
What is the Research Support Fund?

The Research Support Fund (RSF) is a permanent Government of Canada program that helps post-secondary institutions cover the indirect costs of research, enabling them to manage their research activities and maintain a world-class research environment. The program provides an annual grant to eligible universities and colleges to support these costs. [Visit the RSF website](#) for more information.

What are ‘Indirect costs’ of research?

Indirect costs of research refer to the central and departmental administrative expenses that support research but cannot be directly attributed to specific projects. These are the essential costs institutions must cover to enable research activities to occur. RSF groups indirect costs into five categories: 1. Research facilities: examples include renovations, upgrades, and maintenance and operation of research spaces, laboratories, and offices. 2. Research resources: examples include the acquisition and management of library holdings, improved information and research security resources, and insurance for research equipment. 3. Management and administration of the institution’s research enterprise: examples include salaries of research support staff, training and professional development, and research promotion and public relations. 4. Regulatory requirements and accreditation: examples include supporting research ethics boards, training research personnel in health and safety, and upgrading facilities to meet regulatory compliance requirements. 5. Intellectual property and knowledge mobilization: examples include expenses related to patent applications, technology transfer, licensing, administration of partnership agreements, and the development of incubators.

How is the Research Support Fund calculated?

Grants are calculated based on the amount of funding an institution received from the three federal granting agencies over the previous three years. The formula is designed to allocate a higher proportion of funding to institutions that receive less overall support from these agencies. In doing so, the Research Support Fund helps smaller universities and colleges provide adequate support for their research programs and strengthen their research capacity. [Visit the RSF website](#) for more information.

How much is CBU allocated?

In 2025–2026, CBU received an RSF allocation of \$531,841. For 2026–2027, this allocation increased by approximately 13% to \$599,968.

How did CBU use these funds?

Table 1: RSF Expenditure by Category (Dollar Figure), 2025-2026

Expenditure Category	Amount
Research facilities	\$132,960
Research resources	\$159,533
Management and administration	\$186,164
Intellectual property and knowledge mobilization	\$53,184
Total	\$531,841

Figure 1: RSF Expenditure by Category (Percentage Distribution), 2025-2026

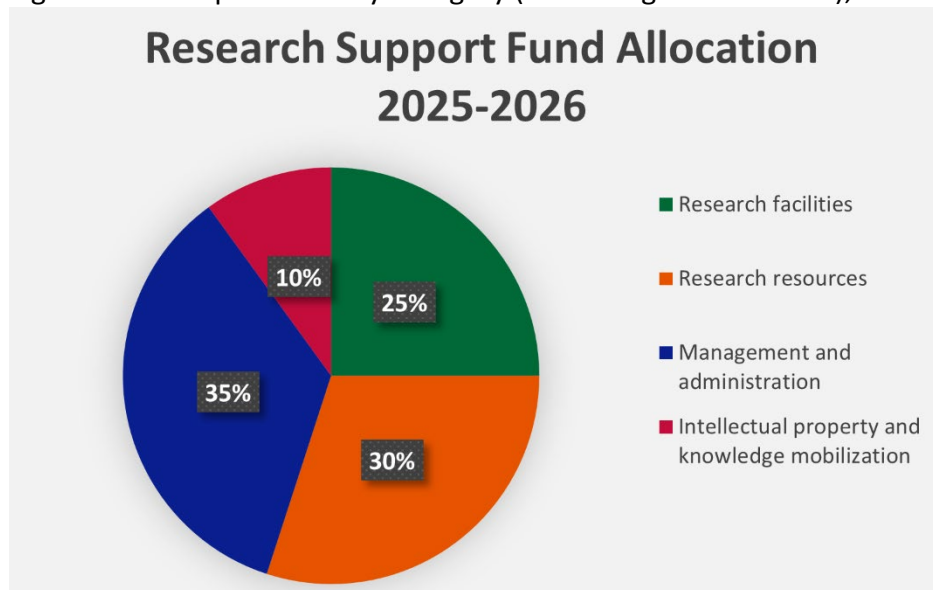


Table 2: RSF Objectives Table, 2025-2026

Eligible Expenditure Category	Output	Performance Objective	Performance Indicator	Target Outcome	Reported Outcome
Research Facilities	Projected expenditure: 25%	Investing in upgraded research facilities.	Number of fume hoods procured for future research facility.	Procurement of research-grade fume hoods completed in alignment with construction timelines for the new facility.	Procurement of 67 research-grade fume hoods completed on schedule in alignment with construction timelines for the new facility.
Research Resources	Projected expenditure: 30%	Maintain access to high quality research software and databases.	Annual renewal of institutional Qualtrics license and assurance of uninterrupted platform access. Number of core research databases supported, contributing to the continued availability of licensed digital research resources.	100% continuity of service.	100% continuity of service maintained throughout the reporting period.
Management and Administration of an Institution's Research Enterprise	Projected expenditure: 35%	Streamline pre and post award research administration processes.	Centralize internal grant submissions and approval processes to one platform. Platformize the research ethics board submission and feedback process.	Implementation of research admin software.	Research administration processes are on track to be streamlined through the near-complete implementation of a centralized platform, bringing internal grant submissions and approvals into one system and moving research ethics board submissions and contracts into the same space. This system is on track to roll out in 2026-2027.
Regulatory Requirements and Accreditation	NA	NA	NA	NA	
Intellectual Property	Projected expenditure: 10%	Ongoing administration of industry agreements and partnerships	Number of active industry agreements maintained annually. Average turnaround time for agreement processing (e.g., draft to execution).	Maintain or increase number of active industry agreements. 50% of agreements processed within 10 business days.	Active industry agreements were maintained, with 50% processed within 10 business days or fewer; a new system is also being introduced to better track agreement timelines and turnaround moving forward.

RSF Investment Stories

The RSF Outcomes Report highlights examples of how RSF funding contributed to a strong and supportive research environment during the previous fiscal year. Below are two impact stories demonstrating the value and outcomes of RSF-supported activities at CBU.

Investment Story #1: Building Research Capacity Through Critical Laboratory Infrastructure

Research Support Fund (RSF) investment enabled the procurement of research-grade fume hoods for Cape Breton University's new Centre for Discovery and Innovation, ensuring critical laboratory infrastructure was in place in alignment with the facility's construction timeline. Designed to be a net-zero ready research building, the Centre will become a hub for interdisciplinary research and innovation, housing the School of Science and Technology alongside other research-intensive programs.

Research-grade fume hoods are essential safety infrastructure that allows researchers to safely conduct experiments involving hazardous chemicals and materials. Procuring this specialized equipment during construction will ensure laboratories are commissioned on schedule and ready to support federally funded research when researchers move into the new facility.

By investing in this foundational research infrastructure, the RSF helped position CBU to provide researchers with modern, safe, and high-quality laboratory environments that meet contemporary research standards. This investment strengthens the University's capacity to attract and retain researchers, expand research opportunities for students, and support cutting-edge research across multiple disciplines. It also demonstrates the critical role of the Research Support Fund in ensuring that Canada's investments in research are matched by the facilities and infrastructure needed to translate research funding into impactful discoveries.

Investment Story #2: Modernizing Research Administration to Support Research Excellence

Research Support Fund (RSF) investment enabled Cape Breton University to procure a research administration platform that centralizes key research administration processes into a single, integrated system. The platform supports the full lifecycle of internal grant administration by streamlining proposal submissions, institutional approvals, and tracking while also modernizing the Research Ethics Board (REB) process through a centralized online system for application submission, review, feedback, and approvals.

Currently, many of these activities rely on separate systems and manual processes, increasing administrative burden for both researchers and research support staff. The new platform creates a more efficient, transparent, and consistent experience, reducing duplication and improving communication throughout the research administration process.

By strengthening the administrative infrastructure that supports research, this investment enables researchers to spend more time researching and less time navigating administrative processes. It also improves institutional oversight, supports compliance with ethical and funding requirements, and enhances CBU's capacity to effectively administer federally funded research. This investment demonstrates how RSF funding is essential to maintaining the robust administrative systems that underpin a high-quality research environment and enable research excellence.