CONESTOGA
Connect Life and Learning

Policy on Completing Proposals and Applications for Research Funding

Introduction

Conestoga College Institute of Technology and Advanced Learning is committed to provide a polytechnic environment conducive to the pursuit of currency, scholarship, applied research and creative activity for its faculty, staff and students.   This policy covers activities and efforts related to the development and management of proposals and applications for research funding.

The Executive Dean of Entrepreneurship and Research (*or designate assigned by the President*) has responsibility for the interpretation and implementation of this policy.

Definitions

Applied Research includes any original investigation, undertaken to acquire new knowledge, or to apply existing knowledge in a novel way, directed primarily towards a specific practical aim or objective. Ideas are developed into operational form to produce new prototype products, devices, processes, systems, and services or to improve substantially those already produced or installed. With respect to this policy, Conestoga includes clinical research, survey-based research, and experimental development within our definition of applied research.

An *applied research project* shall include any project involving an external company or organization, with or without funding, and/or using Conestoga resources (e.g. people, equipment, space) to conduct the project activities. Applied research projects can be further categorized as student projects (capstone or final year), curriculum based projects (i.e. project occurring within certain courses for academic marks), independent projects (i.e. projects done outside of normal academic activities with signed research agreements), or special event projects (i.e. projects undertaken outside of normal academic activities with specified focus for students and/or faculty).

Institutional Research is a special classification of research that involves the surveys and data analysis of information that is focused on program quality improvement and evaluation.   Other classifications of research are experimental, basic, discovery, survey and clinical to name a few. All research at Conestoga, not classified as institutional research, will be referred to as applied research.

The word *research*, referenced by itself within this document, may refer to either institutional or applied research. And, a *research project* may refer either an institutional or applied research project.

A *partner* refers to an external business, institution, research hospital, or organization that is engaged in a research project with Conestoga. The partner may be providing full, partial, or no funding towards the research project.   In most situations, there is normally a contractual agreement between Conestoga and the partner to stipulate the roles and responsibilities of the participants.

The phrase *Conestoga staff members* refers to all staff whether employed full-time, part-time, or on contract basis (e.g. faculty, researchers, support staff, administrators).   The phrase *Conestoga students* refers to all students working as Conestoga students with or without monetary compensation on any project under the direction and control of Conestoga.

Consulting Service activities are similar to the activities within an applied research project but are not normally viewed by Conestoga as applied research. There are two types of consulting services for research purposes; "*internal*", using Conestoga resources, and "*external*", not using Conestoga resources.   For both types, an individual wanting to engage in consulting services with a company requires prior written approval from Conestoga; consulting services cannot conflict with the employee's responsibilities to Conestoga, constitute economic competition with Conestoga, or negatively impact the reputation of Conestoga.

External consulting service activities are the sole responsibility of the individual acting as an independent contractor or consultant. The individual cannot use Conestoga resources and does not represent Conestoga for the consulting service provided.   Legal agreements between the individual, the company, or any other third-party are signed without the involvement, endorsement or warrantee of Conestoga. External consulting service activities by faculty members can potentially be viewed as scholarly activities.

Internal consulting service activities under the auspices of Conestoga require review and approval by one of Conestoga's Academic Chairs prior to engagement.   When a particular internal consulting service activity requires the use of Conestoga resources, the activity must be reviewed to ensure it does not interfere with Conestoga's academic processes and legal obligations (i.e. software license agreements, use of donated hardware, etc.) and does not unnecessarily put Conestoga in a potential liability situation. Upon approval, the individual is responsible for conducting the activities in adherence to all Conestoga policies and procedures. Legal agreements between the individual, the company, and Conestoga may need to be entered into and are at the discretion of Conestoga. Internal consulting service activities by faculty members, with prior approval of the Academic Chair, can be viewed as scholarly activities.

If an internal consulting service requires both Conestoga resources and the participation of Conestoga students, then it will be classified as an applied research project and processed accordingly.

Exclusions

This policy covers all research activities under the auspice of Conestoga excluding *institutional research* and *external consulting*. This policy does not cover *external consulting service* activities since the contract is between an individual (not acting in the role of his or her position at Conestoga) and a company or a third-party.

Policy Elaboration

All activities within a research project, from the development of a proposal to the final report for the project, require time and resources.   With finite time and resources within the institution, it is crucial that we prioritize our efforts along the strategic plans that have been developed for Conestoga.   These consist of the Conestoga's Strategic Plan, Conestoga's Strategic Mandate Agreement (SMA) with the Ontario Government, and each School's research priority area(s).

Composing Proposals or Applications
Before beginning the process of composing a proposal or application, the faculty member or researcher must first consult with his/her Chair and/or Executive Dean to review the general scope and purpose of the eventual research project to ensure that it aligns with the strategic plans of Conestoga. Funding, time, space, resources, and other considerations (e.g. contractual requirements, ethical issues, risk mitigation, and liabilities) should also be reviewed for the potential project.

Conestoga's Applied Research and Innovation (CARI) office must be informed of all research activity within Conestoga. This includes any research that utilizes physical, financial, or human resources at Conestoga. With permission from the Chair or Executive Dean to proceed with a proposal or application, the faculty member or researcher must inform the CARI office about the potential research project.   This applies to all research projects; funded or not. The CARI office is the central repository for Conestoga's research activity. The CARI office collects metrics about the research activities from initial proposal concepts to final reports for various provincial and federal funding agencies, ministries, and lobbying groups.   These metrics are important for future research funding and opportunities.

Proposals and applications requiring external funding (public or private) must be reviewed by CARI's Financial Administrator to ensure budgets are consistent and meet the requirements of Conestoga's Finance Department.   Budgets need to be consistent for such items as (but not

limited to) hiring rates of students, in-kind contributions from industry and from Conestoga, value of internal resources, and release time for faculty.

The CARI office can also provide a review of the written proposal or application, assist with connections inside funding agencies, and assist with the internal processes (e.g. management of the funds, assistance with hiring students) once the funding has been approved.

Completing Interim or Final Reports

Most research grants require both interim and final reports to be completed. Depending upon the grant, reports can be in the form of 'project progress reports' to 'financial reports' (on the use of the funds), and must comply with funding agency requirements.

Interim and final reports should be reviewed and signed-off by the Principal Investigator's (PI) Chair or Executive Dean before submission to the funding agency. Depending upon non-disclosure agreements and confidentiality requirements, electronic copies of reports need to be kept by the CARI office for administrative and auditing purposes.

All financial reports (interim and final) for research funding must be reviewed by CARI's Financial Administrator before being reviewed by the Finance Department and then submitted to the funding agency. The Financial Administrator works collaboratively with PIs to complete these reports. Certain information can only be provided by the PI. These items are crucial in completing financial reports. The PI may need to contact his/her Chair or Executive Dean to ensure that adequate time is available to complete these reports.

Additional Requirements

1. Some grants require an initial Expression-of-Interest (EOI) or Notification-of-Interest (NOI) before a proposal and/or application. When an EOI or NOI require budgetary estimates or a statement of funding requirement, then the EOI or NOI needs to be reviewed by CARI's Financial Administrator.

2. The applicant (e.g. faculty member or researcher) must review the requirements of the funding agency to ensure that all necessary items are submitted with the proposal or application. Contact the CARI office to review these requirements as soon as possible in the writing stage. Some internal items can take significant amount of time to process.

3. Proposals, applications, interim and final reports may require specific signatures within Conestoga (e.g. Director of Finance, VP of Corporate Services, President). The CARI office can assist with this process. Adequate time must be scheduled for obtaining signatures.

4. All research projects involving human participants must receive approval by the Research Ethics Board. Without approval, the research project will not be conducted. Some funding agencies require ethics approval prior to the submission of the full application.

5. Failure to comply with approved policies and procedures may expose Conestoga, staff members, and students to legal and financial liabilities.

6. Appeals of the decision of the School's Chair may be made in writing to the Executive Dean of the School.   Decision of the Executive Dean of the School is final.

7. Any dispute on the interpretation of this policy will be submitted to the Executive Dean of Entrepreneurship and Research in writing. The Executive Dean may elect to form a committee to investigate the dispute and recommend a resolution. The decision of the Executive Dean is binding on all parties.

Related Documents

- Policy on Applied Research
- Policy on Conflict of Interest in Research
- Policy on Research Integrity
- Policy on Intellectual Property
- Policy on Student Rights in Research
- Policy on Research Involving Animals
- Policy on Research Involving Chemical, Biological, or Radioactive Hazards
- Policy on Research in the Yukon, Northwest Territories, or Nunavut
- Policy on Confidentiality of Information in Research
- Policy on Financial Management of Research Projects
- Policy on the Protection of the Environment within Research
- Ethical Conduct in Research Involving Humans
- Procedure for Applied Research Activities
- Procedure for Reporting Concerns within Research
- Procedure for Completing Proposals and Applications for Research Funding

Revision Log

Version Number	Release Date	Notes
AR10 V1	September 2014	Initial release of policy.
AR10 V1	September 24 2014	Academic Coordinating Committee - Approved
AR10 V1	September 15 2014	Policy and Procedure Committee - Approved

Acknowledgements

This policy has been developed based upon policies and documentation from the Tri-Council of Canada and previous Conestoga documents.