

researchNS

Research Nova Scotia

Semi-Annual report to the
Minister of Labour and Advanced Education

1 October 2019 to 31 March 2020

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Executive Summary

This semi-annual report covers the activities of the Research Nova Scotia Corporation (RNS) for the period 1 October 2019 to 31 March 2020.

The Board of Directors of the Corporation has adopted a mission-oriented strategy to fulfill our mandate, selecting four mission areas that serve the provincial priorities. These are:

- 1) A sustainable bio-economy;
- 2) Climate change resilience and adaptation;
- 3) The changing nature of work; and
- 4) Healthy people and communities.

This will create a framework through which RNS can coalesce partners, programs and resources around key societal challenges.

During this reporting period, RNS committed \$898,400 across 5 new projects, leveraging an additional \$5.4 million from partners. In addition, RNS invested a total of \$92,000 in future researchers through its Scotia Scholars Awards program. Funds were allocated to 22 students.

Board of Directors

The current members of the Research Nova Scotia Board are:

- Dr. Alice Aiken (Chair), Vice-President, Research and Innovation, Dalhousie University
- Dr. Mary Bluechardt (Vice Chair), President and Vice-Chancellor, Mount Saint Vincent University
- Mr. Don Bureaux, President, Nova Scotia Community College
- Ms. Ava Czapalay, Associate Deputy Minister, Department of Labour and Advanced Education
- Mr. David Dingwall, President, Cape Breton University
- Ms. Jeannine Lagassé, Associate Deputy Minister, Department of Health and Wellness
- Ms. Denise LeBlanc, Director General, Aquatic & Crop Resource Development, National Research Council
- Mr. Bernie Miller, Deputy Minister, Department of Business
- Dr. Nicholas Nickerson, Chief Scientist and Co-Founder, Eosense
- Dr. Jeffrey Norrie, Chief Science Officer, Breathing Green Solutions
- Mr. Allister Surette, President, Université Sainte-Anne
- Dr. David Woolnough, retired researcher

Our Impact

Research Nova Scotia is responsible for supporting research that links to the province's priority areas of inclusive economic growth; and, a healthy population and health-care system. Our regulations provide us a mandate to support, organize and coordinate the funding of research in Nova Scotia. Our impact must therefore simultaneously contribute to both the strength and success of the research community, and the advancement of benefits to Nova Scotians through academic research.

The period of 1 October 2019 to 31 March 2020 was foundational to the organization's forward direction. During these months, the Board of Directors adopted a mission-oriented strategy to fulfill our mandate, selecting four mission areas that serve the provincial priorities. These are:

- 1) A sustainable bio-economy;
- 2) Climate change resilience and adaptation;
- 3) The changing nature of work; and
- 4) Healthy people and communities.

The selection of a mission-oriented strategy and mission areas creates a framework through which the organization can coalesce partners, programs and resources, and is a significant step in support of the research ecosystem. As the strategy moves through its transition phase into full implementation, Research Nova Scotia's impact will be measured through progress toward specific, targeted missions and research questions within these mission areas. A full evaluation framework will form part of the mission-oriented approach. While developing its long-term strategic approach, Research Nova Scotia continued to support and fund research that would advance knowledge, build capacity, inform decision-making, and improve the health, prosperity and environment in Nova Scotia.

A vital aspect of Research Nova Scotia's support for the research community comes through matched funding for Canadian Foundation for Innovation (CFI) and Genome Canada grants. CFI-JELF funding builds infrastructure capacity at Nova Scotian universities, enabling institutions to attract Canada Research Chairs and build centres of excellence. Eight proposals were brought to RNS for consideration, with decisions made in April 2020. As such, they will be included in the next semi-annual report.

Toward the end of this reporting period, the global COVID-19 pandemic created a need for rapid mobilization in the research community. Research Nova Scotia moved quickly to join with research partners including CIHR and ACOA to fund projects focused on the urgent response to the virus entering Canadian communities. While the projects are in early phases, the immediate impact of

Research Nova Scotia's funding was to increase the scope of projects, the number of students hired, and the number of researchers funded through the CIHR call for proposals to work on this extraordinary crisis. Additional projects and leveraged funding continued through the next fiscal year, and will be highlighted in future reports. A podcast showcasing one of the COVID-19 projects supported by Research Nova Scotia is available at:

<https://researchns.ca/the-research-nova-scotia-podcast/>

Projects Approved by the Corporation

From 1 October 2019 to 31 March 2020, the following commitments were made:¹

Program	Type	# Funded	Total Investment
Bridge Funding	Matching Funds	2	\$130,000
COVID-19 Rapid Response	Matching Funds	3	\$768,400
Scotia Scholars (Undergraduate)	NSHRF Legacy	22	\$92,000
		27	\$990,400

Research Nova Scotia continued to provide bridge funding to two legacy commitments: the Nova Scotia node of the Maritime SPOR SUPPORT Unit, and to the Building Research for Integrated Primary Healthcare (BRIC) network. Support for both projects is important to the province's health research enterprise while they await future commitments from the Canadian Institutes for Health Research.

In recent months, RNS supported several new research projects through its

¹ Funding commitments are not evenly distributed over time, but vary according to other funders' opportunities, external events, and RNS program launch and conclusion dates. In future reports, RNS will provide comparative data (e.g. from other reporting periods, and rolling average).

COVID-19 Rapid Response program. The Rapid Response program was developed to ensure that priority research with the potential to impact Nova Scotians was able to proceed as soon as practicable.

RNS continued to invest in future researchers through its Scotia Scholars Awards program. Scotia Scholars supports trainees at the undergraduate, Masters and PhD levels to work on a specific research project with faculty mentors. In the reporting period, undergraduate awards ranging from \$3,000 to \$5,000 were allocated to 22 students at Acadia University, Cape Breton University, Mount Saint Vincent University, and Saint Francis Xavier University.

Appendix 1 details each project approved by the Corporation during the reporting period, including the following information on each research project:

1. name of the lead applicant,
2. name of the lead institution or organization,
3. name of the project,
4. amount of funding approved,
5. research sector,
6. estimated number of jobs in Nova Scotia that will be supported by the funding awarded to the project,
7. estimated number of training opportunities for students and others in Nova Scotia that will be supported by the funding awarded to the project,
8. information about any funding that the project received from other sources, including the following:
 - the name of each source,
 - the amount received from each source and whether it was in the form of cash or an in-kind contribution,
 - details of any in-kind contribution.

Financial Forecast

The Corporation follows Canadian accounting standards for not for profit organizations (“ASNPO”). Under this method all externally restricted contributions are deferred to future periods with the related expenditures regardless of when funds are received. This section includes the following:

1. A Statement of financial position for March 31, 2020.
2. A Research Opportunities Fund Schedule which provides the current balance in the Fund and the amount anticipated to be paid from the fund over the next 6 months.
3. A Statement of Operations for March 31, 2020. Along with the anticipated expenditures over the next 6 months.

Research Nova Scotia Corporation

Statement of Financial Position

October 1, 2019 - March 31, 2020

	31-Mar-20
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Cash and cash equivalents	\$ 41,114,666
Investments	3,749,837
Accounts receivables	1,310,214
Interest receivable	60,171
Prepays	5,385
	46,240,273
Capital assets	136,862
TOTAL ASSETS	46,377,135
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS	
Liabilities	
Accounts payable & Accrued liabilities	211,790
GST/HST payable	(29,762)
Deferred contributions	43,584,725
	43,766,753
Net Assets	
Restricted	136,862
Unrestricted net assets	2,473,520
Total net assets	2,610,382
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	46,377,135

Research Opportunities Fund Schedule
 October 1, 2019 - March 31, 2020

	Oct-Mar 20	<u>Actuals</u>		<u>Budget Projection</u>	
		FY 2019/20	FY 2020/21	Apr-Sep 20	
Opening balance	\$ 23,746,400	\$ 26,148,613	\$ 27,963,409	\$ 27,963,409	
Current year funding	4,000,000	4,000,000	2,000,000	1,000,000	
Interest income	535,190	535,190	92,985	46,492	
Current year expenditures	(318,181)	(2,720,394)	(15,885,000)	(13,537,821)	
Ending Balance	27,963,409	27,963,409	14,171,394	15,472,080	

Statement of Operations
October 1, 2019 - March 31, 2020

	Actual	Actual	Budget	Projection
	Oct-Mar 20	FY 2019/20	FY 2020/21	Apr-Sep 20
REVENUE:				
Province of Nova Scotia	\$ 65,480	\$ 14,051,339	\$ 4,596,000	\$ 1,898,000
			15,885,000	13,537,821
Research Opportunities Fund	568,400	568,400	92,985	46,493
Other income	313,092	2,556,083		
			20,573,985	15,482,314
	946,972	17,175,822		
EXPENSES:				
Program				
Research grants	533,176	10,304,586	17,510,000	13,537,821
Student awards	76,078	737,900	800,000	700,000
Business unit	135,357	2,206,848	-	-
Special projects	17,694	30,233	315,000	10,000
	762,304	13,279,567	18,625,000	14,247,821
Operational				
Wages and salaries	811,316	1,333,339	1,394,633	738,751
Building rent	66,129	130,701	142,224	71,112
Marketing and communications	15,052	15,602	115,488	29,191
General office expenses	51,218	64,028	60,394	43,590
IT maintenance	23,622	64,339	62,625	31,785
Harmonized sales Tax	29,762	29,762	21,235	9,366
Travel & meeting	8,344	38,361	44,568	22,284
Professional fees	54,456	84,600	32,296	24,148
Professional development	1,957	16,020	34,857	17,429
Amortization	12,684	24,460	26,000	12,500
Telephone and website	10,834	19,841	9,864	4,932
Insurance	2,183	4,504	4,800	2,400
Other			-	
	1,087,557	1,825,557	1,948,985	1,007,487
	1,849,861	15,105,124	20,573,985	15,255,308
Excess of revenues over expenses	(902,889)	2,070,698	(0.00)	227,005
Realized and Unrealized gains	268,219	95,849		
Total excess revenue over expenses	(634,670)	2,166,547	(0.00)	227,005

APPENDIX 1: Funding Applications Approved by RNS

October 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020

							Other sources of Funding		
Project Title	Researcher	Institution	RNS Funding	Sector	# of Jobs Supported	# of Training Opportunities	Partners	Cash	In-Kind
COVID-19 Rapid Response									
Identification of Biomarkers that Predict the Severity of COVID-19 Patients	David Kelvin	Dalhousie	\$589,000	Health (COVID-19 Rapid Response)	5	6	CIHR, Dalhousie Medical Research Fdn, Li Ka Shing Fdn, Genome Atlantic (pending)	CIHR \$1,000,000 DMRF \$200,000 LKSF \$500,000 GA \$118,750	NA
Organizational Response to Disease	Kevin Kelloway	Saint Mary's	\$79,400	Health (COVID-19 Rapid Response)	2	2	CIHR, NB Health Research Foundation, David Sobey Centre for Innovation, St. Mary's University	CIHR \$308,000 NBHRF \$83,000 Sobey \$10,000 SMU \$6,000	NA
Sociocultural and Behavioural Factors Affecting Communities' Response to Countermeasures for COVID-19 Epidemic: Identifying Interventions to Build Trust	Eve Dube/ Audrey Steenbeek	Laval/ Dalhousie	\$100,000	Health (COVID-19 Rapid Response)	2	1	CIHR	\$399,089	NA

Bridge Funding									
Bridge Funding for Maritime SPOR SUPPORT Unit (MSSU)	David Anderson	NSHA	\$75,000	Health	13.5	20	CIHR, NS Dept. of Health & Wellness, Dalhousie, NS Health Authority	CIHR \$2,051,500 NSDHW \$600,000 Dalhousie \$75,000	\$197,785 (NSHA): Office space, financial administration & payroll support, procurement support, legal services (contract review)
Bridge Funding for Building Research for Integrated Primary Healthcare in Nova Scotia (BRIC-NS)	Fred Burge	Dalhousie	\$55,000	Health	5	7	CIHR, Dalhousie Dept. of Family Medicine	CIHR \$50,000 Dalhousie \$15,000	\$5000 (Dalhousie): Computer, clerical support, IT support, office supplies
Totals			\$898,400		27.5	36.0		\$5,416,339	