## Application Guidelines: TRU Internal Research Fund

*Applicants must consult these guidelines before completing the application form*

The Thompson Rivers University Internal Research Fund (IRF) is provided to support research, including the scholarship of teaching, with the aim of both (1) helping faculty become more competitive for external funding, and (2) scaffolding faculty development, *especially in terms of tenure and promotion.* Completion of an IRF award should significantly widen the applicant's sphere of influence in terms of his or her research and scholarship. Those accepting IRF seed funding are expected to apply for complementary or future external funding support.

Awards to a single applicant: a minimum of $3000 and a maximum of $5000.

Awards to multiple applicants for a collaborative project: a minimum of $3000 and a maximum of $5000 per project, with each member of the research collaborative detailing his or her role and level of contribution. The IRF is a small seed fund which is not intended to provide funding for major projects.

**The following priorities apply to all applications**:
**Funds are awarded on the basis of merit.** All IRF applications are peer-reviewed by a faculty subcommittee of the Senate Research Scholarship Committee. The adjudication committee will seek equitable distribution of funds but will make the final decision regarding merit. Applications are due in January, and decisions are normally announced by mid-March.

- Priority is given to proposals judged as most likely to produce tangible results and to secure future external funding.
- Priority is given to proposals that are most likely to develop and enhance the applicant's research and scholarly profile.
- Priority is given to proposals judged as feasible, given their scope, timelines and the qualifications of the applicant.
- **Priority will be given to proposals involving student training, when student training is possible.**
- Priority is given to proposals with the potential to develop areas of existing or emerging institutional strength and excellence.
- Priority is given to projects that involve collaboration within or outside the university, when the project lends itself to such collaboration.
- **Priority is given to first-time applicants, when proposals are of equal merit.**
- Priority is given to applicants who have not received IRF funding in the last two years.
- Lowest priority is given to repeated requests for funds to supplement ongoing research projects, and to applications for which the sole expense is conference travel or publication charges for refereed journals, monographs, reprints, books, proceedings of conferences or equipment.

- Applications to support the work of established faculty members will be considered when the project is intended to diversify the applicant's research or teaching, is exploratory in nature, or when unforeseen expenses are incurred in the applicant's ongoing work.
- Funds *will not be awarded* to applicants who have not successfully completed their previous IRF research projects (i.e., submitted a final report and produced promised outcomes).

**Eligibility**:

**Full-time TRU faculty are eligible to apply.** Eligibility includes all faculty members with ongoing or tenure-track appointments, and term-certain faculty holding appointments of more than one year and not in the final year of those appointments. Those holding sessional or one-year term-certain appointments may contribute to and receive funding from an approved project, but they are not eligible to apply directly for funding from the IRF.

**Use of Funds:**
*Note: All expenses must be in compliance with the Tri-Agency Financial Administration Guide.*

- Funding may be used to pay for research assistants, but neither a grantee nor a member of the grantee's family may receive remuneration from the IRF.
- Funding may be used to pay for travel directly related to the scholarship, including travel by research assistants in the performance of their assigned duties.
- Other items necessary for completion of the project (e.g., supplies, transcription services, technical services, etc.).
- Normally, the purchase of subscriptions, computers and major equipment will not be considered unless a compelling rationale is included in the budget.
- Projects requesting retroactive funding will not be considered.

Funds from the IRF are *not* intended to provide:
- Release time for faculty.
- Tuition and travel costs affiliated with completion of degrees and coursework.
- Travel costs for co-researchers or collaborators not specified in the application.
- Funding for publication (although the Research Committee will provide pre-publication subvention funds for translation, transcription, and copyright fees; preparation of manuscripts; preparation of indexes, tables, or illustrations; and related pre-publication expenses). To qualify for pre-publication funding, applicants should demonstrate that the articles, books, catalogues, or other scholarly works are either under contract or have been accepted for publication.

**Components of the Application**:

Single or multiple applicants may submit only *one* application per competition.

1. **Abstract** should begin with a succinct description of the research written for an intelligent reader, but a reader who is not a specialist in the field of study. The abstract must

   - Define the scope and limitations of the project, indicating briefly previous work accomplished by others on your area of research or teaching, and describing how your proposal will make an original contribution. Detail your anticipated results.
   - Next, comment on the potential significance of the study or project to the University, discipline, and/or society at large.
   - Finally, indicate how the seed grant will help you secure future external funding.

2. **Research/Scholarly Proposal** should describe the proposed research in a narrative style, using headings for clarity. ***This part of the proposal should not exceed three pages and must address the following points***:

   - Define the research problem, issue, or project clearly and concisely, providing any background information essential to understanding the importance of the work proposed. Provide a literature review which includes references, where appropriate, to similar or related work. Indicate how your work will make an original contribution to the field of knowledge or practice in which you are working.
   - Include a statement of the potential significance, future use, relevance or application of the results; and indicate why you are well placed to conduct this scholarly work (say how your previous work has prepared you to take on this project).
   - Provide an explanation of the methodology proposed, the data to be collected or analyzed, and the structure and procedure of the experiment or fieldwork or scholarly teaching project or interpretive study or creative inquiry.
   - State what is to be done, by whom, how and when. *For applications submitted by multiple applicants, indicate the role of each applicant in the proposed research activity.* Set out and describe the methods and procedures that will be used, and the sequence of events. Indicate the resources required, personnel, facilities, equipment, materials, etc., with particular emphasis on those included in the budget. Indicate clearly your expected outcomes, making sure the outcomes listed are supported by your departmental standards document for promotion and tenure.
   - Indicate how you will disseminate your results, ideally in peer-reviewed venues.

- Provide a working bibliography (this should be added as an appendix to the formal two-page proposal).

3. **Publications & Prior Scholarly Activity**: Provide a CV listing each applicant's education, recent relevant publications, prior scholarly activity and longer term research collaborations.
4. **Previous IRF Award**: Provide a brief summary of the results of any previous IRF awards (e.g., conference papers, workshops organized, research grants, publications, performances, exhibitions, curricula developed, etc.).
5. **Other Funding for this Application**: Provide information regarding other granting agencies or sources (internal or external) from which you have received, requested or plan to request funding for this research. Include the name of the granting agency, the status of request, and the amount requested or awarded.
6. **Budget**: Provide a budget and concise justification (one page maximum). Personnel costs must include each employee's title and type of work to be performed, the estimated number of hours/months to be worked, and the rate of pay per hour/month plus 12% benefits. Suggested rates for student Research Assistants: $14 - $16 per hour for URAs; $17 - $18 per hour for GRAs.

   - Travel costs must include the purpose of the travel for each destination, mode of travel, cost of meals and lodging, and the number of days of the travel.
   - **No more than 20% of the project budget may be used for dissemination of research results (i.e., conference travel expenses).**
   - Provide information on the viability of the project if only these funds are available; or indicate where additional funding will be obtained, when the overall costs of a project exceed the maximum provided by this fund.
   - Potential sources of leveraging should the grant be successful.

**Conditions of the Award**:

Funds may be used only for the project and purposes described in the application. Where applicable, ethics review must be completed before the funds are released to the applicant.

1. **Use of Funds**: Expenditures may be made only for those cost elements identified in the application. Minor transfers of funds from one budget category to another may be permitted. Major transfers or the use of funds for a previously unspecified expense or a new budget item requires prior approval by TRU Research Office.
2. **Term**: The usual term of an award is twelve months or less, in accordance with the applicant's request. Requests for extensions should be submitted to the Research Office. The total term, including any extension granted, may not exceed fifteen months.

3. **Reports**: A final report on the work funded must be submitted to the Research Office within two months of the termination date on the provided template. Award recipients will also undertake to present a public lecture, poster, or exhibition, or other form of presentation on the research or scholarly teaching project undertaken and its results within a year of completion. Subsequent applications can be considered only after receipt of satisfactory final reports.

4. **Equipment & Library Acquisitions**: Equipment or library materials such as books, journals, reports, microfilm, etc., acquired with IRF funds are the property of the University. Upon completion of the project, these items are to be transferred to the control of the applicant's Department or the Library, or at the Research Office's request, to some other Department or unit within the University.

**Submission Instructions**:

Deadline for submission to the 2018 competition is 4 p.m. on **Friday, January 12, 2018**. Late submissions will not be accepted and incomplete applications will not be considered. Please submit all applications through the [Romeo portal](#).

**Evaluation Criteria:**

Funds will be allocated according to the priorities detailed in the Application Guidelines. In addition, the Adjudication Committee will consider each application in terms of the following criteria:

**Merit—The aim and importance of the endeavour (50%):**
- Originality, significance and expected contribution to knowledge;
- Clarity of objectives;
- Appropriateness of the theoretical approach or framework;
- Appropriateness of the methods/approach;
- Quality of training and mentoring to be provided to students, and opportunities for them to contribute; and
- Potential influence and impact of the research, including potential to secure future external funding.

**Feasibility—The plan to achieve excellence (20%):**
- Probability of effective and timely attainment of the research objectives;
- Appropriateness of the requested budget and justification of proposed costs;
- Indications of financial and in-kind contributions from other sources, where appropriate; and
- Strategies and timelines for the design and conduct of the activity/activities proposed.

**Capability—The expertise to succeed (30%):**

- Quality, quantity and significance of past experience and published and/or creative outputs of the applicant and any team members relative to their roles in the project and their respective stages of career;
- Evidence of contributions such as commissioned reports, professional practice, public discourse, public policies, products and services, development of talent, experience in collaboration, etc.; and
- Potential to make future contributions.

**Scoring table:** Adjudication Committee members assign a score for each of the three criteria listed above, based on the following scoring table. Applications must receive a score of 3.0 or higher for each of the three criteria in order to be recommended for funding.

| Score | Descriptor |
|:---:|:---:|
| 6 | Excellent |
| 5 | Very good |
| 4 | Good |
| 3 | Satisfactory |
| Below 3 | Unsatisfactory |