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## Report to Senate

### 1. Research Facilities Access Under Pandemic Conditions

Beginning June 15, researchers and graduate students gained expanded access to a range of laboratories and research facilities. This access was allocated through a process that reviewed requests for their safety procedures and for their fit with access priorities outlined in the Access Expansion memo of June 15. Those priorities included graduate student program completion and critical-phase research.

In August, AVPR Dr. Michelle McGinn chaired the Research Access Task Force as it held additional researcher consultations and planning sessions, focusing on, among other things, the question of research involving human participants. In the last week of August, the Emergency Management Group approved the updated [Brock Research Activities During Stages of Pandemic and Recovery](#). This document refines and extends the processes developed in the June 15 expansion plan, integrating research activities and facilities access with the broader academic activities beginning in September. It moreover integrates the guidelines for research activities with the newly developed [Brock Stages for Pandemic and Recovery](#).

As of September 1, the University is functioning under *Brock 3*, which permits limited types of in-person human research, short-term studies in animal-based models, onsite research training, and domestic research travel, all subject to other applicable restrictions, guidelines, and mitigation strategies as described in the documents.

### 2. Research Training Awards

The VPR allocated over a quarter of a million dollars to fund an internal Research Training Award program over the summer. 42 graduate and undergraduate students received \$6,000 awards to fund the continuation of a research project with a supervisor. Most of these projects are currently under way. More details about the research projects and student award-holders are [here](#).

### 3. Indirect Costs of Research policy

A policy bearing on overhead rates for contract research (“indirect costs of research”), in support of a sustainable research enterprise, has been drafted, reviewed by stakeholders, and approved by Senior Advisory Council. The policy addresses a gap identified by a Research Management Services review and an earlier Internal Audit review. It codifies and generalizes existing practices at Brock and in the wider Canadian research university sector, with respect to default rates, processes, exceptions, oversight, and internal allocation of overhead revenues. The Office of Research Services is preparing extensive materials to educate and guide researchers and external partners step-by-step through the associated processes. The document is shared with R&SPC for information.

#### 4. Canada Research Chair appointments

In July, Brock received notice that the first of its open CRC searches has been approved by the Tri-agency Institutional Programs Secretariat. Dr. Val Fajardo (Assistant Professor, Kinesiology) began a five-year term (renewable) effective July 1, as a Canada Research Chair (Tier II) in the field of Tissue Remodelling and Plasticity Through the Lifespan. The University receives a \$100,000 annual allocation to support the hiring and research activities of a CRC Tier II.

Candidates for five additional CRC positions hold or have been offered faculty positions, with associated nominations to the TIPS Secretariat and CFI in development, while a sixth position remains in the hiring phase. The University is thus far on track to meet its EDI representation goals as set by TIPS. One of the five positions now in the TIPS nomination process is the internal Tier II Chair for candidates identifying as having a disability.

#### 5. Insight Development Grant competition

Eleven Brock University researchers were awarded over \$655,000 in grants through the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council's program for Insight Development Grants. The Insight Development Grant program is one of two primarily individual research grants offered by SSHRC.

Brock researchers won IDGs at a rate significantly above the national average in this round (55% vs 44%).

These grants are used to fund early career researchers, as well as established researchers who are developing a new expertise. They are an important source of external research funding for shorter and usually a bit smaller-scale projects, and their value can really add up. They also tend to lead to success in the Insight Grant competition, which is SSHRC's flagship individual grant program. Further details are available [here](#).

#### 6. Ontario Research Fund allocation

Brock University received over \$450,000 from ORF in June as matching funds for three successful CFI-JELF awards. The CFI awards were made in 2019.

7. A draft usage and allocation plan is in development for research uses of the Brock Farm, on the basis of a call for expressions of interest that was circulated to researchers in the spring, as well as an analysis of non-research institutional uses in Facilities Management. A draft plan is expected by the end of 2020.

8. Congratulations to Dr. Angela Evans (Psychology), who has been selected as the [2020 Chancellor's Chair for Research Excellence](#), as well as the winner of the Award for Distinguished Research and Creative Activity.

9. An increment of roughly \$82,000 has been added to the BUAF budget allocation for 2020-21, as a corrective measure for the University's shortfall in budgeting for the former BSIG (now Explore/Exchange) and BUAF under the terms of a 2017 MOU with the Brock University Faculty Association.