King’s Research Excellence Fund
Terms of Reference and Program Guidelines
King’s Research Excellence Chairs Program & King’s Research Excellence Scholars Program

Version: v2021.10.06

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Preamble

The King’s Research Excellence Fund (REF) is intended to support programs of research excellence across the College. The REF is to be administered by the Research Activity Committee (RAC), a subcommittee of Faculty Council that is Chaired by the Vice Principal Academic Dean. Recipients of the award will be selected on the basis of the quality of their proposal to accomplish King’s mission to foster creativity, partnerships, intellectual curiosity, and community impact and well-being. The grant is also intended to increase capacity for externally funded research programs.

A. General Policies: Applicable to Research Excellence Scholars and Research Excellence Chairs Awards

The following policies apply to Both the Fellowships Research Excellence Scholars and Research Excellence Chairs Awards.

1. Value of Awards:

1.1: Total Funding Available – All Programs:

- Value: King’s Research Excellence Fund (REF): One-time allocation of $1,000,000 restricted to a maximum distribution of $60,000/year until allocated funds are exhausted.
- Distribution: The King’s Research Excellence Fund will be distributed each year (to a maximum of $60,000) through two Programs: The King’s Research Excellence Chairs Program and the King’s Research Excellence Scholars Program.

1.2: Funding Available for Research Excellence Chairs Program:

- Two Research Chairs with three-year terms awarded every three years
- Each Research Chair will receive $15,000/year, renewable annually for a maximum duration of three years (totaling $45,000 for each Research Chair)
  - One to an early career faculty member
    - Recognizes a scholar whose research has had extraordinary academic and/or social impact relative to their career stage and who has been recognized by their peers as an emerging leader in their field of inquiry.
  - One to an established faculty member
    - Recognizes a scholar whose research has had an extraordinary impact (academic and/or social) and is widely recognized by their peers as an authoritative voice in their field of inquiry.
- Recipients can be referred to as “[year awarded] King’s Research Excellence Chair”.

1.3: Funding Available for Research Excellence Scholars Program

- Three $10,000 Research Excellence Scholars Grants awarded annually
- Recipients can be referred to as “[year awarded] King’s Research Excellence Scholar”
2. Frequency:

One competition annually for both Fellowships and Research Chairs on the following timeline:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Opportunity</th>
<th>Application</th>
<th>Peer Review</th>
<th>Decisions</th>
<th>Funding</th>
<th>Funding</th>
<th>Reports (Annual or Final)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Announcement</td>
<td>Deadline</td>
<td>Period</td>
<td>Announcement</td>
<td>Period Start</td>
<td>Period End</td>
<td>Due</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>October</td>
<td>January</td>
<td></td>
<td>May 1</td>
<td>April 30</td>
<td>First Thursday in June</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Adjudication

Applications will be peer-reviewed and adjudicated by King’s Research Activities Committee (RAC), or a Research Excellence Fund Subcommittee (“Subcommittee” hereafter) appointed by RAC. If a subcommittee is appointed, its membership should ensure diverse and equitable representation of core constituencies. The Research Facilitator will be available to the committee in an advisory capacity in relation to the administration of the award and the peer review process; however, the Research Facilitator will not have any vote in the adjudication process. The Research Facilitator and/or an Administrative Assistant assigned to the adjudication committee through the Academic Dean’s Office will help coordinate the peer-review, compile the scores for the committee, and attend the adjudication meetings in an administrative support capacity (ex. Interpretation of competition guidelines, co-ordination of review, etc.). To have quorum, at least 2/3 of voting members of the committee charged with adjudication (either RAC or a Subcommittee appointed by it) must be present for votes/approvals.

4. Reporting

All recipients are asked to submit Final Reports outlining the anticipated or actual outcomes of their research within 1 month of the funding end-date (the first Thursday in June). A final reporting form will be provided and will outline the information to be provided. Outcomes to be reported may include scholarly outputs, student training, and community engagement. Awardees cannot apply to future Research Excellence Fund competitions until a complete final report is submitted.

Additionally, since the Research Excellence Chair grant is renewable for a maximum duration of 3 years, recipients of the Research Chair grants will need to submit an Annual Report within 1 month of the end of the first and second year of the grant (first Thursday in June) that summarizes activities and progress during the previous 12 months.

At the RAC’s discretion, recipients may be asked to provide a voluntary annual outcome update for up to 3 years after the completion of the project. Past awardees who choose not to provide the voluntary follow-up updates will not be prevented from applying to future competitions.
5. Ethics Review

All applicants who propose research involving human subjects must abide by the Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans – TCPS 2 (2018) and follow the policy outlined for King’s Research Ethics Review Committee (RERC). If the grant application is selected for funding but the project has not yet been granted ethics approval, the grant will be approved provisionally with the understanding that no funds will be disbursed in support of research activities requiring ethics approval until such approval has been granted. Partial funding may be released to support research activities not requiring RERC approval with the remaining funds to be released as soon as the applicant has secured RERC approval.

In cases where the adjudication committee for this competition is of the view that activities described in the application will require ethics approval, but the applicant has indicated that they do not intend to seek ethics approval, the adjudication committee will refer the case to King’s RERC Chair for an opinion as to whether or not RERC approval must be secured and will abide by that opinion.

6. Use of Funds

6.1: Eligible Expenses

The following kinds of expenditures are eligible so long as the costs are directly related to the research project described in the approved application:

a) Research assistance, (e.g., technicians, interviewing, library searches, data collection).

b) Preparation of manuscripts for submission to publishers (e.g., cost of indexing, reproduction of images, postage, etc.).

c) Travel: Recipients are asked to first use available internal research travel funds (negotiated benefit). If those funds are exhausted and travel costs related to this project remain, travel-related expenses permitted under King’s Policy for Travel expenses will be eligible.

d) Other research costs associated with access to archival collections, proprietor data sets, freedom of information requests, etc.

e) Design and production of dissemination media (ex. posters, pamphlets, infographics, videos, podcasts, etc.).

f) Equipment (including computers and software): Recipients are asked to use any internal funds allowing for purchase of equipment first (negotiated benefit). If those funds are exhausted and equipment costs still remain, then equipment costs directly related to the proposed research and/or dissemination are eligible, so long as the total cost of equipment does not exceed 25% of the total value of the grant.

Any computer hardware or software purchased with grant funds would be the College’s property, would have to be housed at the College or in a research setting, and could be available for use by other members of the King’s community

g) Hosting costs for electronic platforms (ex. website or online database) so long as the platform is being used to make the results of the research project available and that platform is open access (i.e., end-users can access it without any fee). Hosting costs will be counted towards the limit of equipment costs to 25% of total eligible expenses charged to the grant.

h) Costs of hosting events at King’s so long as the primary aim of the event is to actively engage potential users with the results of a research project. These users can include academic users and/or community users. Ex. A workshop bringing together scholars and community members to discuss how the results of a research project can inform next steps (including further research projects that build upon those results).

i) Specialized software or equipment training for the investigator and/or students so long as that training is directly related carrying out the research described in the proposal (ex. training on qualitative analysis software).
Recipients must follow the policies and procedures outlined in King’s Expense Reimbursement Manual when submitting expense claims.

### 6.2: Ineligible Expenses

- a) Any expenditure that is not directly related to the research project described in the approved application package.
- b) Compensation for Principal Investigator or Co-Investigators
- c) Course Buy-out
- d) Equipment (including computers and software licenses/subscriptions) exceeding 25% of the total value of the grant.

### 6.3: Non-Transferrable

Funding through the King’s Research Excellence Award Fund programs (both Research Excellence Chairs and Research Excellence Scholars) must remain at King’s and so cannot be transferred to other institutions. Therefore:
- Subgrants/subawards cannot be issued from these funds. All expenses must be processed through King’s.
- If a recipient accepts a new position at another institution, funds cannot be transferred to that institution.
- If a recipient’s employment relationship with King’s ends, any unspent funds are forfeited as of the last day of their employment at King’s.

### 6.4: General Budgeting Considerations:

- When preparing budgets, please be mindful of accounting policies and procedures. (Review “Expense Reimbursement Manual”, “Policy for Travel Reimbursement”, “Timesheet Pay Schedule” and other relevant documents the Faculty Extranet.)
- Flight quotes, proposed accommodation details such as hotel bookings, train quotes, etc., are NOT required at the application stage. All travel and accommodation must adhere to King’s posted “Policy for Travel Reimbursement.”
- If the applicant plans on using funds from other sources to supplement the proposed project, they should identify the other sources of funding and amounts they intend to allocate towards this project.

### 7. Extensions to Grants

All grants must be used by the end of the King’s fiscal year (April 30) for which they were granted.

#### 7.1: Extensions Due to Approved Leaves

When a recipient is granted an approved leave by King’s, an extension of up to one-year will be automatically granted. The recipient will not be required to disclose the reason for the leave, nor the kind of leave granted. They will only need to provide confirmation from an appropriate authority (ex. Department Chair or HR) that a leave has been granted and confirmation of the duration of the approved leave. The RAC will be informed of such automatic extensions, but its approval will not be required.

If the project cannot be completed during the one-year extension period the recipient will forfeit the remainder of the grant without prejudice (i.e., they will not be prevented from reapplying with the same or similar project in future competitions).
7.2: Extensions Due to Circumstances Other Than Approved Leaves

Where there are exceptional and unforeseen circumstances (ex. global pandemic) that delay research and/or dissemination activities outlined in the application, extensions of up to one year can be approved at the discretion of the Research Activities Committee. Extension requests must provide evidence of progress made to date and describe why the delays could not have been reasonably foreseen or mitigated. A clear plan must be presented for completing the project by the end of the extension period. The RAC will review and adjudicate all extension requests. Extension requests must be submitted no later than 60 days prior to the original end-date using the extension request form.

8. Reapplication to the Competition

- Applications that are not funded upon their initial submission can only be resubmitted once. Applications to another round that present a substantively different project (i.e., are not just revised/adapted versions of previous applications) do not count as resubmissions.
- Eligible applicants can only be awarded a Research Excellence grant once every two years. This means that if an applicant is successful, they cannot apply in the next year’s competition (but they are free to apply in subsequent rounds).

9. Relation to Other Awards Issued by the Research Activities Committee

In order to maintain the distinctness of the awards and to ensure King’s is able to recognize the excellence of as many scholars as possible, the Research Activities Committee will not simultaneously award the following awards to any single individual for the duration of each award:

**A: Early Career Awards:**
- King’s Research Excellence Chair – Early; and,
- Early Career Excellence in Research Award

**B: Established Career Awards:**
- King’s Research Excellence Chair – Established Career; and,
- Hugh Mellon Excellence in Research Award

Implications:
- Past recipients of the Early Career Excellence in Research Award or the Hugh Mellon Excellence in Research Award can apply.
- Individuals being considered for both the:
  - a) King’s Research Excellence Chair; AND,
  - b) Early Career Excellence in Research Award or Hugh Mellon Excellence in Research Award
- During the same round can only receive one award.
  - The Research Activities Committee (or its subcommittees) will co-ordinate to ensure this practice is maintained.
- Individuals who currently hold a King’s Research Excellence Chair cannot be nominated for Early Career Excellence in Research Award or the Hugh Mellon Excellence in Research Award during the first two years of the Research Chair. They can be nominated during their third (final) year of the Research Chair.
10. Eligibility to Apply – King’s Research Excellence Scholars Grant

Applicants must be full-time faculty members employed at King’s at the time of application.

Previous or current external funding is not required to apply; however, the application should demonstrate how there is potential for applying for external funding for further iterations of this project or other components of the researcher’s broader research program/interests. Applicants are encouraged to indicate in their proposal any other funding opportunities they plan on pursuing to continue the proposed research beyond the one-year term of this grant.
11. Adjudication Criteria – King’s Research Scholars Grant

11.1: Quality and Importance: 40%
- The project has a clearly defined research question and clearly defined objectives.
- The proposal provides evidence of its originality and its potential to address a clearly defined gap, challenge, or need.
- The appropriateness of the theoretical approach and methodology.
- There is a clearly identified audience for the research outcomes to be disseminated through this project.
- The audience’s needs are clearly defined and supported by evidence.
- There are clearly defined outputs and there is evidence that the intended audience will be able to successfully use those outputs to advance change (academic or societal).
- There is evidence that the knowledge mobilization approach or framework is appropriate for the applicant’s discipline.
- The proposed student training and/or involvement is meaningful and directly contributes to attaining the project’s research and/or dissemination objectives.

11.2: Planning: 30%
- The research plan is clear, cohesive, and easy to understand.
- The proposed timeline is reasonable (neither too ambitious or too conservative) and realistic (can be completed in the time indicated).
- There is a clearly defined plan to proactively engage the audience.
- Budgeted expenditures comply with restrictions on eligible expenses for this competition.

11.3: Expertise and Resources to Execute: 30%
- The researcher or research team provided evidence of expertise required to carry out planned research and/or dissemination activities.
- The researcher’s publication record confirms their ability to conduct the proposed research and dissemination activities.
- The researcher or research team has enough people to carry out the research and/or dissemination activities in the time planned.
- There is evidence of previous success on projects of this nature and/or scope.
- There is evidence that the applicant has already initiated the networks, relationships, or collaborations required to carry out the proposed research and/or dissemination activities (or can adequately establish them in the project’s timeframe).
- There is evidence of the applicant’s ability to provide successful, engaging, and meaningful student involvement in research and/or dissemination.
12. Application

Applicants must submit all required materials according to all instructions provided and respecting all formatting restrictions no later than the published deadline.

Applications that are incomplete or that fail to meet these requirements may be excluded from the competition prior to peer-review and adjudication.

12.1: Application Materials:

1) Application Form (Capturing Administrative Information)
2) Research Proposal (Maximum 6 pages)
   a. Context: Why is the proposed research needed given the current state?
   b. Objectives: Describe the proposed project’s research question(s), main objectives/goals, and anticipated academic and/or social impacts.
   c. Methodology: How are you planning on conducting the proposed research project and why is this approach appropriate given the context and objectives just described?
3) Bibliography (no page limit)
4) Budget/Budget Justification (Maximum 2 pages)
5) CV (Including a List of Publications)

12.2: Formatting Requirements (for Research Proposal, Bibliography, and Budget Justification only):

- Font: 12-point Times New Roman
- Compressed font spacing is not permissible.
- Margins should be 2.5cm (or 1 inch) on all sides.
- Minimum line spacing = single spaced
C. King’s Research Excellence Chairs Program

Two Research Chairs will be awarded each year.

- One research chair is reserved for applicants who qualify as “Early Career”.
- The other (“Established”) is reserved for scholars in all other stages of career.

Eligibility requirements for each type of Research Chair are outlined below.

Both awards are intended to signify prestigious institutional recognition for their research impact (both academic and social) as identified by their peers through the adjudication process outlined below.

13. Expectations for Research Excellence Chairs (Early and Established):

13.1: Research

a) Carry out the research program proposed in the application.

b) In order to qualify for annual renewal, Research Chair-holders are expected to demonstrate progress on their research program.

13.2: Leadership, Mentorship, and Partnerships

- Applicants should demonstrate a strong record in as many of these areas as possible.
- In order to qualify for annual renewal, Research Chair-holders are expected to demonstrate some form of leadership, mentorship, or partnership engagement that advances research excellence at King’s during each year of the three-year Research Chair period.

13.3: Dissemination

- Publication of research results in recognized scholarly venues.
- Discussion of project in a faculty research seminar.
14. Eligibility – King’s Research Chair – Early Career

To be eligible to apply, all of the following statements must be true as of the application deadline:

a) Applicant holds a full-time faculty position at King’s.

b) Applicant meets the following criterion to be recognized as an Early Career Scholar:

The time since the start-date of their first independent research-related appointment does not exceed 84 months + time credited for eligible leaves

i. Independent research-related appointments are understood as appointments where the individual has the autonomy to conduct research independently.
   - Any appointment that requires appointment of an Academic Supervisor (ex. postdoctoral position) does not qualify as an independent research-related appointment and so such positions should not be counted against the criterion

ii. Eligible Leaves
   - Eligible leaves include any leave approved by the applicant’s institution (King’s or otherwise) at the time of the leave. Examples can include maternity, adoption, parental, medical, or bereavement leaves.
   - Sabbaticals are not considered eligible leaves since they should not involve interruptions to research.
   - Credits for eligible leaves are calculated as follows: months on approved leave x 2
15. Adjudication – King’s Research Chair – Early Career

15.1: Quality and Importance: 40%

- The project has a clearly defined research question and clearly defined objectives.
- The proposal provides evidence of its originality and its potential to address a clearly defined gap, challenge, or need.
- The appropriateness of the theoretical approach and methodology.
- There is a clearly identified audience for the research outcomes to be disseminated through this project.
- The audience’s needs are clearly defined and supported by evidence.
- There are clearly defined outputs and there is evidence that the intended audience will be able to successfully use those outputs to advance change (academic or societal).
- There is evidence that the knowledge mobilization approach or framework is appropriate for the applicant’s discipline.
- The proposed student training and/or involvement is meaningful and directly contributes to attaining the project’s research and/or dissemination objectives.

15.2: Planning: 30%

- The research plan is clear, cohesive, and easy to understand.
- The proposed timeline is reasonable (neither too ambitious or too conservative) and realistic (can be completed in the time indicated).
- There is a clearly defined plan to proactively engage the audience.
- Budgeted expenditures comply with restrictions on eligible expenses for this competition.

15.3: Expertise and Resources to Execute: 30%

- The researcher has demonstrated extraordinary academic and/or social impact relative to their career stage and has been recognized by their peers as an emerging leader in their field of inquiry.
- The researcher or research team provided evidence of expertise required to carry out the planned research and/or dissemination activities.
- The researcher’s publication record confirms their ability to conduct the proposed research and dissemination activities.
- The researcher or research team has enough people to carry out the research and/or dissemination activities in the time planned.
- There is evidence of previous success on projects of this nature and/or scope.
- There is evidence that the applicant has already initiated the networks, relationships, or collaborations required to carry out the proposed research and/or dissemination activities (or can adequately establish them in the project’s timeframe).
- There is evidence of the applicant’s ability to provide successful, engaging, and meaningful student involvement in research and/or dissemination.
16. Application – King’s Research Chair – Early Career

Applicants must submit all required materials according to all instructions provided and respecting all formatting restrictions no later than the published deadline.

16.1: Application Materials – Early Career

1) Application Form (Capturing Administrative Information)
2) Research Proposal (Maximum 6 pages)
   - **Context:** Why is the proposed research needed given the current state?
   - **Objectives:** Describe the proposed project’s research question(s), main objectives/goals, and anticipated academic and/or social impacts.
   - **Methodology:** How are you planning on conducting the proposed research project and why is this approach appropriate given the context and objectives just described?
3) Timeline (1 page maximum)
4) Bibliography (no page limit)
5) Budget/Budget Justification (Maximum 2 pages)
6) CV (Including a List of Publications)
7) Letters of Reference (3 letters required)
   - Applicants will need to provide the names and contact information of their letter writers on the application form.
     - Letters provided from anyone else will not be considered.
   - **Letters are to be provided directly by referees to research@kings.uwo.ca**
   - **Letters of reference should speak to:**
     - the applicant’s growing impact and influence in their field.
     - the importance of the proposed research project.
   - **Recommended Letter Writers:**
     - Where possible, applicants are strongly encouraged to seek at least one reference letter from outside Western. This will help the committee appreciate the extent of the significance and impact of the applicant’s research beyond King’s.

16.2: Formatting Requirements (for Research Proposal, Bibliography, and Budget Justification only):

- Font: 12-point Times New Roman
- Compressed font spacing is not permissible.
- Margins should be 2.5cm (or 1 inch) on all sides.
- Minimum line spacing = single spaced
17. Eligibility – King’s Research Chair – Established

- Applicants must be a full-time faculty member at King’s University College at the time of application.
- Applicants are not eligible to apply to the Early Career King’s Research Chair.
- To be competitive, applicants should have a strong record of:
  - research impact (academic and/or social)
  - consistent success in securing peer-reviewed publication, funding, or recognition (honours, awards, etc.).
18. Adjudication – King’s Research Chair – Established Scholar

18.1: Quality and Importance: 40%

- The project has a clearly defined research question and clearly defined objectives.
- The proposal provides evidence of its originality and its potential to address a clearly defined gap, challenge, or need.
- The appropriateness of the theoretical approach and methodology.
- There is a clearly identified audience for the research outcomes to be disseminated through this project.
- There is evidence that the knowledge mobilization approach or framework is appropriate for the applicant’s discipline.
- The proposed student training and/or involvement is meaningful and directly contributes to attaining the project’s research and/or dissemination objectives.

18.2: Planning: 30%

- The research plan is clear, cohesive, and easy to understand.
- The proposed timeline is reasonable (neither too ambitious or too conservative) and realistic (can be completed in the time indicated)
- There is a clearly defined plan to proactively engage the audience.
- Budgeted expenditures comply with restrictions on eligible expenses for this competition.

18.3: Expertise and Resources to Execute: 30%

- The researcher has demonstrated extraordinary academic and/or social impact and is recognized by their peers as an established and authoritative leader in their field of inquiry.
- The researcher’s publication record confirms their ability to conduce the proposed research and dissemination activities.
- The researcher or research team provided evidence of expertise required to carry out the planned research and/or dissemination activities.
- The researcher or research team has enough people to carry out the research and/or dissemination activities in the time planned.
- There is evidence of previous success on projects of this nature and/or scope.
- There is evidence that the applicant has already initiated the networks, relationships, or collaborations required to carry out the proposed research and/or dissemination activities (or can adequately establish them in the project’s timeframe).
- There is evidence of the applicant’s ability to provide successful, engaging, and meaningful student involvement in research and/or dissemination.
19. Application – King’s Research Chair – Established

19.1: Application Materials – Early Career

1) Application Form (Capturing Administrative Information)
2) Research Proposal (Maximum 6 pages)
   - **Context:** Why is the proposed research needed given the current state?
   - **Objectives:** Describe the proposed project’s research question(s), main objectives/goals, and anticipated academic and/or social impacts.
   - **Methodology:** How are you planning on conducting the proposed research project and why is this approach appropriate given the context and objectives just described?
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## Appendix: Anticipated Schedule of Competitions According to Total Funds Available Through the King’s Research Excellence Fund

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Application Year (January)</th>
<th>Award Term (FY)</th>
<th>REx Scholars Grants</th>
<th>REx Chair - Early</th>
<th>REx Chair - Established</th>
<th>Funds Distributed Annually</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2022</td>
<td>2022-2023</td>
<td>$30,000</td>
<td></td>
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**Notes:**

- To respect the terms and conditions of the Research Excellence Award funds approved by King’s Board of Directors that limits the use of funds to a maximum of $60,000 in any given year, the two Research Excellence Chairs are issued $15,000 annually and are renewable for a maximum of 3 years (totally $45,000 per Research Chair over 3 years).
- Based on this model, 2037 will be the final round of competitions for both the Research Excellence Scholars grant and the Research Excellence Chairs grants (Early and Established).
- There would only be enough funds to issue a total of 4 Research Excellence Scholars grants over the 2036 and 2037 competition years. As a result, the 4 grants have been divided evenly over those years (as opposed to having 3 grants issued in 2036 but only 1 grant in 2037).