

TITLE: RESEARCH GRANT MANAGEMENT

POLICY STATEMENT:

Red Deer College (RDC) provides adequate reporting and accountability practices to ensure compliance with research and innovation agreements funded by granting agencies.

PURPOSE:

The purpose of this policy is:

- to ensure accountability and compliance with research grant agreements,
- to set standards for managing and reporting research expenses.

SCOPE:

This policy applies to all research grant agreements entered into by RDC.

PRINCIPLES:

Procedures and decisions at Red Deer College:

1. Treat all persons fairly and respectfully.
2. Are nondiscriminatory and non-intrusive.
3. Incorporate open, honest and timely communication.
4. Are made in a timely manner.
5. Provide appropriate confidentiality and privacy.
6. Provide appropriate access to education.
7. Ensure that all persons have access to informed support regarding policies, procedures, rights and responsibilities
8. Operate with clear written expectations for conduct and handling of complaints.
9. Meet all accreditation standards.
10. Maintain a high standard of administration and instruction, clearly stated in College practices and policies, in all areas of educational programs and services.
11. Are communicated in alternate forms to those who require such accommodation.

Specifically for this policy:

As a publicly funded institution, RDC is committed to conducting its business affairs in a consistent and cost-effective manner, guided by the following principles:

Integrity – aligning actions, methods, principles, expectations, and outcomes with those of funding agencies and members of the public.

Trust – relying on the discretion and latitude of its employees and officers to act in a fair and reasonable manner.

Accountability – establishing an environment and processes where employees and officers of the College have a clear understanding of their respective accountabilities.

Transparency – ensuring consistent, fair, and equitable application of policies and procedures.

Efficiency – maximizing the ease and efficiency of the claiming process for both employees and the College.

DEFINITIONS:

Audit: For the purposes of this policy Audit is defined as an activity conducted by Financial Services to ensure financial controls and adherence to internal policies and external funding agencies' guidelines; includes but is not limited to process and document review and sample testing.

Tri-Council: The Tri-Council Agencies (CIHR, NSERC, and SSHRC) are a major source of research funding for post-secondary institutions in Canada and are made up of the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR), the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC). All research that is funded by the Tri-Council Agencies must be in accordance with the Tri-Council Agreement on the Administration of Agency Grants and Awards by Research Institutions. The agreement describes the basic requirements for maintaining institutional eligibility to administer research funds.

GUIDELINES:

While some additional specific accountability requirements may be provided under specific research and innovation grant agreements, the College provides the following standard guidelines.

1. The Associate Vice President Academic is responsible for all actions required by this policy related to the Applied Research and Innovation Department.
2. The Applied Research and Innovation Department acts as the Research Grants Office at RDC.
3. The Applied Research and Innovation Department ensures that applications forwarded to any granting agency meet that agency's eligibility requirements.
4. The Applied Research and Innovation Department assesses all research projects prior to sending the application to a granting agency in order to certify its compliance with all College policy related to research. The Associate Vice President Academic or delegate signs all grant applications and grant agreements.
5. Once the grant proposal or grant agreement's formal documents are prepared, these are to be approved, in writing, by the Principal Researcher, Associate Dean, and the Associate Vice President Academic or delegate, within their financial limits.
6. The Principal Researcher's signature constitutes an acceptance of responsibility for the ethical, technical, and scientific conduct of the research. This signature is also the Principal Researcher's acceptance of the grant agreement's terms and conditions.
7. Where required, the Associate Dean signature constitutes an approval of the undertaking of the research; an assurance that the research is consistent with and will benefit the Department/School teaching and learning, research and public service mandates; an undertaking that the research can and will be accommodated within the constraints of the facilities and services currently available; an assurance that the costs of equipment, personnel, supplies, and services used for the research can and will be recovered from the grant agreement funds; and an assurance that the research will not conflict with the researcher's responsibilities to the College.

8. The signature of the Associate Vice President Academic or delegate, within their financial limits, is required to finalize the grant application or grant agreement. The signature indicates that the College will accept and administer the grant funds in accordance with the granting agency's terms and conditions and in accordance with the College's policies and procedures. The signature indicates acceptance of any cost-sharing or other financial arrangements based on compensating/off-setting benefits, if applicable, as described in 12.
9. The Applied Research and Innovation Department and the Financial Services Department work together to establish practices and procedures to meet the College's corporate responsibilities related to research and innovation activities (e.g. legal, financial, adherence to funding agency guidelines).
10. The College uses its integrated enterprise information system including student, human resources, and financial reporting systems to provide complete records of all transactions related to research and innovation projects and services.
11. Internal Audits are regularly conducted on all financial systems within the College where required and transactions related to research and innovation are in full compliance with granting agency guidelines.
12. Research grant project budgets must include the recovery of indirect costs except when specifically prohibited in a sponsor's formally established research policy. However, the College may be prepared to participate in cost-sharing or other financial arrangements based on compensating/off-setting benefits. These arrangements require written approval by the Associate Vice President Academic.
13. The Applied Research and Innovation Department advises the Financial Services Department that certification has been obtained (Research Ethics Board approval, animal care committee approval, biosafety officer approval and any other required certifications) and that funds may be released.

Financial Services releases funds to the researcher's account only when the necessary certification requirements are met. If the activities involving human participants will only take place in the future and certification is not in place yet, a part of the funds may be released to cover only expenses to be incurred before human participants are involved.
14. The Financial Services Department normally establishes separate accounts for each individual research grant.
15. Research projects are regularly monitored (at least annually) by the Applied Research and Innovation Department to ensure ongoing progress and compliance with certification requirements.
16. It is the duty of all grantees to advise the Applied Research and Innovation Department of any changes that might impact the certification of a project.
17. Should potential conflicts of interest be disclosed as per College policy, the Applied Research and Innovation Department informs the granting agency of the potential conflict.
18. Departments/Schools inform the Applied Research and Innovation Department and the Financial Services Department of any substantive changes in personnel appointments or continuing eligibility for grants during regular reviews of research projects. The Applied Research and Innovation Department informs the funding agency as soon as possible.

19. All goods and services purchased related to research and innovation grants are approved according to the standard purchasing and accounting procedures of the College. It is the responsibility of the grantee to contact the Financial Services Department to assure compliance with these practices.
20. In the case where a research grant is provided to a specific individual, that individual or delegate is required to approve all expenditures from that account, subject to the level of signing authority provided by the College. Should the amount exceed that signing authority, additional signatures are required as per the policy.
21. In the case where a research grant is provided to the College, the Associate Vice President Academic or delegate is responsible for authorizing expenditures of funds from the grant account subject to the signing authority limits specified in College policy.
22. Records of delegated signing authority, signed contracts and financial reports related to grants are kept by the Financial Services Department.
23. The Financial Services Department provides electronic access to research grant accounts to all grant holders and the Applied Research and Innovation Department. These accounts are updated with every transaction record as they are posted, including summaries, details by transaction, and summaries by type of expense.
24. All equipment and material purchased or collected through research grants remains the property of the College unless otherwise specified in an agreement between the College and the grant holder.
25. All equipment and material purchased or collected through research grants is recorded in the College inventory control system as maintained by the Financial Services Department.
26. If equipment or material purchased or collected through research grants is later sold, the proceeds from the sale is received into the College's general accounts unless otherwise specified in the research grant agreement.
27. Equipment purchased with grant funds is made available to other researchers and students when it is not used by the grantee.
28. If expenditures deviate significantly from original projections specified in the project proposal including:
 - a. Deviations from original objectives,
 - b. Deviations of more than 20% of the total budget,
 - c. Deviations of more than \$10,000 from the original budget,
 - d. Deviations of 20% per line item;the Applied Research and Innovation Department ensures that the granting agency is informed either by the grant holder or by the Applied Research and Innovation Department. Deviations cannot involve the over-expenditure of grant funds.
29. Salaries may be encumbered against grant accounts when they comply with the terms of the granting agency and the specific project grant. Such expenditures are reviewed for compliance by the Applied Research and Innovation Department in consultation with the Financial Services Department.
30. Travel expense claims that require expenditure of funds from a grant account must adhere to College policy. Grant-related travel expense claims are required for each traveler and include at least the following information:
 - a. Purpose of the trip,

- b. Persons or organizations visited,
- c. Official documentation indicating the dates of events for conferences and workshops,
- d. Original receipts.

Should the College expense claim policy or grant agreements require additional information, travelers are required to comply with those requirements as well.

- 31. Expense claimants are required to certify that they have not been reimbursed by other organizations.
- 32. All expense claims require the traveler's supervisor to countersign the claim forms as per College policy.
- 33. Incentives may be paid to research participants provided that the incentive:
 - a. meets Research Ethics Board requirements,
 - b. does not contravene funding agency requirements or agreements,
 - c. does not exceed the dollar value limit for capital equipment,
 - d. complies with the RDC Hosting and Business Expenses Policy regarding gifts and honorariums.
- 34. The College provides a General Research Fund account in order to carry forward any residual Tri-Council grant funds from prior years. Such funds, should they be awarded to the College, are held in trust for the funding agency and are used to enhance the quality of research as specified by the funding agency.
- 35. The College provides safeguards to protect the sensitive information entrusted to it by funding agencies for administering applications and awards and abides by funding agency data protection requirements as determined in any agreements entered into between the College and a funding agency.

PROCEDURE:

- 1. Faculty and staff who plan to submit a research grant proposal or enter into a research grant agreement consult with the Applied Research and Innovation Department.
- 2. The Applied Research and Innovation Department reviews the proposal or agreement and sends it to the Associate Vice President Academic or delegate for signature.
- 3. Research projects involving faculty workload release require the approval of the Dean or Administrative Supervisor before the grant application is finalized.
- 4. The Applied Research and Innovation Department sends an original copy of the signed proposal or agreement to the Financial Services Office.

OFFICER RESPONSIBLE: Vice President Academic

POLICY CATEGORY: Academic

RECOMMENDING AUTHORITY: Deans' Council, upon recommendation from Service Council

CONSULTATION FOR REVIEW: Vice President Academic, Deans' Council, Service Council, Applied Research and Innovation Department, Financial Services Department

POLICY REVIEW DATE: February 2019

EFFECTIVE DATE: February 1, 2017

REVISION HISTORY: July 1, 2006
April 1, 2014
February 1, 2017

RELATED POLICIES:

- [Research and the Promotion of Innovation](#)
- [Contracts for Research and Innovation](#)
- [Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Human Participants](#)
- [Hosting and Business Expenses](#)
- [Integrity in Research and Scholarship](#)
- [Signing Authority and Contract Execution](#)
- [Travel and Related Expenses](#)

CONNECTION TO BOARD POLICIES:

All RDC policies support relevant Board of Governors policies.