

## Research Strategic Initiatives Grant (RSIG) Guidelines

### Description

The Vice President Research and Innovation (VPRI) receives numerous requests throughout the academic year for funding in support of research activities. The VPRI is committed to promoting and enhancing research capacity at UNBC. The increase in the number and types of requests, and the modest funding available, have made it necessary to move to a more formal mechanism for accessing internal grants including supports for graduate students. The process outlined below replaces the individual internal grant competitions the Office of Research has historically administered. This new process is intended to better respond to the needs of the UNBC research community. All funding requests will flow through the Research Strategic Initiatives Grant (RSIG) process.

RSIG grants are awarded in two thematic areas:

#### *Knowledge Dissemination*

Funding provided in this area supports collaboration and the dissemination of research results by funding knowledge mobilization and dissemination activities, such as hosting workshops and/or seminars, attending scholarly conferences to present research, or publishing in peer-reviewed scientific journals. This includes supports for students to present and disseminate their research (for policy on student travel please see page 2).

#### *Knowledge Creation*

Funding provided in this area supports innovation and experimentation by providing researchers with “seed” funding to develop a new research project. Applicants can apply for support to cover any research-related expenses they deem necessary to conduct their research. RSIG funding in this area is intended to act as a “springboard” to assist researchers in obtaining external funding for their research. Seed grants are distinct from start-up funding, which is made available to new faculty and negotiated with Chairs/Deans as a part of the appointment process. The applicant must provide a clear plan for the acquisition of external funds, including how the RSIG grant will assist in reaching that goal.

RSIG applications may include activities from both thematic areas. Total application budgets must not exceed \$10,000.

### Application Deadlines

RSIG applications will be accepted until midnight on the following dates\*:

January 1  
April 1  
July 1  
October 1

*\*Should the deadline fall on a weekend or a holiday, applications will be accepted up to midnight of the following business day.*

Applications will be reviewed the week following the deadline. Normally, decisions will be sent to applicants within 2 weeks of the deadline.

## **Eligibility**

Members of the four federally designated equity seeking groups (women, Indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, members of visible minorities) are strongly encouraged to apply. RSIG proposals across all disciplines demonstrating engagement with and/or plans to develop respectful Indigenous partnerships, and addressing equity, diversity and inclusion (EDI)<sup>1</sup> are encouraged.

For Faculty:

Faculty members in tenured, tenure track or regular term appointments (as designated in article 14.20 of the Faculty Association Agreement), Librarians in continuing appointments, Senior Lab Instructors, PhD-trained Research Associates, including Research Scientists and Post-Doctoral Fellows are eligible to apply. Applicants can only hold one successful RSIG per calendar year (including support for student travel as described below). Therefore, careful consideration of your priorities for the year is essential when structuring your application.

For Students:

Faculty supervisors apply on behalf of their students. Student travel may be supported under the RSIG for either knowledge creation or dissemination. Student research travel support can be submitted as a stand-alone request or be part of a larger research project. Students must be registered in the current semester as well as the semester they will be travelling, they must not have holds on their accounts or money owing and must be in good standing. Total travel funding will be limited to \$1,000 per student.

Students can be in any field of study at UNBC, as a part-time or a full-time graduate student. Travel must be relevant to their program at UNBC. Students registered as pre-entry or non-degree are not eligible.

### **Student Travel for Knowledge Creation**

- Students are not eligible once they have completed their thesis/dissertation/project defense or otherwise completed their written project in a degree program and stream not requiring a defense.

### **Student Travel for Knowledge Dissemination**

- Students must be registered in a dissertation, thesis or project route in order to apply.
- Students attending a conference must provide proof that they have been accepted to present a poster or paper.
- Students may apply for funding to offset the cost of travel necessary to engage in knowledge dissemination activities, which includes, but is not limited to presenting at a conference, participation in workshops, and/or community engagement activities.

As Canada's Green University, UNBC is re-examining the current travel policy to create sustainable travel practices and encourage green travel options to reduce emissions due to fossil-fuel dependent travel. The RSIG guidelines will be updated as new policies to reduce emissions are implemented.

## **Evaluation Considerations**

The Director of Research and Innovation and/or VPRI will review all requests. Full, partial, or no funding will be awarded based on the following considerations:

- All other sources of funding available to support the request have been explored and utilized; Researchers must not hold other funding sources for the requested scope of work in order to be eligible for funding.
- Has the applicant secured other sources of funding or attempted to secure additional funds e.g. Chair, Dean, internal/external grants or partnerships? ***Please note that the contribution of matching funds from other sources will be favorably considered.***
- What are the potential benefits to the advancement of UNBC's Strategic Research Plan and the research capacity of UNBC?
- Who will benefit from the request (e.g. students, faculty, community)?
- Has the applicant received funding from the RSIG in the past? (please note that priority will be given to applicants who have not previously received RSIG funding).
- Applicant's previous research activities (e.g. research application submissions, publications, graduate students, grants or contracts, mentoring).
- Description of how the applicant will convene a diverse research group.
- Overall merit of the request.

*Application reviews and funding decisions for the Knowledge Dissemination proposals will be made by the Office of Research and Innovation staff. Application reviews and funding decisions for Knowledge Creation proposals will be conducted by an adjudication committee comprised of the Vice-President Research and Innovation, faculty members and Office of Research and Innovation staff.*

## **Submission Process**

Applications must be submitted through the Romeo Research Portal at <https://www.unbc.ca/research/romeo>. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered. Please contact Crystal Carpenter at [crystal.carpenter@unbc.ca](mailto:crystal.carpenter@unbc.ca) or at (250) 960-5686 if you require more information or assistance in completing your request. Successful applicants will be notified of the funding decision by email. Appeals will not be entertained by the VPRI; however, applicants may reapply if unsuccessful. Please fully complete the on-line application form and provide all necessary supporting documentation (e.g. publication acceptance letter). A "How-to" manual for the RSIG grant form in Romeo is available at the link above.

## **General Information**

Awards will be granted for a period of 12-months. Funds may only be used as indicated in the approved budget. Deviations in the timelines or purpose from the original awards will not normally be considered. Residual funds are to be returned to the VPRI for future competitions. Applicants may only receive RSIG funding once in a 12-month cycle for a specific project. For knowledge creation grants applicants must complete a 2-page final report at the end of the award period or completion of the research activity for which funding was granted (whichever comes first). The report must be submitted to the VPRI for review within 3 months. Failure to submit the final report will render an applicant ineligible for future requests. If certifications (Animal Care, Biosafety, Ethics) are required, funds will not be released until the proper protocols are approved by the appropriate governing body (Animal Care and Use Committee, Biosafety Committee, Research Ethics Board).

**Travel Restrictions:** Applicants should be aware of travel restrictions and requirements necessary to carry out their intended travel plans (e.g. vaccine and quarantine requirements). Refer to <https://www2.unbc.ca/safety/advisories>

Faculty members are welcome to use their UNBC credit card when incurring expenses but must be aware that costs not covered/approved under the award will not be reimbursed.

<sup>1</sup>. Please see NSERC statement on Equity Diversity and Inclusion for reference: [http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/Policies-Politiques/Wpolicy-Fpolitique\\_eng.asp](http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/NSERC-CRSNG/Policies-Politiques/Wpolicy-Fpolitique_eng.asp)