

Research Platforms Pool – FAQ

What is the Research Platforms Pool (RPP)?

The RPP is an amount of funding set aside specifically to support recognized McMaster Core Research Platforms. The funding is transferred to the VPR's Office by the Provost and is allocated by the University Research Infrastructure Oversight Board (URI OB).

What/Who is the URI OB?

The University Research Infrastructure Oversight Board (URI OB) is comprised of the following members:

- Vice-President, Research
- Associate Vice-President, Research
- Associate Deans/Vice Dean, Research for all 6 Faculties/Schools:
 - DeGroot e School of Business
 - Faculty of Engineering
 - Faculty of Health Sciences
 - Faculty of Humanities
 - Faculty of Science
 - Faculty of Social Science

The URI OB provides leadership and decision making related to CFI IOF funding, RPP allocations, new Core Research Platform recognition, governance policies and other programming related to support for on-campus research infrastructure.

How much is in the RPP?

The RPP is funded by the Provost on a one-time basis that is reevaluated each year based on several factors including the University's overall financial position and assessment of all priorities across campus, amongst others. This means there is no guaranteed amount or long-term commitment in terms of funding. Criteria for the types of requests that can be submitted have been developed in line with the nature of this funding and are described in more detail in the section "What type of expenses can RPP funding be used for?".

When does the URI OB accept applications for the RPP funding?

The URI OB will issue a formal call once per year during the fall. Faculties will be given 4-6 weeks to submit any requests, with adjudication by the URI OB approximately one month thereafter. However, if there are emergent, time sensitive needs that arise in between formal RPP cycles, facilities may submit an "off-cycle" request to the URI OB for special consideration.

Off-cycle requests must be accompanied by a justification for immediate review and any funding awarded will count towards the total funding requested by the involved Faculties and correspondingly reduce the pool available during the fall.

The matching requirement (see below) as well as research office/Faculty approval is also still a mandatory requirement.

What type of expenses can RPP funding be used for?

RPP funding is strictly to be used for one-time, discrete purposes. There is no guarantee of future funding based on previous funding. All applications must demonstrate the one-time nature of the request.

Example categories of eligible expenses include:

- New equipment/capital purchases
- Existing equipment upgrades
- Service contracts and major repairs
- Contract limited, project-based salary support (eg: 1 yr contract for communications plan development)
- Fees associated with implementation/start-up services (eg: software, training programs, regulatory certifications, etc.)
- Etc.

Expense categories that are not eligible include:

- Permanent staff salary support
- Conference/seminar registration, travel and accommodation
- Consumables
- Seed grants/user fee subsidy
- Etc.

The eligibility of expenses is reviewed each year based on the changing needs of the McMaster research community and the factors affecting the sustainability of on-campus research infrastructure. If you have any questions or are unsure about the eligibility of an expense, please contact the Director, Research Platforms Support.

Who is eligible to apply for RPP funding?

A facility must first be recognized as a McMaster Core Research Platform in order to apply for RPP funding. This recognition is achieved through a separate process with details provided here:

[Applying-and-Reporting-to-the-URIQB-updated-10Aug2022.pdf \(mcmaster.ca\)](#)

All requests must also be approved by the home Faculty of the Core Research Platform (typically the research office). Any requests submitted that have not been reviewed by the Faculty Associate/Vice Dean Research, will not be considered by the URIOB.

Furthermore, all requests must be accompanied by a full matching commitment. Matching amounts may come from any source including other invested Faculties outside the home Faculty, Research Centres or Institutes, individual research groups, external partners and institutions, etc. **Matching must be 1:1 and is mandatory.**

What is the historical subscription rate to the RPP?

The RPP has typically been oversubscribed. Depending on the nature of the requests received, the URIOB will elect to defer some requests to future rounds (where appropriate), or in rare circumstances make a one-time exception to increase the amount of funding available. The RPP is still a relatively new funding source and the University is monitoring the needs of our research community in this space, the impact that this investment has on our research outputs and the University's overall financial situation in order to optimize the level of support provided through this mechanism.