
Research Incentive Grant for New Academic Staff Members Procedures

Policy Sponsor:	Office of the Provost and Vice President, Academic
Name of Parent Policy:	Research Incentive Grant For New Academic Staff Policy
Policy Contact:	Provost and Vice-President, Academic
Procedure Contact:	March 16, 2012
Effective Date of Procedures:	March 16, 2012
Review Date:	These procedures will be reviewed annually.

Purpose

The purpose of these procedures is to outline the steps required to implement the Research Incentive Grant (RIG) Policy, and to specify the responsibilities of the relevant parties.

Definitions

Academic Staff Member	An individual holding a regular, full-time academic appointment in accordance with Article 3 of the Board/AUFA Terms and Conditions of Agreement. This does not include Academic Coordinators.
Dean	Chief administrative academic officer of a Faculty (includes, for purposes of this policy, Chair, Centre for Distance Education and Chair, Centre for World Indigenous Knowledge and Research).
Research Proposal	The research plan and budget, prepared by an academic staff member that must be approved by the relevant Dean in order for the Research Incentive Grant to be accessed.
Research Incentive Grant	A one-time award that enables new academic staff members to undertake research activities to enhance their research and publication records and increase success in obtaining external research funding.



RIG Holder	An academic staff member who has been awarded a Research Incentive Grant.
Term of Funding	Maximum of three years.

Procedures

1.0 Research Incentive Grant (RIG) Approval and Review

At the time of appointment, the amount of the RIG is determined by the P&VPA in consultation with the Dean. The Dean provides Human Resources with the RIG amount and term of funding in the appointment documentation. Human Resources prepares a separate RIG Confirmation letter outlining the conditions of the RIG for the appointee.

Access to RIG funding is dependent on approval of the Research Proposal by the Dean. The Academic Staff Member is encouraged to seek the advice of the relevant Chair and other colleagues in developing the Research Proposal.

The Academic Staff Member submits the Research Proposal to the Centre Chair, who forwards it to the Dean with a recommendation. The Dean evaluates and approves, or withholds approval of, the proposal.

If approval is withheld, the Dean notifies the Centre Chair and returns the proposal to the applicant with explanatory comments for improvement and re-submission.

If approval is granted, the Dean sends the RIG Approval form to the RIG holder, Centre Chair and Financial Services and forwards a copy of the full proposal to the OP&VPA.

The RIG holder provides the Centre Chair with an annual report on the progress of the research project, including budget and expenditures, as part of the annual performance assessment process. The report includes plans for the coming year. The Centre Chair forwards these reports to the Dean.

The Dean is responsible for reviewing this annual report, and for ensuring that:

- research project objectives are being met.

- expenditures comply with the research activities specified in the approved proposal.

The Dean will communicate any concerns about these issues to the RIG Holder. If they are not addressed to the satisfaction of the Dean, access to RIG monies may be suspended.

Since the purpose of the RIG is to help a staff member be more competitive for external grants the RIG holder is strongly encouraged to apply to one of the Federal Research Councils (or equivalent) within the overall term of RIG funding.



2.0 Account Procedures

Upon receipt of a RIG Approval form from the Dean, Financial Services opens the RIG account based on the term and amount specified on the RIG Approval form.

The Centre Chair is the signing authority for RIG expense claims.

At the end-date, Financial Services will, in the absence of notification of an extension to the Term of Funding from the Dean, transfer any unused RIG funds to the budget of origin and close the RIG account.

3.0 Expenditures

The RIG holder submits expense claims for eligible expenditures using the AU Intranet (as per Admin Practices Handbook for online process myAU Portal/AUNet/Resources). Expense claims are reviewed and approved by the Centre Chair to ensure expenditures claimed are consistent with the approved proposal.

It is the RIG Holder's responsibility to monitor the RIG account balance and to be aware of accepted AU standards for eligible expenses. Expenses that exceed the allocated RIG funds or are otherwise ineligible are the responsibility of the RIG holder.

AU manages RIG expenditures in congruence with the federal Income Tax Act, and the Income Tax Folio, S1-F2-C3, Scholarships, Research Grants and Other Education Assistance effective March 11, 2014 located at <http://www.cra-arc.gc.ca/tx/tchncl/ncmtx/fls/s1/f2/s1-f2-c3-eng.html>.

Travel incurred in the course of approved research must comply with the AU Expense Reimbursement Policy which sets out the conditions for eligibility and payment of travel on AU approved business.

The following is a listing of typical and ineligible expenses. Refer to S1-F2-C3 for additional items.

Typical expenses include:

conference fees (presenting results of the research), direct costs for research, shipping (if justified), publication costs, research assistance (fact checking, research, interviewing, translation), books and journals of an academic or technical nature directly related to the project that are not in the AU library, equipment (e.g, relevant hardware and software not typically covered by AU) typical services (e.g, database access), car rental (where reasonable, where other modes of transportation are not available), ground transportation, copying, editing, and proof-reading.

Ineligible expenses include:

capital assets, assistant attending conference, course fees, membership in professional societies, conferences not directly related to the research study, visas, medical insurance, office rental, proportion of mortgage and other expenses for in-home office, exchange (e.g. Can to US \$), consulting and commuting while sojourning.



4.0 Extension

In exceptional circumstances, RIG holders may apply to have their Term of Funding extended by a maximum of one year. To extend the Term of Funding, the RIG holder must apply in writing to the Centre Chair no later than six months prior to the end-date. The Centre Chair will forward the request and a recommendation to the Dean.

The Dean reviews the request for extension and notifies the RIG holder of the result, and notifies Human Resources and Financial Services if an extension is approved.

Human Resources records the extension in the staff member's personnel file, and Financial Services adjusts the end-date of the Term of Funding.

Applicable Legislation and Regulations

[*Income Tax Act*](#)

Related References, Policies, Procedures and Forms

[Research Incentive Grant for New Academic Staff Members Policy](#)

[Conflict of Interest in Research Policy](#)

[Expense Reimbursement Policy](#)

[Hiring of Research Assistants Policy](#)

[Tangible Capital Asset and Purchased Intangible Asset Accounting Policy](#)

History

The Board, March 16, 2012, Motion # 176-7 (associated policy approved)



RIG Approval

Applicant Name: _____

Applicant Position: _____

RIG Amount: _____ (Specified in Confirmation of RIG letter)

RIG Term: _____ (Specified in Confirmation of RIG letter)

Dean's Approval: _____

Please refer to Research Incentive Grant (RIG) policy and procedures for more details.

Date: _____

Department/Faculty RE: Confirmation of Research Incentive Grant

Dear Dr. _____

To enhance the research and publication records of Academic Staff Members, and to increase their success in obtaining external funding, Athabasca University offers a Research Incentive Grant (RIG) to new faculty members on tenurable contracts.

We are pleased to inform you that you are eligible to receive a RIG in the amount of _____ for a period of three years from the date of hire specified in your Letter of Offer. It is therefore strongly recommended that you submit your RIG proposal by the earliest possible date.

As per the Research Incentive Grant Policy and Procedures established by the University, this funding must be directed toward an original research project involving research design, data gathering and analysis that follows established Tri-Council guidelines. You are strongly encouraged to submit a proposal to one of the Tri-Council agencies or an equivalent external funding agency within the three-year Term of Funding.

Approval to access your RIG funds is dependent on your Dean's approval of your RIG research proposal. Details about how to submit the proposal and the conditions surrounding this award are contained in the RIG Policy and Procedures.

As a RIG holder, and as part of your annual assessment, you will be required to provide an annual report, including budget and expenditures, to your Centre Chair on the progress of the research, which will be forwarded to the Dean for review.



You are also expected to monitor the level of funding remaining in your RIG account. Please note that expenditures that exceed the allocated RIG funds or are otherwise ineligible will not be reimbursed.

In exceptional circumstances, should you need an extension to complete your RIG research, you will need to provide a request and relevant documentation to your Centre Chair at least six months prior to the conclusion of the Grant. You will not have access to any remaining RIG monies at the conclusion of your Term of Funding.

Again, allow me to extend a warm welcome to the Athabasca University community, and to wish you every success in your research career.

Sincerely,

Dean, Faculty of _____

Distribution List:

RIG awardee
Centre Chair,
Finance and Performance Services
Office of the Provost and Vice President, Academic