



UBC Okanagan’s Aspire Fund —Program Terms

<u>Application Deadline</u>	<u>Funding Start Date</u>
Applications can be submitted anytime during the recruitment process but no later than 30 days after an offer letter is signed.	Same as the Faculty appointment start date.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVE

The goals of the UBC Okanagan Aspire Fund are (1) to ensure that UBCO can offer competitive start-up packages to recruited candidates and (2) to provide new faculty with the resources required to develop a robust research career at UBC Okanagan.

PROGRAM DETAILS

The Aspire Fund will provide up to a 1:1 financial match of one-time start-up funding provided by the Faculties to new professorial recruits at UBC Okanagan. Funding for the Aspire program is provided by Faculty central budgets and the Excellence Fund.

An investment of Aspire funds is intended to allow candidates to develop a sustainable research career supported by external funding. Successful applicants will have demonstrated outstanding achievements in research and/or scholarly activities and will have articulated their path to developing a thriving research career at UBC Okanagan.

Aspire funding is intended to form part of a letter of offer package provided to a research faculty recruitment candidate. **The amount of start-up funding provided by the Faculty and by the Aspire program must be indicated as separate items in the offer letter provided to the candidate.**

The funding start date is the first day of employment at UBCO and the funding term is five years. Aspire funding will be administered by the Vice-Principal, Research and Innovation Office.

Funding requests will be made by Deans, with input from Associate Deans and Heads of Departments as appropriate.

FUNDING ADMINISTRATION

Aspire allocations are distributed to Faculties annually. The distribution of funds is based on a 3-year rolling average of external research funds obtained by the Faculty. In addition to the Aspire fund, Faculties can also access an additional allocation from a “VPR Recruiting & Retention Fund” to support three priorities:

1. Supplement one-time start-up funding for Faculties with limited Aspire Faculty allocations



2. Contribute to a retention package
3. Provide a supplement to Aspire funding contributions for top-tier recruits

SUBMISSION PROCESS

Deans, ADRs, or equivalent roles, are asked to complete **Part A** of the **Aspire Program Application Form** and submit this along with the **supporting documents** to yprawards.ubco@ubc.ca. Typically, Part A is submitted during the early stages of the recruitment process.

Required supporting documents include the Dean’s letter of support, three letters of reference, a research/creative activity plan written by the candidate, and the candidate’s CV.

Supporting Documents	Requirements
Dean’s Letter of Support	The Letter of Support should specify resources that the Faculty will provide such as office and research space, the Faculty’s start-up contribution, CFI allocation, teaching release, mentorship, trainee support, etc.
Research/Creative Activity Plan Written by the candidate. 3 pages, maximum.	Using up to three pages, present a five-year research/creative activity plan as outlined. Be concise and use plain language. The plan should provide: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a summary of research aims, planned approaches, and discipline-specific outcomes that can be expected over the next five years; • the types and numbers of trainees who will be engaged (undergraduates, graduate students, and postdoctoral fellows); • a description of the required research infrastructure; • a brief external-funding plan or table to summarize secured, pending, and expected future funding sources that would best contribute to the research and creative activities; and, • a budget plan or table outlining how the Aspire funding will be used in five years to help achieve the research and training objectives.
Letters of Reference x 3	Use the Letters of Reference that were submitted as part of the candidate’s application to UBCO. Letters of Reference should be dated within 12 months of the Aspire application.
Curriculum Vitae (CV)	Use the CV that was submitted as part of the candidate’s application to UBCO.



REVIEW PROCESS

Complete applications will be reviewed by the Vice-Principal, Research and Innovation (VPRI), and the Associate Vice-Principal, Research (AVPR). The VPRI Office will attempt to process the application within two weeks; however, the timeline could be longer should additional examination of the application be required on the VPRI side. Upon approval, the VPRI or AVPR will complete **Part B** of the **Aspire Program Application Form** and return it to the Dean.

ACCOUNT SET UP

Once the candidate accepts their offer, a copy of the signed offer letter must be sent to vprawards.ubco@ubc.ca. This final step is to confirm the candidate has accepted the role and will trigger the creation of the Aspire grant account.

ELIGIBILITY OF EXPENSES

All expenses must comply with the most current [Tri-Agency Guide for Financial Administration](#) (TAGFA) and [UBC Finance expenditure guidelines](#) to prevent non-compliant use of funds. As per TAGFA, employment and compensation expenses must contribute to the direct costs of the research/activities for which the funds were awarded, with benefits directly attributable to the grant.

These funds cannot be used for activities requiring research ethics without prior consent from the appropriate UBC compliance body. For more information, please contact the [Office of Research Services – Ethics](#).

Additionally, the following restrictions apply to Aspire Funds including the Faculty matching funds:

Caps on Expenses:

- o Visits as part of the recruitment or interview process for graduate students have an annual maximum of \$5,000.

Ineligible Expenses:

- o Teaching-related expenses (e.g., teaching release; expenses for marking services)
- o Relocation expenses
- o Furniture
- o Renovations
- o Electronics and appliances for non-research purposes
- o Equipment, supplies, and communications (e.g. Internet) for home office. Please consult UBC's latest policy for possible exceptions related to remote work arrangements.



AWARD TERMS

Grant Administration: Start-up funding from the Aspire Fund and the Faculty's matching contribution will be combined into one research grant. The research grant information will be sent automatically to the faculty member once the account is created and the research grant will appear in the Research Grants Dashboard in Workday.

5-Year Term: All eligible expenditures must be incurred prior to the end of the 5-year term, after which any unspent funds will be returned to the VPRI. Under special circumstances such as parental or medical leaves, an extension may be granted at the discretion of the Faculty and VPRI. Extensions due to delays in incurring expenses will likely not be approved by the VPRI. Any residual funds remaining after this term will be returned to VPRI and the Faculty.

Non-transferrable: The research grant is not transferable. If the faculty member leaves the University, any unspent funds will be returned to the original funding source.

PROGRAM CONTACT

Questions and comments may be directed to Nicole Bennett, Internal Programs Manager, Office of the Vice-Principal, Research & Innovation, nicole.bennett@ubc.ca.