

2021 Workshop Series

Research Administration Processes: The Impact of Covid-19

January 28, 2021, 10:30 am – 11:30 am

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Land Acknowledgement

"We wish to acknowledge this land on which the University of Toronto operates. For thousands of years it has been the traditional land of the Huron-Wendat, the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River. Today, this meeting place is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island, and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work on this land."

Research Administration: Impact of COVID-19

Agenda

- Working from Home
 - Eligibility of expenses on research grants
 - Research administration processes
- Funder responses to COVID-19
 - Federal and Provincial Funders
 - Tri-Agencies
- Your Questions

UofT Covid-19 FAQ

https://research.utoronto.ca/covid-19

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General

Coronavirus (COVID-19) Research FAQ

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Last updated Tuesday January 19, 2021 at 6:30 PM EST

 **Please Note** [**MESSAGE ABOUT THE IMPLICATIONS OF THE ONTARIO PROVINCIAL EMERGENCY ON RESEARCH ACTIVITIES**](#)



COVID-19 Responses: Working from home

- spending eligibility determined by the specific award / agreement terms
- for Tri-Agency awards, [TAGFA](#) rules apply (TAGFA, April 1st, 2020)
- cannot buy equipment from grants (e.g. laptops, modems, zoom , office furniture, etc.) if sole intent is to enable working from home or to connect with colleagues (Tri-Agency and other sources)
- CRCEF exception: where the additional/new expense is
 - a direct research expense and
 - essential for the completion of the research as (or close to) originally planned.

COVID-19 Responses: Working from home

Exception example:

- project intended to interview subjects, but cannot because of social distancing rules
- project may purchase equipment to enable interviewing via zoom etc
- research can pivot, but aim must be to achieve the original research objectives

COVID-19 Responses: Working from home

Wet vs Dry Signatures

- Current financial policies regarding hand-written (wet) signatures and original receipts have been temporarily waived when required
- Where the policy requires a wet signature, the “temporary” policy allows for an **email approval/declaration**, with a return to the wet signature approval/declaration provided upon return to the office

COVID-19 Responses: Working from home

Backup Documentation

- No change on the documents needed to be retained as supporting documentation
- Documents can now be retained in an electronic format – either scanned copies or pictures
- However, original documents should be provided when we return to the office to ensure we have them for audit purposes.

Federal & Provincial Agencies' COVID-19 Responses

Will address:

- How federal and provincial research funding agencies are adapting to restrictions on research resulting from COVID-19

Will not address

- New COVID-19 research funding programs (as the terms & conditions set out in the respective Call for Proposals)

Institutional Initiatives: COVID-19 Responses

Canada Foundation For Innovation

- Competition timelines unaffected
- 2020 Annual reporting deferred to Sept: no news on 2021
- no additional funding
- project end date extensions: up to 6 months
- 3 month extension to finalization deadline (now 1 year)

<https://www.innovation.ca/apply-manage-awards/faq-changes-due-covid-19>

Institutional Initiatives: COVID-19 Responses

Ontario Research Fund (RE & RI) and ERA

- competitions disrupted
- move from MEDJCT to MCU
- 2020 Annual reporting deferred to Sept: no news on 2021
- no supplementary funding
- project end date extensions: up to a year, if requested by March 2021

<https://research.utoronto.ca/covid-orf-era>

Institutional Initiatives: COVID-19 Responses

Genome Canada

- competitions appear unaffected
- no supplementary funding
- project end date extensions: up to a year; scope for more
- “case-by-case”

<https://www.genomecanada.ca/en/news/genomics-mission-meeting-covid-19-challenge>

Institutional Initiatives: COVID-19 Responses

Canada Research Chairs

- reverted to two-cycle model (April & October deadlines)
- some previous disruption
- annual reports delayed in 2020 (portal issues)

<https://www.chairs-chaires.gc.ca/home-accueil-eng.aspx>

Institutional Initiatives: COVID-19 Responses

Canada Research Continuity Emergency Fund (CRCEF)

- \$450m national funding: ongoing
- 4 phases:
 - 1, 2 & 4 for salary support for non-government grant paid staff
 - 3 for research maintenance and ramp up costs
- very rapid implementation and required response
- issues with interpretation of eligibility rules
- U of T claims fully funded
- must compete by 31 March 2021

<https://www.sshrc-crsh.gc.ca/funding-financement/crcef-fucrc/index-eng.aspx>

Tri-Agencies: COVID-19 Responses

Mitigation Measures to date

- Unfunded extensions for NSERC, SSHRC, CIHR
- Funded extensions for NSERC Discovery
- Salary and Stipend Supplements for NSERC, SSHRC, CIHR

Tri-Agencies: Unfunded Extensions

- NSERC and SSHRC:
 - Grants that end between February 1, 2020 and March 31, 2021 eligible for **unfunded** extension of 12 months due to delays as a result of COVID-19
 - NSERC & SSHRC have enabled RGOs to extend and advise Agency afterwards (exception to usual process.)
- CIHR
 - An automatic one-year unfunded extension was provided to all active CIHR grants. All eligible CIHR funds at U of T were extended over the summer/fall 2020

Tri-Agencies: NSERC funded Extensions

- Funded 1-year extensions for NSERC Discovery Grants
 - NSERC offers active grant holders a one-year funded extension
 - **Active** = the grant received an instalment for April 1st, 2020
 - Grants that began their unfunded extension year on April 1st 2020 are ineligible
 - NSERC is offering the extension on a fiscal-year by fiscal-year basis
 - Grants ending March 31, 2021 were offered first, followed by those ending March 31, 2022, and so on.

Tri-Agencies: Salary and Stipend Supplement

Funded by federal government COVID-19 mitigation measures

- Offered to Tri-Agency grant-holders with specific regulations

Overview:

- Grantees who paid students and grant-paid staff salaries or stipends between April 1st and June 30th 2020 were eligible to accept supplement offer.
- PIs had to accept offer – funds did not flow automatically
- Program details available on VPRI Website: [Tri-Agency Supplements Program](#)

Tri-Agencies: Salary and Stipend Supplement

Eligible use of Supplements:

- Can be used between April 1st 2020 and March 31, 2021 for NSERC and SSHRC
- Can be used between April 1st 2020 and the grant end-date for CIHR
- Salary and Stipend payments only (no other costs permitted)
- Can be for any grant-paid staff or students (e.g. does not have to be those the PI paid between April 1 and June 30, 2020)

Tri-Agencies: Salary and Stipend Supplement

Unique administrative requirements:

- [Attestation](#) that those paid with Supplements are not simultaneously benefitting from other federal income support programs
 - Payee completes and submits to Department Business Officer/HR or payroll officer
- Separate reporting requirements.
- Unspent funds are returned.

Questions?



2021 STAR Workshop Series: Next Events

Research Procurement Updates <i>Registration closes Feb. 14, 2021</i>	Wed. Feb. 17 10:30-11:30am
Preparing for an Audit	Wed. March 10, 10:00-11:00am
Tri-Agency Guide on Financial Administration: Part 1	Wed. May 12, 2:00-3:00pm
Tri-Agency Guide on Financial Administration: Part 2	Thurs. May 13, 10:00-11:00am

Resources

- VPRI Website <https://research.utoronto.ca>
- STAR Program <https://research.utoronto.ca/training-resources/research-administration-training-star-program>
- 2021 STAR Quick Tips

Thank you for participating!