
POLICY

Aurora College will establish and administer General Research Funds in accordance with Tri-Agency policies and guidelines.

PRINCIPLES

1. Aurora College recognizes the importance of research, the new knowledge and applications that it creates, and the knowledgeable and skilled human resources developed through the process of conducting research.
2. Tri-Agency funds are public funds provided to promote and assist research.
3. Aurora College has a responsibility to use Tri-Agency funds as effectively as possible; to be accountable for their use, allocation, and outcomes; and to ensure the activities supported are conducted in accordance with the highest ethical and financial standards.
4. Reinvesting unspent funds from previous years enables Aurora College to develop and diversify its research capacity and to enhance the quality of research and training.

SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- a) Aurora College employees; and
- b) The special accounts (known as General Research Funds) that Aurora College uses to administer unspent funds of expired or terminated grants from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC).

DEFINITIONS

General Research Fund: A General Research Fund (GRF) is a special account opened as a trust account under the authority of the President of Aurora College (or their designee) into which the unspent funds of expired or terminated Tri-Agency grants are transferred with the authorization of the granting agency.

Residual Balance: A residual balance is an amount corresponding to 50% or less of the allocated grant. Any amount greater than 50% is deemed to be an unspent grant and must be refunded to the Tri-Agency that awarded the grant (either NSERC or SSHRC).

Tri-Agency: Tri-Agency refers to the three Canadian federal research funding agencies: 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 of Canada (SSHRC).

1 OVERVIEW

- 1.1 Aurora College will establish and maintain two General Research Fund (GRF) accounts, one for NSERC funds and one for SSHRC funds.
- 1.2 Each fund, NSERC and SSHRC, will be administered separately.
- 1.3 Each fund will be administered in a centralized manner. This means the two funds are administered college-wide, not by each division or campus or region.
- 1.4 GRF funds are intended to be used as seed funding for start-up research projects or bridge funding for researchers between grant submissions.
- 1.5 The amount of funds available in any given year is unpredictable. However, as required by NSERC/SSHRC guidelines, Aurora College must spend at least 50 per cent of the opening balance of its GRF during the current fiscal year.
- 1.6 Eligibility and compliance requirements for expenditures charged to grants apply to expenditures charged to the GRF. (see *Tri-Agency Financial Administration Guide* available online via the Government of Canada Science and Innovation webpage)
- 1.7 The President of Aurora College or their designee has sole responsibility for authorizing expenditures charged to the GRF in accordance with the requirements and conditions of the grants and with Aurora College's and the agencies' policies.
- 1.8 Aurora College will comply with Tri-Agency transfer conditions and reporting requirements. (see *Guidelines for the General Research Fund* available online via the Government of Canada Science and Innovation webpage)

2 TRANSFER OF FUNDS INTO THE GRF

- 2.1 The College will obtain written authorization from the Tri-Agencies before transferring residual balances or proceeds from sales to the College's GRF. (Note: The unspent funds of grants in certain programs are not eligible for transfer to the GRF.)
- 2.2 Unspent funds considered to be residual balances of project grants that have been completed are eligible for transfer to the College's GRF.
- 2.3 Unspent funds considered to be residual balances of expired grants that have not been renewed or extended are eligible for transfer to the College's GRF.

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- 2.4 Unspent funds considered to be residual balances of grants that, for any reason, were terminated by the Tri-Agency before the expiry date are eligible for transfer to the College's GRF.
 - 2.5 Unspent funds considered to be residual balances from grants for equipment or for the establishment of facilities are eligible for transfer to the College's GRF.
 - 2.6 Proceeds from any sale of equipment purchased, or facilities established, with funds granted by the Tri-Agencies may be transferred to the College's GRF.
 - 2.7 The College will transfer all eligible funds to the appropriate GRF.

3 DISBURSEMENT OF THE GRF

- 3.1 The Vice President, Research manages the application and review process of the GRF and recommends grant recipients to the President.
- 3.2 Within three (3) months of the NSERC/SSHRC grant final termination date the previous holder of the grant may apply in writing to the Vice President, Research for permission to access the unspent funds.
- 3.3 If the previous grant holder does not apply, as per 3.2 above, they will no longer have priority and the funds will be available to all researchers.
- 3.4 Researchers will follow Aurora College policies and procedures to get approval for their research proposal. (see *I.02 Research Administration*)
- 3.5 Researchers apply to the Vice President, Research for support from the GRF.
- 3.6 The Vice President, Research will establish and publish the GRF application criteria and deadline annually.
- 3.7 Applications must include a scope of work, budget, budget justification, timeline, certifications (if required), amount of funds being requested, and a signed copy of the Aurora College Research Application Form.
- 3.8 There is no restriction on the amount of funds that may be requested from the GRF.
- 3.9 GRF funded grants are limited to a maximum of 12 months.
- 3.10 Grantees must retain NSERC/SSHRC eligibility throughout the GRF grant period. This means they continue to be an Aurora College employee and are in good standing with

NSERC and SSHRC (that is, they are up to date on reporting for other grants they may hold or have held).

- 3.11 Any funds remaining at the end of the GRF grant period will be automatically returned to the College's GRF and subsequent applications or extensions to GRF grants for the same project will not be considered.

SUPPORTING PROCEDURES, FORMS, AND RULES

The Vice President, Research (or designee) is responsible for managing the supporting procedures, forms, and rules for this policy.

General Research Fund Procedure

RELATED POLICIES

- I.02 Research Administration*
- I.03 Integrity in Research and Scholarship*
- I.04 Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Human Subjects*
- I.05 Care of Animals in Teaching and Research*
- I.06 Intellectual Property*

RELATED AURORA COLLEGE BYLAWS

None

FACT SHEET

DATES:

2020-04-14 New policy issued.
Approved by Administrator, Aurora College Ref.#Admin-05-2020.
Implemented April 14, 2020.