

The role of BCIT in the next decade extends far beyond traditional teaching and knowledge dissemination to encompass new expectations for innovations that will have broader social and economic benefits. As is stated in BCIT's strategic plan, for BCIT to be integral to the prosperity of the province, BCIT needs to focus on four strategic areas: Education and Research, our Learners, our Employees and Stewardship and Resource Development.

Unlike research-intensive universities, BCIT's role in research is characterized by our direct interaction with industry as providers of innovation and solutions for current and emerging industry problems and our deep commitment to developing learners that can supply the needs of industry. Our strategic research objective is to continue along that path while increasing and enhancing student participation in research and enhancing the role of interdisciplinary research groups within BCIT's educational programs. This two-fold approach can only be accomplished by growing on the existing success of both research and education at BCIT, by combining the strengths of both areas and by fostering an environment that is beneficial to researchers, faculty, students, staff and industry.

The role of the Institute Research Funds is to allow BCIT employees to pursue research initiatives that are not able to obtain funding from other sources or allow researchers to leverage institute funds to obtain research funding from external agencies and partners that they would otherwise be unable to access. **All funds are granted on a competitive basis with no guarantee of funding.** If there are not sufficient successful applications to expend funds in any given year, funds may be carried over for future applications.

There are currently two separate funds from which Institute Research Funds are drawn. The VP Research Seed Fund is currently funded by a recurring budgetary line item in the VP Academic's budget. The Discovery Parks Fund is funded by Discovery Parks Foundation. The amount of funding available each year is variable and will be determined on a yearly basis during the annual BCIT budget process.

The Institute Research Funds are intended to fund research applications that will require partial release time from duties for the principal investigator, or to fund the preparation of applications for external grants. The intention of the funds is not to provide ongoing permanent release, so that over time the opportunity to conduct research is spread among the widest possible audience. The maximum duration of a grant is for 3 years, limited to a maximum of \$25K per year per principal investigator, project or application.

Evaluation Criteria

The School, Support and Service and Institute Research committees will evaluate research projects based on applicant's ability to complete the study based on the following essential, equally weighted criteria:

- The quality of the research plan (i.e. are the study design, research methods and analysis plan appropriate to answer a well-defined research question or questions.)
- The feasibility to conduct the study (i.e. is the project deliverable based on challenges with the study design, institutional resources, timelines, budget.)
- Alignment with areas of interest within BCIT or School mandates and strategic plans.

And on these desirable criteria:

- Student Participation.
- Partnerships with other BCIT Schools or departments.
- External Partnerships (Industry; University, Institute or College; Non-profit Organization.)
- Other Internal Funding Support.
- External Funding Opportunities.
- Length of time since Principal Investigator's previous successful application to either fund.

Application Requirements

Applications must include:

- Completed application form signed by all parties including Dean of respective School/Dean of Applied Research or respective VP or designate (for areas other than a School or Research Group); respective Associate Dean or Director; respective Program Head/Chief Instructor or equivalent on behalf of the department; Principal Investigator(s).
- Written confirmation from respective Dean or VP confirming any additional funding that will be provided in support of the proposal.
- Letters of support/recommendation from each internal or external partner including confirmed financial support (if any).
- Approval from BCIT Research Ethics Board (if required).
- Information on Intellectual Property Protection (if required).
- Research Proposal consisting of:
 - Summary of Proposed Research (1 page max).
 - Budget including backfill and benefit costs; materials costs; travel costs (2 pages max.)
 - Researcher Background Information - Research interests, industry experience, publications (papers, presentations, reports), BCIT service, courses instructed, etc.
 - Description of existing or proposed facilities that are required to successfully complete the research project as described (1 page max.).
 - List of other personal required to support research project as described.
 - Reporting criteria (quarterly, mid project, end project, etc. as required by committees). Multiyear project funding will be contingent upon successfully meeting project goals for each year. Failure to meet required project goals may result in revocation of subsequent year funding.

Applicants are reminded that proposals will be reviewed by multi-disciplinary Research Committees and that the proposal should be oriented accordingly.

Budget justification, eligible expenses and non-eligible expenses

The budget must clearly demonstrate the need for funds relative to other funding available to the applicant including departmentally sponsored release time and month free of teaching for faculty. The budget justification should explain how the costs were established for each line item in the budget. All budget items must be clearly justified in terms of their need for the accomplishment of the project objectives. Grant funds must contribute towards the direct costs of the research project for which the funds were awarded. The funds must be used effectively and economically, and the expenses must be essential for the research supported by the grant.

Examples of eligible expenses are:

- Employee release funding, Research Assistant funding, Student funding to perform research
- Employee release funding for preparation of grant applications.
- Materials and supplies for research.
- Minor research equipment (within the context of a research project and justified in terms of that project). Total spending on minor research equipment should normally not exceed 10% of the requested funding.
- Research-related travel for data collection (if required, and justified).
- Conference travel for presentation of research results (maximum one conference per application for the Principal Investigator or designate to a maximum of \$2500 inclusive of all costs).
- Other direct research costs.

Examples of non-eligible expenses include:

- Professional fees to the Grantee(s).
- Administrative fees/ standard monthly connection or rental costs of telephones / connection or installation of lines (telephone or other links) or other services already provided by the Institute unless specifically tied to research objectives.
- Passport and/or Immigration fees.
- Costs associated with education: thesis preparation, tuition and courses fees, thesis examination or defence, conference attendance.
- Cell phones, Blackberry, and/or other electronic devices unless directly related to research objectives.
- Books, computers, furniture unless directly related to and justified for purposes of the proposed research.
- Travel to conferences and scholarly meetings except for the presentation of papers as the result of the research as described above.
- Equipment repair or purchase not associated with the specific goals of the research project.
- Curriculum development.

Adjudication Process

All applications will be vetted by one of the School Research Committees or the Service and Support Committee before being forwarded to the Institute Research Committee for final adjudication. For each competition, all Research Committees will base their decisions on the criteria listed above with the following additional principals:

Merit of the proposal, including, without limitation:

- Originality and innovation.
- Clarity and scope of objectives.
- Feasibility and adequacy of methodological approach.
- Importance of the expected outcome of the research (Industrial Application, School/Institute Research Theme, Student Education, Advancing the State of Practice, etc.)

Quality of the presentation:

Proposals should be clear, concise, legible and complete.

Proposed plan to apply for external funding:

It is important that you demonstrate your plan for accessing external funding if that is the goal of the application as one of the objectives of these funds is to increase the likelihood of competing successfully for such funding. Your application must demonstrate that you have identified potential external funding agencies (including granting councils, industry, foundations, government etc.), that you are cognizant of the evaluation criteria and guidelines of those external funding agencies and that the proposed work will support and strengthen your future grant application.

Contribution to the training of students:

Applicants wishing to claim student education as an important outcome must clearly explain how the project will contribute to the training/education of students in either an industrial or research capacity.

Financial and Reporting requirements

Principal Investigators must submit interim and final reports to the School and Institute Research Committees as required describing progress in light of original project objectives. Additionally, Principal Investigators must supply a final accounting of how grant funds were spent including wages, materials, fees, equipment purchases and travel.

Multiyear project funding will be contingent upon successfully meeting project goals for each year. Failure to meet required project goals may result in revocation of subsequent year funding.

Other requirements

Once an award has been granted, any and all certification requirements (ethics of research with human subjects, animal care, safety, etc.) must be met before funds can be released. Any funds remaining at the end of the project are to be reverted to the respective fund. However requests for a single extension of one year, with no additional funds, on submission and acceptance of an appropriate justification of the need for the extension in terms of the original project objectives may be granted. If an extension is granted, any unexpended funds at the end of the extension period will be returned to the respective fund.

Calls for Funding Applications

Applications to the funds will be received by the research committees annually, assuming available funds, to be forwarded to the Institute Research Committee for final adjudication.