

**University of Toronto Scarborough**

**RESEARCH COMPETITIVENESS FUND**

**Updated October 28, 2021**

**Program Purpose:**

The purpose of the University of Toronto Scarborough Research Competitiveness Fund is to enhance the competitiveness of new external operating grant applications submitted by U of T Scarborough faculty members, with an emphasis on Tri-council grant applications.

Applications will be adjudicated by members of the U of T Scarborough Research Advisory Board according to the Selection Criteria outlined in the Guidelines below. Preference will be given to those proposals that show scientific/scholarly merit, demonstrate need and have strong potential to generate external support.

Normally, the funds awarded will be in the \$5,000-\$10,000 range for individual applicant proposals.

This Fund is not intended to provide continuous support for on-going research, nor as support for infrastructure or equipment, nor as bridge funding for already submitted external applications for which the outcome is not yet known.

**Guidelines:**

1. Full-time U of T Scarborough faculty members eligible to submit Tri-council research grant applications (e.g. CIHR, NSERC or SSHRC) may apply to this Fund. In the case of a group application, a U of T Scarborough faculty member must be the lead applicant.
2. There is one submission deadline per year:
  - **November 1<sup>st</sup>** - The submission deadline will be the next business day if the deadline falls on a weekend or public holiday.
3. Frequency of Application:

Previous Research Competitiveness Fund (RCF) recipients will be ineligible to reapply for a period of 24 months following receipt of an RCF award unless they meet one of the following conditions:

- The final report from the previous RCF award has been submitted
  - The application is a multi-investigator initiative in which they are not the lead applicant
  - The application is for an entirely different purpose
4. The Applicant **must** justify the request for funding. Eligible activities may include:
- Short-term support for early stage research leading to the future submission of a specific external sponsor application. This may include provision of funds for student training opportunities to assist a faculty member in enhancing their highly qualified personnel (HQP) training record to become a more competitive applicant to an external grant program (e.g. undergraduate student research assistantships). Applicants must be able to complete the work proposed prior to the sponsor's deadline.
5. Selection Criteria:
- Excellence of the applicant
    - Experience of the applicant relative to career stage and discipline
    - Quality, quantity and significance of past research activity and published output relative to career stage
  - Quality of the proposed research project
    - Significance and expected contributions to research
    - Appropriateness and feasibility of the approach
    - Appropriateness of, and justification for, the budget
  - Benefits of the proposed contribution from the RCF to the competitiveness of the proposed research activity
6. Certifications: University certifications for research using human subjects, animal subjects, or biohazards are required. Certifications need not be appended at the time of application; however, funding will not be released until confirmation of the necessary certification is received by the Office of the Vice-Principal Research & Innovation.
7. Successful recipients will be advised of fund transfer arrangements in the award letter.
8. Acknowledgment: Support from the RCF should be acknowledged in any research output arising from this award.
- Report: Recipients must submit a final report of one to two pages in length describing what was accomplished and how the funds were expended. Final reports are to be submitted to the Research Operations and Financial Officer no later than November 15<sup>th</sup> of the year following the November 1<sup>st</sup> competition.
9. These guidelines are subject to periodic review.

## How to Apply:

A complete RCF application package includes:

- a) Completed and signed UTSC OVPRI-RCF Cover Sheet
- b) Proposal: 2 pages maximum, in **clear non-specialist language**, under these headings:
  - Background/summary
  - Hypothesis/aims
  - Research methods and materials
  - Impact
  - Rationale – how the funds will be used for the purpose(s) of the request as identified, (e.g. institutional contribution, partnership, early stage, etc.)
- c) Itemized budget and justification (1 page maximum)
- d) A description of the lead applicant's most significant research contributions related to the RCF proposal (half page maximum)
- e) Lead applicant's up-to-date personal data form/CV.
- f) Co-applicants' up-to-date personal data forms/CVs in the case of collaborative proposals.

## 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.

Please convert your complete application package to PDF format and forward it electronically in one attachment to [researchoffice.uts@utoronto.ca](mailto:researchoffice.uts@utoronto.ca). Any questions in regards to the RCF competition please contact [researchoffice.uts@utoronto.ca](mailto:researchoffice.uts@utoronto.ca), with *Research Competitiveness Fund* in the subject line. A scanned copy of the signed cover sheet is permitted. Late or incomplete submissions will not be considered.