

Senate Policy and Procedures Template

Senate Policy/Procedures Name	Research, Innovation, Scholarship and Exploration (RISE) Grant Policy and Guidelines
Policy Number	CBU ORGS 10
Origin	Office of Research and Graduate Studies through the Research Assistance Committee of Senate
Authority	Senate
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Supersedes	Research, Innovation, Scholarship and Exploration (RISE) Grant Policy and Guidelines
Senate Approval Dates	15 December 2024
Effective from	15 December 2024
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Responsibility for Revision	Research Assistance Committee of Senate
Responsibility for Implementation	Coordinator, Research Assistance Committee of Senate

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to establish a uniform set of regulations and procedures for the development, submission and administration of the Internal Research Grant titled Research, Innovation, Scholarship and Exploration (RISE) Grant at Cape Breton University (CBU). This policy establishes eligibility to apply for the grant, application and submission processes, costing and budgeting guidelines, adjudication processes and responsibilities of the applicant.

Scope:

The purpose of this policy is to establish a uniform set of regulations and procedures for the development, submission and administration of the Internal Research Grant titled Research, Innovation, Scholarship and Exploration (RISE) Grant at Cape Breton University (CBU).

Definitions:

RISE Grant Research, Innovation, Scholarship and Exploration Grant ORGS Office of Research and Graduate Studies

VPA Vice-President Academic and Provost

ADRG Associate Dean Research and Graduate Studies

Principal Applicant The lead researcher at Cape Breton University who is employed in a fulltime capacity and is responsible for the Research Project

Co-applicant: An individual, participating in the grant application, who makes a significant contribution to the intellectual direction of the research, who plays a significant role in the conduct of the research, and who may also have some responsibility for financial aspects of the research

Collaborator: An individual, participating in the grant application, who may make a significant contribution to the intellectual direction of the research or may play a significant role in the conduct of the research; research collaborators do not have access to research funds or responsibility for financial aspects of the research

Researcher: The Principal Applicant as well as other faculty, student research assistants, staff, and contract researchers, involved in the Research Project from CBU and associated universities

Faculty: Cape Breton University faculty as defined by either the Collective Agreement between the Cape Breton University Faculty Association (CBUFA) or the Nova Scotia Government and General Employees Union (NSGEU) and CBU

Research Team: The Researchers participating in the Research Project Applicant categories:

a) **Early Career:** an early career faculty member or researcher within their first five years of academic appointment at CBU and with a maximum of five years of independent academic research experience

b) **Not Research Active:** an applicant who has self-identified as “not currently an active researcher” (if designated as such by their School Dean) in their application form; an applicant can apply as under this category for a maximum of three times consecutively, before returning to the regular applicant pool

c) **Regular:** an applicant with more than five years of employment history at CBU and/or with greater than five years of independent academic research experience

Large Grants: RISE applications requesting more than \$2,000; these applications are standard project-based grant proposals that require funds to address a well- defined research question within the context of a broader field of study

Small Grants: RISE applications requesting \$2,000 or less; Small Grant applications can be standard project-based grant proposals (as above) where only modest funding requirements are needed; alternatively, Small Grant applications can be for defined research needs (e.g., equipment, software programs, research dissemination) within the framework of an existing research project or program

REB (Research Ethics Board): An arm’s-length independent committee mandated to review the ethical acceptability of human research in accordance with federal, provincial and institutional requirements

ACC (Animal Care Committee): ACC oversee the ethical treatment of experimental animals used in research at CBU

Policy:

Updated RISE policy attached below

Procedures: (If applicable)

N/A

Guidelines: (if applicable)

N/A

Related Documents: (if applicable)

N/A

Overview**Description:**

Research, Innovation, Scholarship and Exploration (RISE) Grants are intended to fund:

- a) basic research and scholarly activity directed to the creation of fundamental new knowledge,
- b) applied research and scholarly activity directed to understanding how to bring about specific changes to solve practical problems.
- c) applied research and scholarly activity, including innovation and technology transfer, directed to the design or improvement of products, processes, and services.

To be considered research or scholarly output in this context, it is essential that the work contributes to a body of knowledge and represents an advance over routine application of existing knowledge or interpretation. This definition of research and scholarly output includes the design or improvement of products, services, or processes, but excludes the routine production and provision of products, services, or processes.

Award and Eligibility:

The Office of Research and Graduate Studies (ORGS), through the Research Assistance Committee of Senate (RAC), awards internal grants of up to \$10,000/year to support various forms of research and scholarly activity. CBU RISE Grants are intended for CBU faculty who are members of the CBUFA or NSGEU. All other CBU employees can apply for RISE funding through collaboration with a CBUFA/NSGEU faculty member who is designated as the principal investigator for the research project. A CBU faculty member with union affiliation (stated above) who is employed on a contract of 12 months or less is eligible only if the proposed research is to take place within the time frame described in the employment contract.

Submission Process:

Applicants should review the “RISE Grant Policies and Guidelines” as well as the application format carefully before completing the application process. It is very much in the interest of

Name of Policy: **Research, Innovation, Scholarship and Exploration Grant Policy**

applicants to **adhere to all policies and guidelines**, and to **provide all of the information that is requested in the manner in which it is requested**.

Applications for RISE Grants will only be accepted online. To apply, please first check the information on the ORGS webpage for any updates in procedures and links, and for answers to Frequently Asked Questions.

The online application form can be accessed [online](#). Applicants will need to login with their CBU credentials (user name: `firstname_lastname@cbu.ca`, and CBU password). Once the submissions page has been accessed, a new application can be created by clicking “add document”. Successful submission of an application will be acknowledged by an automated email confirmation.

Policies and Guidelines

1. Competition

1.1 Frequency

Grant rounds will be conducted once each year during the winter term. RISE funding is intended for short-term projects and/or for contributions to larger projects. The deadline to use funds is 16 months. Recipients of RISE funding may reapply the following year if they include with their application a brief progress report on the status of their earlier project including the balance remaining in the project account. Project accounts from the previous year will close at the 16-month deadline (on August 31) even if there are funds remaining.

1.2 Value of Award

RISE grants are awarded to a maximum of \$10,000.

2. Applicants

2.1 Eligibility

CBU RISE Grants are intended for CBU faculty who are members of the CBUFA or NSGEU. All other CBU employees can apply for RISE funding through collaboration with a CBUFA/NSGEU faculty member who is designated as the principal investigator for the research project. A CBU faculty member with union affiliation (as stated above) who is employed on a contract of 12 months or less is eligible only if the proposed research is to take place within the period described in the employment contract.

2.2 Joint Projects

Joint projects are acceptable, but all applicants must be eligible to receive RISE Grant funding. If more than one applicant is named in an application, principal and secondary co-applicants must be specified and a detailed explanation of the division of responsibilities is expected. Collaborators can also be listed within the grant application to acknowledge their roles in the research process. Definitions of co- applicants and collaborators accord with SSHRC guidelines, as outlined below:

- (a) A **co-applicant** is an individual, participating in a grant application, who makes a significant contribution to the intellectual direction of the research, who plays a significant role in the conduct of the research, and who may also have some responsibility for financial aspects of the research.
- (b) A **collaborator** is an individual, participating in a grant application, who may make a significant contribution to the intellectual direction of the research or may play a significant role in the conduct of the research. Research collaborators do not have access to research funds or responsibility for financial aspects of the research.

2.3 Holding Multiple RISE Grants

A person cannot be an applicant or co-applicant on more than one RISE Grant application during each round of RISE Grant adjudications but may submit multiple sub-projects in one proposal. Applicants and co-applicants who apply in a given year can apply the following year as long as they provide a brief progress report indicating the status of the previous year's project and spending to date.

2.4 Applicants Serving on the RAC

Research Assistance Committee members may be applicants or co-applicants for RISE Grants. However, such applicants and co-applicants must not be present when their research proposals are discussed, evaluated, and rated. Furthermore, such applicants and co-applicants must not in any way, formally or informally, influence or attempt to influence the discussion, evaluation, or rating of their own RISE Grant applications. To do so creates a clear conflict of interest and will result in the removal of the RISE Grant application from the adjudication process.

3. Funding Categories

3.1 Application Categories

Applications for RISE funds are categorized according to the funding request (Large Grant vs Small Grant applications). Application types are associated with different assessment criteria.

- a) **Large Grant applications** (i.e., those requesting funding of > \$2,000). These applications are standard project-based grant proposals that require funds to address a well-defined research question within the context of a broader field of study.
- b) **Small Grant applications** (i.e., those requesting funding of \$2,000 or less). Small Grant applications can be standard project-based grant proposals (as above) where only modest funding requirements are needed. Alternatively, Small Grant applications can be for defined research needs (e.g., equipment, software programs, research dissemination) within the framework of an existing research project or program.

3.2 Applicant Categories

For adjudication purposes, applicants will self-identify with one of the following groups:

- a) **Early career.** Early career applicants are early career faculty members or researchers

within their first five years of academic appointment at CBU and with a maximum of five years of independent academic research experience.

- b) **Not currently research active.** Applicants in this category have self-identified as “not currently active researchers” (if designated as such by their School Dean) in their application form. Applicants can apply under this category for a maximum of three times consecutively, before returning to the regular applicant pool. Prior to applying for funding, applicants in this category are advised to make an appointment with the Office of Research and Graduate Studies to discuss their application.
- c) **Regular.** Regular applicants are those applicants with more than five years of employment history at CBU and/or greater than five years of independent academic research experience.

4. Criteria

4.1 Eligible Research Programmes

RISE Grants are intended to support all research and scholarly activities except those directly related to CBU program development, CBU course development, or an applicant’s acquisition of degrees or other credentials. RISE Grants fund:

- a) basic, or pure, research and scholarly activity directed to the creation of fundamental new knowledge
- b) applied research and scholarly activity directed to understanding how to bring about specific changes to solve practical problems
- c) applied research and scholarly activity, including innovation and technology transfer, directed to the design or improvement of products, processes, and services.

RISE Grants are awarded to faculty and researchers at CBU to support early career faculty and researchers in developing their research programs; to assist faculty and researchers with established research records to continue their progress; and to help full-time faculty and researchers without extensive research records to improve their research profiles. RISE grant funds are awarded for 16 months and are intended for short term projects or contributions to larger projects that can be completed within the specified timeframe.

Although the quality of the research proposal is of paramount importance, priority will be given to research and scholarly projects that advance a researcher’s career and/or help position them to apply for external funding. In addition, consideration may be given to projects that initiate new lines of research or projects that further develop an existing research program.

The inclusion of student assistants is encouraged, where feasible, and a well-thought-out role for students will be looked upon favourably. However, not all research proposals can or should include such opportunities and proposals will not be penalized for failing to include requests for such funds. Expenses related to graduate students or collaborators are also allowed and will be considered positively.

4.2 Evaluation

Six criteria are considered when evaluating the merits of a research proposal:

- a) completeness, specificity and clarity of the research proposal
- b) originality, suitability of theoretical perspectives, research strategies, and methodologies proposed
- c) appropriateness of the budgetary projections, feasibility of the proposed research, and relation to any other existing or requested funding
- d) degree of expected contribution to the advancement of knowledge, the solution to a practical problem, or the development of a novel product, process, or service
- e) the general research and scholarly activity of the primary applicant.
- f) Applicants are expected to demonstrate how they have considered Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in the academic team composition (e.g., hiring process for a research assistant) as well as the training plan. Furthermore, when applicable, applicants are expected to demonstrate how diversity and inclusivity have been considered in the research design.

Large Grant applications will be evaluated based on all six criteria.

Applicants in the Small Grant group will be judged solely on a), c) and e). See section 3 on categories for more information.

In cases where applicants have self-identified as “not currently active researchers”, regardless of whether applications are for Small or Large Grants, applicants will not be evaluated on their past scholarly activity (e).

4.3 Submitting Completed Applications

Applicants must adhere strictly to the Research Assistance Committee’s “Policies and Guidelines” and the preparation of the application must follow the format specified in the online application form.

Incomplete or improper applications may be excluded from further consideration in the adjudication process.

Applicants are expected to supply sufficient documentation to allow the RAC to make an informed assessment. Because the Research Assistance Committee is comprised of representatives with various professional backgrounds and is unlikely to contain a specialist in the field of most research proposals, it is especially important that the proposed research project is explained as clearly and concisely as possible. **The onus is on each applicant to explain and place the project in context within their discipline in a way that is comprehensible to non-specialists.**

4.4 Ethics/Animal Care Approval

Applicants whose **proposed research project involves human subjects or animals** are eligible to apply for funding prior to seeking approval from the **CBU Research Ethics Board (REB)** or the **CBU Animal Care Committee (ACC)**. Mi'kmaw Ethics Watch, an ethics approval process independent of REB, is required for research projects involving Mi'kmaw communities/participants. Tri-Council policy stipulates that research involving Indigenous people requires approval from the communities/cultural groups involved. For this reason, applicants are encouraged to apply for REB, ACC, or Mi'kmaw Ethics Watch review committee approval before applying or while waiting to hear results of the RISE

competition. However, access to RISE Grant funds is contingent upon the final approval of the project by the CBU REB, ACC, or Mi'kmaw Ethics Watch.

5. Adjudication

5.1 Adjudication Process

The adjudication process will follow a standard procedure for each funding round.

Prior to the review of any grant applications, the Research Assistance Committee will decide on the modifiers to be used (if any) to prioritize certain applications for funding within a given funding round. These modifiers can represent the number of successful RISE applications by that applicant over the past five years (more applications could mean their priority is lessened); their track record regarding applications for external funding (using RISE funds to seed an external application or being judged fundable but unfunded by outside agencies would increase priority); etc. Modifiers must always be decided upon before any applications are read/reviewed to ensure impartiality.

Within a given funding round, members of the Research Assistance Committee will be assigned applications to review by the RAC Coordinator in consultation with the RAC Chair. Each committee member will then privately judge assigned applications based on application type and relevant evaluation criteria outlined in Section 4. For each proposal, evaluation criteria will be scored as either satisfactory, unsatisfactory, or excellent, where excellent is reserved only for the best examples.

The Chair of RAC will collate the responses of all committee members and then the Research Assistance Committee will consider the distribution of excellent and unsuccessful judgements for each and set a quantitative threshold for each of the application groups (Large Grants and Small Grants). The identity of the applicants will not be revealed during these deliberations. Those applications which exceed the threshold for their group will be judged fundable.

If the funds available are not sufficient to fund all applications judged fundable according to the preceding process, it will be necessary to rank these applications. Scores will be assigned according to which group the applicant comes from and their excellent and unsatisfactory judgments. This basic score will then be additionally modified positively or negatively by the factors/modifiers decided upon prior to the review of applications. Once the applicants are ranked, the funds will be allocated in that order.

Priority for funding will be lessened for any applicant who receives funding from RISE regularly.

5.2 External Assessment of Applications

The Research Assistance Committee reserves the right to seek confidential assessments of research proposals from persons external to the Committee and perhaps external to CBU. If the applicant has had an application judged non-fundable, they can request that the same application (with any time-sensitive details updated) be submitted to the next grant round with an external review of the project's quality. A reviewer that is agreeable to both the Research Assistance Committee and the applicant will be selected.

5.3 Supplementary Information

If the Research Assistance Committee decides that it desires additional information to proceed with an application, the applicant(s) may be requested to appear before the Committee to provide further clarification or to respond in writing if this is deemed satisfactory by the RAC.

5.4 Privacy and Confidentiality

Insofar as is possible within the preceding policies and guidelines, the Research Assistance Committee will maintain the principles of applicant privacy and confidentiality in the RISE Grant application, adjudication, and announcement procedures and processes.

6. Funding Decisions

6.1 Notification of Results

The Office of Research and Graduate Studies will notify each applicant of the Research Assistance Committee's decision, provide general information about the application adjudication procedures to all applicants, and announce all awards to the University community through the Research Committee of Senate.

6.2 Final Results

Funding decisions are final for each allocation period. Applicants should be aware that even though a proposal is meritorious, it may not be successful because funds are limited, and other applications may be judged to be more competitive.

6.3 Feedback on Partially Funded or Unsuccessful Proposals

For applicants who do not receive funding and for applicants who receive less funding than requested, selected additional information about how their application was judged will be provided by the Chair of RAC.

7. Responsibilities of Principal Applicant

7.1 Execution of Project

Principal applicants make final decisions in the execution of projects. However, major changes (more than 20% change in a budget category) in proposed projects must receive prior authorization from the RAC.

7.2 Authority of Funds

Within whatever restrictions the Research Assistance Committee imposes on awards, principal applicants hold ultimate authority and responsibility for decisions regarding expenditures and must authorize all such expenditures in writing.

7.3 Financial Responsibility

Principal applicants are responsible for providing payment for expenditures beyond the value of the award.

7.4 Final Report

Principal applicants are required to submit a final written report by August 31 of the following year. Submitted reports should be emailed to the [RAC Coordinator](#). The reports will be reviewed by the RAC Chair and Associate Dean RGS.

Each report must include a research summary (of not more than 250 words) of the work accomplished that can be used for dissemination on the ORGS webpage and in print materials compiled by the Office of Research and Graduate Studies. Reports may be accompanied by products of the research, such as published or unpublished documents.

7.5 Extensions

Researchers who cannot submit a final report by the reporting date must provide an explanation for the delay to the [RAC Coordinator](#). In most situations, RISE grant funding is not extended beyond the 16-month timeframe. Any request for an extension must be sent to the [RAC Coordinator](#) prior to the final report submission deadline. Requests for extensions will be evaluated by the RAC Chair and the Associate Dean RG. If an extension is granted due to extenuating circumstances, the report in question will be due by the extended deadline unless other arrangements are negotiated with the Office of Research and Graduate Studies.

Outstanding reports for any (CBU or external) prior grants will mean that the researcher is ineligible for consideration for RISE funding until the reports are submitted.

7.6 Unspent Funds

After the research project is complete—or the 16-month deadline has passed—and the final report has been filed, any unspent funds remaining in a RISE Grant account are returned to the Office of Research and Graduate Studies and are unavailable to the principal applicant.

7.7 Cessation of Employment

If a sole principal applicant ceases to be employed by CBU, the RISE Grant normally terminates immediately, and any unspent balance is returned to the Office of Research and Graduate Studies. If any principal or secondary co-applicant ceases to be employed by CBU, the remaining grantee(s) must notify the Research Assistance Committee immediately and seek Research Assistance Committee approval to continue the RISE Grant funding.

7.8 External Funding

Applicants may receive RISE Grants while awaiting news concerning a simultaneous external grant application for a similar research project, but must reimburse the Office of Research and Graduate Studies in full if an award is received from the external source. All research funded by a RISE Grant should be distinguishable from any research funded by external grants and the distinctions between the research made clear in the application, so that all expenses and products are reported accurately.

7.9 Acknowledgement

Acknowledgement of a RISE Grant received at CBU is appropriate and expected for any product arising in whole or in part from RISE Grant support. Published documents should be submitted, where possible,

to Cape Breton University's Online Digital Repository, [CBU Scholar](#).

8. Eligible Expenses

8.1 General Expenses

If essential for the proposed project, RISE Grants may be used for expenses in the following categories (subject to the conditions outlined in 8.2):

- research assistants (undergraduate students and graduate students)
- travel to conduct research
- periodicals, books, and other library resources
- computers and computer accessories
- duplicating, disseminating, and publishing research results (e.g., printing of posters, publication charges, etc.), conference registration (note that RISE funding does not cover expenses related to conference travel)
- miscellaneous equipment and other items (for questions about specific expense items not included in this list, consult the Research Administration Officer-Facilitation and Outreach, Office of Research and Graduate Studies).

8.2 Conditions of Eligible Expenses

It is the responsibility of applicants to precisely justify their budget. Applications must list each expense item and include a budget justification stating the need for each item listed. Additionally, the project description must explain how budget items are linked to the study's overall purpose and objectives. For example, if travel is essential for completing a research project, the applicant should elaborate on connections between budget items and their research proposal. **Applications with unclear or partially unjustified budget items may be deemed ineligible.**

Personnel

- a) RISE Grants may be used to fund the salaries of student research assistants for up to 100 hours during each semester and for 16 weeks during the spring and summer months. Researchers are encouraged to hire CBU students if possible; however, the Research Assistance Committee recognizes that some projects may require hiring students from other universities. Guidelines will adhere with current [Student Employment Policy and Guidelines](#), where salaries of research assistants are based on standardized hourly rates at CBU, and standard differentials are applied depending upon academic level. Fringe benefits and required contributions must appear in the budget and must be enumerated separately for each student research assistant. The advantages of hiring undergraduate and graduate assistants for both the research and CBU should be clearly outlined in the application.

RISE Grant funds must not be used as salary for the applicant(s) or for any member of the immediate family of the applicant(s). RISE Grant funds also must not be used as salary for any other employee of CBU or members of their immediate families, without approval of the Research Assistance Committee. An exception can be made for students who are related to CBU employees but employed by unrelated researchers.

Travel

- b) To be eligible for funding, travel must be directly related to the completion of the proposed project. RISE Grants cannot be used for travel to conferences. For eligible research travel, requests for transportation expenses will be considered. Requests for living expenses should be reasonable and well justified and accord with the CBU travel expense report instructions. Travel expense records and receipts are required for reimbursement. The Research Assistance Committee reserves the right to reduce travel budgets presented in RISE Grant applications.
- c) Conference registration fees up to a maximum of \$500 are eligible if the researcher is giving an oral or poster presentation at the conference. Funding will be assessed depending on the level of prestige attached to the academic exposure gained from the conference.

Material

- d) Periodicals, books, or other library resources must be specifically enumerated in the RISE Grant application. The onus is on the applicant(s) to determine that each budget item is not currently available at CBU. The Research Assistance Committee also must be convinced that it is not practical or economically advantageous to secure each item through interlibrary loan or some other temporary arrangement. Purchased periodicals, books, or other library resources are issued to the applicants(s) but remain the property of CBU.
- e) Required hardware and software computing items must be specifically enumerated in the RISE Grant application. Funds for computers and computer accessories will only be granted if the Research Assistance Committee is convinced that the computing items are **absolutely essential** for the proposed research project, that computer equipment, software, and accessories adequate to complete the proposed project are not already available for use at CBU by the applicant(s), and that the computing items cannot be purchased through other CBU channels. Note that ORGS has laptops available to borrow as well as other equipment and Computer Services can be requested to supply computers for research purposes. RISE funding should not be viewed as a source for routine computer purchases and upgrading. Purchased hardware and software computing items are issued to the applicants(s) but remain the property of CBU, and future utility to other researchers will be looked on favourably.
- f) Extensive duplicating and other office costs must be adequately justified in the application. Both CBU and external costs may be charged to the RISE Grant. Purchases of standard stationery and office supplies are not eligible expenses in RISE Grant applications.
- g) Necessary miscellaneous equipment and other items must be specifically enumerated in the RISE Grant application. The onus is on the applicant(s) to determine that each budget item is **not currently available** at CBU and that each budget item cannot be purchased through other funding channels at CBU. Equipment and other items obtained with RISE Grant funds are issued to the applicants(s) for the duration of the project and future related projects but remain the property of CBU. Sensible cooperation is expected to optimize the potential use of the equipment and other items by others at CBU. When no longer needed by the applicants(s), the equipment and any unused items fall under the control of the appropriate CBU body (e.g., department, library, centre, institute).

- h) The costs of dissemination of research products, including printing of posters, publication charges, etc., should be included in the budget. Page charges for journals and other such costs resulting from publication should be carefully justified and explained within the context of the applicant's field. Dissemination costs are limited to a maximum of \$1,000 per RISE grant application. Applicants who require funds solely for research dissemination should apply for a Small Grant.