FICP Impact Statements 2013-14

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Impacts of the Federal Indirect Cost Program Grant at University of Guelph: 2013-14

- Recent major facilities such as the University's science complex building (completed in 2009) and the Biodiversity Institute (completed in 2012) continue to have significant portions of space dedicated to federally sponsored research. The ICP has enabled the University to maximize the implementation and operations of all aspects of the facility - without it we would have had to defer commissioning of portions of the research space, severely limiting our ability to compete for, and conduct, critical research particularly in the physical, biological and engineering sciences areas.
- The ICP grant has made it possible for the University to continue to enhance our capacity, security and reliability of our communications and data transfer and storage services to researchers. In the grant's absence, we could not invest in this technology and related support services and second, over time we would see a major deterioration of communication and data transmission and storage capacities.
- The University's library has been able to maintain first class positioning in spite of constant inflationary challenges, as a result of the on-going investment of the ICP in maintaining research support services in the library.
- We made significant progress in the past year on our project to introduce on-line application and tracking of research proposals for all of our researchers, a project designed to improve the efficiency and level of service to our researchers and ensure effective interactions with researchers and sponsors. In 2013-14, our business plan to acquire such a research administration and information management system (RAIMS) was approved and funding was secured for this initiative. The Business Analyst that was hired last year specifically for this project led the preparation of a request for proposal for RAIMS.
- The monthly seminar series for faculty focused on topics in support of their research programs was continued. Topics included how to publish, financial administration, knowledge mobilization, etc. In addition, a 10 week non-credit research and project management course was offered by the Office of Research to graduate students. New this year was the hiring of a consulting company to deliver CIHR, NSERC and SSHRC grant writing workshops to both new and established faculty.
- Staff within Research Financial Services has increased their knowledge and use of Cognos Reporting which has allowed us to develop new reports that assist with the management of research awards. The first major report is an Over-expenditure Report which flags a research award as being over-spent when expenses incurred and committed are greater than the annual budget. These improvements will enhance both service provided by Research Financial Services and internal control over the use of research funds.
- Improving our internal communication strategy through the Director of Communications in the Office of Research and in the development of improved information management are contributing significantly to the University's ability to inform researchers on a timely basis of opportunities, initiatives, and the status of their research funds. The e-newsletter for researchers was developed to meet this goal. It is issued every three weeks and it is becoming a primary vehicle through which the Office of Research communicates funding opportunities and news to researchers. This year the Office of Research initiated a large scale web site redesign project aimed at helping researchers more quickly and readily access information (e.g., funding opportunities, agency information, internal forms and policies, etc.). Central Computing Services was engaged by the Office of Research to make recommendations on web site improvements (e.g., new features, improved organization of information, etc.).
- Recruitment for a new AVP (Research Services) was a key priority this year and the position was filled July 2013. The Managing Director, Research Operations that was hired last year focused on implementing the new 5 year strategic plan. Numerous initiatives were moved forward including work on a new Office of Research

web site, issuing a request for proposal to acquire and implement an electronic research administration and information management system, delivery of Tri-Council grant writing workshops, etc.

- The **Catalyst Centre, the University's business development office,** actively promotes the commercialization of research outcomes through technology transfer and industry liaison activities. The foundation of the Catalyst Centre's success is based on strong industry relationships and knowledge of UofG researcher expertise. To this end, the Catalyst Centre office moved onto campus to ensure researchers have ready access to the business, patenting, and networking supports offered by the office.
- A 2013 study by The Impact Group identified University of Guelph as one of 'Canada's Most Inventive Universities' as measured by the number of invention disclosures received annually. The prolific disclosure rate is reflective of the interest in applied commercial opportunities related to research outcomes at Guelph. Without ICP funds it would not be possible to provide the necessary support at the earliest stages of the commercialization process to ensure bench research reaches the market.(i.e. research proposal creation, identification of applicable research outcomes, invention disclosure and provisional patent protection).
- This past year we used a small portion of the ICP grant (3.8%) to help support key staff positions dedicated to regulatory matters and risk management, including a Director, Research Risk Management. This is enabling us to place a greater emphasis on environmental health and safety issues associated with research, on identification of research activities that have regulatory compliance needs, and on animal care services. All of these efforts are helping us to minimize risk to researchers and to the University, and helping us to ensure that research funds are used only on projects that meet regulatory and other compliance guidelines.

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