

GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH FUND (GSRF) GUIDELINES

Athabasca University acknowledges the importance of graduate student research and supports their endeavors via the Graduate Student Research Fund (GSRF). Students engaging in systematic inquiry are not only completing important milestones in their academic programs but are also contributing to their respective fields of study. The quality and reputation of Athabasca University as an academic centre of excellence is reflected in the extent to which graduate students learn, develop and apply their research competencies to investigate substantive questions in their disciplines and disseminate their research findings.

RESEARCH INVOLVING HUMAN SUBJECTS / ANIMALS / HUMAN OR ANIMAL PATHOGENS OR TOXINS / ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

- Research involving human participants requires written approval of the Athabasca University (AU) Research Ethics Board (REB) prior to commencement, irrespective of the source of funding (if any) and the location of the research, if the research is being conducted by a member of the AU community, including its graduate students, or under the auspices of AU.
- The AU Ethical Conduct of Research Involving Humans Policy and related Procedures provide additional information in this regard. REB applications must be submitted via the Research Portal.
- Researchers may seek AU Research Ethics Board approval prior to submitting an application to the Graduate Student Research Fund.
- Funds from the Graduate Student Research Fund will not be released until all relevant ethics certifications have been approved
- Additional non-AU Research Ethics Board and/or institutional access approvals may also be required to access the participants and/or data required to conduct your study. Researchers are advised to contact the appropriate individual(s) in the site(s) in which the research will be conducted to determine what actions (if any) are required prior to the commencement of their research.
- Researchers who plan to conduct a study that involves human or animal pathogens or toxins or a potential environmental impact should be aware of specific protocols that exist and/or other approvals that may need to be obtained prior to commencing the proposed research.
- Researchers who are not certain about whether or not their research requires AU Research Ethics Board approval should consult the AU Research Ethics Office by e-mail at rebsec@athabascau.ca or by telephone at (780) 675-6718.

APPLICATION DEADLINES & NOTIFICATION

Normally three times per year	February 10 th , May 10 th , October 10 th <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If these dates fall on a weekend or statutory holiday, the deadline shall be the next business day.
Award Notification	Within 21 business days of application deadline

ELIGIBILITY

- Athabasca University graduate students currently enrolled and in good standing in an Athabasca University master's or doctoral degree program.
- Athabasca University graduate students who were enrolled in an Athabasca University master's or doctoral degree program are eligible to apply for a dissemination award if the presentation occurred within three months after graduation.
- **Graduate students enrolled in certificate or diploma programs are ineligible to apply.**

SUBMISSION OF APPLICATIONS

- 1) Award recipients are obliged to abide by the conditions governing these awards, conduct the research as proposed and adhere to all relevant Athabasca University Research Policies and related procedures in so doing.
- 2) Applications will be reviewed in accordance with these guidelines.

- 3) Only completed applications, including applicable appendices, will be considered for review by the Graduate Student Research Fund Committee. Late submissions will not be accepted.
- 4) Applications for support from the Graduate Student Research Fund must be submitted through the AU [Research Portal](#).

PURPOSE OF GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH FUND (GSRF)

Graduate Student Research Fund awards are intended to:

- 1) Enhance the research experience of award recipients;
- 2) Foster research creativity and innovation;
- 3) Support graduate students' research focused endeavors;
- 4) Acknowledge graduate students' contributions to the research climate of Athabasca University;
- 5) Encourage dissemination of scholarly research that is part of the student's master's or doctoral degree program.

Purpose of Funding for Dissemination Activities:

The purpose of funding for dissemination activities is to provide graduate students with the opportunity to disseminate their research to the appropriate audiences, such as study sample participants, the public, policy-makers and colleagues, and other pertinent groups, no matter what the forum. Examples of the types of forums students can use to disseminate their research include a conference, workshop, symposium, seminar, colloquium or roundtable, whether in-person or online. Other presentation venues can include World Cafe, Campfire Session, Panel Session, Storytelling and 7-14-38 Presentations. The forum must have a well-defined theme that is relevant to the student's research topic.

VALUE OF AWARD

MASTER'S DEGREE PROGRAM	DOCTORAL DEGREE PROGRAM
Conducting Research	Conducting Research
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Up to \$1,000 to conduct research 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Up to \$1,500 to conduct research
Disseminating Research	Disseminating Research
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Up to \$2,000 to disseminate research ▪ A student can apply to either of the above categories more than once; however, the total amount of GSRF funding shall not exceed \$3,000 while enrolled in the Master's program. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Up to \$2,000 to disseminate research ▪ A student can apply to either of the above categories more than once; however, the total amount of GSRF funding shall not exceed \$3,500 while enrolled in the Doctoral program.

BUDGET: ELIGIBLE EXPENSES

A rationale for all expenditures related to the research study or dissemination of the research results, including estimates, if actual costs are not available must be included within the budget submission.

Examples of eligible expenses supported by the Graduate Student Research Fund include, but are not necessarily limited to the following:

- 1) Travel costs directly related to the data collection component of the research study, or dissemination of the research results. All claims must be consistent with the Athabasca University's [Travel and Expense Claim Policy](#);
 - Costs may include airfare, accommodations, meals, incidentals, ground travel, and/or conference fees.
 - **Details on how expenses are calculated must be included in the budget submission (e.g., kilometers travelled and mileage rates).**
- 2) Materials and Supplies (e.g., postage, telephone charges, paper, computer ink cartridges, photocopying, printing);
- 3) Data management/analysis software (**that is not otherwise normally available at AU**);
- 4) Other expenses (e.g., advertising, flyers, etc.)
- 5) Incentives for participation, as appropriate (**value must be justified in the budget submission**).

GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH FUND (GSRF) DOES NOT SUPPORT

Examples of **activities not supported** by the Graduate Student Research Fund GSRF include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

- 1) Costs to conduct research that is not part of the graduate student's master's or doctoral degree program of research;
- 2) Costs to disseminate research that is not part of the graduate student's master's or doctoral degree program of research;
- 3) Digital connections (e.g., Internet connections);
- 4) Encrypted data storage and backup;
- 5) Furniture items and common office equipment (e.g., calculators, telephones, computers, laptops, headsets, microphones, audio recorders, etc.);
- 6) Production costs for thesis/dissertation and/or research reports (e.g., editing, binding, publishing, etc.), including any required committee assessment copies, as set out in the regulations governing the academic degree for which the research study was undertaken as a requisite;
- 7) Rent (if conducting research from home);
- 8) Software or equipment where such items are available free-of-charge or at a reduced cost on loan from Athabasca University (e.g., via Athabasca University Library & Scholarly Services, or an academic centre);
- 9) Textbooks or reference books (other than in exceptional circumstances where the material cannot be accessed by borrowing through private or public sources);
- 10) For other alternatives (e.g., Tutorials, Citing and Referencing Tutorials etc.), refer to the [Athabasca University Library & Scholarly Services](#);
- 11) Tuition fees;
- 12) Costs to hire Research Assistants;
- 13) Transcription costs
 - Transcription is an integral and interpretive part of the research and learning process, as it is the first step in analysis of the research data. It is customary that graduate students transcribe the data themselves to capture the learning experience, the essence of the spoken work, and intent of the participant(s). Graduate students are encouraged to use electronic means to transcribe digital audio files (e.g., <https://gotranscript.com>).

DURATION OF AWARD

- 1) Approval of an award shall remain for up to one year from the date of the full approval memo.
- 2) If the award is not claimed within this timeframe, the unclaimed award will be returned to the Graduate Student Research Fund.
- 3) If, due to extenuating circumstances, the research cannot start and/or be completed as planned, you must notify 1) your thesis, dissertation or project supervisor, program advisor, course instructor, or other Athabasca University faculty member who is supervising your work and 2) the Graduate Student Research Committee.

EVALUATION CRITERIA

The Graduate Student Research Fund Committee adjudicates all Graduate Student Research Fund applications. Consultation may be sought from individuals possessing specific expertise (e.g., methodological) as required.

Applicants are encouraged to ensure that their application can be readily understood and evaluated by others who are not necessarily familiar with the technical language used in their discipline or field.

Not all of the questions on the Graduate Student Research Fund application form may be applicable to a particular research study. In such cases, the applicant is encouraged to provide sufficient other relevant information that will allow the reviewers to assess the application.

Applications will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- 1) Consistency with the Graduate Student Research Fund Guidelines;
- 2) Clarity and completeness of the information provided;
- 3) Scientific merit and/or other relevant criteria used in the related field of study;
- 4) Budget, **including relevance of and justification for all planned expenditures.**
 - Details on how expenses are calculated should be included (e.g., kilometers travelled and mileage rates);
- 5) Plans for the dissemination of the research findings.

SUPERVISOR'S SUPPORT

The following support is required as part of the application process:

- Approval from the Graduate Student's thesis supervisor, project supervisor, program advisor, course instructor, or other Athabasca University faculty member who is familiar with the work is required.

REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

- 1) A final report must be submitted via the AU [Research Portal](#) within one month following completion of the research study or dissemination of the results.
- 2) The final report must demonstrate that the research was conducted or disseminated in accordance with the approved application and related budget.
- 3) Subsequent Graduate Student Research Fund awards (if eligible) will be conditional upon the submission of the final report for grants previously approved by the Graduate Student Research Fund Committee.

ADDITIONAL FUNDING SOURCES

Applicants who apply to the Graduate Student Research Fund may also apply for funding from other sources such as those noted below:

Refer to the Office of the Registrar-Student Awards website for information on:

- [AU Access to Research Tools Award](#)
- [Profiling Alberta's Graduate Students](#)
- [Graduate Level Student Travel Awards](#)

Refer to Faculty of Graduate Studies website for information on:

- [Alberta Innovates-Technology Futures Award](#)

Refer to Research Centre-Graduate Student Research website for information on:

- [Graduate Student Access to Data Management/Analysis Software](#)