



Eligibility to Hold a Research Grant as a Primary Investigator (PI)

Background

These guidelines were developed to help answer a few questions concerning the eligibility of various people affiliated with VIU to hold a research grant. In particular:

- Should VIU administer a grant held by a non-employee such as a Postdoctoral Fellowship holder, Honorary Research Associate, Emeritus or Adjunct faculty?
- Under what circumstances should VIU be willing to administer a grant?
- What governing documents need to reflect the decisions around this?

The guidelines also highlight restrictions on expenditures for non-employees who hold grants administered by VIU.

Guidelines for non-employees and non-faculty staff holding a research grant:

VIU will generally administer externally-funded research grants and research contracts only for regular on-going faculty members. However, there may be exceptions to this and these guidelines outline the conditions for which non-employees and staff can become eligible and the process for doing so.

VIU staff

VIU staff who do not hold a research appointment (ongoing or term) or a regular faculty position can apply to their supervisor and/or the appropriate Dean or Director, and the Associate Vice-President, Scholarship, Research and Creative Activity to hold external research grants and contract funds in their own name.

Adjuncts, Emeritus Faculty, and Postdoctoral Fellows

Adjuncts appointed under Policy 31.14, Emeritus Faculty under policy 92.02 and Postdoctoral Fellows under Policy 31.16 are eligible to apply to hold research grants (but not contracts) and have them administered by VIU under the conditions outlined below.

Conditions for non-employees to hold a research grant

Non-employees and non-faculty staff are eligible to apply to hold research grants (but not contracts) and have them administered by VIU under the following conditions:

1. The term of their VIU appointment covers the term of the grant.
2. They agree to abide by all VIU policies and procedures.
3. They will not be paid from the grant on which they intend to be the primary investigator or the co-applicant.
4. The Dean, and in the case of a Postdoctoral Fellow their supervisor and the Dean, must approve each application to hold a grant and agree to their roles and responsibilities as outlined in the [application to be eligible to hold a research grant](#) form.



5. Postdoctoral Fellows, Adjuncts and Emeritus faculty who intend to apply for a grant must complete and sign the statement on the [application to be eligible to hold a research grant](#) form available on the forms and templates Research web page, which indicates their understanding of, and agreement to, the above conditions for each grant applied for. A copy of their current appointment letter is to be appended to the form.

Employees that currently hold a grant or contract that are leaving the institution can, with the approval of the Associate Vice-President, Scholarship, Research and Creative Activity and the Dean, continue to hold the grant/contract through to completion, provided this is allowable under the guidelines of the funding agency. The final decision will depend on the specific circumstances (e.g. timeframe to completion, status of the researcher with the institution, financial risk, and insurance implications). Employees in this situation should discuss this in advance with the Research Services Manager.

Restrictions on expenditures

VIU's financial policies and procedures do not allow for certain types of financial transactions for non-employees. Restrictions on expenditures for non-employees include:

1. No cash or travel advances are permitted directly to the non-employee, as per institutional policy. Options to handle travel include:
 - a. Prepayment using a supervisor's purchase card or PO;
 - b. Cash advances could be provided to the Supervisor who would then assume personal responsibility for the advance and subsequent receipts and any repayments required.
2. Should the overall budget on a grant be exceeded, or ineligible expenses charged against it, it is the responsibility of the principal investigator to make arrangements for payment of the over-expenditure or non-eligible item.
3. Non-employees are not eligible to hold purchase cards.
4. Payments to oneself from a research grant are not allowed.
5. Signing authority limits of \$500 (normally) with one-up signatures required over and above this.
6. One-up signatures required for all travel, as per institutional policy.
7. Pre-approval by the applicable Dean and the Provost and Vice-President Academic is required for each instance of out-of-country travel.
8. Should the non-employee be awarded a grant and their eligibility to hold a grant changes (due to relocation, losing their academic standing, or a personal request to terminate the grant early), they must notify the Research Services Manager, Scholarship, Research and Creative Activity Office ASAP. The Scholarship, Research and Creative Activity Office shall communicate with the sponsor/funder, as required.