UBC Research Staff and Trainee Emergency Fund

The University has established the UBC Research Staff and Trainee Emergency Fund to mitigate salary shortfalls for UBC graduate students, postdoctoral fellows, and research staff (“Research Staff and Trainees”) at UBC and our Affiliated Hospitals where project funding from industry and foundations has been lost or interrupted as a result of COVID-19.

The University has further partnered with Mitacs and their Mitacs Research Training Award program. Applications to support graduate student salaries to the Research Staff and Trainee Emergency Fund may be directed to apply for leveraged funding from the Mitacs Research Training Award. A Mitacs application form will need to be submitted as part of the application to the UBC Fund.

Funding for research staff can be provided in exceptional circumstances where there is a time-sensitive need for critical job functions to continue.

Please note: The Research Staff and Trainee Emergency Fund is only available in situations where funding committed by industry or foundation partners has not been received due to COVID-19. The fund is not intended to extend salary support for Research Staff or Trainees to account for lost productivity during the period of research curtailment.

Questions can be addressed to ors@ors.ubc.ca.

Application Forms

Application Guide and FAQs

Eligibility

Principal Investigators can apply to the Research Staff and Trainee Emergency Fund to cover salaries for Research Staff and Trainees if the following criteria are met:

- An existing source of research funds from a research project with industry or foundations (the “Lost Funds”) has been terminated, interrupted, or meaningfully delayed due to the COVID-19 pandemic
- The Lost Funds directly support the salaries of current Research Staff and Trainee (note: salary support for undergraduate research positions is not provided by this fund)
- The Investigator has no available, un-committed, unrestricted sources of research funds that could otherwise support the Research Staff and Trainees
- Applications will be made for support on a per-person basis for each research staff member and trainee impacted by the shortfall

Time Period

- Awards from the Research Staff and Trainee Emergency Fund that meet the eligibility criteria will be available for the period April 1, 2020 - to August 31, 2020.
• Support will only be provided for the period of the Lost Funds, i.e. if the Lost Funds were due to expire on July 1st, salary support from the Research Staff and Trainee Emergency Fund will only be provided to cover the period up to June 30th.

• Funds may be provided retroactively to April 1, 2020 if eligible salaries were unfunded at this time.

• The Vice-President, Research & Innovation Office (VPRIO) will provide updates on potential extensions to the Research Staff and Trainee Emergency Fund beyond August 31, 2020 at a later date

Graduate Student Funding Amount

The Research Staff and Trainee Emergency Fund will support:

• The portion of a graduate student salary that is unfunded due to the Lost Funds to a maximum of $2,000/month
  o Mitacs graduate student awards are $6k total

• These amounts are guidelines for salary, and benefits will be calculated and added on top of the salary amount to be funded by the Research Staff and Trainee Emergency Fund.

FAQs

What evaluation criteria will be used to determine funding priority?

The following criteria will be applied in evaluating eligibility:

• Confirmation that the Lost Funds were interrupted or terminated due to COVID-19. A description of the situation, including the dates the funding was interrupted/terminated, and details of the relevant PG accounts will be required.

• Details of any other sources of salary support received by, or available to fund the salaries of, affected the Research Staff and Trainees

What do you mean by 'no available, un-committed, unrestricted sources of research funds'?

COVID-19 has had an unprecedented impact on UBC’s ability to undertake and fund research. It is critically important that the Research Staff and Trainee Emergency Fund is reserved for Research Staff and Trainees who have no other potential source of salary support. Therefore, any unrestricted or discretionary funds that a Principal Investigator has that could be used to support the Research Trainee or Staff salary must be exhausted before application to the Research Staff and Trainee Emergency Fund.

• If unrestricted or discretionary funds exist, then the applicant should provide details as to how these funds are otherwise committed and why these commitments are more important than maintaining salary support for Research Staff and Trainees.

How can the funds be spent?

The Research Staff and Trainee Emergency Fund can only be used to support salaries for Research Staff and Trainees.
Who will review my application?

Applications will be reviewed by the Review Committee of UBC Faculty Members and staff.

Which applications will be directed to also apply for Mitacs Research Training Support?

If funds are requested to support a graduate student salary and the student can continue their research or there is other research or skills-based training that they can undertake (and the student is not currently engaged in an active Mitacs project) then the student will be directed to apply for a Mitacs Research Training Award as part of the application to the UBC Research Staff and Trainee Fund. This Mitacs program is available for graduate students with an eligible salary shortfall of up to 3 months, using the UBC Research Staff and Trainee Fund as matching funding. If graduate students have a salary gap of more than 3 months, the Mitacs program will cover the first three months of the shortfall.

- These awards are valued at $6k total ($3k from Mitacs, $3k from the Research Staff and Trainee Emergency Fund)
- These applications must first meet the eligibility criteria for the Research Staff and Trainee Emergency Fund, which will provide funds to match the Mitacs award.
- Applicants to the Mitacs Research Training Award program will need to provide an approximately 3-page application comprising a description of a research project that the student can undertake that will further their academic studies and research career. Further details will be provided at the time of application.

What is the deadline for applying?

Applications will be received and reviewed on an ongoing basis, though applications must ultimately be received before August 31, 2020.

When will I find out if my application will be funded?

The review committee meets weekly, and timely review of applications and decisions are a priority for the University. Applicants should expect to hear whether they’ve been funded within approximately a week of application.

How will the funds be transferred to me?

Once a decision is made to provide funding to support the salary of the Research Staff and Trainees, the funding will be transferred to the Principal Investigator’s project grant (PG) which is the source PG that funds the salary.

If my application is not approved, what can I do?

Applicants will be informed of the reasons their application was not approved. If the applicant believes they can address these reasons they are encouraged to revise and resubmit their application.

Other questions?

Please contact us at ors@ors.ubc.ca.