

Report to Senate
February 6, 2018
T. Kenyon

Report to Senate of the Vice President, Research

1. Research Grants Update

Results:

- Nov 2017 Connection Grant submission (1) unsuccessful
- Institute for Aegean Prehistory Emergency Conference Grant (Prof. Angus Smith, Classics, \$13,235)
- Ontario Human Capital Research and Innovation Fund Grant, finalizing paperwork (Prof. Andrea Doucet, Sociology, \$49,597)
- 7 BSIG grants (\$31,548)
- 17 BUAF grants (\$60,626)
- 3 Environmental Sustainability Research Centre grants (\$23,670)
- 1 Social Justice Research Institute grant (\$2,000)
- LOI accepted in Ontario Centre of Excellence in Early Childhood Education granting round (OME).
- 5 unfunded CIHR grant submissions (Overall success rate for Ontario: 15%)

Submissions:

- Spencer Foundation Conference Grant (\$41,302)
- 2 Partnership Engage grants (December 15); results February 2018
- Centennial Gardens Partnership Fund Application (\$15,000)
- 5 Connection Grants (February 1)
- 11 Insight Development Grants in preparation (February 2)
- Partnership Development Grant (November 30); results March 2018

2. RMS Review Summary

In the Fall of 2017, the Interim Vice President Research commissioned a review of research operations at Brock University, to provide guidance and recommendations to the incoming VPR. I have received that report, and include as a separate document a summary of the feedback received by the reviewers and their recommendations to the VPR.

3. VPR Activity and Updates

Consultation with reporting line

A considerable portion of my time in January was devoted to meeting, individually and in unit groups, with nearly every member of the Brock research administration - ORS, ORE,

and Animal Care - as well as the heads of most TD Hubs. These positions report to the VPR in various respects; my understanding of the trends and current operations in research at Brock depends critically on the perceptions, insight, and experience of these colleagues. I have been greatly edified by these meetings and look forward to applying what I have learned.

External relations

I attend meetings and was “onboarded” at Innovate Niagara, and at OCUR, the Ontario Council for University Research. The 01/18 OCUR meeting in Toronto included an update on research metrics; a useful discussion of Indigenizing university research in accordance with the 2015 TRC Calls to Action; and discussions of the recent Expert Review Panel Report on the Ontario Network of Entrepreneurs. ONE members include Regional Innovation Centres, or RICs, such as Innovate Niagara, of which Brock University is a key partner. The Expert Panel report makes several major recommendations, including greater strategic clarity for the ONE network, greater investment to support entrepreneurship, and a re-grouping of the RICs. The report is available online at:

https://www.onebusiness.ca/sites/all/themes/one/assets/ONE_Building_Global_Winners_Report.PDF

AVPR appointment

The process of appointing an Associate Vice President Research, which had been paused in anticipation of a new VPR, is now in the process of being reactivated. I look forward to making timely progress on this long-overdue appointment, on which the basic sustainable functioning and key strategic and operational goals of the OVPR crucially depend. I am deeply impressed that the Interim VPR was able to perform at the level he did for over a year without an AVPR. Yet despite that remarkable effort, this under-strength functioning was not without significant costs to research administration and operations – and presumably significant costs to the incumbent as well.

Many faculty members, students, and staff have expressed to me their commitment to seeing Brock set and achieve outstanding research goals in the coming years. Given this culture of commitment to excellence, along with the addition of BrockLINC as a centre for innovation on campus, and the opportunities afforded by a new strategic research plan, this will be a very exciting time for the research enterprise at Brock. I look forward to working collaboratively with an AVPR colleague who will both excel in and enjoy the role in this time of development and opportunity.

Brock LINC

Brock LINC construction remains essentially on schedule for completion Summer 2018 and grand opening Fall 2018. To date, planning and oversight have naturally emphasized construction and facilities issues, though considerable efforts have also been devoted to preparing for operations. I anticipate an increasing shift to an operational focus over the coming months, though much capital construction and infrastructure development remains.

On January 29, Christina Phillips, Acting Director of Government and Community Relations, arranged a visit to campus by representatives of the South Niagara Chambers of Commerce for presentations on Brock LINC and a tour of related university facilities. The SNCC representatives heard brief remarks from several people, including President Gervan Fearon, Mark Robertson, University Librarian, Anna Lathrop, Vice-Provost, Teaching and Learning, and Tim Kenyon, Vice President, Research. At the end of the day, visitors were offered a special tour of BioLinc facilities by D. Lynch, Manager, and C. Price, Coordinator. Feedback from the SNCC visitors in the closing session was uniformly positive, especially with respect to Brock University's openness to community engagement.

Next Steps

- Discussion and action items with Faculty Deans and Associate Deans, Research, including plans for clear communication between the OVPR and the Faculties; understanding research processes, needs, and resources; and the role of the Deans' offices in the approaching strategic planning exercise.
- Monthly meetings with the Associate Deans (Research and Graduate) have been scheduled.
- Development of the Research component of Brock's integrated strategic plan will begin in February.
- I am finalizing a set of VPR goals, both a five-year set of high-level strategic goals, and a plan for the coming year, which I will share with Senate upon completion.
- Various pieces of important research-related policy have been awaiting revisions or consultation rounds; I anticipate completing these preparations and bringing the policies to the Research and Scholarship Policy Committee of Senate for discussion in the coming weeks and months.

Tim Kenyon, PhD
Vice-President, Research