



Aspire Fund — Program Terms

Application Deadline

Applications can be submitted anytime during the recruitment process but no later than 30 days after an offer letter is signed.

Funding Start Date

Same as the Faculty appointment start date.

INTRODUCTION

The Aspire Fund will supplement one-time start-up funding provided by the Faculties to new professorial recruits at UBC Okanagan. Funding for the Aspire program is provided from the central budget and from the Excellence Fund.

FUNDING PRINCIPLES

The Aspire Fund has two goals: (1) to ensure that UBCO can offer competitive start-up packages to recruitment candidates and (2) to provide new faculty with the resources required to develop a robust research career at UBC Okanagan. **The Aspire Fund provides up to a 1:1 financial match for start-up amounts provided by Faculties to research-stream recruitment candidates.**

An investment of Aspire funds is intended to allow candidates to develop a sustainable research career supported by external funding. Successful applicants will have demonstrated outstanding achievements in research and/or scholarly activities and will have articulated their path to developing a thriving research career at UBC Okanagan. Aspire funding will be administered by the Vice-Principal, Research and Innovation Office. Funding requests will be made by Deans, with input from Associate Deans and Heads of Departments as appropriate.

Aspire funding is intended to form part of a letter of offer package provided to a research faculty recruitment candidate. The amount of start-up funding provided by the Faculty and by the Aspire Program should be indicated as separate items in the letter of the offer provided to the candidate.

FUNDING ADMINISTRATION

Aspire allocations are distributed to Faculties annually. The distribution of funds is based on a 3-year rolling average of external research funds obtained by the Faculty. Faculties can also access an additional allocation, the VPR Recruiting & Retention Fund, to support three priorities:

1. Supplement one-time start-up funding for Faculties with limited Aspire Faculty allocations
2. Contribute to a retention package
3. Provide a supplement to Aspire funding contributions for top-tier recruits

APPLICATION

Requests for Aspire funding are made by Deans who need to complete **Part A** of the **Aspire Program Application Form** and submit this along with the **supporting documents** to vprawards.ubco@ubc.ca.

The **Aspire Program Application Form** can be found on the [UBCO VPRI Internal Funding](#) website.



Required Supporting Documents to be submitted with Part A by Deans:

- **Curriculum Vitae (CV)**
- **Letters of Reference** (3 letters minimum)
 - The letters should be from individuals who are independent of the candidate, who are experts in the candidate's field, and who are able to provide an objective appraisal of the candidate's work
 - The letters should address the candidate's competency and potential to develop into an independent investigator
 - Typically, the letters obtained as part of the candidate recruitment process will normally suffice, provided they were dated within 12 months of the Aspire application.
- **Research/Creative Activity 5-year Plan** – written by the Candidate (3 pages maximum)
 - This plan should include:
 - The candidate's specific aims and planned approaches;
 - A description of required infrastructure;
 - The types and numbers of trainees who will be engaged (undergraduates, graduate students, and postdoctoral fellows);
 - A plan for sustainably supporting the research goals (candidates should demonstrate knowledge of relevant funding landscapes for their discipline and include a timeline for securing external operating funding);
 - A budget table outlining how the Aspire funding will be used; and
 - Discipline-specific outcomes that can be expected.
- **Dean's Letter of Support**
 - Letter of Support should specify resources that the Faculty will provide such as: space, salary, Faculty's start-up contribution, CFI allocation, teaching release, mentorship, and HQP/trainee support.

Requests will be reviewed by the Vice-Principal, Research and Innovation (VPRI), and the Associate Vice-Principal, Research (AVPR). The VPRI is committed to processing applications quickly, typically within 2 business days. Upon approval, the VPRI or AVPR will complete **Part B** of the **Aspire Program Application Form** and return it to the Dean.

Once the candidate accepts the offer, the Dean will complete **Part C** of the **Aspire Program Application Form** and submit it along with a **copy of the signed offer letter** to vprawards.ubco@ubc.ca.

ELIGIBILITY OF EXPENSES

All expenses must comply with the most current [Tri-Agency Financial Administration guide](#) (TAGFA) and [UBC Finance expenditure guidelines](#) to prevent non-compliant use of funds.

Additionally, the following restrictions apply to Aspire Funds (including the Faculty matching funds):

Program-Specific Caps on Expenditures:

- Trainee (HQP) visits as part of their recruitment/interview process (annual maximum of \$5,000)

Program-Specific Ineligible Expenses:

- Relocation expenses
- Furniture



- Renovations
- Electronics and appliances for non-research purposes
- Equipment, supplies, communications (e.g. Internet) for home office. Please consult UBC's latest policy for possible exceptions related to remote work arrangements.

RESEARCH GRANT ADMINISTRATION AND ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

- Start-up funding from the Aspire Fund and the Faculty's matching contribution will be combined into one research grant.
- The research grant may be held for a maximum of 3 years. Any residual funds remaining after this term will be returned to VPRI and the Faculty.
- With justification, a no-cost extension may be granted at the end of year three at the discretion of the Dean and VPRI. Please send an [extension request form](#) to vprawards.ubco@ubc.ca.
- These funds cannot be used for activities requiring research ethics without prior consent from the appropriate UBC compliance body. Please contact the [Office of Research Services - Ethics](#) if you wish to pursue such research activity.
- The research grant information will be sent automatically to the faculty member via RISE once the account is created and the research grant will appear in the Research Grants Dashboard in Workday.
- The research grant is not transferable. If the faculty member leaves the University, the funds will be returned to the VPRI and the Faculty.

PROGRAM CONTACT

For any questions on this program, please contact

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