



ALES RESEARCH TIP SHEET #9 Budgeting for Proposals September 2023



1. General

- Carefully read sponsor guidelines to know what expenses are eligible for the funding opportunity and in which expense category they should be included. Only include eligible expenses.
- Budget for increases in costs (eg: PDF salary increases) between the time of grant submission to the time when expenses are incurred (eg: up to 5-years in the future).
- Refer to the Research + Innovation [Help with Budgets](#) page for recommendations on budget development and instructions on indirect costs (see #4 below).
- Successful applications can provide good insight on what a sponsor is looking for and the level of detail required in the budget and budget justification. The [Successful Grant Library](#) provides samples of SSHRC and NFRF applications. For other sponsors, contact us for assistance.

2. User fees

- You are encouraged to include user fees for using your own equipment (lab equipment, field equipment, trucks, etc.). User fees can be collected into your general research account (lab account) and will allow you to generate funds for repairs, maintenance and replacement of equipment, for example. Further information on lab accounts can be found [here](#). Refer to [Vehicle Pool rental rates](#) to determine appropriate rates for using your vehicles which could include a day rate for rental and a km rate (eg: \$32/day + \$0.5/km).
- Budget appropriately for Faculty facilities and equipment user fees. Consult with the specific unit manager or Jay Willis, the Research Stations Manager or Urmila Basu, the Research Labs Manager, on the appropriate user fees and facility availability during proposal development.

3. Personnel

- **Lab Manager/Coordinator:** In large research programs such as Genome Canada LSARPs or GAPPs, a project manager is a built-in component of the proposal and budget, however, most projects do not have these positions clearly identified. We recommend that large and growing labs, with multiple projects, consider budgeting for a full- or part-time lab manager, if allowed by the sponsor. A lab manager can assist with most administrative aspects of your lab across all your projects, including tracking of expenses and reporting, hiring, purchasing, maintaining your CV, compiling reports etc. It is recommended to check sponsor guidelines to confirm which activities are allowed on the grant. A lab manager can also work for more than one researcher, sharing the cost across grants and labs.

ALES Research Team:

For more information and resources check the ALES Research webpage (intranet):

<https://intranet.ales.ualberta.ca/research/>

- **Highly Qualified Personnel (HQP):** Determine the required rates for the personnel you are planning to hire (see below). Consider budgeting above the minimum rates to be more competitive in attracting students and staff.
 - **Graduate students (MSc, PhD):** minimum rates for paying graduate students are available in Appendix B of the [Graduate Student Assistantship Collective Agreement](#).
 - **Post-doctoral fellows (PDF):** PDFs are considered employees; therefore, benefits should also be budgeted. Minimum stipend rates can be found on the [Administering Employment for Postdoctoral Fellows](#) page. According to UofA policy, PDFs can be appointed within 5 years of the completion of their PhD, and the appointment is for up to 5 years. Some grants may have shorter appointment terms.
 - **Research Associates (RA):** Rates for RAs vary based on the RA's job description, duties, experience and other factors. Researchers are advised to consult with ALES HR Partners.
- The Human Resource Services ([HRS compensation calculator](#)) can be used to estimate the total cost of employees (PDFs, Research Associates and other support personnel).

4. University Overhead/Indirect Costs of Research (ICR)

- According to UofA policy, indirect cost of research (ICR) must be included in all research contracts, research grants, technical services agreements, research donations, and flow through contracts, except where the sponsor has a published policy indicating a different rate or no ICR. The current UofA ICR rate is **30%** and is calculated based on the total of direct costs. Additional information on ICR can be found [here](#).
- When including matching/leveraged funds from other sources in an application, different ICR rates may apply to these matching/leveraged contributions. For example, industry funding that is expected to flow directly to the UofA and is being included as leveraged funds in an application to the Agriculture Funding Consortium (AFC), should have an ICR rate of 30%, even though funds coming from the AFC will have an ICR rate of 15%.
- Direct Grant Administration Costs (DGAC): When ICR are not permitted but administrative costs are allowed, DGAC should be included in the personnel category. See the [Faculty of ALES DGAC Policy](#) for the amount to include in your budget.
- A letter/email of approval must be obtained from the Dean of ALES and be included with the application if the overhead rate is below 30% (ie: when the sponsor does not have a publicly-available policy stating their overhead rate). Contact the ALES Research Development Coordinators if you need help to identify the appropriate overhead rate for your proposal.

5. In-kind contributions

- Some funding agencies (eg: Agriculture Funding Consortium) require in-kind contributions from the applicant. The Faculty of ALES [Policy on Valuing In-kind Contributions](#) provides guidance on how in-kind should be calculated. An [ALES in-kind calculator template](#) is also available.
- Eligibility of in-kind contributions differs by sponsor. Consult with sponsor policies to confirm which in-kind contributions are eligible. Contact the ALES Research Coordinators for assistance.

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