

Research Support Fund Program – 2023-24

The Research Support Fund (RSF) assists Canadian postsecondary institutions and their affiliated research hospitals and institutes with the expenses 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 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 administrative support available. The total allocation for 2023-24 is \$4,884,623.

[Eligible institutions](#) receive an annual grant through the fund to help pay for a portion of the central and departmental administrative costs related to 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. The values of the 2023-24 grants are based on the eligible funding (i.e. credits) that institutions received from the three federal granting agencies (NSERC, SSHRC, and CIHR) during the 2019-20, 2020-21 and 2021-2022 fiscal years, and according to the 2023-24 RSF, IPG and research security funding budgets totaling \$369,403,000 and \$58,235,090, \$24,720,000 respectively.

More details about the Program can be found at http://www.rs-fsr.gc.ca/about-au_sujet/index-eng.aspx.

Definition of the Indirect Costs of Research

Indirect Costs (IDCs) are real costs attributable to scholarly, research and creative (SRC) activities. IDCs are those costs incurred at the University that are necessary for maintaining an environment and infrastructure that support research. IDCs are incurred at faculty and departmental levels for purposes common to all research projects, programs, or activities of the University, but which cannot be identified and charged directly to individual projects, programs, or activities with a reasonable degree of accuracy, and/or without an inordinate amount of accounting.

IDCs include but are not limited to:

- building costs, maintenance and depreciation (including renovations required for specific laboratories, heating, cooling and lights);

- maintenance, upgrading and depreciation of equipment purchased that enable faculty to undertake SRC activities;
- faculty salaries and benefits, where these are not charged directly to an SRC project;
- University, Faculty and Departmental/school administration such as payroll, human resources, accounting, purchasing and accounts receivable, insurance/risk management, occupational health and safety, legal, etc.;
- library and other research resources, including maintenance of on-line search capabilities and data-bases;
- central computing services;
- financing (e.g., payment of salaries of students or research technicians, purchase of materials and supplies, prior to the billing and receipt of revenue from a sponsor); and
- intellectual property assessment and advice.

Overview of How the Institution Allocates its RSF

The grant has been divided between the five different areas covered under the award. This was done for two reasons: 1. as the funded amount varies from year to year and could theoretically be cancelled we did not want any one area to be completely dependent upon the grant, and 2. dividing the grant between the different areas afforded the opportunity to discuss and explain the broad spectrum of RSF at the University.

The grant is held centrally and costs are attributed to the grant. The costs incurred are central costs primarily, however some costs such as lab renovations are paid centrally but the benefit is at the departmental/faculty level. The breakdown of the 2023-24 allocation is as follows:

Facilities	\$1,666,924
Resources	\$679,649
Management & Administration	\$2,248,970
Regulatory Requirements & Accreditation	\$129,080
Intellectual Property	\$160,000
Total Research Support Fund 2023-24	\$4,884,623

Affiliation

Ontario Strategy for Patient-Oriented Research (SPOR) Support Unit (OSSU)

Incremental Project Grant – 2023-24

The Incremental Project Grants (IPG) funding opportunity is a stream of the Research Support Fund (RSF), in addition to the RSF grant, that provides further support for the indirect costs of research.

This stream stems from additional funding for the RSF announced in Budget 2018, totaling \$231.3 million over five years (\$28.75 million in 2018-19) and \$58.8 million per year after that.

The IPG will provide eligible institutions with additional support for projects that focus on a set of priorities that cut across the RSF's [five existing categories of eligible expenses](#). The initial four IPG priority areas are:

- innovation and commercialization activities;
- facilities renewal, including deferred maintenance;
- information resources, including digital resources, open access and databases; and
- equity, diversity and faculty renewal (in the context of equity, diversity and inclusion).

The objective of the IPG stream aligns with the RSF's objective to reinforce the federal research investment by helping Canadian postsecondary institutions ensure their federally funded research projects are conducted in world-class facilities with the best equipment and administrative support available. By directing funds to specific investments and annual or multi-year projects initiated by institutions, the IPG will facilitate tracking and reporting, to better demonstrate the impact of these investments.

The total allocation for 2023-24 is \$496,971. The costs are allocated within the three IPG priority areas to meet emerging SRC priorities. The allocation of the IPG funds reflects the strategic plan of the University to: (1) increase the impact of Toronto Metropolitan University's (TMU) research through increased support for commercialization and knowledge dissemination; (2) enhance the student pipeline and training through the greater engagement of students' involvement in research and entrepreneurship; and, (3) ensure the integrity of the research being undertaken through creation of resources and training around SRC integrity and inclusion.

Research Security – 2023-24

The Government of Canada released the National Security Guidelines for Research Partnerships in July 2021. The new requirements are to ensure the Canadian research ecosystem is as open as possible and as safeguarded as necessary and to integrate national security considerations into the development, evaluation and funding of research partnerships. TMU has been working and will continue to work with counterparts at other universities, government stakeholders, and with our researchers and internal partners to support the development of research security risk assessments and appropriate mitigation strategies and plans, whilst adhering to the fundamental principles of academic freedom and intellectual property policies. Our objective is to strengthen the management and administration of the institution's research risk management and security capacity using the Research Security program to fund three priority areas including:

- salaries and benefits for staff who assist and coordinate research security activities across the institution, and aid in identifying risks and risk mitigation measures across risk areas (physical, cyber, partnerships and international collaborations, intellectual property, people);
- costs associated with providing training (e.g., workshops) associated with research security, as well as tools and resources such as software licenses used to conduct open source due diligence searches; and
- Acquisition, maintenance and/or upgrade of information technology and research security systems.

The total allocation for 2023-24 is \$254,910.

Performance Objectives 2023-24 - RSF

Eligible expenditure category	Institutional performance objective	Indicator	Outcome reported at year end
Research Facilities	Provide research and innovation infrastructure support to increase scholarly, research and creative (SRC) quality, participation, and funding	Renovation of research and innovation premises	Square footage of research and innovation space renovated
	Coordinate and integrate activities of OSSU Research Centres	Maintain suitable office space to execute OSSU activities	Coordinating Centre space
Research Resources	Provision of subscription library resources in support of research	Access and use verified via proxy data	Total access and uses of online library resources
Management and Administration	Provide pre- and post-award support services to faculty members to enhance SRC excellence and impact of SRC activities	Research administration services provided by the Offices of the Vice-President, Research and Financial Services	Number of research grant/contract applications
	OSSU – Research support staff	Research staffing support – research assistants and research program coordinators	Number of new research cost centres Enhanced efficiency for the work of research applications and proposals
Regulatory Requirements and Accreditation	Provide the ethics protocol review and approval services to faculty members and graduate students to enhance SRC excellence and impact of SRC activities	Reviews and approvals of ethics protocol applications	Number of ethics protocols reviewed
Intellectual Property	Provide support to faculty member with respect to intellectual property activities to enhance impact of SRC activities	Number of invention disclosures filed	Number of invention disclosures filed

Performance Objectives 2023-24 - IPG

Project Title	IPG Priority Area	Output (investment of IPG grant funds)	Performance Objective	Performance Indicator
User Interface Enhancement of TMU Research Repository	Information resources, including digital resources, open access and databases	\$50,000 invested to enhance research repository	Enhancing support for knowledge mobilization	Number of publications, data sets and researcher accounts in the repository
Strengthen and Grow Innovation and Commercialization	Innovation and commercialization activities	\$346,971 invested to raise awareness, interest and literacy in the areas of innovation, commercialization and IP	Expand pool of EIRs through strategic sector and expertise based recruitment. Increased and broadened interaction with and engagement of researchers Students to gain real-life innovation and commercialization experience	Number of disclosures Number of clients and interactions Number of participating student teams Number of participating researchers and available technologies
Development of an Evaluation Framework to Measure EDI-related Data	Equity, diversity and faculty renewal	\$50,000 invested for an evaluation framework	The creation of an EDI evaluation framework to support data collection, analysis, assessment, and performance evaluation Strengthening EDI awareness and action	Creation of EDI evaluation framework Phase 1 of assessment through framework

			<p>across the research domain</p> <p>Understanding areas of EDI strength and weakness</p>	
<p>Research Integrity eLearning Module - Phase 4: Uptake Evaluation and Content Review</p>	<p>Information resources, including digital resources, open access and databases</p>	<p>\$50,000 invested for research integrity eLearning</p>	<p>To ensure that we have created the necessary and appropriate tools to support and enhance a culture of research integrity across the SRC landscape</p>	<p>Strong participation of researchers, postdoctoral fellows and graduate students in the evaluation of the RI eLearning Module</p> <p>Enhancements to the Module based on the feedback provided and relevant updates to the Framework on the Responsible Conduct of Research</p>

Performance Objectives 2023-24 – Research Security

Project Title	Output (investment of research security funds)	Performance Objective	Performance Indicator	Target Outcome
Enhance Research Security – Planning and Implementation	\$254,910 invested in hiring research security staff and research security training for staff, faculty and others	<p>Develop and implement a research security strategy for TMU that includes appropriate organizational framework, infrastructure and supports</p> <p>Engage with all levels of the University and Faculties to strengthen risk management and research security by examining, advocating and advancing research security matters in SRC activities, internationalization, and commercialization at the University</p> <p>Engage with provincial and federal governments, granting agencies and other research security stakeholders to share</p>	<p>Development of plan to incorporate research security into TMU’s existing enterprise risk management framework</p> <p>Development of research security organizational framework and infrastructure that aligns with and enhances TMU’s enterprise risk management framework</p> <p>Creation of training workshops, research security briefings / guidance issued / tools</p> <p>Number of <i>National Security Guidelines for Research Partnerships</i> (or comparable documents) completed</p> <p>Development and implementation of risk-</p>	<p>Raise awareness of research security considerations and the need to safeguard research</p> <p>Raise capacity to identify risks and develop risk mitigation measures</p> <p>Develop organizational framework and supporting infrastructure to enhance research security that is incorporated into TMU’s enterprise risk management framework</p> <p>Foster a research security culture and mindset to strengthen TMU’s resilience in response to changing security and regulatory requirements</p> <p>Build industry partnerships and research collaborations that will contribute to the long-term economic security and prosperity of Ontario and Canada</p>

		best practices and ensure compliance and alignment of research security related polices, programs and procedures	based due diligence reviews for partnerships and grant applications	
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