

# Applied Research and the Promotion of Innovation Policy

This document is the parent policy for any College or Divisional procedures. Questions regarding this policy are to be directed to the identified Policy Administrator.

<b>Functional category</b>	Academic
<b>Approval date</b>	January 29, 2020
<b>Effective date</b>	February 1, 2020
<b>Policy owner</b>	Vice President, Academic
<b>Policy administrator</b>	Dean, Research and Academic Innovation

## Objective

NorQuest College (college) recognizes applied research as an essential element of its mandate. Rapid technological and social change and an increasingly global economy require the education and training of a workforce familiar with research methodologies and innovation strategies and skilled in developing and applying new technologies, processes, and knowledge to bring solutions to the workplace, business, and the public sector. Encouraging faculty, students, and staff to undertake applied research and innovation activities in partnership with community organizations, businesses, and industry will strengthen the college's role as a comprehensive community institution and a leader in workforce preparation and social and industry innovation.

Authority to establish this policy is derived from the [NorQuest College Board of Governor's Policy No. 5](#), which delegates authority to the President and

CEO to establish policies and procedures for the college's management and operation.

## Policy

Providing opportunities for college students, faculty, staff, and partners in business, industry, the public service, and the not-for-profit sector to participate in applied research and innovation activities is an important role for Comprehensive Community Institutions as specified in the *Alberta Post-Secondary Learning Act*, S102.3(4)(f).

The college promotes applied research and encourages innovation in teaching, public service, community life, business, and industry as a means of:

- Improving practical learning experiences for students;
- Enhancing the expertise of college faculty and staff;
- Building strong partnerships between the college and community and/or industry; and
- Contributing to the economic, cultural, and social well-being of the larger college community.

The college commits approved facilities, personnel, and financial resources to support applied research and innovation activities undertaken by internal researchers, students, and external partners when evidence supports that these objectives can be met.

Through its commitment to applied research and innovation, the college will:

- Meet its own goals and objectives as outlined in its Strategic, Academic, and Comprehensive Institutional Plans;
- Contribute to innovations in intellectual property and technology, pedagogical practices, industrial products and processes, business capacity and effectiveness, community services, and social relations; and
- Broaden and strengthen the dissemination of knowledge throughout business, industry, and government, and to local, national, and international communities.

The college's applied research and innovation activities must be approved by the appropriate authorities at the college and are subject to review by the appointed Research Ethics Board when they involve research with human participants. Research and innovation undertaken by students, faculty, staff, and any external partners must comply with all relevant college policies and procedures, including those governing *Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Human Participants*, *Integrity in Research and Scholarship*, *Academic Freedom*, and *Code of Conduct*, and related federal Tri-Agency requirements. All research and innovation activities must ensure full accountability by undertaking due diligence, adhering to the directives of funding institutions and/or contract conditions, and meeting freedom of information and protection of privacy criteria as provincially legislated.

The college's applied research and innovation activities will further ensure accountability and maintain ethical transparency through coordinated efforts of internal and external research partners, institutions, and funding bodies by adhering, at a minimum, to the standards set forth by the federal *Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research* and their research data management policies; to comply with participating institutional research ethics boards; and to ensure that multi-centred research and innovation activities and projects conducted under other jurisdictions also receive appropriate ethical approval from those centres and jurisdictions (e.g., projects involving Indigenous persons or taking place on Indigenous lands, clinical trials taking place in the health system, etc.).

## Definitions

**Applied research:** the process of systematic investigation, often using established methods, to determine facts, principles, or knowledge that produce(s) practical results with actual or potential application to real-world situations. Applied research often focuses on solving immediate problems faced by businesses, industry, communities, government, and society.

**External researcher:** Any person who is a member of an applied research and innovation project team who is not employed by the college. Current

NorQuest students are not deemed to be external researchers but considered student researchers.

**Innovation:** the process by which ideas are converted into value in the form of new and improved products, services, and approaches. Innovation often draws on research and may involve commercialization, but it is not synonymous with either. Innovation can be developments in technology, design, business models, social models, and mechanisms of service delivery. It is often conceived as a new way or different way of doing something that adds value and contributes to the existing knowledge store of an organization.<sup>i</sup>

**Internal researcher:** any NorQuest employee (staff or faculty) who is leading or collaborating on an applied research and innovation project team.

**Research:** “The systematic investigation or inquiry aimed at contributing to knowledge of a theory, topic, etc., by careful consideration, observation, or study of a subject.” Also, the “original critical or scientific investigation carried out under the auspices of an academic or other institution.”<sup>ii</sup>

**Research data:** “Data that are used as primary sources to support technical or scientific enquiry, research, scholarship, or artistic activity, and that are used as evidence in the research process or are commonly accepted in the research community as necessary to validate research findings and results. All other digital and non-digital content have the potential of becoming research data.”<sup>iii</sup>

**Student researcher:** current NorQuest students who engage in applied research or innovation projects. Student researchers cannot lead applied research or innovation projects, but must be supervised by a researcher who is also an employee of the college.

## Related information

### NorQuest College

- [Academic Freedom Policy](#)

- [Applied Research and the Promotion of Innovation Procedure](#)
- [Code of Conduct Policy](#)
- [Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Human Participants Policy](#)
- [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy \(FOIP\) Act Policy](#)
- [Integrity in Research and Scholarship Policy](#)

## External

- [Post-Secondary Learning Act](#)
- [Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research](#)

## Next review date

December 2024

## Revision history

Date	Version Number	Action
January 2013	V1	New
August 2013	V2	Update for document links and branding
November 2014	V3	Update for change in policy administrator
July 2015	V4	Update for document standards, document links and next review date
June 2017	V5	Updated
August 2019	V6 (published as V5-C)	Compliance Office template & reorganization update
January 2020	V7 (published as V6)	Updated to reflect new federal requirements and ensure alignment with impacts research policies
January 2024	V8	Information, Risk & Compliance template & reorganization update

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<sup>i</sup> O'Sullivan, D. & Dooley L. (2009). *Applying Innovation*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

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ii (2015). Oxford English Dictionary.

iii Tri-Council Research Data Management Policy (2018). Retrieved from [https://www.science.gc.ca > eic > site > 063.nsf > eng](https://www.science.gc.ca/eic/site/063.nsf/eng)