

Enhancing Research Infrastructure Through RSF: Conestoga College's Strategic Expansion of its Research Information Management System (RIMS)

At Conestoga College, Research Support Funds (RSF) have been instrumental in strengthening the infrastructure and administrative capacity of the Office of Research Services (ORS), particularly through the expansion of RIMS. This strategic investment has significantly enhanced Conestoga's ability to support innovation, entrepreneurship, and regulatory compliance across its research ecosystem.

Conestoga's ORS serves as the central hub for research partnerships, facilitating collaboration among faculty, students, industry, and community partners. With RSF support, ORS has been able to allocate funds toward the management and administration of its operations. This foundational support has allowed ORS to focus on strategic initiatives such as the continued development and expansion of RIMS.

One of the most impactful outcomes of RSF funding has been the development of enhanced faculty resource tracking capabilities within RIMS. Intended to more accurately manage faculty time commitments, these improvements ensure compliance with the Tri-Agency Guide on Financial Administration (TAGFA), which outlines the financial responsibilities and reporting standards for institutions receiving federal research funding.

Prior to the RSF-supported expansion, tracking faculty time and effort across multiple research projects was a manual and fragmented process. Thanks to upgrades, RIMS now enables detailed recording of faculty time commitments and contract details. This not only streamlines internal reporting but also ensures that Conestoga remains compliant with TAGFA standards, thereby safeguarding future funding eligibility and enhancing transparency.

In addition, RSF funding enabled ORS to hire a part-time administrator to review and audit RIMS records, strengthening quality control and enhancing the integrity of our records management system.

The expansion of RIMS at Conestoga exemplifies how strategic use of RSF funding can transform institutional research capacity. By investing in systems that support both compliance and innovation, ORS has positioned itself as a leader in applied research and innovation. These enhancements to RIMS not only improve operational efficiency but also empower faculty, students, and partners to engage in high-impact research and commercialization activities.

As Conestoga continues to grow its research portfolio, RSF will remain a critical enabler of

its mission to foster innovation, support community development, and prepare students for the future of work.