

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 and help build internal research capacity 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's strategic priority areas, 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 Guide on Financial Administration*.

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

- This policy establishes four types of GRF accounts:
 - A separate NSERC GRF.
 - A separate SSHRC GRF.
 - A separate Bow Valley College GRF. This GRF holds pooled unspent funds from other funders who allow funds to be pooled.
 - Separate funder-specific GRFs - these GRFs hold unspent funds from other funders who do not allow funds to be pooled.
- 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.
- This policy ensures GRFs are reinvested to:
 1. Comply with NSERC and SSHRC GRF guidelines, which state funds must be utilized to:
 - Support research in natural sciences and engineering, and social sciences and humanities, respectively.
 - Provide small start-up research grants to new researchers and supports student engagement and training in applied research.
 - Provide additional funds to researchers to support ongoing research.

2. Support Bow Valley College researchers engaged in research and innovation in areas identified by the College as strategic priorities.
3. Comply with the conditions imposed by other funders with regards to the type of research the GRF can support.
4. 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 to know, understand, and comply 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:

Refers to any individual employed by BVC (i.e., exempt, faculty [under the BVC Faculty Association], and staff [under the Alberta Union of Provincial Employees]).

Funder:

Any person or organization who provides funding to the 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:

A General Research Fund (GRF) is a special account opened as a trust account under the authority of the President of the College (and authorized delegates by the President), into which the unspent funds of expired or terminated grants are transferred with the authorization of the granting agencies. (Tri-Agency http://science.gc.ca/eic/site/063.nsf/eng/h_5429D5A5.html)

Learner:

Any person registered in a program or course delivered by the College.

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 for eligibility). Functions such as Internal Audit are not involved in daily management. (Adapted from: Tri-Agency Collaborative Information Gathering Tool glossary.)

Tri-Council or 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.

Unspent funds:

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)

Data sheet

Accountable officer

The Executive Team member responsible for the Academic Division

Responsible officer

Special Advisor, Academic and Research

Approval

Academic Council
Board of Governors of Bow Valley College

Contact area

Academic and Research

Relevant dates

Approved	Board of Governors: BOG181125-08
Effective	November 25, 2018
Next Review	November 2026
Modification History	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accountable and Responsible Officer updated 5-25-2023 Rebranded 2021 Housekeeping January 2024
Verified by	Office of the President, May 2023*
Revision Number	Rev. 01 – (January 2024)

Associated policy(ies)

Delegated signing authority policy #100-2-5
 Disclosure of travel and expense policy #100-1-3
 Ethical conduct for research involving human participants policy #500-3-2
 Expense claim procedure #100-1-3
 Hospitality event expense policy #100-1-9
 Integrity in research and scholarly activity policy #500-3-3
 Purchasing card policy #100-1-10
 Travel expense policy #100-1-8
 Research administration policy #500-3-5

Directly related procedure(s), guideline(s) (if any)

General research funds procedure #500-3-4

Related legislation

Guidelines for the General Research Fund (NSERC and SSHRC only)
 (http://www.science.gc.ca/eic/site/O63.nsf/eng/h_5429D5A5.html?OpenDocument)
 Tri-Agency Guide on Financial Administration
 (http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Professeurs/FinancialAdminGuide-GuideAdminFinancier/index_eng.asp)

Attachments (optional)

N/A