

Institution: Cape Breton University **Reporting period:** [April 1, March 31]

Attraction and Retention

The CRCP supports the attraction and retention of a diverse cadre of world-class researchers to Canada. The program defines world-class researchers as outstanding and innovative researchers whose accomplishments have made, or have the potential to make, a major impact in their fields.

Using the scale provided, rate how important the CRCP funding was to your institution's ability to **attract** and **retain** a diverse cadre of world-class researchers during the reporting period:

Attraction of researchers from within Canada to your institution.

Very important

Attraction of researchers from outside Canada to your institution.

Not applicable

Retention of researchers at your institution.

Very important

Explain your rating.

If you provided a rating of "Important" or "Very Important" to the questions above, provide one or two examples that demonstrate the way in which the CRCP played a key role in attracting outstanding researchers to your institution, or in retaining outstanding researchers at your institution during the reporting period.

The CRCP is very important to attracting and retaining researchers at CBU. For example, the Program contributed to retaining an exceptional researcher by providing national recognition and a platform for research leadership. The Chair appointment enhanced the researcher's profile, creating opportunities to lead major research initiatives, mentor students and early-career researchers, and expand partnerships with community, industry, and academic collaborators. In one instance, the support and visibility associated with a Canada Research Chair appointment enabled a researcher to secure additional funding, build a critical mass of research expertise, and ultimately launch and lead a research institute aligned with their area of specialization. The combination of institutional support, protected research time, and opportunities for research leadership and institute development reinforced the researcher's decision to continue their academic career at CBU rather than pursue opportunities elsewhere.

What are the challenges in recruiting and nominating researchers from outside of Canada to the CRCP, and how does your institution address them?

Impact on Research Capacity

One of the CRCP's key objectives is to contribute to fostering research capacity. Strengthening research capacity and clusters in strategic areas of research provides institutions with the ability to seek and receive other funding, therefore maximizing their ability to develop clusters of research excellence. Maximizing research capacity, in turn, generates social, economic and cultural benefits for Canada and Canadians.

Indicate which aspects of your institution's research capacity were significantly strengthened by the CRCP funding and the related Canada Foundation for Innovation (CFI) infrastructure support, during the reporting period. Select all that apply.

The ability of the institution to attract highly qualified personnel (HQP) – including undergraduate, master's and doctoral students, postdoctoral fellows, technicians, research assistants and other HQP

The ability of the institution to fund HQP

- ✓ The ability of the institution to train HQP
- ✓ The ability to increase the number of research collaborations at the institution
- ✓ The ability to create international partnerships
- ✓ The ability to develop clusters of research excellence or areas of research strength according to the institution's CRCP Strategic Research Plan
- ✓ The opportunities to conduct research at the institution
- ✓ The overall quality of the research conducted at the institution
- ✓ The institution's capacity to produce new research knowledge

The use of research results at the institution

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion 1

Research demonstrates that achieving an equitable, diverse, and inclusive work environment leads to increased excellence, innovation, and impact. A diversity of experiences, perspectives and voices is fundamental to achieving excellent research.

Key institutional actions in support of EDI in the CRCP

Share up to three key EDI actions related to the CRCP that were undertaken by the institution during the reporting period as well as their impact. (required)

Describe the key action that was undertaken.

CBU partnered with Senomi Solutions to develop the EDI: Researcher Toolkit, a practical resource to help researchers meaningfully integrate equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) throughout the research lifecycle. Designed for researchers across all disciplines, the toolkit includes a glossary of EDI terminology; guidance specific to research projects and research programs; considerations for research design, methods, data collection, analysis, and knowledge translation; grant-writing language; and tools to support inclusive team composition and research culture. The toolkit is intended to help researchers identify systemic barriers relevant to their field, adopt practical EDI practices, access existing institutional supports, and prepare for EDI requirements in funding applications.

Did this action relate to an objective named in your CRCP EDI Action Plan?

No

Describe outcomes and impacts this action supported during the reporting period.

During the reporting period, the toolkit established a consistent, institution-wide resource to support researchers in embedding EDI principles into their research planning, design, implementation, and knowledge mobilization activities. It increased researchers' access to practical guidance and tools for identifying and addressing systemic barriers, fostering more inclusive research teams and practices. The toolkit also strengthened institutional capacity to meet evolving EDI expectations from funding agencies by providing accessible resources that support high-quality, inclusive research across disciplines.

Describe any challenges encountered in undertaking this action, and any mitigation strategies that were employed.

A key consideration during development was ensuring that the toolkit was relevant and applicable across the wide range of research disciplines represented at CBU. To address this challenge, the University partnered with external EDI experts at Senomi Solutions and sought feedback from faculty members throughout the development process. This collaborative approach helped ensure the toolkit reflects leading practices while remaining practical and adaptable to diverse research contexts.

Was funding from the CRCP Stipend for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion used for this action?

Yes

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion 2

Research demonstrates that achieving an equitable, diverse, and inclusive work environment leads to increased excellence, innovation, and impact. A diversity of experiences, perspectives and voices is fundamental to achieving excellent research.

CRCP Stipend for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion

Rate the importance the CRCP Stipend for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion has had on your institution in making progress in implementing measures to address systemic barriers:

Very important

Other EDI initiatives

Provide an example of an EDI initiative underway at the institution – that is broader than those tied to the CRCP that is expected to address systemic barriers and foster an equitable, diverse and inclusive research environment.

For example, are there projects underway that underscore the importance of EDI to research excellence? Is there additional training being offered to the faculty at large? Are there initiatives to improve the campus climate? Please provide hyperlinks where relevant in the box below. URLs should include https://. Note that collecting this information is a requirement of the 2019 Addendum to the 2006 Canadian Human Rights Settlement Agreement (clause 39.e) and provides context for the work the institution is doing in addressing barriers for the CRCP.

CBU Un-Conference: Fostering an Inclusive Research Culture

Researchers at Cape Breton University led an inaugural Un-Conference that brought together faculty, staff, and researchers from across disciplines to engage in participant-driven conversations on issues that matter most to the campus community. Rather than following a predetermined agenda, participants proposed and led discussions on topics related to research, teaching, community engagement, equity, diversity, inclusion, accessibility, and other emerging institutional priorities. By creating an open forum where all voices could shape the conversation, the Un-Conference encouraged cross-disciplinary collaboration, challenged traditional academic hierarchies, and created space to explore systemic barriers and opportunities for institutional change. The initiative strengthened CBU's research culture by promoting inclusive dialogue, fostering new collaborations, and reinforcing the importance of diverse perspectives to research excellence.

Strategic Use of Resources

One of the CRCP's expected results is to make the best possible use of research resources through institutional strategic planning.

Using the scale provided, rate to what extent the institution makes decisions on the allocation of CRC awards in alignment with its CRCP Strategic Research Plan.

To a good extent

Share any significant research successes your institution has achieved during the reporting year while implementing its CRCP Strategic Research Plan.

Institutional Support and Protected Time for Research

As an evaluation criterion of the program, institutions must demonstrate that they will provide chairholders with the support they need to ensure the success of their work, such as protected time for research, mentoring (if applicable), additional research funds, office space, administrative support, and hiring of other faculty members.

Protected time for research is a component of a research chair which provides chairholders with sufficient time to focus on their research program. Protected time can include teaching release, release from service expectations, release from administrative duties, and/or increased administrative support.

Please respond to the questions below.

Yes, our institution provides protected time for research to chairholders.

If no, explain.

How does your institution provide protected time for research to chairholders? Select all that apply.

It is negotiated by each chairholder

There is an institution-wide policy that applies to all CRCP chairholders

It is decided at the faculty/department level and is not negotiated by the CRCP chairholder

☒ Other (specify in box below)

Explain "Other".

In consultation with the nominee, their School Dean, and the Associate Vice President Research and Innovation, the Vice President Academic determines how to provide protected time for research.

Additional Comments and/or Suggestions

Use this section to describe any successes or challenges you have experienced this year in managing the CRCP at your institution. Successes achieved in the context of your institution's CRCP Strategic Research Plan should be entered in the Strategic Use of Resources section and should not be repeated here. Include any suggestions you may have for improvements or changes to the program.