

Call for Proposals

REGIONAL INITIATIVES FUND

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Regional Initiatives Fund (RIF) is an initiative undertaken in partnership between Vancouver Island University (VIU), the Real Estate Foundation of British Columbia and the Province of British Columbia to enable communities of Vancouver Island to collaborate on projects that develop scholarly connections through meaningful student involvement in community-based applied research that directly respond to community needs, that promote innovative and sustainable solutions to those needs and that benefit regional initiatives relating to lands, people, and sustainability with a particular interest in supporting Indigenous communities and projects.

Specifically, the fund is intended to empower student involvement in the following applied research themes:

- Sustainable land use initiatives
- Sustainable food system protection and development
- Sustainable built environments
- Indigenous Economic Development
- Management, conservation, and sustainable modification of natural environments
- Innovative tourism and recreation development initiatives
- Conservation of the natural environment
- Protection of fresh water
- Economic Sustainability
- Marine and coastal environment

ELIGIBILITY & CONDITIONS

The Regional Initiatives Fund (RIF) requires active participation and investment by public, private and community entities. Potential projects that fit the defined themes of the Regional Initiatives Fund can be identified by community entities, VIU students, and/or faculty, but proposals must be led by a faculty member. All proposals must show “buy in” by the community entity and, where possible, private sector support. Proposals must provide evidence of this ‘buy in’ within the budget and with documentation **confirming funding commitments to the project by all partners prior to submission of the application.**

All faculty employed by VIU at the time of application are eligible to apply for RIF funding.

- Primary applicants can only hold one RIF at a time as the Primary applicant however they can be a co-applicant on other RIF projects.
- Funding is not intended to provide ongoing funding for the same project; however, if a project is evolving in stages, the proponent must provide clear evidence of the outcomes of the prior stage of the project and delineate how the next stage builds upon previous work and creates added value to the community partners involved in the project.
- An applicant is ineligible if he/she has not submitted a final report on a previous project.
- Projects that have been initiated prior to the RIF application are not eligible for funding.

PROJECT FUNDING

The RIF provides grants of up to \$20,000 for a one-year research project. All funds must be matched 33/33/33 between the RIF fund, the community partner (cash support) and VIU (in-kind support). Monies can be applied to the following costs:

- Students research assistants (all projects must have a minimum of 1 VIU student involved in a paid capacity)
- Stipends for community researchers
- Project-related travel
- Equipment, if integral to the research can only be funded from partner cash contributions as REFBC will not fund equipment
- Research time stipend for the principal investigator. *Maximum equivalent of one section (budget \$13,880) on projects with a minimum project budget of \$20,000 (so a project with \$10,000 from RIF and \$10,000 from the community partner could allocate \$13,880 towards one section release within the budget).*
- Other direct research expenses (supplies and materials)
- Knowledge mobilization expenses (conferences, workshops, media kits) within the Vancouver Island and coast region.

Ineligible costs include: staff training, general operating or overhead expenses (including wages for existing staff or faculty), conference attendance or knowledge mobilization outside of the region, and other indirect costs. Equipment, if integral to the research can only be funded from partner cash contributions as REFBC will not fund equipment.

APPLICATIONS

Applications must be submitted [online](#) and include the following:

1. **A research proposal** (maximum 7 pages for content from a-h below) that:
 - a) Includes a cover page indicating the title of the project, the community entity, the principal investigator, and the proposed start and end date of the project;
 - b) Describes the problem or issue that will be addressed in the research, with supporting evidence;
 - c) Describes the goal and objectives of the proposed research and the intended outcomes of the project;
 - d) Explains the relevance of the project to the community partner and to the Vancouver Island and Coast region;
 - e) Identifies the methods that will be used to undertake the study and project schedule (using the [milestone/timeline chart](#));
 - f) Clearly identifies the project team members, their skill sets that contribute to the project and their roles in the research.
 - g) Identifies the number and type of VIU students that will be engaged in the project and the benefits they will gain from involvement in the research;
 - h) Outlines the plan(s) to mobilize the knowledge gained in the research project, with particular emphasis on sharing with community partners and the broader region (final project reports will be displayed on the Real Estate Foundation of BC website);
 - i) Additional supporting materials may be provided as well and do not count in the 7 page limit. These may include the curricula vitae of project staff (maximum of two pages per investigator), bibliography, and other relevant material.
2. Detailed budget (using the [budget template](#) provided) and justification (maximum 2 pages) that clearly identifies the funding requested and the community/VIU cost sharing. Community and VIU partners are required to match the RIF funding request whereby 1/3 of the project costs are borne by the community partners as cash, 1/3 of the project costs are borne by VIU as in-kind contributions (use [VIU in-kind valuation guidelines](#) as a reference), and 1/3 of the costs are borne by the RIF fund.

- Letters of support and/or contract(s) from collaborators specifically stating how they will support the work and their commitments (cash and in kind) to the research. **Please note that it is the responsibility of the proponent to provide documents confirming the matching funds. For all funded projects, a signed research agreement between VIU and community partners providing cash contributions is required before funds can be disbursed.** [VIU's indirect cost guidelines](#) apply to all contracts with community partners providing cash contributions.
- A signed Institutional Signature Sheet (ISS) showing commitment of VIU in-kind support of faculty and students.

APPLICATION DEADLINE:

The call for RIF funding is **open between August 15 and June 15 each year** while funding is available.

Applications must be submitted online at <https://research.viu.ca/form/rif-application-form>

Applicants are encouraged to attend a grant information session (held each fall and spring) and work with a Grant Facilitator (Bettina.Ruhstein@viu.ca or Roisin.Mulligan@viu.ca) to coordinate the acquisition/procurement of community funding agreements and prepare the internal RIF application.

PROPOSAL REVIEW PROCEDURES

Proposals are evaluated by two peer reviewers who are faculty members at Vancouver Island University. When applications are submitted, the AVP SRCA will invite two reviewers to review the application and provide a recommendation.

EVALUATION CRITERIA:

- Significance of the proposed research to the region: 50%
- Quality of the research approach and team 30%
- Strategy to mobilize the knowledge that emerges 20%

SUBMISSION CHECKLIST:

- ✓ The proposal meets the submission criteria as laid out in this Call for Proposals.
- ✓ The significance of the proposed research to the Vancouver Island and Coast region is clearly articulated.
- ✓ The proposed research aligns with the themes of the RIF.
- ✓ The project is clearly described, the problem well defined, and the research objectives clearly stated.
- ✓ The project is designed to be successfully completed within one year.
- ✓ There is sufficient review and inclusion of relevant literature.
- ✓ The proposed methodology is appropriate and the investigative procedures clearly explained.
- ✓ The outcomes, impact and deliverables are specifically and clearly identified.
- ✓ The budget reflects equal participation and commitment from the community entity, VIU and the RIF.
- ✓ The proposal includes firm commitments (letter of support) from all partners.

For inquiries about the RIF, call or email:

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Or contact a Grant Facilitator:

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