

## FACULTY RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT ACCOUNT GUIDELINES

**Effective Date:** April 1, 2023

**Originating Office:** Research and Restricted Financial Management, Financial Services

### SCOPE

The framework described in these guidelines applies to all Faculty Research Development (FRDP) accounts. The funds deposited into these FRDP accounts are provided to new faculty hires as determined by their employment offer.

### PURPOSE

Funds are allocated to new faculty hires to support research activities. The activities paid for with these funds must contribute towards the direct cost of research, be activities not regularly provided by Concordia University to its new faculty hires, not result in personal benefits for any members of the research team and continuous best efforts should be applied to optimize and obtain the best value in the spending of the funds.

### DEFINITIONS

As used in this guide/framework, the following terms shall mean:

*Research Grants*<sup>1</sup>: An account used for research activities with a specified budget, purpose and timeline.

*New Faculty Hires*: New faculty hires in a Tenure-Track or Tenured position.

*Direct Costs*: Costs that can be directly attributed to the project itself and that would not have been incurred had the research not been undertaken. It includes items such as materials, supplies and salaries for students, technicians, or professionals.

*Indirect Costs*: Costs that cannot be directly attributed to the project itself and includes items such as the provision and maintenance of physical space and facilities, library services, financial services, computing services, furniture, departmental services (including secretarial), heating, cooling, insurance and like costs.

*Sponsor*: The source of the funding/budget. For FRDP account, the sponsor is the Provost's Office.

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<sup>1</sup> As of May 1<sup>st</sup>, 2022, all FRDP accounts are opened as research grants. Previously, FRDP accounts were opened as IO/non-grant and will be phased out. This guideline applies to all FRDP accounts, whether opened as a grant or non-grant.

## PREAMBLE

The goal is to support the start up research activities of a new faculty member upon their hire.

## PROCESS:

1. The new faculty hire must submit a proposal and budget, based on the employment offer, to the Associate Dean of Research (ADR) office.
2. When approval by the faculty (ADR office) is confirmed, a completed Internal Notice of Award (INOA) along with this proposal and budget will be submitted to the Office of Research (OOR).
3. The Provost's Office will confirm the amount as per the employment offer to the OOR.
4. With both the awarded amount from the Provost's Office and the approved proposal and budget from the faculty, the OOR will verify all requirements to release the funding. Note that such requirements include ethics and compliance clearance.
5. Once the OOR provides final approval to release funding, they will instruct Financial Services, Research and Restricted Financial Management, to open a new research grant account.

## TERM DATES:

FRDP accounts are opened with a timeline to be terminated in two years. An additional one-year grace period may be provided, subject to approval by the ADR office.

Any changes in budget or scope must follow the FRDP grant creation process.

## ELIGIBLE EXPENSES:

The purpose of these funds is to support research. The following principles, as influenced by the spirit of the Tri-agency guidelines<sup>2</sup>, determines the eligibility of expenses:

- The expenses must contribute towards the direct cost of research.
- The expenses must not be regularly provided by Concordia University to its new faculty hires.
- The expenses must not result in personal benefits for any members of the research team.

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<sup>2</sup> Tri-Agency Guide on Financial Administration: [https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/interagency-interorganismes/TAF-AFTO/guide-guide\\_eng.asp](https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/interagency-interorganismes/TAF-AFTO/guide-guide_eng.asp)

- Continuous best efforts should be applied to optimize and obtain the best value in the spending of the funds.

If the expense meets all the above 4 principles, it is an eligible research expense.

Common eligible research expenses:

- Student / Research personnel support
- Equipment
- Travel – Research / dissemination
- Materials and supplies

#### INELIGIBLE EXPENSES:

Non-research project related expenses

Common ineligible expenses:

- Alcohol
- Home internet - *Note: PDA funds can be used for this expense (PDA funds are funds assigned to CUFA members. PDA funds support members who pursue development activities in order to maintain academic and professional competencies in their capacities as employees of the University, as well as their research activities).*  
<https://hub.concordia.ca/content/dam/cspace/services/hr/docs/professional-development-scholarly-research-allowance-directives-V2.pdf>
- Expenses resulting in personal benefits – *Note: in circumstances where part of an eligible expense provides an element of personal benefit, only the proportion relating to the research activity will be eligible.*

#### OTHER RESTRICTIONS:

All expenses charged to FRDP account must adhere to Concordia University policies:

<https://www.concordia.ca/about/policies/sector.html>

Any unspent amounts at the end of the term, or the grace year if applicable, will be returned to the Sponsor.

## **Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)**

### **1. Can I use my FRDP account to purchase a software?**

Only the portion directly related to your research can be charged on your FRDP account.

If the expense relates to a standard software which is centralized by Concordia University through site license agreements and is normally provided at no cost to faculty members, the expense is not eligible. A list of these software and information on how to obtain them are available at <https://www.concordia.ca/it/services/software-licensing.html>.

Consultation and implementation services for the purchase of non-standard software can be requested by contacting the Service Desk. This service includes analysis of user needs, providing information about the current options, purchasing instructions, and installation.

Note that according to Concordia University's policy on computer provisioning (VPS-32), software acquisition must be done with an electronic requisition and may not be bought using a Corporate or Purchasing Card, or any personal funds including credit card (which will not be reimbursed via an Expense Report). Once procurement receives the electronic requisition, a privacy impact assessment review is automatically triggered with IITS and legal.

### **2. Can I charge subject fees (such as incentives to human participants) to my FRDP account?**

Yes, provided you have obtained approval from the Concordia University Human Research Ethics Committee ([oor.ethics@concordia.ca](mailto:oor.ethics@concordia.ca)) and your compliance certificate is valid at the time of the expense.

### **3. Can I purchase a cellphone using my FRDP account?**

The cellphone monthly plan is not an eligible expense to charge to this account. It can be charged to a PDA account.

If the cellphone purchase is for personal use or for convenience, it is not eligible.

If the cellphone is directly related to your research, it is an eligible expense.

### **4. Is the Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) Employer compliance fee eligible on my FRDP account?**

Only the portion directly related to your research can be charged on your FRDP account.

### **5. I am co-supervising a student or post-doc from another university. Can I use my FRDP account?**

Generally, the supervision of students is eligible; however, the ADR office should be contacted for Faculty-specific guidelines on this type of expense.

**6. I am inviting an academic visitor who will be contributing to my research. Can I cover their travel and hospitality expenses with my FRDP account?**

The portion of the travel and hospitality expenses which contributes to your research can be expensed on your FRDP account.

Note that travel and hospitality expenses need to adhere to the Travel and Conference policy (CFO-3) as well as the Hospitality, Meetings and Events policy (CFO-10) and their respective handbooks.

**7. Are networking expenses (meals discussing collaboration, seeking partnerships for future grants) eligible on my FRDP account?**

If the expense relates to a current or future research grant application/proposal then it is eligible. Please refer to Concordia University's policies for supporting documentation required: <https://www.concordia.ca/about/policies/sector.html>

**8. Are holiday parties and department retreats eligible on my FRDP account?**

Holiday parties and department retreats are not eligible as they provide an element of personal benefit for members of the research team.

**9. Are gifts eligible on my FRDP account?**

"Gifts" are cash or in-kind items provided freely as a token of appreciation, respect and/or goodwill. Gifts can be offered to establish/facilitate relationships with individuals or groups who are involved in the research/activity as participants or as research partners/contributors (i.e., guest researchers, research partners or community stakeholders) under the following circumstances:

- when prescribed by cultural heritage/established traditions
- as a formal courtesy

In recognition of the cultures and traditions of First Nations, Métis and Inuit, Elders and other Knowledge Keepers who also fulfill another role (i.e., an independent researcher) are eligible to receive gifts in a ceremonial or other context.

**10. Are magazine or software subscription fees eligible on my FRDP account?**

Only the portion directly related to your research can be charged on your FRDP account.

**11. Are honoraria eligible on my FRDP account?**

“Honoraria” refers to monetary payments made on a one-time or non-routine basis to an individual as a “thank you” for a service for which fees are not traditionally paid (i.e., speeches, lectures, seminars, etc. by a guest lecturer/speaker).

Honoraria is an eligible expense on the FRDP account but cannot be paid to Concordia University faculty members.

Please note that this eligibility differs from the Tri-Agency guidelines. More information on the restrictions in regards to honoraria from the Tri-Agency guidelines can be found at: [https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/interagency-interorganismes/TAFA-AFTO/guide-guide\\_eng.asp](https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/interagency-interorganismes/TAFA-AFTO/guide-guide_eng.asp)

**12. Are consulting fees eligible on my FRDP account?**

“Consulting fee” is a fee for service provided by a third party (non-employee).

Consulting fee is an eligible expense on the FRDP account but cannot be paid to Concordia University faculty members.

Please note that this eligibility differs from the Tri-Agency guidelines. More information on the restrictions in regards to consulting fees from the Tri-Agency guidelines can be found at: [https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/interagency-interorganismes/TAFA-AFTO/guide-guide\\_eng.asp](https://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/interagency-interorganismes/TAFA-AFTO/guide-guide_eng.asp)

**13. Is furniture, equipment, materials and supplies eligible on my FRDP account?**

Only the portion directly related to your research can be charged on your FRDP account.

**14. Are moving, shipping and delivery expenses eligible on my FRDP account?**

Only the portion directly related to your research can be charged on your FRDP account.

**15. Are internal charges (land phone, postage, photocopier) eligible on my FRDP account?**

Only the portion directly related to your research can be charged on your FRDP account.

**16. Are the rental fees of a studio space eligible on my FRDP account?**

Normally, indirect costs such as the provision and maintenance of physical space and facilities are not eligible. However, in certain circumstances (ex. if physical space is not available at Concordia University) and on an exception basis, rental fees of a physical space (ex. studio space) will be eligible with prior approval from the ADR office. Please contact your ADR office for more information and for approval.

**17. An expense has been processed after the termination date of my FRDP account (after my 2-year term). Is this expense eligible?**

If the expense was incurred prior to the termination date of your FRDP account but was only processed in the system after, it is an eligible expense.

If it is a new expense incurred after the termination date of your FRDP account, it is not eligible unless a grace period has been approved by the ADR office. Please contact your ADR office if you would like to request a grace period of one additional year.

For questions or support regarding the eligibility of expenses, please contact the Compliance Specialists at [researchcompliance@concordia.ca](mailto:researchcompliance@concordia.ca).