



**Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC)
General Research Fund (GRF)**

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 To outline the StFX University policy on the use and administration of the NSERC GRF.
- 1.2 The NSERC General Research Fund (GRF) is a special account held in trust by the institution President, into which unspent award funds from previous years are deposited. These funds are to be reinvested in research in the fields of natural sciences and engineering research.
- 1.3 At StFX, the President has designated the Associate Vice President, Research and Graduate Studies (AVPRGS) to be responsible for the administration of the NSERC GRF account. The AVPRGS holds the spending authority for this account within StFX.
- 1.4 The Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC) and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) have established [Guidelines for the General Research Fund](#). These guidelines provide information on the management and use of the funds, including the eligibility of funds for transfer and the eligibility of expenditures that can be charged to them.
- 1.5 The guidelines introduce the notion of eligibility of residual funds for transfer to the GRF. Beginning April 1 2016, NSERC expects each institution to spend at least 50 percent of the year's opening balance on eligible expenses and to report on those expenses through the Statement of Account (Form 300) by June 30 of each year. If an institution fails to meet these requirements, it will not be able to transfer any funds to the GRF, irrespective of the funds being otherwise eligible. Account balances will continue to be assessed every year.
- 1.6 To better employ these funds in support of research and training of students, NSERC has encouraged all institutions to make every effort to publicize the availability of these funds to researchers and students, and to encourage applications for their use. NSERC encourages the use of GRF funds for the

development of research capacity in the natural sciences and engineering disciplines. This may include funding for research equipment and its related maintenance costs, and support for early career researchers and those who require bridge funding between grants.

2.0 Applicability

2.1 University-wide

3.0 Implementation

3.1 NSERC-funded researchers who have residual funds in NSERC accounts at the end of the grant period will have the opportunity before the end of the grant period to present a plan for their use to the Associate Vice President, Research and Graduate Studies. The proposal must be communicated to the AVPRGS in writing and outline the proposed use of grant funds, amount required, and timeline for expenditures. Discretion to award GRF funding rests with the AVPRGS.

3.2 Each year, StFX will establish a budget that represents 50% of the residual balance of the NSERC GRF accounts, which will be dispersed through the following priority mechanisms:

- I. \$5000 supplementary awards for any faculty receiving a NSERC Discovery Development Grants
- II. Providing supplemental \$4500 undergraduate student awards for students meeting NSERC USRA criteria who would be supervised by faculty in the natural sciences and engineering disciplines. Early career researchers holding NSERC grants will receive priority.
- III. Provide supplemental funding to assist with NSERC-funded faculty who require additional undergraduate or graduate student research support. Early career researchers holding NSERC grants will receive priority.

3.3 The ability to provide these awards will be subject to the availability of funding in the NSERC GRF accounts on an annual basis.

3.4 A review process will be carried out approximately 3 months before the end of the fiscal year to remind awardees about GRF spending requirements. All funds transferred from the NSERC GRF that are not spent by the end of the Fiscal Year in which they are awarded will be clawed back at the end of the fiscal year.

4.0 Interpretation and Questions

4.1 For further information, please contact the Associate Vice President, Research and Graduate Studies.