

**Canada Research Continuity Emergency Fund
Strategy for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Decision-Making**

Stage 3 – Research maintenance/ramp-up costs

Throughout this document we refer to equity seeking groups. Equity seeking groups include people who identify as being a member of one or more of the following communities: Indigenous peoples, racialized peoples, persons with disabilities, women identifying persons, and LGBTQ2+ persons. We also acknowledge that persons who identify with multiple equity seeking groups are particularly vulnerable to inequities. Please refer to [Memorial's Employment Equity and Diversity Plan 2019-2021](#), as well [Memorial's Equity, Diversity and Inclusion in Employment policy](#) for further information on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion at Memorial University.

Funding in Stage 3 will be awarded to support direct costs associated with maintenance and ramp-up of research activities.

Memorial University will guarantee an open and transparent process for allocating monies received from Canada Research Continuity Emergency Fund (CRCEF). In doing so Memorial will employ the following governance structure:

- As in Stage 1, the established Research Pandemic Preparedness Sub-Committee, chaired by the Vice-President (Research) and composed of individuals representing both academic and administrative units from across the university as well as individuals from equity-seeking groups will have oversight for Stage 3 fund disbursement planning.
 - Committee composition will be assessed every 3 months, and/or as needed if committee members change, using an equity survey. This survey will help to ascertain, as required by the program, that the Research Pandemic Preparedness Sub-Committee includes representation from individuals from equity-seeking groups. This information will be used by the university to better its CRCEF program response with respect to equity, diversity, and inclusion, and may be published in reports in aggregated form. In particular it will point to any gaps in representation by equity seeking groups and inform approaches to address gaps.
- A working group, including members of the Research Pandemic Preparedness Sub-Committee and other invited members, will make recommendations towards supporting a robust and transparent process for Memorial's management of CRCEF funds, and facilitate development of the Strategy for Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) in decision-making. In addition, it may also make specific recommendations to address gaps in representation by equity seeking groups should they arise.
- Members of all governance groups undertake unconscious bias training.

Memorial will be applying a two-pronged approach to determine what needs exist that may be eligible funded under Stage 3 of the CRCEF program. Financial and Administrative Services has collected information from across the university to identify costs that are attributed to COVID-19. A follow-up survey will be conducted to provide an estimate of costs that have resulted from the pandemic and the university's infrastructure needs which are eligible under the CRCEF program. In addition, an open call will be issued to units to identify any other potentially eligible needs. The information from the survey and open call will give a baseline assessment of the

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funding required to protect the institution's research investment. The following steps will guide Memorial's disbursement of CRCEF program funding:

1. If the institution's need is less than the funding allocation available from CRCEF then all applications will receive funding.
2. If the institution's need is greater than the funding allocation available from CRCEF then the following approach will be applied:
 - Memorial will entertain expressions of interest (EOI) from the university community.
 - The Research Pandemic Preparedness Sub-Committee will be responsible for the administration of an institution-wide CRCEF competition and tasked with the vetting of applications and the selection of funding recipients. The Research Pandemic Preparedness Sub-Committee's working group will outline steps to be employed in order to ensure a fair, equitable, diverse and inclusive approach in its decision making. The working group is developing recommendations and processes to:
 - ensure inclusivity of underrepresented groups in its decision-making process;
 - limit the negative impact of unconscious bias and systemic barriers for maintenance/ramp-up costs, including in cases where the need exceeds the funds provided;
 - safeguard that decisions are not negatively affected by a researcher's inability to work during the pandemic due to child/family care or increased risk related to exposure to COVID-19;
 - ensure that the decision-making values research that is non-traditional or unconventional, based in Indigenous ways of knowing, outside the mainstream of the discipline, or focused on issues of gender, race or minority status; and,
 - seek advice on the proposed strategy for EDI decision making from Memorial's Equity officer, EEDAC and other university committees that have mandates related to equity, diversity and inclusion prior to disbursing CRCEF.

Framework Prioritizing Infrastructure Needs and Initiatives Based on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) principles

Units and individuals who submit proposals should note that while all proposals will be considered, preference will be given to those proposals where individuals or units demonstrate that their research infrastructure needs will benefit equity seeking groups. If a proposal is submitted by an individual seeking research infrastructure funding they will be provided an opportunity to choose to self-disclose that they identify with one or more equity seeking groups.

For further information on how proposals will be adjudicated in terms of EDI, as one criteria for successful proposals, the adjudication committee will use the following framework to evaluate the impact the proposed research infrastructure changes will have on equity seeking groups. It is important then for those individuals and units who submit proposals to consider this framework.

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Vulnerability to Illness as a Result of COVID-19 in Relation to Equity Seeking Groups

Studies of COVID-19 thus far demonstrate extreme vulnerability of certain groups. Namely cultural and demographic factors influence who is at greater risk of contracting/suffering from and spreading the virus. Any response plan that assumes uniform cultural exposure and social interaction in context of COVID-19 will promote inequities that disadvantage equity seeking groups. Thus, proposals outlining research infrastructure needs that will reduce the potential exposure to COVID-19 for these groups will be given priority.

According to the Government of Canada (2020) the most vulnerable groups in terms of contracting and having poor outcomes related to COVID-19:

- People with medical conditions (this may include but is not limited to persons with chronic illness and/or disability) - See <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/diseases-conditions/people-high-risk-for-severe-illness-covid-19.html>
- Older adults (this may include but is not limited to, older adults with higher risk of having a disability and/or chronic illness).
- Indigenous peoples. The Government of Canada (2020) acknowledged the [vulnerability of Indigenous Communities in relation to COVID-19](#). Memorial University also recently established a [Policy Surrounding Research Impacting Indigenous Groups](#). If you have questions about Indigenous research at Memorial, please contact: IndigenousResearch@mun.ca.

External Factors that may Increase Vulnerability for members of Equity Seeking Groups

In addition to the vulnerable groups noted above, we will examine external factors that may further increase vulnerability of equity seeking groups. These may include:

- People living with a large number of other people. This may include but is not limited to, students who are members of equity seeking groups who: do not have family support nearby, have little income support, are a person with a disability who requires caretakers etc.
- People living with and/or provide care to others (including dependents) who fall within the at-risk categories above and/or are a member of one or more of the equity seeking groups.

Questions Evaluators Should Consider for EDI purposes

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