

INFORMATION

University Council

Date: September 25, 2025

Subject: Eligibility to Apply for, Hold and Administer Research Funding Policy Changes

Agenda Item: 5.2

SUMMARY

In April 2025, the Executive Committee of University Council passed a motion requesting a review of the following Board approved policy: **Eligibility to Apply for, Hold and Administer Research Funding**. As it stands, the policy makes a wide variety of faculty positions eligible, including professorial ranks, adjuncts, research scientists, senior leaders, but excludes term and without term lecturers and instructors. The request from the Executive Committee of University Council proposed an amendment to make the excluded faculty eligible.

As part of the review process, the Vice-Provost Faculty Relations consulted with the leadership teams for both the Provost and Vice-President Academic and Vice-President Research. Discussions were held with Deans' Council, the Executive Committee of University Council, and a town hall was organized for faculty concerned with the role of lecturers and instructors. Both the risks and benefits of changing the policy were considered and variability in opinions was noted.

The Interim Provost and Vice-President Academic (iPVPA) and the Vice-President Research (VPR) took a recommendation to the Board on September 4th, 2025 to modify the policy and add the word "normally" so that those positions currently listed as eligible remain intact, while also opening up the possibility for exceptions to be considered. This change will enable those not normally eligible to make a case for applying for and holding research funds.

IMPLEMENTATION STEPS AND TIMELINE

A working group of members from the portfolios of the iPVPA and VPR will implement this change by developing the process for considering exceptions. This policy change was approved by the Board with the view to using this as a three-year pilot. Introducing a pilot affords the opportunity to explore whether the creation of a mechanism to consider and to action exceptions achieves the positive benefits that are sought without leading to identified challenges. The change to policy will need to be put in place immediately, in order for colleagues to benefit from the current grant application cycle. Implementation steps will include:

At regular intervals over the three-year period, the Provost and Vice-President Academic and the Vice-President Research will work together to monitor the number of exceptions being granted and the viability of continuing this practice. At the end of the three-year pilot, USask might make further revisions to the eligibility language within the policy and will assess if it is still needed.

The Board of Governors approved the changes to the policy noted below on September 4, 2025.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Relevant Sections of the Policy

Underlined text signals an addition to the policy.

2.0 Eligibility to Apply

2.1 Members of the university are deemed eligible to apply for Research funding based on their position, assigned duties and the requirements dictated by the Funder.

3.0 Eligibility to Hold and Administer

3.1 In order to hold and administer a Research Fund, those with responsibility to conduct independent Research must have a letter of appointment that clearly states that he/she is they are allowed/required to conduct independent Research for the department/college/school/unit/institute/center. Faculty cannot issue letters of appointment that state hires within their Research program are allowed to conduct independent research.

3.2 An individual shall have, at the time of application for Research funding, a permanent or term appointment spanning the period of funding or a signed commitment for a term of employment spanning the period of funding (unless eligibility criteria of the Funder dictate otherwise) from the department head/dean/director.

3.3 The following outlines the positions normally eligible to hold and administer a Research Fund:

- University of Saskatchewan Faculty Member
 - Professor
 - Associate Professor
 - Assistant Professor
 - Special Lecturer
- Full-Time University of Saskatchewan Librarian
- Full-Time University of Saskatchewan Archivist
- Academic Appointments
 - Adjunct
 - Professor Emeritus
 - Physicians Appointed in Clinical Departments
- Physicians Appointed in Clinical Departments• Research Personnel appointed by Department Head, Dean, Director
 - Research Associate
 - Research Scientist
 - Senior Research Scientist
- Deans, Executive Directors, Vice-Deans, Associate Deans, Assistant Deans, Department Heads, Academic Directors
- President, Provost, Vice-Presidents, Vice-Provosts, Associate Vice-Presidents
- Administrative Directors
 - May hold grants related to the function of their unit

3.4 Additional positions may be considered eligible provided that the requirements of 3.1 and 3.2 are met. Decisions regarding the eligibility of a member whose position is not listed under 3.3 will be made by the Provost and Vice-President Academic and the Vice-President Research following a case-by-case assessment based on the circumstances of the position and the needs of the academic unit.