Office of the Vice-President Research

Niagara Region
1812 Sir Isaac Brock Way
St. Catharines, ON
L2S 3A1   Canada
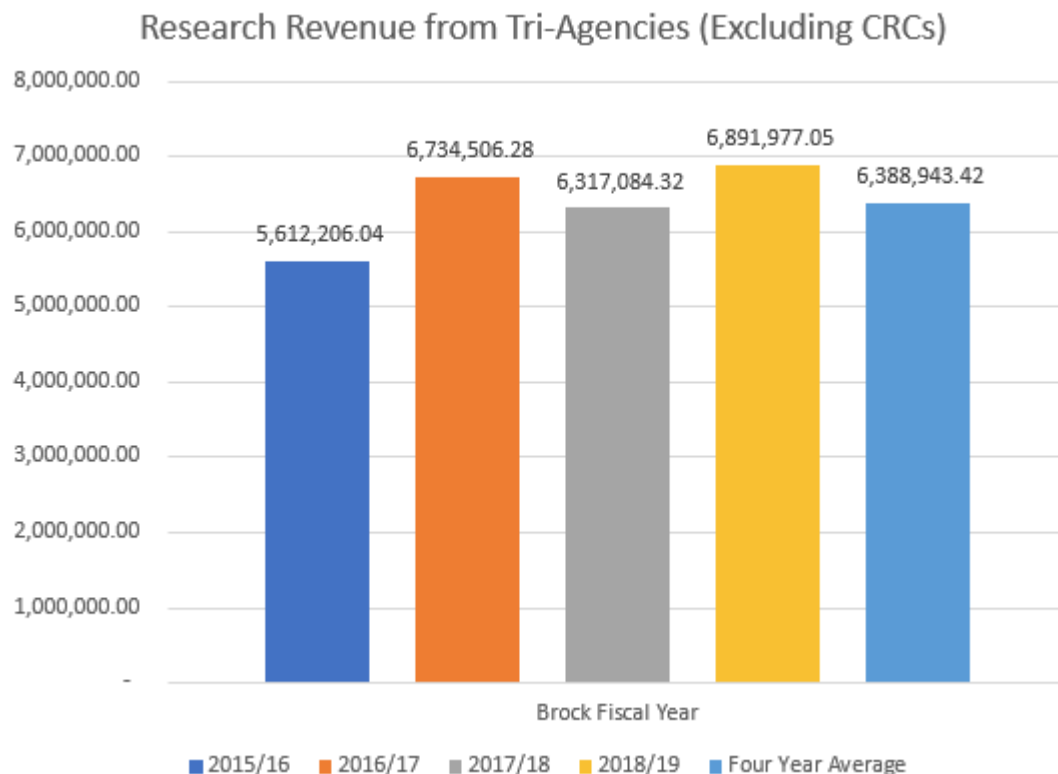T 905-688-5550 x4315
F 905-688-0748

brocku.ca

Report to Senate
May 22, 2019
T. Kenyon

Report to Senate of the Vice President, Research

1. RIA

The Office of Research Services has announced a pilot program, the Research Initiative Awards, that aims to unify and expand the internal small-grant supports that have historically been attached to NSERC Discovery Development Grants and to the former SSHRC category of "4A" in Insight Grant assessment. The RIA extends opt-in grant support by default to researchers who have submitted unsuccessful applications to external award competitions. It provides resources to support stronger reapplications, and recognizes the initiative to build and submit external grant applications.

2. Tri-Agency grant funding data

Research Revenue from Tri-Agencies (Excluding CRCs)

	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	Four Year Average
	5,612,206.04	6,734,506.28	6,317,084.32	6,891,977.05	6,388,943.42

Brock Fiscal Year

Brock is on track to set a new high in its 2018-19 Tri-Agency research grant revenue, albeit by a modest amount. The graph included here captures only a subset of total research

revenue, and for that matter a subset of Tri-Agency revenue, since it factors out CRC funding, inter alia. But it reflects a fairly stable set of core funding programs that enable longitudinal comparison (as CRC funding varies when positions are allocated but unfilled).

It is common in academic circles to track research grant funding by the year in which it was awarded. (That is, irrespective of the length of time over which the funding will subsequently be disbursed.) From a budgeting and accounting perspective, it can be tracked either by when it is disbursed to the institution, or when it is spent, both approaches distinct from the first and quite difficult to harmonize with it. In any case, when the numbers shown in a multi-year record of research funding seem higher or lower than expected, it may well be due to differences between these ways of tracking funds.

One recently announced success is the allocation of a New Frontiers in Research Fund award to Professor Spy Dénommé-Welch, for his project "Sonic Coordinates: Decolonizing through land-based music composition," which aims to revitalize Indigenous understandings of memory, land and space. This new program was announced in December 2018 and was characterized by a fast and demanding application process. It aimed to support especially innovative and interdisciplinary research.

3. OCUR activities

The Ontario Council for University Research, or OCUR, is the committee of the Council of Ontario Universities made up of the Vice-Presidents Research. (COU is all the Presidents; OCAV is all the Provosts; OCUR all the VPRs.) I am on the Steering Committee for a Research Stakeholder Summit to be held in the Fall of this year, aiming to exchange views and coordinate messaging about the value of research to Ontario's economy, health, society, and culture. I have also joined the OCUR Executive team.

4. Board reports

Beginning in May 2019, the VPR will now present regular reports to the Board of Trustees. I requested this arrangement, because I believe it is important for the Board to be informed of, and attentive to, the activities that are at the heart of a university's mission. Even if the management of some of those activities is not directly in the Board's mandate, under the proper division of responsibilities between the Board and Senate, Board members put a great deal of time and commitment into supporting the University's capacity to perform its mission, and it is collegial to include them in a conversation about what that capacity actually enables. These reports are public, and are thus accessible to members of Senate as well.