

Report to Senate
April 22, 2020
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Report to Senate of the Vice President, Research

1. New Digital Research Infrastructure Organization (NDRIO)

- Brock University is a voting member of the New Digital Research Infrastructure Organization, which will replace the current architecture for investment and development bearing on high-performance research computing in Canada. The NDRIO voting members elected Janet Davidson as Board Chair and Peter MacKinnon as Vice-Chair at its inaugural meeting in early March.
- The federal investment in digital research infrastructure, stemming from the 2018 budget, is \$572m over 5 years with a commitment of \$52m/yr ongoing. A rough breakdown of this investment includes:
 - ARC (Advanced Research Computing), with \$50m for immediate expansion of ARC capacity at up to five existing national ARC host sites; these funds are further leveraged for a \$95m total investment.
 - CANARIE, with \$145m to manage the ultra-high-speed network for Canadian researchers. This includes some funding for Northern investment, and, until April 2022, Research Software on the national level.
 - NDRIO (New Digital Research Infrastructure Organization), with up to \$375m going to this national not-for-profit to advance and invest in national DRI: ARC, DM, RS research tools as identified by the researcher community.
- Different kinds of services and infrastructure will receive different funding treatments under the new model.
 - Integrated national services: 100% federal contribution for ARC operations and for a federated national service layer
 - Infrastructure: targeting federal funding up to 60%, aiming for a 40% match across the infrastructure envelope (with some variation for specific cases). Compare this with the 40-60 model formerly in place.
 - Direct services to researchers: up to 100% for some functions that are best delivered by NDRIO; up to 25% fed to catalyze direct services at regional HQP layer via NDRIO, on the basis of evaluation against preset criteria.
- CFI will continue to fund Compute Canada to March 31 2022 in order to ensure a smooth transition from the current approach to the incoming approach.

2. Internal Call, CRC Tier 2

- Brock University has announced a call for applications for Canada Research Chair, Tier II, in an open area (NSERC, CIHR, or SSHRC). The call is directed at researchers currently holding a faculty appointment at Brock, and who self-identify as persons with disabilities under CRC definitions. Forms and details of application timelines are available online: <https://brocku.sharepoint.com/Research-Services/SitePages/Internal-call-for-Canada.aspx>

3. Pandemic research guidelines and programs

- Research guidelines associated with the COVID-19 pandemic have received multiple updates, with the most current information always posted on the Brock University Coronavirus FAQ page. Provincial restrictions and closures have increased, with the definition of essential businesses and services further restricted. At the time of writing, research activities requiring access to research facilities on and off campus are suspended except by authorization from the Vice-President, Research. The criteria for exemptions are listed in the Research section of the Coronavirus FAQ page: “research studies that are part of essential clinical care, specific projects related to the COVID-19 pandemic, or those that cannot be suspended without significant risk to persons, animal welfare, infrastructure, or crucial data...”.
- Other pandemic-related information and updates, including the automatic one-year extension granted to projects funded through internal grant programs, is available on the Research Enterprise SharePoint site. Provincial and federal governments alike have introduced a range of funding programs dedicated to support research on COVID-19. Details on these programs can be accessed via the Office of Research Services.

4. Equipment donation to Niagara Health

- Brock University receives a wide range of requests for scarce supplies for medical care and testing purposes. On March 31, the University donated a significant collection of personal protective equipment (PPE) and sanitizers to Niagara Health. The collection and hand-over of this donation under difficult circumstances was coordinated by Acting AVPR Dawn Zinga, and was only possible through the sustained efforts of staff members in Shipping and Receiving, Science Stores, and Ancillary Services. More information is available online: <https://brocku.ca/brock-news/2020/03/brock-university-donates-truck-full-of-ppe-to-niagara-hospitals/>

5. Acting AVPR extension

- It is a great pleasure to announce that Professor Dawn Zinga (Child and Youth Studies) has accepted an extension to her duties as Acting Associate Vice-President, Research, for six months beginning April 15, 2020. Dr. Zinga continues to work in conjunction with the Associate Vice-President, Research, Dr. Michelle McGinn.