

## CRDCN Access and Fee-for-Service Policy

### Background

The Canadian Research Data Centre Network (CRDCN) and Statistics Canada (Microdata Access Division) promote and support access to and use of micro-data files (census, survey and administrative data) housed in university-based Research Data Centres (RDCs). Access to the RDCs and use of the microdata files is granted under the authority of the *Statistics Act* and Statistics Canada directives and policies.

The primary users of the RDCs are university-based researchers who:

- a) are employed by CRDCN partner universities and/or whose projects are directly funded by an agency which is providing core financial support for the sustained research activities of the CRDCN (they are: Canadian Institutes of Health Research (CIHR); Social Science and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC), Fonds de recherche du Québec - Science, Fonds de recherche du Québec - Société et culture, Fonds de Recherche du Québec - Nature et technologies (FRQS, FRQSC, and FRQNT), and Microdata Access Division at Statistics Canada.
- b) are doing self-directed research.

All students who are undertaking self-directed research, *regardless of whether or not they are affiliated with a CRDCN partner university or an agency which is providing core financial support for the sustained research activities of the CRDCN* are also deemed primary users of the RDCs.

All professors emeriti who are undertaking self-directed research and who are affiliated with a CRDCN partner university and or an agency which is providing core financial support for the sustained research activities of the CRDCN are also deemed primary users of the RDCs.

All of the primary users defined above are considered *internal users*.

The partnership between CRDCN and Statistics Canada also provides for approved fee-for-service access to and use of the facilities and data as well as support from RDC analysts by three categories of secondary users:

### **Category A:**

All university-based researchers (*excluding students*) who are undertaking self-directed research but a) who are *not* employed by a CRDCN partner university; b) who are *not* professors

emeriti of a CRDCN partner university; or c) whose projects are not directly funded by an agency which is providing core financial support for the sustained operations of the CRDCN

**Category B:**

All researchers working for government or the charitable and non-profit sector *including* university-based researchers, professors emeriti and students undertaking directed or fee-for-service work for these sectors

**Category C:**

All researchers working for the private sector *including* industry associations, university-based researchers, professors emeriti and students undertaking directed or fee-for-service work for the private sector

All of these secondary users are hereafter referred to as *external users*.

The purpose of this document is to update and further codify the policy and procedures for determining the terms and conditions for access including the fee schedule for researchers deemed external users.

**Guiding Principles**

The policy and procedures for access and fee-for-service outlined in this document are guided by the following principles:

***Fairness principle***

The access and fee-for-service policy should take full account of the contributions made by the CRDCN partner universities and the funding agencies which are providing core financial support for the sustained research activities of the CRDCN.

***Simplicity principle***

The policy and procedures for assessing and administering access and fee-for-service should be easily communicated to, and easily understood by, users and funders to ensure consistency in the application of the policy.

***Cost-effectiveness principle***

The costs of administering fee-for-service access should be reasonable and should result in a significant net advantage to the Network and partner universities to justify the administrative effort to assess and collect the fee.

### ***Funders' priority principle***

In the event of insufficient capacity or funding to accommodate all requests for access, priority will be accorded to researchers (*faculty, students and professors emeriti*) of CRDCN partner universities and or those whose projects are directly funded by an agency which is providing core financial support for the sustained research activities of the CRDCN (CIHR, SSHRC, FRQS, FRQSC, FRQNT, MAD).

### **Fee-for-service Assessment**

In the case of university-based researchers, the decision regarding *whether* a fee-for-service should apply will be based on:

- a) whether the researcher is employed by a CRDCN university partner, is a professor emeritus of a CRDCN partner university, or has direct funding support from an agency which is providing core financial support for the sustained research activities of the CRDCN; AND
- b) whether the researcher is receiving direct compensation, (above and beyond his or her university compensation) for his or her research project and/or has one or more specific deliverables to the funder as part of the research agreement.

The decision regarding the *specific* fee-for-service to be charged to university-based researchers, for whom it is determined a fee-for-service should be paid, is based on the expected primary beneficiary or recipient of the research deliverable(s) (e.g. the individual researcher, a private sector company, a government department or agency and/or a non-profit organization).

Researchers working for government, the non-profit and charitable sector and the private sector must all pay a fee-for-service for RDC access (with the exception of agencies which are providing core financial support for the sustained research activities of the CRDCN). The decision regarding the *specific* fee-for-service to be charged to these researchers depends upon who is employing them to undertake the research and the expected primary beneficiary or recipient of the research deliverables.

Please note that for projects undertaken by researchers from more than one sector or by researchers with deliverables for more than one sector, the highest fee assessed will apply to *all* the researchers listed on the project who will access the data.

Additionally, in select cases, organizations providing access to data across the Network may be granted access to an RDC to conduct activities related to data development.

## **Access Policy**

Requests for access will normally be granted if researchers meet the following criteria and pay the fee-for-service, if assessed, as detailed below.

### **Confirmation of intended use of the data/research results**

All users must submit a project proposal which identifies the expected primary beneficiary and/or recipient of the research. This review could lead to additional clarifications being requested and or a refusal to access RDC facilities or data in light of the deemed integrity of the research methodology, the availability of the data sought, the current capacity to accommodate external users, and/or a lack of perceived public benefit.

### **Completion of the fee-for-service questionnaire**

All principal investigators must also complete a fee-for-service questionnaire confirming the funding conditions under which they are undertaking the research project and the expected primary recipient and beneficiary of the research. This questionnaire will include a signature confirming that the information provided is true and accurate, to the best of the researcher's knowledge.

If there is any change in the funding conditions under which researchers are undertaking their work, or if the funding of the project is not yet finalized at the time that access is being requested, researchers are required to file an amendment to the fee-for-service questionnaire and pay the resulting fees in the event of reassessment.

Falsifying information on the questionnaire or failing to file an amended questionnaire could result in denial of current or future access to the facilities or data and or a retroactively imposed fee-for-service.

### **Compliance with security and confidentiality requirements**

All users must also meet the security and confidentiality requirements for access to the RDC and use of the micro-data files that are outlined in the *Statistics Act* and in the StatCan-CRDCN MOU. Inability or unwillingness to conform to the Statistics Canada requirements for access will result in denial of access to the facilities and or data sought.

### **Reassessment of the fee-for-service**

In the event that a researcher does not agree with the fee-for-service assessed, s/he will have recourse to a review by the Joint Operations Committee of CRDCN's Board, which will make a final recommendation to the Executive Committee of the Board. The Executive Committee will communicate the rationale for the fee-for-service assessed to

the researcher in writing, once its final decision is made and within a reasonable period of time.

Any researcher who requests a reassessment of the fee-for-service will be required to pay a fee of \$250 to cover a portion of the administrative costs associated with the reassessment. The researcher will not be eligible to begin his or her research in the RDC until the reassessment is completed. Should the reassessment process determine that the researcher was charged a fee-for-service in error, the \$250 reassessment fee will be reimbursed.

### **Payment of the fee-for-service**

Once a fee-for-service has been assessed, researchers must pay in a timely way for access to the facilities and data granted by the CRDCN and Statistics Canada. Should the required number of hours to complete the research exceed the amount paid, additional hours may be purchased in blocks of 100 hours, to complete the work. The output that results from RDC access will not be released until the fee-for-service has been paid in full.

Fee-for-service will apply to external users as prescribed in the fee schedule below and currently assumes the use of a single medium class VDI instance (e.g. 2 CPU cores, 16 GB RAM, 512 MB vGPU, dual display or similar system). Additional fees for the use of high-performance computing systems will be determined once the HPC system is fully operational.

This fee-for-service schedule, including the reassessment fee described above, will be revisited annually or at the joint discretion of CRDCN and Statistics Canada.

### **Fee-for-service schedule**

#### **Category A:**

All university-based researchers (*excluding* students *but including* professors emeriti) who are undertaking self-directed research and who a) are *not* employed by a CRDCN partner university; b) are *not* professors emeriti at a partner university; or c) whose projects are *not* directly funded by an agency which is providing core financial support to the sustained research activities of the CRDCN.

#### **Category B:**

All researchers working for government or the charitable and non-profit sector including university-based researchers, professors emeriti and students undertaking directed or fee-for-service work for these sectors

### ***Category C:***

All researchers working for the private sector including industry associations, university-based researchers, professors emeriti and students undertaking directed or fee-for-service work for the private sector

***Researchers in Category A and B above shall pay the following fee-for-service to access an RDC:***

**\$6,250 (plus applicable tax) for the first 200 hours or part thereof of access to between one and ten data files in the RDC.**

The access granted to the lead researcher can be shared by two or more researchers. Each hour or part thereof of access to the RDC per researcher will be counted as one hour of use, up to a maximum of 200 hours.

For projects requiring more than 10 data files the cost for each additional data file is \$700 per file.

For projects requiring more than 200 hours of access, additional access can be purchased in blocks of 100 hours at \$3,250 per block of additional time purchased.

***Researchers in Category C shall pay the following fee-for-service to access an RDC:***

**\$9,500 (plus applicable tax) for the first 200 hours, or part thereof in addition to \$3,875 (plus applicable tax) for each data file requested.**

The access granted to the lead researcher can be shared by two or more researchers. Each hour or part thereof of access to the RDC per researcher will be counted as one hour of use, up to a maximum of 200 hours.

For projects requiring more than 200 hours of access, additional access can be purchased in blocks of 100 hours at \$4,750 per block of additional time purchased.

### ***SAS supplement***

A 10 per cent supplement will be assessed to the fee for service and remitted to SAS for all projects that require the use of SAS and which involve researchers in category B or C above.

### ***Category C Supplement***

A 25 percent supplement will apply to the fee-for-service for category C users in recognition that the private sector does not contribute to the maintenance and

enhancement of the infrastructure and data development of the Network in the same way as the government and university sectors.

### **Administration of the policy and revenue-sharing arrangements**

This policy came into effect on September 1<sup>st</sup>, 2018. It was approved by the CRDCN Board on June 15th, 2018. Revisions to the Access and Fee-for-Service Policy were approved by the Executive Director in August 2019 based on the recommendations of the CRDCN-Statistics Canada Working Group on the Access and Fee-for-Service Policy and are reflected in this September 30, 2019 version.

The policy includes the following three annexes:

Annex A – a list of all CRDCN partner universities (to be updated regularly as needed, including the minimum threshold to be considered a partner university);

Annex B – a list of the agencies providing core financial support for the sustained research activities of the Network (to be updated regularly as needed, including the minimum threshold to be considered an agency providing core financial support); and

Annex C – a list of definitions of key terms referenced in the policy and the questionnaire to be completed by all principal investigators.

Updated as of September 30, 2019.

## Annex A: Partner Universities

The following universities have on-site RDC branches or RDCs:

Carleton University	University of Calgary
Dalhousie University	University of Guelph
McGill University	University of Lethbridge
McMaster University	University of Manitoba
Memorial University of Newfoundland	University of New Brunswick
Nipissing University	University of Northern British Columbia
Queen's University	University of Ottawa
Simon Fraser University	University of Regina
Université de Moncton	University of Saskatchewan
Université de Montréal	University of Toronto
Université de Sherbrooke	University of Victoria
Université du Québec à Montréal	University of Waterloo
Université Laval	University of Windsor
University of Alberta	Western University
University of British Columbia	York University
University of British Columbia: Okanagan	

The following universities have an access agreement with one of the universities listed above that currently house either a Research Data Centre or a Branch of a Research Data Centre. For definitional purposes in the new *CRDCN Access and Fee-for-Service Policy*, the universities listed below are currently considered *CRDCN partner universities*.

The terms of these access agreements will be reassessed over the course of the next year and/or upon expiry of the current terms of these agreements.

Acadia University

Brandon University

Brock University

Canadian Mennonite University



Concordia University

HEC Montréal

Institut national de la recherche scientifique

Mount Saint Vincent University

Ryerson University

Saint Mary's University

Saint Francis Xavier University

St. Paul's College

Université de Saint-Boniface

Université du Québec

University College of the North

University of Winnipeg

Wilfrid Laurier University

## Annex B: Core funders

The following is a list of the agencies which are providing core financial support for the sustained research activities of the CRDCN:

Canadian Institutes of Health Research

Fonds de Recherche du Québec – Nature et technologies

Fonds de Recherche du Québec - Santé

Fonds de Recherche du Québec - Société et culture

Microdata Access Division at Statistics Canada

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council

A few provincial or regional government departments have access agreements (in exchange for local core funding or data acquisition) with one or more of the universities that currently house either a Research Data Centre or Research Data Centre Branch. For definitional purposes in the new *CRDCN Access and Fee-for-Service Policy*, these organizations will currently be considered as core funders for the sustained research activities of the Network.

The terms of these access agreements will be reassessed over the course of the coming year and/or upon expiry of the current terms of these agreements.

## Annex C: Definitions

**The following definitions of key terms will be used for the purpose of administering the *CRDCN Access and Fee-for-Service Policy*.**

**Self-directed** – For a research project to be considered “self-directed”, the investigators should have complete control over the research process from conception to the final draft of the report. Specifically, it should meet the following three criteria.

- The topic of the study is selected by the principal investigator (PI) in collaboration with his or her co-investigators. While the topic may be of interest to funders, they do not direct the research question(s).
- The management of the research, including the selection of the appropriate research methodology and interpretation of the findings, is under the control of the PI. While funding partners may offer critical feedback in the normal process of peer review, the PI does not have an obligation to make changes to the final research project as a condition of funding.
- The authorship remains with the PI and co-investigators. While the final research product may be shared with funders as a form of knowledge transfer, the funders do not have the authority to rewrite, publish or disseminate the findings under their own name.

**Research Contract** – A research contract is generally of short duration and serves to help another funding organization (including government, nonprofit, and private companies) to help fulfill their mandate. Research contracts might be pursued to generate additional income and will generally be an isolated project as opposed to part of a series of research projects with sustained funding.

**Research Grant** – Research grants are any research funding that result from an open competition between researchers (usually between competing research proposals). Research grants will often (though not always) specify a broad theme or topic to be investigated but will not necessarily specify a research question. The research undertaken under a grant will be self-directed and will not have associated deliverables.

**Deliverable** – A deliverable is a research product typically produced in exchange for funding. Deliverables typically exist as consideration in a contractual relationship. They will generally directly benefit the recipient, might appear as a publication with the funding organization’s name and trademarking, or otherwise support their mandate. It is common for funders of self-directed academic research to have knowledge transfer requirements tied to grants and procedures to verify that the proposed work was done (including submissions of a final draft of the research); these types of arrangements are not considered deliverables.

**Co-investigator** - Co-investigator refers to researchers who are working with the data and who are listed on the RDC application. Not all co-authors need be co-investigators, nor all co-investigators co-authors. However, for the research to be “self-directed”, it needs to be so from the perspective of the co-investigators. That is to say, at least one co-investigator should have a superordinate role in research design and authorship to any potential co-author not listed on the RDC application.

**Professor Emeritus** – A Professor Emeritus is defined as a former tenured professor (full or associate) who has retired from their university. The formal designation of professor emeritus does not need to have been granted by the department.

**Student** - A student is someone who is in training. This includes academics from undergraduate to post-doctoral fellows.

**University Employee** - A university employee is someone who draws their principal salary from one of the university’s faculties or its central administration. For example, a courtesy appointment or any similar form of honorary appointment or anyone who works for a research or funding organization at arm’s length from the university would not be considered an employee.

**Employment income** – If any member of the research team is currently employed by the funding organization (including governments, nonprofits and private companies), either full-time or part-time, for services that extend beyond the FFS contract, they are considered to be employees of the funding organization.