

**Grant/Award
Holder's Guide**

researchNS

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Overview

Congratulations on your successful grant/award application. This document outlines all conditions of funding and responsibilities of funded RNS grant/award recipients. Acceptance by an applicant of an offer of funding from RNS is a confirmation that the applicant has read, understood and agrees to all requirements for holding RNS funds detailed in this document.

Accepting or Declining a Funding Offer

Funding recipients must accept a grant/ award by the date listed in the offer letter or the award will be rescinded. To accept an offer in the Grant Management System (GMS), login to your [GMS](#) account.

- Under the *Status* column on the *Applicant Portfolio* page, click *Funded*. RNS's Terms and Conditions will be displayed and your offer letter linked.
- Under *Offer Response*, you must select *Accepted* or *Declined*, and select your anticipated project start date. By accepting the offer letter, you agree to the conditions outlined in this document.
- When completed, click *Save and Return to List* at the bottom of the page.

Start Date

To take advantage of the full duration of the award/grant, recipients are encouraged to begin their grant/award on the earliest available start date. The start date must be within one year of the original funding offer date. Any grants/awards not started within one year of the original funding offer date will be terminated by RNS.

Change of Start Date

Before commencing the grant/award, the award recipient may change their chosen start date by sending a written request to the program manager.

Conditions of Funding

Provided all conditions of funding are met, funding will be guaranteed for the first 12 months of the award. Future funding will be contingent upon:

- Timely submission of all reports — progress and final.
- A satisfactory review of the progress reports detailing research-related activities and research outcomes.
- Future funding of RNS by the provincial government and annual budgetary approval by RNS's Board of Directors.

Funding Offers with Specific Conditions

In some cases, RNS may require the applicant to address, in writing, specific concerns or issues related to the application. Funding recipients must address any conditions specified in their Letter of Offer. Funding will not be issued until the specific conditions are satisfactorily addressed.

For concerns relating to science and/or methodology, responses may be forwarded to the original reviewers for feedback and final recommendation. RNS staff will adjudicate issues relating to administrative concerns.

Ethical Conduct

Funding recipients and the institutions administering funds must comply with ethics and research policies outlined by the institution, the Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research, and RNS's [Ethical Conduct Requirements](#).

If ethics approval is a condition of funding for a grant/award, funds will be released (provided all other criteria are met) when RNS has received either official ethics approval from the relevant Research Ethics Board(s), or written confirmation from the relevant research office indicating that ethics approval is not required. Conditions related to ethical conduct requirements must be met within one year of the notification of approval for funding. If conditions are not met, the Offer Letter will expire and funding will no longer be available.

If the funding period extends past the expiry date of the ethics approval, the Principal Investigator (PI) must provide RNS with an updated ethics approval within 30 days of its expiry date. If ethics approval has been expired for more than 30 days, the file will be placed on administrative hold; no payments will be issued until an updated ethics approval is received.

Eligibility

Funding recipients must continue to meet all eligibility criteria outlined in their grant/award requirements. Grant/award recipients must advise RNS promptly in writing of any major changes regarding eligibility during the funding period. RNS will determine the impact of the change and whether to continue funding.

Disclosure of Information

Grant/award recipients consent to the information provided in their application and reports being disseminated for the purpose of payment, monitoring, evaluation of the grant/award, and other administrative purposes. An applicant's plain language summary may be made available on RNS's website, and in reports, documents, and other disclosures to government, partners, stakeholders and/or the public.

Communication

Grant/award recipients and host institutions are required to respond in a timely fashion to any requests from RNS personnel regarding the verification of compliance to the Conditions of Award.

Equipment

Unless otherwise stipulated by RNS at the time of the funding offer, any equipment purchased with RNS funds will become the property of the institution originally administering the funds, and may not be transferred or otherwise dealt with except with the written permission of that institution.

Audit

To ensure funds are being used for the purposes stated in the funding application, RNS reserves the right to examine, for audit purposes, the financial records pertaining to the grant at any time. RNS has the right to conduct on-site audits, as deemed necessary by RNS.

Evaluation

RNS funding recipients agree to participate in evaluation for the purposes of planning, accountability and the assessment of impact of RNS funding.

Acknowledgment of Research Nova Scotia

Funding recipients must acknowledge the funding provided by RNS in any presentation, publication, public messages or media coverage about the funded research while holding RNS funding or resulting from the tenure of the grant/award. Acknowledgment of RNS support should include RNS's logo, where appropriate. High-resolution versions of the RNS logo can be obtained by contacting the [RNS Communications Officer](#).

Progress and Final Reports

All funding recipients are required to submit a final report within 30 days of their funding end date. Recipients of multi-year funding are also required to submit an annual progress report.

A subsequent year's funding is contingent upon a satisfactory review of the progress report detailing research activities and outcomes. If a report is not received by its due date, the file will be placed on administrative hold; no payments will be issued until the report is received. Funding recipients with outstanding reports are ineligible to apply for RNS grants/awards.

Progress and Final report dates and requirements are also available on the [RNS website](#).

Financial Statements

A financial statement from the institution administering the award must be submitted annually and before subsequent payments are disbursed. Contact your institution's financial services to obtain a copy of your account statement. Account balances must be below \$20,000 before an additional payment will be made.

A template and details on the format and content of financial statements are available on the [RNS website](#).

Knowledge Translation

All recipients of funding from RNS will actively disseminate their findings through traditional and nontraditional activities, such as peer reviewed publications in quality journals, media engagement, education sessions with patients, practitioners, or policy makers, social media, and other means so that their work will have maximum impact and utility.

Use of Grant/ Award Funds

RNS funds must be used effectively and efficiently, and be applied only to costs directly associated with the grant/award, as outlined in the application approved for funding, and in accordance with the requirements outlined below. In coordination with the institution administering funds, the applicant must submit a request to RNS for any exceptions to the following policies and/or the eligible and ineligible expenses outlined in the grant/award application requirements. RNS will consider each request on a case-by-case basis.

Budget Variance

Up to 20% of the approved budget, as an annual cumulative total, may be reallocated among budget categories. Reallocation of more than 20% of the approved budget must be approved by RNS personnel. All variances between approved and actual budgets must be outlined in progress and final reports.

Funding Period

The grant/award funding period is the time between the start and end dates outlined in the recipient's payment schedule. All funds must be distributed before the end of the funding period. RNS is not responsible for expenditures outside the funding period or in excess of the funds it is contracted to provide.

Institutional Policies

Costs related to human resources, procurement and travel must align with the policies of the institution administering funds. When discrepancies or exceptions arise, RNS will defer to the policies of the institution. The grant/award recipient's affiliated institution may withhold approval of an expenditure if it contravenes institutional policies or RNS's application requirements.

Jurisdiction

RNS funds will be issued to Nova Scotia institutions and will be used for activities taking place in Nova Scotia. Up to 25% of approved funds may be used for activities taking place outside the province.

Additional Funding

RNS does not provide funding for projects already funded by another agency, unless the applicant can clearly demonstrate that there is no duplication or overlap in the allocation of RNS and external funds.

Unused Funds

All unused funds must be returned to RNS at the end of the grant/award funding period.

Extensions and Transfers

Extensions

A funding recipient may apply, in writing, to the appropriate RNS program manager for an extension

of a grant/award start or end date. A delay cannot exceed one year in total, including any delays throughout the grant period (including time to obtain ethics approval).

Requests to extend the end date must be made at least 30 days in advance of the existing end date. A progress report and updated financial statement will be required before the extension will be considered. In exceptional circumstances, the CEO may approve an extension longer than one year.

Leaves of Absence

Researchers who wish to suspend their grant/award while on an institution-approved leave must apply in writing for approval, explaining the provisions that will be made for either the suspension or operation of the grant/award, and, if applicable, for the supervision of staff. Leave of absence approval is considered on a case-by-case basis.

Grant/Award Transfer

A grant/award is issued for work to be undertaken at a specified institution in Nova Scotia. In exceptional circumstances, the funding recipient may be permitted to transfer the grant/award to another eligible institution in Nova Scotia. The funding recipient must request, in writing, a grant/award transfer at least 30 days in advance of the anticipated transfer date. The recipient must indicate the reason for the transfer request and the amount of the remaining funds available for transfer. A financial statement must be provided from the original institution administering funds, and both institutions must provide written consent to the transfer and receipt of funds.

Breach of Conditions

If a funding recipient is found in breach of the conditions outlined in this document or does not maintain eligibility for the grant/award, RNS reserves the right to withhold or terminate funding, or deem the recipient ineligible to apply for future RNS funding opportunities. If funding is terminated, RNS will contact the host institution for the return of unused funds.

Payment of Grant/ Award Funds

Prior to the start date of research grants/ awards, RNS must receive copies of all ethics approvals (Research Ethics Board, Animal Protocols, Biohazard Certificates, Stem Cell Protocols etc.).

Once the offer has been accepted, all conditions of support have been met, and approximately one week prior to the start date, the Principal Investigator will be notified that a payment schedule and cheque have been sent to the institution identified in the offer letter as administering the funds. Once received, funds will be available for use during the designated funding period.

If you have any questions about additional administrative processes required by your institution, please contact your institution's research office and/or finance department.

APPENDIX A: RNS Confidentiality and Use of Personal Information Policies

RNS Confidentiality Policy

All documents and information provided to RNS for the purpose of peer review must be treated as strictly confidential and may not be used for any purpose beyond that for which they are originally intended.

All materials related to the review process must be stored in a secure manner to prevent unauthorized access. When documentation is no longer required, it must be destroyed using a secure method such as burning or shredding or returned to RNS for destruction. It is the intention of RNS that all information gained by reviewers by reason of their participation in this program is to remain confidential. This would include information as to who may or may not be in a list of competitors for grants and awards, as well as information concerning applicants who have submitted proposals for review. All inquiries received by committee members, reviewers, or scientific officers concerning the review of any application should be referred to RNS.

Freedom of Information, Privacy, and Personal Information Protection

RNS is working to develop a disclosure and transparency policy and process that is committed to openness, while ensuring the protection of private information and intellectual property of Nova Scotia researchers. Personal information collected by RNS about applicants and funding recipients is used to: review applications, administer and monitor grants and awards, compile statistics and support research in Nova Scotia.

All signing parties involved in a collaborative agreement will be bound by the Personal Information Protection and Electronic Documents Act (PIPEDA). All personal information (as identified by the PIPEDA) collected, used or disclosed in the course of any commercial activity under collaborative agreements related to the funding opportunity will be collected, used and disclosed in compliance with the PIPEDA.

Collection, Use, Disclosure and Retention of Personal Health information

RNS is subject to provincial legislation governing the collection, use, disclosure and retention of personal health information, as defined by the Personal Health Information Act, 2010 (the PHIA). RNS is committed to openness and transparency, while ensuring the protection of personal health information in accordance with the PHIA. See Appendix C for more information about consent and compliance with the PHIA.

APPENDIX B: RNS Ethical Conduct Requirements

RNS is committed to supporting and enabling research of the highest quality. Funded research must comply with ethical conduct requirements.

Research Involving Humans

Research involving humans must comply with TCPS 2 – Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans.

The appropriate local review committee operating in accordance with the relevant statements of the TCPS2 policy must approve any research involving human subjects before it starts.

In addition to the provisions outlined in Chapter 9 of the TCPS 2 (Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples of Canada), applicants whose proposed research will involve Aboriginal people are encouraged to consult the Mi'kmaw Research Principles and Protocols (Mi'kmaw Ethics Watch) to ensure awareness of any principles and protocols established by local Aboriginal communities.

Other Ethical Guidelines

Other applicable ethical guidelines include, but are not necessarily limited to, the following:

- Canadian Biosafety Standard (CBS) and Canadian Biosafety Handbook (Public Health Agency of Canada and Canadian Food Inspection Agency)
- Canadian Council on Animal Care Guidelines

Integrity in Research

RNS is guided by national standards and procedures related to integrity in research, as described in the Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research (2016). This framework is used as a guide to promote integrity in research and scholarship, and when investigating any allegations of misconduct in research and scholarship.

The primary responsibility for ethical conduct lies with the researcher(s); the institution administering funds must have boards, committees or agreements in place for the review and monitoring of this conduct.

APPENDIX C: Consent and Compliance Undertaking Personal Health Information Act

The Personal Health Information Act (PHIA) provides for certain obligations and restrictions with respect to the collection, use, disclosure and retention of personal health information, as defined in the PHIA. The text of the PHIA may be [viewed here](#).

RNS is subject to the provisions of the PHIA. This section is intended to ensure that Applicants are fully aware of the provisions of the PHIA and that the Applicants will ensure that personal health information obtained from third parties for the purpose of any work under a Grant, or submitted to RNS in this Application, is compliant with the PHIA.

Applicants (including team members listed on an RNS grant registration/application submitted via the GMS) undertake that use, disclosure and retention by RNS of any personal health information contained in this Application will be compliant with the PHIA when used or disclosed as may be reasonable for the purpose of:

- relevance review by RNS staff, funding partners and potential funding partners of RNS peer review committee members and consulting experts; and funding decisions by RNS staff, funding partners and potential funding partners of RNS, peer review committee members and consulting experts.