

2014-15 Report on the Indirect Costs of Research Program

Since 2003 the Federal Indirect Costs of Research Program provides Canadian universities with annual funding to help pay for a portion of the hidden or “indirect” costs of research. Examples of such costs include lighting and heating for research space, salaries for staff that provide technical or administrative research support, training costs for workplace health and safety, and the administrative costs associated with getting a patent for an invention.

According to government criteria, funded costs must be “indirect” costs such as central and departmental administrative costs that institutions incur to support research but are not direct costs for specific research projects. Indirect Costs funding may be used to cover new expenditures as well as to maintain the current level of services to and support of an institution’s research environment, and to generate improvements, innovations and efficiencies in its management.

For more information about the Indirect Costs Program (ICP), please visit the Government of Canada website at: <http://www.indirectcosts.gc.ca/home-accueil-eng.aspx>. The federal government has made some changes for next year and the program will be called the Research Support Fund (RSF) grant beginning in 2015-16.

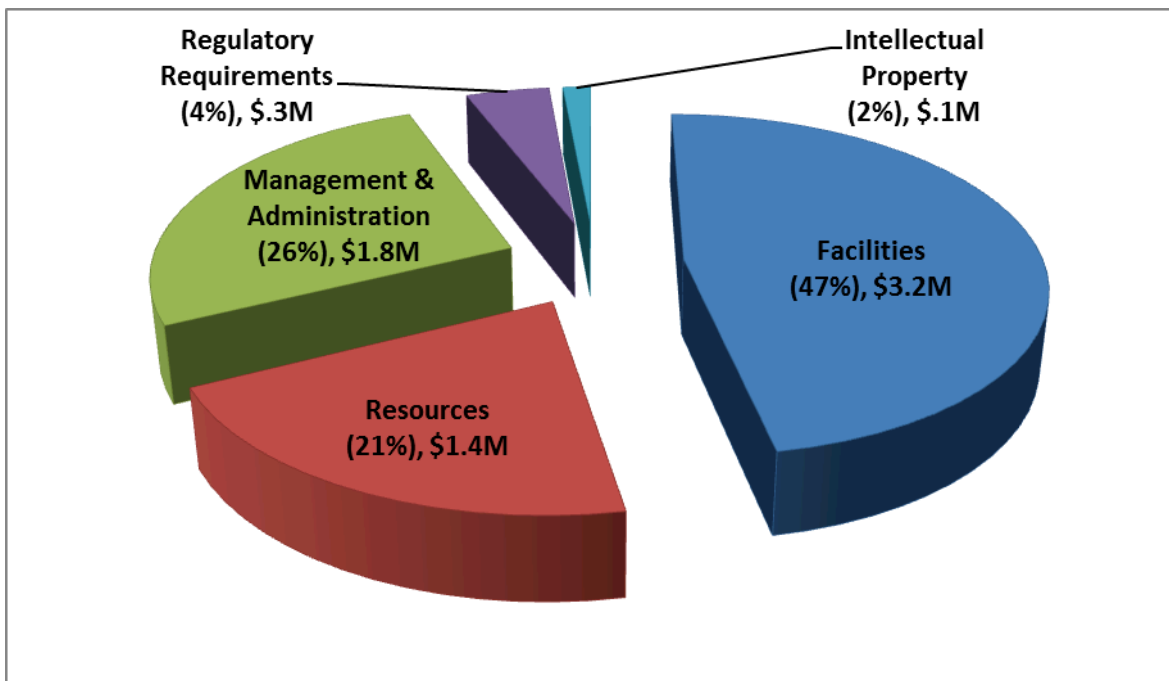
ICP at Dalhousie University

Dalhousie University has included the Indirect Cost of Research grant into its operating budget where it funds the indirect costs borne by the budget. In addition to costs in the various units, the University allots strategic initiatives funding to identify areas of strategic focus for the University. Two of the strategic focus areas have an impact on research. The University has directed funds to a variety of areas to improve research strengths and renew University facilities. The total of indirect costs for the 2014-15 fiscal year was \$45.1 million, of which \$6.8 million was covered by the indirect costs grant.

On September 1, 2012 Dalhousie University merged with the Nova Scotia Agricultural College. As a result, beginning in 2013-14 the ICP grant received from the federal government as well as the reported indirect costs include the Agricultural Campus. Previously the College would have received a separate ICP allocation.

Use of the grant is reported in five categories. The pie chart and descriptions below illustrate the distribution of the ICP grant by category:

Total 2014-15 Indirect Costs Program Grant: \$6,754,124



Description of costs included in the five categories:

Research Facilities

This includes laboratories, research networking spaces, offices of research and finance administration, and offices of researchers. In 2014-15 the expenditures include operating costs for such facilities such as custodial, security, maintenance, utilities and insurance. Technical support for research is also included in this category.

Research Resources

The University reported a portion of library operating costs, administration staff salaries as well as the acquisition of library holdings in this category. Expenditures related to the cost of information resources such as databases, telecommunications, information technology and research tools for the benefit of researchers were also reported in this category.

Management and Administration

Management and administration costs include institutional support for the completion of grant applications/research proposals, salaries and benefits for staff who work on grant applications and research proposals (e.g. grant facilitators, secretarial and administrative assistants). Salaries and benefits for employees who support the research enterprise (research, financial, human resources and procurement offices as well as Faculty departmental administrative support) are also expenditures included in this category.

Regulatory Requirements and Accreditation

In 2014-15 the cost of training faculty and other research personnel in health and safety, animal care, ethics review, handling radiation and biohazards, and environmental assessments is included. Technical support for animal care, handling of dangerous substances, biohazards and radioactive materials is a significant expense included in this category. In addition, costs associated with the creation of regulatory bodies such as the Research Ethics Board are recognized.

Intellectual Property

The University reported expenditures for the Industry Liaison and Innovation (ILI) unit that supports the research community at Dalhousie University and the affiliated hospitals. ILI is responsible for promoting innovation, research development, industry engagement and start-ups. ILI enables the movement of University research from the institutions to the community with tangible results, enabling economic growth.

Impact of the ICP at Dalhousie

The Indirect Costs grant provided \$6.8 million in revenue to support the operating budget of the University. Without this funding, alternative funding sources or significant reductions in costs would need to be achieved. The funding allows the University to provide a well resourced research environment including staff and facilities to help attract and retain high quality researchers and highly qualified personnel.