

General research funds policy

Policy statement

A General Research Fund (GRF) is a special trust account established under the authority of the President of Bow Valley College (or the President's authorized delegate) to support Bow Valley College researchers in their research and innovation activities. With a funder's authorization, unspent funds of eligible expired or terminated grants are transferred to a Bow Valley College GRF. GRFs are intended to support research in alignment with College priorities, in the fields in which the original grants were awarded, or other strategic research goals as allowed by funder agreements.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that GRFs are utilized to support research at the College and are managed to ensure compliance with all relevant funder and Bow Valley College policies, procedures, guidelines, and definitions (e.g., researcher); and contractual agreements with funders. This policy applies to the GRF guidelines of two federal granting agencies, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) and the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC). GRFs are maintained and administered centrally and separately for each agency, and utilized to support research in the social sciences and humanities or in the natural sciences and engineering, respectively. SSHRC and NSERC GRFs can be provided only to SSHRC- or NSERC-eligible researchers and are administered following the *Guidelines for the General Research Fund (NSERC and SSHRC only)* and the *Tri-Agency Financial Administration Guide*. This policy applies to other GRFs that are established by the College under this policy.

Scope

This policy applies to all members of the College community who conduct research under the auspices and authority of the College and apply to use the GRFs to fund research projects. It is applicable to all who receive research funding through the GRFs, as well as those responsible for the administration, financial management, disbursement, and reporting of GRFs.

Principal Objectives

1. This policy establishes four types of GRF accounts:
 - 1.1. A separate NSERC GRF;
 - 1.2. A separate SSHRC GRF;
 - 1.3. A separate Bow Valley College GRF. This GRF holds pooled unspent funds from other funders who allow funds to be pooled;
 - 1.4. Separate funder-specific GRFs - these GRFs hold unspent funds from other funders who do not allow funds to be pooled.
2. Where allowable by the policies of other funders, and/or contractual agreements with funders, unspent funds of expired or terminated grants from these organizations may be transferred as a separate GRF, or a pooled GRF.
3. This policy ensures GRFs are reinvested to:
 - 3.1. Comply with NSERC and SSHRC GRF guidelines, which state funds must be utilized to:
 - 3.1.1. Support research in natural sciences and engineering, and social sciences and humanities, respectively,
 - 3.1.2. Provide small start-up research grants to new researchers,
 - 3.1.3. Provide bridge funding to researchers who are between applications, and
 - 3.1.4. Provide additional funds to researchers to support ongoing research.

- 3.2. Support Bow Valley College researchers engaged in research and innovation in areas identified by the College as strategic priorities.
- 3.3. Comply with the conditions imposed by other funders with regards to the type of research a GRF can support.
4. To ensure proper financial management and reporting of non-Tri-Agency GRFs as required by funders and Bow Valley College GRF policies, guidelines, and procedures, and contractual agreements with funders,
5. Promote the use of GRFs by the College community.

Compliance

Employees, contractors, and learners are responsible for knowing, understanding, and complying with Bow Valley College policies, procedures, and any other documentation that relate to their position, employment, or enrolment at the College.

Definitions

Bow Valley College employee:

Any individual who is engaged to work, or performs services, for the College under an employment contract or Collective Agreement.

Funder:

Includes any person or organization providing funding to Bow Valley College in support of research. Examples of a funder are granting agencies (such as NSERC and SSHRC), federal or provincial departments, foundations, donors and persons or organizations having research contracts with the College.

General research fund:

Special trust accounts opened by Bow Valley College under the authority of the President of the College (or the President's authorized delegate) into which the unspent funds from eligible expired or terminated grants or funding are transferred, with the funders' authorization.

Learner:

A person who is currently registered as a learner at the College whether or not for credit.

Management:

The continuous operational management of individual grants on a transactional or regular basis including the responsibilities of employees within specific functions related to the management of grants as part of their role within the College (e.g., authorized representative reviews transactions for eligibility, finance processes transactions and reviews and reviews for eligibility). Functions such as Internal Audit are not involved in daily management. (Adapted from: Tri-Agency Collaborative Information Gathering Tool glossary.)

Unspent funds:

Means the remaining balance of a research fund, after the project has been completed with all terms and conditions met, all revenue fully received, and all direct and indirect expenditures related to the project incurred. A specific example of unspent funds is *residual balance* that the Tri-Agency defines as "an amount corresponding to 50% or less of the allocated grant. Any higher amount is deemed to be an unspent grant and a reimbursement is required." (Tri-Agency:

http://science.gc.ca/eic/site/063.nsf/eng/h_5429D5A5.html)

Tri-Agency:

Refers to the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), National Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC), and Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC).

Tri-Agency Financial Administration Guide:

Describes the use of funds derived from Tri-Agency sources and delineates eligible and ineligible expenses. It guides the use of funds for all awards made from NSERC and SSHRC GRF.

Data sheet

Accountable officer

Vice President, Academic.

Responsible officer

The Dean, Research and Innovation.

Approval

Academic Council
Board of Governors of Bow Valley College

Contact area

Research and Innovation

Relevant dates

Approved	Board of Governors: BOG181125-08
Effective	November 25, 2018
Next Review	November 2021
Modification History	Rebranded 2021
Verified by	Office of the President, March 2022*

Associated policy(ies)

Applied Research and the Promotion of Innovation at Bow Valley College Policy 500-3-1
Delegated Signing Authority Policy 100-2-5
Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Human Participants Policy 500-3-2
Expense Claim Policy 100-1-6
Hospitality Event Expense Policy 100-1-9
Integrity in Research and Scholarship Policy 500-3-3
Purchasing Policy 100-1-2
Travel and Expense Policy 100-1-8

Directly related procedure

General Research Funds Procedure

Directly related guidelines

Guidelines for the General Research Fund (NSERC and SSHRC only)
(http://www.science.gc.ca/eic/site/063.nsf/eng/h_5429D5A5.html?OpenDocument)
Tri-Agency Financial Administration Guide
(http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/FinancialAdminGuide-GuideAdminFinancier/index_eng.asp)

Related Legislation

Attachments (optional)