

Memorandum

Office of the VP (Research and Innovation)
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TO: Board of Governors
FROM: Martha Crago, Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation)
SUBJECT: Grant Applications and Notices of Award to the Federal Research Support Fund Program.
DATE: May 24, 2018
DOCUMENT #: GD17-71
ACTION REQUIRED: INFORMATION APPROVAL/DECISION

ISSUE & EXPECTED OUTCOME Approval is sought to apply for and approve a notice of award to the Research Support Fund (RSF), administered by the Tri-agency Institutional Programs Secretariat (TIPS).

BACKGROUND & RATIONALE

The Research Support Fund assists postsecondary institutions and their affiliated research hospitals with expenses, commonly known as indirect costs, associated with managing research funded by the three federal research granting agencies: the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR); the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC); and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC).

Research Support Fund grants may be used to:

- maintain modern labs and equipment;
- provide access to up-to-date knowledge resources;
- provide research management and administrative support;
- meet regulatory and ethical standards; and
- transfer knowledge from academia to the private, public and not-for-profit sectors.

TIPS conducts a yearly grant calculation exercise to determine the size of the grant for which eligible institutions may apply. The grant size is based on a set funding formula, which takes into account the amount of funding received by the institution's researchers from the three federal research granting agencies in the three most recent years for which the data is available. TIPS then notifies institutions that they meet the program's eligibility criteria, and invites them to apply for a Research Support Fund grant of that prescribed value. Grants are awarded for one year only. Institutions must re-apply each year and meet all terms and conditions of funding in order to continue receiving these funds.

In 2018 – 2019, McGill’s preliminary grant amount is \$27,768,264. This amount does not take into consideration the reinvestments announced in the Federal Budget 2018. When adjustments are made to the grant amount during the year, institutions are required to re-apply for the revised amount, which is likely this year. As additional funding is anticipated, it is recommended that the Board approve a grant amount up to \$33 million.

ALIGNMENT WITH MISSION AND STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

McGill has long been a leading advocate for increased federal funding for the RSF, so that universities receive adequate funding to cover the full cost of research. In April 2017, Canada’s Fundamental Science Review Panel released its report, which included a recommendation for an increase of funding for the RSF. McGill strongly supports the recommendations set out by the Report.

COMPLIANCE WITH UNIVERSITY POLICY

This request is presented to the Board in accordance with the provisions of the *Policy on the Approval of Contracts and Designation of Signing Authority*. The applications, notice of awards, and reports sent to TIPS are reviewed by Financial Services, Legal Services, and the Office of the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation).

COMPLIANCE WITH LEGISLATION/ EXTERNAL REGULATIONS

To be eligible to receive the grant, each institution must apply to the program each year in May (regularly in December/January for a revised amount), and must report on the use of the funds each year in June.

The grant is administered through the institution according to the terms of the *Agreement on the Administration of Agency Grants and Awards by Research Institutions* that McGill signed with the three federal research granting agencies.

RISK FACTORS

Risks related to this grant are minimal. However, the risk of not proceeding with the application and other requirements on time is to lose the funding altogether.

SUSTAINABILITY CONSIDERATIONS

This grant is used to cover the costs associated with research. Costs associated with McGill sustainability-related policies, procedures and initiatives as they relate to research would be covered by the grant.

IMPACT OF DECISION AND NEXT STEPS

Following approval, the Office of the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation) will proceed with the application and reporting requirements to obtain this federal funding.

MOTION OR RESOLUTION FOR APPROVAL

Be it resolved that the Board of Governors, on the recommendation of the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation), approve the submission of the Research Support Fund Applications and Notices of Award for 2018 – 2019 and authorize the Vice-Principal (Research and Innovation) to sign the Applications and Notices of Award up to \$33 million, and any accessory documents required for purposes of receiving the Award, between The Royal Institution for the Advancement of Learning/McGill University and the Tri-Agency Institutional Program Secretariat (within the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council), provided that they reviewed by Legal Services.

APPENDICES

The RSF application form for 2018 – 2019 is available from Secretariat upon request.
