



UBCO Shared Research Platforms Fund (SRPF)

PROGRAM OBJECTIVE

Shared Research Platforms (SRP) at UBC Okanagan provide access to state-of-the-art equipment and expertise to researchers both on and off campus. Through the Shared Research Platform Fund (SRPF), the Vice-Principal Research & Innovation (VPRI) Office aims to keep these platforms current and operational.

PROGRAM DETAILS

Through its annual budget, the VPRI Office has allocated a limited amount of funding for financial assistance to support the acquisition, development, repair, replacement, or creation of core research equipment and tools at shared research platforms at UBC Okanagan. SRPF requests for funding can be submitted on **September 15** or **January 15** of each calendar year. Under exceptional circumstances (e.g., equipment out-of-commission, training activities and partnerships at risk of not meeting hard deadlines or losing important revenues), off-cycle applications may be submitted with the same eligibility and assessment criteria. Based on the available budget and the nature of the request, the VPRI may provide financial assistance toward the costs of core/shared research infrastructure. The platform manager must provide a brief description and purpose of the request and indicate if other sources (e.g., Departments, Faculties, Centres/Institutes) have been approached for financial support as well.

According to the Canada Foundation for Innovation, a core facility provides access to the following, which are generally too expensive, complex or specialized for researchers to cost-effectively provide and sustain themselves:

- State-of-the-art research services and analyses
- Instruments and technology
- Expertise
- Training and education

The term “research equipment and tools” is inclusive of all infrastructure that supports research or knowledge-creation activities in any discipline. The SRPF embodies the SSHRC definition of research tools as “items that enable researchers to collect, organize, analyze, visualize, mobilize and store quantitative and qualitative data and creative outputs”.

PROJECT ELIGIBILITY

Applications will be accepted from platform managers and directors. The following are the eligible Shared Research Platforms at UBCO (VPRI-sponsored shared research platforms share characteristics outlined in Appendix 1)

- Fipke Laboratory of Trace Element Research (FILTER)
- Plant Growth Facility
- Research Data Centre
- UBC Animal Care and Use Program
- UBC Survive and Thrive Applied Research (UBC STAR)

When a request to SRPF is submitted, it is expected that funds will be provided from other sources. This will be



confirmed at the time of application. This could include the platform's equipment budget (secured), external research funds (expected/secured), faculty contributions (secured), or donations (expected/secured).

Proposed research equipment and tools must be housed in existing spaces.

Shared Research Platforms funded through the SRPF (regular and off cycle submissions) are not eligible to apply for funding in the subsequent competition year.

APPLICANT ELIGIBILITY

- The Lead Applicant may be the Manager or Director of the Shared Research Platform;
- The Lead Applicant cannot submit more than one application.

SUBMISSION PROCEDURE

Submit the following four items to vprawards.ubco@ubc.ca

- **Cover Page** - Use the template provided to list users and other sources of funding.
- **Free-form proposal (maximum of 2 pages)** - Write a free-form proposal to address the selection criteria (see below).
- **A quote or breakdown of costs for the proposed purchase(s)** – Provide a quote or other evidence to support the budget request.
- **Picture or schematic of the equipment or overall set up (optional)** - A picture or schematic, if available.

Proposals must use standard formatting (0.5-inch margins, 11-point font, and single-spaced). References, images, tables, and figures are included in the page limit for the proposal.

SELECTION CRITERIA

Each criterion is weighted equally.

- **Impact** - The proposal clearly describes the potential positive impact on one or more of the following: research or technology development in an area of institutional priority, student training, knowledge mobilization activities, innovative service offerings, and/or competitive external research funding.
- **Urgency & Necessity** - The proposal addresses why the equipment or tool is urgent and necessary to support UBCO research programs. If similar infrastructure is available at the institution or nearby, an explanation of why it is not feasible to use existing resources is provided.
- **Operations Plan & Training Plan** - The proposal describes how the research equipment or tool can be adequately operated and maintained for a reasonable number of years, including, if applicable, details on other sources of funding to support ongoing operations and technical staff. An appropriate plan for training users of the equipment or tools and optimizing the use of the equipment is provided. If needed, concrete actions to appropriately consider equity, diversity, and inclusion in the training and usage plan are described.



REVIEW PROCESS

Requests will be reviewed by the Associate Vice-Principal Research and Innovation with the support of the Manager, Strategic Initiatives and Operations. The Office of the VPRI may follow up with the applicant to clarify the request and may consult with the Standing Research Infrastructure Committee (SRIC) to prioritize proposals. Recommendations will be made to the Vice-Principal Research and Innovation who will make a final decision based on the available funding envelope. Results will usually be communicated to applicants four weeks after they are submitted.

EXPENSES ELIGIBILITY

To be eligible, purchases must be made only after the VPRI has confirmed funding from the SRPF Fund.

Applicants may only use the SRPF for equipment that can be accommodated in available space, without construction and/or renovations. Minimal renovations will be accepted under truly exceptional circumstances.

Eligible Costs:

- The purchase of new, used, or refurbished research equipment and tools for research purposes
- Costs to replace, upgrade, repair, enhance, or otherwise improve existing research equipment and tools
- Shipping, transportation, and installation of research equipment and tools, including brokerage fees, excise taxes, and duties
- Extended warranties or service contracts for new or existing equipment and tools
- Initial training of the main operator(s)
- Software subscriptions and licenses
- Costs for the creation, design, or engineering of research equipment and tools to enable researchers to collect, organize, analyze, visualize, mobilize and store quantitative and qualitative data and creative output
- Minimal renovations (max \$2,500) if directly linked to the equipment purchase

Ineligible Costs:

- Retroactive expenses
- Consumables and operational costs
- Salaries and trainee stipends except for those directly involved in the creation, design, or engineering of the research equipment or tool
- Lease or rental costs
- General purpose (personal) computer equipment or software
- Office equipment and furniture
- Administrative costs
- Travel costs except for travel directly required in the creation of research equipment or tools or training of main operators
- Equipment or tools primarily used for teaching and/or non-research use such as knowledge mobilization.



AWARD TERMS

Financial terms: The award term is one year although a one-year extension may be granted upon request.

Equipment ownership & location: All SRPF-funded research infrastructure is owned by UBC and must be located on UBC Okanagan property.

Operations & maintenance costs: The Shared Research Platform is responsible for all operating, maintenance, and any other additional costs incurred over the useful life of the research infrastructure to ensure the effective and optimal use of SRPF-funded infrastructure. The useful life of the research infrastructure is considered to be the period of time over which the infrastructure is expected to provide benefits and be usable for its intended purpose, factoring in normal repairs and maintenance.

PROGRAM CONTACT

Questions and comments regarding this program can be directed to Nicole Bennett, Internal Programs Manager, Office of the Vice-Principal, Research & Innovation, nicole.bennett@ubc.ca, (250) 807-8408.

APPENDIX 1

VPRI-sponsored shared research platforms share the following characteristics:

1. An operational budget is provided by VPRI;
2. The platform offers services or access to instruments to a range of users;
3. The platform has a publicly available fee structure published online and can demonstrate that users are invoiced using this fee structure;
4. The platform has its own worktag(s) in Workday, separate from a research worktag;
5. The platform has staff dedicated to providing service to users or maintaining the platform.