

Beginning in FY20, The University of Akron created a Research Contingency Fund (RCF), later renamed the Research Equipment Fund. The RCF's purpose is to aid the colleges with funding for research equipment related contingencies, such as unexpected research expenditures (e.g., equipment failures or urgent facility problems). The RCF will be administered by the Office of Research Administration.

ORA-00-09.01 Policy and Processes Overview

- During the spring semester, the Interim Director of Research and the Interim Director of Research Initiatives will submit to the CFO a request for funds for the following fiscal year.
- Annually, around the beginning of the new fiscal year (once the tentative budget is believed to be set), the Deans will be asked to submit their requests for strategic research funding, using the [RCF Request form](#), via rcf@info.uakron.edu, no later than a deadline approximately two weeks after the requests for submissions to be distributed. Each Dean must submit each request on a separate form and must prioritize their College's requests. All requests will be reviewed and prioritized by the Interim Directors of Research. Approximately two weeks after the deadline (or once the budget is finalized), the Deans will be made aware of the funding decisions. Available funds will be committed to the highest overall priority needs.
- Emergency and other research equipment related requests can be submitted at anytime during the year, by the Dean, via email to rcf@info.uakron.edu.
- Uncommitted RCF funds will not carry over to the following fiscal year and will be returned to the general fund. One exception is major purchases. A major purchase may require funds to accumulate over multiple years (for example, replacement of expensive equipment). In such cases, if the request is approved, these funds will be set aside (within the ORA) each year until the needed total is accumulated. Should the intended use of the funds no longer be needed at the time when the funds have been accumulated, the funds revert back to the pool in ORA. The accumulated funds do not remain with unit for other uses. It is the Dean's responsibility, via the annual request process, to update the ORA on the current pricing and associated costs that come with a multi-year strategic need.
- Colleges and Departments must spend down their existing IDC reserves before being eligible to receive RCF funds.
- Deans are urged to consider working with Development to procure additional funds to supplement these RCF monies to further advance the specific research missions of their colleges.
- While the goal is to share these limited RCF funds proportionally among the colleges based on research expenditures, the reality is that some areas are more equipment-heavy than others. All Deans are urged to make use of these RCF funds as needed.

ORA-00-09.02 Process Details

- The Dean will complete an [RCF Request form](#) for each individual request. Justification must fit within the allotted space. Equipment quotes and the like must be attached. A link to the specific equipment is only acceptable if it contains all of the required information that would be in a quote (such as shipping costs.)
- All RCF requests must be submitted, via email, to rcf@info.uakron.edu. A single email may contain multiple request forms.
- Requests must include detailed justifications, including, but not limited to, the information below.
 - Equipment: include make/model, vendor, cost including shipping and any other associated fees, a quote if applicable or a screenshot from UA's online purchasing system, where the equipment will be housed, any PFOC costs involved in setup, who will use it, and its purpose.
 - Equipment Maintenance: include make/model, vendor, repair estimate, location of equipment, its

use and who uses it, the justification for its repair, and whether or not the equipment is duplicated elsewhere on campus. RCF funds can be requested for continuing preventative maintenance contracts; however, the Colleges are urged to seek other sources for this funding in order for the RCF funds to meet their intended purpose.

- Major Purchase: a multi-year strategic request for equipment must include all of the same details as listed for equipment above. In addition, in each subsequent year until the total requested funding is accrued, the Dean must submit an annual request confirming the need still exists and updating all of the information, including the purchase price and associated costs.
- Cost-share: Excluding faculty time. Example, required cost-share on an NSF MRI proposal. Cost-share requests must be strategic and serve the campus as a whole. If a cost-share request is approved, the money is held in reserve by the ORA and cannot be used for any other requests until the sponsor's funding decision is known.
- Emergency requests must also include the nature of emergency (such as equipment failure).
- ORA will log each request received and assign an RCF ID number. This number should be used in all correspondence and be included in the purchasing/receipt documentation.
- The Deans will receive notification of the funding decision(s) via email. If requests are approved, the email will also include the speedtype and the RCF ID number.
- If a request is approved, the ORA will work with the Office of Resource Analysis and Budget (RAB) to transfer the funds. One RCF account was/will be created for each College.
- **It is the Dean's responsibility to ensure that the new account is used ONLY for the approved purpose.** If the approved purpose is no longer valid, rcf@info.uakron.edu should be notified and the funds will be transferred back to ORA. Occasionally changes or substitutions arise. These changes must be approved. In most cases this can be completed via an email to rcf@info.uakorn.edu from the Dean or Dean's designee. If the original request is completely changed, the Dean will be asked to submit a new RCF request.
- Rebudgeting of the RCF account is not allowed.
- The ORA will monitor the RCF accounts, verify the expenses against the approved requests, and provide reporting to the Director of Research. If additional verification is needed, ORA will contact the Dean or Dean's designee for the information.