/files/2020%20-%202021%20IPG%20Indicators%20and%20Outcomes_0.pdf [6] https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/article/two-university-guelph-technologies-receive-innovation-year-award-2020 [7] https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/article/federal-fund-supports-u-g-research-activities-affected-covid-19-pandemic [8] https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/article/enhancing-research-ethics-u-g [9] https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/article/turning-research-knowledge-action [10] https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/article/predatory-journals [11] https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/article/open-access [12] https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/article/new-animal-care-program-gives-researchers-better-insights [13] https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/article/using-data-management-plans-will-keep-your-research-data-safe-and-give-your-research-more [14] http://www.uoguelph.ca/research/article/new-office-will-help-u-g-research-get-out-world [15] https://www.uoguelph.ca/research/article/technology-and-expertise-foster-innovation [16] https://www.uoguelph.ca/finance/reports/ficp-expenditures [17] https://www.uoguelph.ca/finance/reports/ficp-impact-statements [18] https://www.uoguelph.ca/finance/reports/ficp-outcomes-reports