RESEARCH IMPACT AWARDS (RIA)
PROGRAM DESCRIPTION
2025

Academic year:	**2024-2025**
Deadline:	For application deadline please refer to the Faculty call for proposals
	Faculty recommendations must be submitted to the Office of the Vice-President, Research, Innovation, and Impact by April 22, 2025 at 12:00pm
Awards:	Up to five awards of $5,000 each
	Please note that the application process has been streamlined from last year

Program Overview

The Office of the Vice-President, Research, Innovation, and Impact (OVPRII) is pleased to announce the call for applications for the 2025 edition of Concordia University's Research Impact Awards (RIAs).

Up to five (5) awards will be given to Concordia faculty members in recognition of the exceptional impact of their research or research-creation. The awards are intended to honour the diverse ways in which research and research-creation contribute to academic and scientific impact as well as beyond, such as through contributions to society, culture, policy, innovation, and the broader community. We acknowledge that the impact of research and research-creation is not always immediately visible, quantifiable, or direct, but can unfold across different scales and timelines, with its significance varying across disciplines, sectors, and communities.

This award, which is open to all fields related to Concordia's Strategic Research Plan, is designed to embrace this complexity and capture a broad spectrum of impacts. Applicants are encouraged to articulate the nuanced, dynamic, and sometimes unexpected ways their work has made a difference, acknowledging both their challenges and successes in achieving and providing evidence for impact. Our aim is to celebrate the rich, intricate patterns of influence that Concordia researchers imprint on the world, recognizing that each contribution forms a vital part of our collective endeavour to address the pressing issues of our time.

Successful candidates will receive a $5,000 research award and be invited to showcase their impact through featured activities.

A minimum of two awards are reserved for each career-stage category (detailed below) each year, provided there are meritorious candidates.

"Research" is understood to include research-creation throughout this program description.

The Research Impact Award competition requires **candidates to apply directly**; no nominator is required or permitted for the application.

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RESEARCH, INNOVATION, AND IMPACT

Eligibility
Full-time faculty members in tenure-track or tenured positions at Concordia can apply. The candidate must meet the eligibility criteria as detailed below:

Eligibility of candidate:
- **Emerging Researcher Category –** Includes faculty members who meet <u>both</u> of the following criteria:
  (1) have completed their highest degree no more than six years before the competition deadline; and
  (2) have held a tenured or tenure-track postsecondary appointment for less than six years.
- **Established Researcher Category** – Includes faculty members who completed their highest degree more than six years before the competition deadline <u>or</u> have held a full-time faculty position for more than six years *(appointments beginning before 2019).*

Time spent in a non-tenure-track position, such as Lecturer, LTA, or postdoctoral fellow, will not count towards the period of eligibility. All eligible leaves (for example, maternity, parental, personal illness, leave taken by applicants for family-related illness, bereavement), as well as delays related to COVID-19, extend the period of eligibility as twice the amount of leave time. Professional leaves (such as sabbatical or administrative leave) will not extend the period of eligibility.

A faculty member can only be awarded the RIA once in each category. Unsuccessful applications can be re- submitted if eligibility criteria are met.

Application and submission
Each Faculty prepares a call inviting faculty members to submit applications for the RIA. In the call, each Faculty indicates the internal deadline to receive the applications. The respective Faculty Research Committee (FRC) (or the equivalent) selects among the applications and submits their recommendations (maximum 5 for GSC and FAS; maximum 3 for JMSB and FoFA) for adjudication to the University Research Committee by **April 22, 2025 at 12 p.m.**

Applications to the Faculty must include:
- A **Tri-agency CV**, completed by the applicant, highlighting the candidate's contributions and fit with the award criteria. The Tri-agency CV is an **evidenced-based impact narrative** (maximum five pages in English, six pages in French, 12pt Arial font, single-spaced) from the applicant that provides a plain language overview of their contribution(s), highlighting the significance of the impact(s) and the ways their work has made a difference to their target audience or stakeholders. Challenges and successes in achieving and providing evidence for impact should be articulated. The CV template should be completed using the section headings, instructions and formatting as outlined by SSHRC.
- **Letters of support from two external referees** (referees should not be from Concordia, and may be academic **OR** non-academic). Letters of support remain valid for three years and may be resubmitted without modification during that period, if a candidate is re-applying for the award.
- Where applicable and required to extend the applicant's period of eligibility, an explanation of eligible leaves and reduced research periods, including calculations of the full-time equivalent duration of the delay.

The recommendation by the Faculty to the OVPRII must include:
- A complete dossier of the selected candidate(s), including the applicant's Tri-agency CV and two letters of support from external referees, as well as the explanation of eligibility extension, where applicable; and
- A cover memo from the Faculty Dean's office outlining the recommendations (maximum 5 for GSC and FAS;

maximum 3 for JMSB and FoFA) of the FRC along with the reasons for their selection, a summary of the impact of the research/research creation linked to each selected candidate, and their fit with the Strategic Research Plan. Recommended dossiers should be unranked and listed alphabetically, by category, in the memo.

Dossiers received will be considered by the University Prizes and Awards Committee (UPAC), which will adjudicate the final awards.

Conflict of interest
Committee members (FRC and UPAC) cannot be in a situation of conflict of interest with respect to a candidate. Conflict of interest includes, but is not limited to, having collaborated (i.e., published or been a co-researcher) with the applicant in the last six years. Committee members must disclose any conflict of interest to the Chair of the committee prior to the start of the adjudication process.

Evaluation criteria
The recommended applications received by the UPAC are evaluated based on:
1. **originality, ambition, and significance** of the contribution(s) within the applicant's fields of research **(25%)**
2. **evidence of exceptional impact and influence,** including academic contributions as well as other indicators of impact **(75%)**.

Evaluation guidelines and rubric
The evaluation guidelines and rubric below are adapted from promising frameworks and guidelines created by colleagues worldwide, including from Research Impact Canada, Erasmus University Rotterdam (Netherlands) and the Research Impact Academy (Australia). These guidelines and rubric are consistent with Concordia's commitment as an organizational signatory to the [Declaration on Research Assessment (DORA).](#)

What is (and is not) Research Impact? (adapted from Research Impact Canada, [Impact and Engagement Case Study Guidelines](#)):

Research impact is a beneficial change, beyond academia and/or within it, that is demonstrably caused or contributed to by specific research contributions. It is a change to the field of study, economy, society, culture, public policy or services, health, the environment, or quality of life. Impact includes, but is not limited to, a beneficial change to:

- an activity, attitude, awareness, behaviour, capacity, opportunity, performance, policy, practice, process or understanding
- an audience, beneficiary, community, constituency, organization, or individuals
- any geographic location whether locally, regionally, nationally, or internationally

Impact includes the reduction or prevention of harm, risk, cost, or other negative effects.

Engagement with and dissemination to non-academic audiences is not considered research impact *on its own*. It becomes impact when that engagement activity establishes a beneficial change or effect on activities, attitudes, and awareness of the non-academic audience.

Likewise, research impact is usually not a report, journal article or other form of knowledge dissemination, though dissemination of that output can be linked to impact as defined above. In this case the disseminated output is not itself the impact. Rather, the output enabled the subsequent impact that should be described in the application.

Impact contributions and associated indicators include, <u>but are not limited to</u>, the following (listed alphabetically):

- **Creative impact:** invited exhibitions, commissions and other cultural contributions, and influence on creative industries
- **Decolonization impact:** advances to reconciliation and the decolonization of research
- **Economic, environmental, and societal impact**: contributions to sustainability or economic development, or to environmental or social innovations, or to movements at local, regional, national, or international level(s)
- **Interdisciplinary and collaborative impact**: advances related to cross-disciplinary integration and outcomes from collaborative efforts, as well as the fostering of an equitable, diverse and inclusive research enterprise
- **Policy impact:** influence on current policy, guidelines, regulations, laws, standards and/or practices
- **Public scholarship impact:** increased public understanding of, use of and/or interest in certain aspects of scholarly research
- **Scientific or scholarly impact:** advances to new knowledge generation, and scale of influence (within and beyond discipline or field)
- **Technological impact:** advances to state-of-the-art research or technology readiness level; patents, industry adoption and technological solutions to societal issues

N.B. Each dossier should be evaluated based on the *benefits and supporting evidence it presents*, rather than the quality of a narrative. Similarly, assessment should consider the significance and level of impact *relative to the applicant's field*, with particular attention *to its importance for the beneficiaries of that impact*, rather than privileging impact in some fields over others. Finally, impact should be assessed based primarily on factual evidence of impacts already achieved and, secondarily, as applicable, on potential for future impact. While the balance between achieved impact and potential impact is expected to differ between emerging researchers and established researchers, achieved impact is a prerequisite for both categories and will be given priority during evaluation.

Two steps for RIA evaluation:

1. Is <u>achieved</u> impact clearly illustrated and substantiated in the dossier? For the emerging researcher category, the achieved impact will likely be smaller, but potential for larger impact should be realistically illustrated. Three key questions to consider in this respect, taking into consideration the letter of application, letters of reference, and applicant's Tri-agency CV:

    a) Can you clearly understand what the applicant was addressing and how that led to impact?
    b) Does the dossier articulate the use, adoption, adaptation, or focused experience of the applicant's immediate outputs, *by others*, beyond the initial research work (e.g. beyond publications, regardless of journal prestige; beyond installation, regardless of gallery prestige, etc.)?
    c) Is the *significance* of the impact articulated? (What has changed; who is affected and/or benefited?)

    Only dossiers for which the answer to <u>all three</u> questions above is Yes should be advanced to Step 2.

2. Dossiers that advance to Step 2 will be ranked by the UPAC according to the evaluation criteria outlined in the table below. During evaluation, consideration will be given to:

    1. Challenges in evidencing and achieving impact
    2. Both short-term and long-term contributions to impact, recognizing the diverse timelines of research impact
    3. Acceptance, use and influence of the contribution(s) by stakeholders, including members of the research community, relevant partners, specific communities, or others who may benefit from the research
    4. The additional time and resources available to applicants who are holders of a research chair relative to those who are non-chairs
    5. Achieving an equitable distribution of awards across various disciplinary fields and areas of impact

Evaluation Criteria	Weight

Originality, ambition, and significance **of the contribution(s) within the applicant's fields of research:**
   • This refers to the applicant's outputs (e.g. publication, art installation, technical report, etc.) that have caused or contributed to the impacts described in the application.
   • These should be considered relative to the applicant's career stage.
   • Consider the type and level of the challenge(s) met by the contribution(s).
	25%

Evidence of exceptional impact and influence, **including academic contributions as well as other indicators of impact:**
   • This refers to the outcomes – i.e. the demonstrable changes – effected by the applicant's contributions, both within academia and in broader society.
   • What is the significance, level and duration of impact relative to the applicant's career stage? Keep in mind that more localized impact can in some cases be more appropriate to a research project than more globalized impact, and vice versa.
   • What is the importance of the impact to those who benefit from it?
   • Does the dossier provide verifiable evidence of impact claims?
	75%

Award administration

The expected start date of the awards is June 2025. After the award announcement, and upon verification that any compliance requirements (human ethics, etc.) have been met, the funds will be made available in a research account.