

**UTSC Departmental Research Fund**

October 28, 2021

**Background**

The Office of the Vice-Principal Research (OVPR) consulted with UTSC Chairs and Directors (CAD) and the UTSC Research Advisory Board (RAB) during the spring of 2018 to identify new funding initiatives that aim to stimulate and support research activities across the diverse academic disciplines at UTSC. Based on feedback provided, the OVPR proposed a new UTSC Departmental Research Fund.

The Fund provides Chairs and Directors an opportunity to request funding within one of the following funding envelopes available: (1) \$100,000 or (2) \$30,000. Up to a maximum of three \$100,000 requests and a maximum of three \$30,000 requests will be awarded. Requests can be made to support one or more of the following initiatives based on departmental research priorities. There was general consensus from the CAD and RAB meetings that the below funding initiatives would benefit diverse research ambitions across departments.

**Funding Initiatives****1. *Research to Knowledge Mobilization and Commercialization (R2K)***

Funding to support proposals that move research to community impact or product development. These funds can include partnering meetings, community events, hiring staff to commercialize products, and so on. Researchers should be encouraged to identify if there is an opportunity to leverage these funds for partnership granting programs.

**2. *Interdisciplinary Challenge Fund (ICF)***

Funding to support interdisciplinary proposals. The research must explicitly use expertise from distinct disciplines to create new understanding or solutions to address societal, technological, or environmental problems. Proposals can be within the same department or across two or more UTSC departments. Proposals should identify potential funding programs to help grow the interdisciplinary project.

**3. *Research Infrastructure and Equipment Fund (RIEF)***

A pool of funds for faculty to purchase new or replace faulty or obsolete equipment (for faculty that were unsuccessful applying for an NSERC Research Tools and Instruments Grant the year prior), or to service or repair existing equipment.

#### **4. Undergraduate Summer Research Opportunity (USRO)**

Funding to support undergraduate summer research experience by providing funding to outstanding undergraduate students to work on faculty research projects. The University of Toronto Research Excellence Awards program guidelines should be used to administer this opportunity.

#### **How to Apply**

1. Chairs or Directors are asked to submit a memo (maximum of three pages) to the OVPR outlining:
  - a. A request for funding including the funding envelope being requested and budget for the allocation of funds
  - b. Details on which one or more of the funding initiatives the funds will be used for
  - c. How the requested funds meet the department or centre's overall research strategy
  - d. How the funds and initiative proposed will enhance research excellence in the department or centre
2. The submission deadline is **February 15** (should that date fall on a weekend or public holiday, the submission deadline will be 5pm the next business day). Funding requests should be sent to ([researchoffice.utsc@utoronto.ca](mailto:researchoffice.utsc@utoronto.ca)). Any questions regarding the Departmental Research Fund should be directed to [researchoffice.utsc@utoronto.ca](mailto:researchoffice.utsc@utoronto.ca), with the subject *Departmental Research Fund*
3. Chairs and Directors will review all requests and funding will be dispersed to successful Departments and/or Centres the end of March

#### **COVID-19 Research Impact Statement:**

We recognize that COVID-19 has impacted faculty research activities. Accordingly, we invite applicants to provide information on how COVID-19 has impacted their research activities. This information will be shared with program competition adjudication committees.

**Required:** Please check no more than two responses.

My proposal is for:

- 1) Recovery: The award funds research recovery (I was not able to do research, or my research activities have been reduced because of COVID-19 restrictions, and I am seeking funds to recover my research program)
- 2) Realignment: The award funds realigned research (Restrictions – past, present or anticipated – require that I adjust my research program)
- 3) Pivot: The award funds a new research agenda or method (Given restrictions and their impact on my research, I am seeking funds to pursue a new area of research)
- 4) Opportunity: The award funds COVID-19-related research

- 5) Not relevant: The award will fund ongoing or new work, and COVID-19 has no bearing on this research proposal

**Optional:** Please specify in no more than 100 words how (if at all) the COVID-19 pandemic relates to/might impact your research proposal.

**Accountability**

A brief final report (maximum of two pages) describing what was accomplished with the Departmental Funds including the outcomes and impact of the funding on faculty research in the department/centre. The final report is due **February 15** of the year following the competition. Should February 15 fall on a weekend or public holiday, the submission deadline will be 5pm the next business day). The report should be sent to [researchoffice.utsc@utoronto.ca](mailto:researchoffice.utsc@utoronto.ca) with the subject *Departmental Research Fund*.