DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY

# Research Support Fund

Accountability and Public Acknowledgment

*May 2015*

## Public acknowledgment

1. *definition of the indirect costs of research, along with concrete examples of the types of expenses incurred by the institution in managing the research funded:*

   Research funding provided through the granting agencies (the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC)) is generally limited to direct project costs (e.g., research equipment, research assistant salaries, etc.). Institutions whose researchers receive funding for research also incur costs to manage their research enterprise. These are often called "indirect costs of research." These costs include, for example, the costs of maintaining modern labs and equipment; costs of providing researchers with access to up-to-date knowledge resources; costs of managing and administering research; costs of meeting regulatory and ethical requirements; and costs of transferring research results to knowledge users.

   Examples of the types of expenses incurred at Dalhousie University and affiliate hospitals in managing the research funded are:

   - research space facility fees, e.g., custodial, maintenance, security, utilities and insurance, and research equipment maintenance
   - electronic data access and resources including technical support, e.g., portion of library operating costs.
   - Research Services' staff assistance and oversight
   - regulatory compliance including human and animal ethics certifications and research integrity and scholarly misconduct services
   - research commercialization and intellectual property services and support through the Industry Liaison & Innovation office.

2. *description of the Research Support Fund program and link to the program's website:*

   The federal government Research Support Fund program assists Canadian postsecondary institutions and their affiliated research hospitals and institutes with the indirect costs associated with managing the research funded by the three federal research granting agencies:
   - the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR);
   - the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC); and
   - the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC).

Every year, the federal government invests in research excellence in the areas of health sciences, engineering, natural sciences, social sciences and humanities through its three granting agencies. The Research Support Fund program reinforces this research investment by helping institutions ensure that their federally funded research projects are conducted in world-class facilities with the best equipment and supports available.

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Eligible institutions receive an annual grant through the fund to defray a portion of the indirect costs incurred to support federally funded research. The program (formerly known as the Indirect Costs Program) was introduced in 2003 as part of the federal government's strategy to make Canada one of the world's top countries in research and development. It currently has a budget of $342 million and serves 126 postsecondary institutions across the country.

More information on the Research Support Fund program can be found on the website:

http://www.rsf-fsr.gc.ca/about-au_sujet/index-eng.aspx

3. *list of Dalhousie University affiliated institutions:*

- Nova Scotia Health Authority
- IWK Health Centre

4. *overview of how the institution allocates its grant funds under each of the five categories:*

The Research Support Fund Grant is included as a revenue source to the University Operating budget and helps defray a portion of these costs which are imbedded in the various responsibility centres in the operating budget. For example, a portion of the grant supports utility costs for research space on University campuses which are included in the University budget for Energy, Water, Taxes and Insurance. The majority of the costs supported by the grant are ongoing.

Where the federal government allocates increased Research Support Grant funding to the University it is allocated to the various categories based on the cost drivers for each category. As an example, as additional space is provided for research activities the grant allocated for the maintenance and insurance of space is adjusted.

The University directs funds to specific research initiatives and the following is a key strategic direction for Dalhousie over the next several years which will require funding support to achieve:

*Expand opportunities for research, scholarly and artistic work*

Direct and attract resources to priority research areas, with local, national, and international importance

- Attract and retain outstanding academics
- Attract and support excellent graduate students and postdoctoral fellows to strengthen the impact of research
- Foster undergraduate research
- Enhance research with state-of-the-art facilities and resources in accordance with the Institutional Framework for the Support of Research (IFSR)

The hospitals allocate funding from the ICP to various initiatives help to: maintain and revitalize existing research space and equipment, provide systems required to support research, support the administration of new research initiatives, supplement Research Ethics administration and maintain lab safety and certification requirements.

**Setting and reporting on institutional performance objectives**

5. *Identify institutional performance objectives for the grant. Objectives should be in accordance with how the institution chooses to invest its grant in either one, several or all five of the eligible expenditure categories, and must include corresponding indicators and target outcomes:*

| Eligible expenditure category | Institutional performance objective | Indicator | Output | Outcomes reported at year end |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Research facilities | Develop and support core research facilities and multi-user space | Core facilities accommodate more research equipment | Support for on-going maintenance costs | Support core facilities capacity and usage |
| Research resources | Implement research performance tool for research community to support proposal development and institutional strategies | Research performance tool available to research community | Support for purchase of software | Performance information incorporated into applications and reports and sector areas to improve are identified by institutions |
| Management and administration of an institution's research enterprise | Improve information sharing and reporting between Dalhousie and affiliate institutions | Timely and accurate statistical reports | Upgrade research database | Consistent statistical information between Dalhousie and affiliates is produced and figures are reflective of national stats |
| Regulatory requirements and accreditation | Facilitate on-line Ethics submissions | Submission of Ethics applications on-line | Support for technical assistance and electronic system | More efficient processing of Ethics applications and reduction of paper |
| Intellectual property (IP) | Support for researcher innovation and tech transfer | Increased IP and industry agreement capacity | Legal position to support Industry Liaison & Innovation | On-site legal advice and assistance provided to research community by ILI |