

UNBC General Research Fund Guideline

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In the event that a residual balance of funds remains upon completion or termination of an NSERC or SSHRC grant held by a researcher at UNBC, these residual funds may be retained by the institution under certain conditions (as determined by the Finance and Awards Administration Division of the funding agency). Once authorized by the Agencies (i.e. NSERC or SSHRC), these funds are transferred to a General Research Fund. Likewise, proceeds from the sale of equipment purchased or facilities established with funds granted by the Agencies, may be transferred to the General Research Fund with approval from the Agencies.

Any CIHR funds remaining at the end of an authorized granting period (including any automatic extension periods - if applicable) must be returned to CIHR. These funds are not transferred into the General Research Fund.

General Research Funds (GRF) must be used as authorized by the originating Agency, to enhance the quality of research in the natural sciences and engineering, or in the social sciences and humanities (NSERC and SSHRC respectively with start-up grants, bridge funding, research grants, etc.). The use of GRF funds must be approved by the Vice President Research, and must be used within one year of being approved.

The General Research Fund Guideline provides guidance around the use and distribution of the funds and ensures compliance with the Agencies' Financial Administration Guide and UNBC's related policies.

GUIDELINES

Definitions:

Agency: in this document, Agency may refer to NSERC or SSHRC.

Agency Extension: may be an automatic one year extension or granted through written request to the Agency by the researcher.

Agencies: in this document, Agencies refers to NSERC and SSHRC.

CIHR: the Canadian Institutes of Health Research

General Research Fund: A fund established by the institution to capture residual funds from completed or terminated NSERC or SSHRC grants, as well as proceeds from the sale of equipment purchased or facilities established with funds granted by these Agencies.

Internal Extension: may be granted by the Vice President Research for one year following written application and justification by the researcher.

NSERC: the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada

SSHRC: the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada

Responsibility:

The Vice-President Research is responsible for reviewing applications made for the use of General Research Funds (GRF) and may approve those applications that meet the originating Agencies criteria. Requests for the use of GRF funds are to be sent to the Office of Research.

Procedure:

For most programs, NSERC and SSHRC will grant an automatic one-year Agency extension beyond the end of the original grant period (see Appendix A for a list of participating programs). Programs that do not grant automatic extensions may allow an extension by written request to the Agency at least 30 days prior to the end of the grant period (see Appendix B for a flowchart illustrating the Tri-Agencies grant extension process).

Upon the expiration or termination of a grant received from NSERC or SSHRC (including any Agency extension periods), a freeze will be placed on any residual balances.

Researchers whose authorized granting period has ended (including any Agency extension periods), must apply to the Vice President Research if they wish to access the residual balance. Researchers must provide the Vice President Research with a justification as to how the funds will be used (funds may only be used for the purposes for which they were originally awarded). Researchers must plan to spend the funds within one year of being approved for an internal extension by the Vice President Research.

After the one-year internal extension period, funds not spent by the researcher will go into the General Research Fund. These funds will then be accessible by all UNBC researchers provided they are used as authorized by the Agencies to enhance the quality of research in the natural sciences and engineering, or in the social sciences and humanities, as applicable (e.g. start-up grants, bridge funding, research grants, etc.).

The Office of Research will notify researchers bi-annually of the availability of General Research Funds (including (if approved) those funds available from the sale of equipment purchased or facilities established with funds granted by the Agencies) and the application process. Successful applicants will need to spend the funds requested within one year of being approved.

References:

2014 Tri-Agency Financial Administration Guide

APPENDICES

Appendix A: NSERC/SSHRC programs that permit an automatic one year extension (excerpt from the 2014 Tri-Agency Financial Administration Guide)

Agency	Automatic Extension Period (1 Year)	Extension by Request Only
NSERC	<p>Discovery Grants (Individual, Group); Major Resources Support; Research Tools and Instruments; Subatomic Physics Envelope (Individual, Group, Research Tools and Instruments, Major Resources Support, Project); Supplements to Discovery Grants (Discovery Accelerator Supplement, Northern Research Supplement)^{1, 2}</p> <p>Networks of Centres of Excellence</p> <p>Brockhouse Canada Prize for Interdisciplinary Research in Science and Engineering; Gerhard Herzberg Canada Gold Medal for Science and Engineering; NSERC John C. Polanyi Award</p>	For all other programs not listed in the Automatic Extension Period column, the extension will be upon request only.
Agency	Automatic Extension Period (1 Year)	Extension by Request Only
SSHRC	<p>Aboriginal Research (Research Grants); Aid to Research Workshops and Conferences; Canadian Environmental Issues, Northern Communities (Research Grants); All Image, Text, Sound and Technology Grants; (Research, Workshop/Conference/Summer Institute Grants; All Public Outreach Grants; Knowledge Impact in Society; Connection Grants; Management, Business and Finance (Research Grants); Northern Research Development Program; Research/Creation Grants in Fine Arts; Research Development Initiatives; Sport Participation Research Initiative (Research Grants); Standard Research Grants; Aid to Scholarly Journals; Partnership Development Grants; Partnership Grants; Insight Development Grants; Insight Grants</p>	For all other programs not listed in the Automatic Extension Period column, the extension will be upon request only.
¹	Additional extensions to the Authority to Use Funds period beyond the automatic extension period will be considered only in the case of extended leaves of absence during the grant period or due to uncontrollable delays to project activities.	
²	Grantees can submit another grant application and hold a new grant during the extension period.	

Appendix B: Tri-Agency grant extension process flowchart

