

Section	Policy
50	52.10

Section Title: Prevention and Partnerships
Subject: Research and Workplace Innovation Program (RWIP)
Effective Date: January 1, 2020

POLICY PURPOSE

The Workers Compensation Act (the Act) enables the WCB to undertake and fund research and safety programs or other initiatives on issues relating to workers compensation. The WCB may also partner with other workers compensation authorities, research agencies or third parties to undertake research or projects related to workers compensation issues. Partnerships may involve either sharing of costs, in-kind support or both. The WCB has established the Research and Workplace Innovation Program (RWIP) to oversee these research and partnership funding initiatives.

This policy describes the RWIP mandate, as set by the WCB Board of Directors, and the types of initiatives available for funding, their eligibility and qualifying criteria, and the terms and conditions of funding. The policy also provides the governance structure for oversight and management of the RWIP program.

RWIP MANDATE & OBJECTIVES

RWIP supports and funds high quality research into workplace innovation, and training and education projects that have a high potential of contributing to the long-term prevention of workplace injuries and illnesses, or the long-term reduction in impacts of injury and illness on workers, workplaces and the workers compensation system as a whole in Manitoba.

In particular, RWIP prioritizes projects that will lead to the **adoption** of innovative, practical, shop-floor solutions to improving workplace health and safety and fostering successful rehabilitation and productive return-to-work of injured or ill workers. For this reason, projects must have a Knowledge Transfer and Exchange (KTE) component. Other criteria include projects that:

- Are relevant to Manitoba workers, employers, industry sector(s) and workplaces;
- Are aligned with the WCB's mandate and strategic priorities;
- Are focused on problems and issues frequently encountered in workplaces;
- Are able to demonstrate having the support of key stakeholders and partners;
- Are unique (do not duplicate existing programs or services); and
- Are time-limited, with achievable milestones.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION & ADMINISTRATION

There are no limits on who can apply for funding under the RWIP program except that WCB employees, members of the Board of Directors, external committee members and Appeal Commissioners are ineligible.

Funding Agreements

Successful RWIP grant recipients are required to enter into a formal funding agreement with the WCB. The funding agreement sets out the terms and conditions of funding, including the maximum amount of the grant and its duration, deliverables, expenditure controls and reporting requirements. RWIP funds awarded can only be used for items specified in the funding agreement.

Funding agreements can be terminated by the WCB where the WCB determines that the recipient failed to meet the deliverables and obligations set out in the funding agreement, is no longer able to complete the project, or where there is evidence of misuse of funds.

Recipients of RWIP funds are required to acknowledge the financial support provided by the WCB in any publication, presentation, or public mention. The grant recipient retains intellectual property rights to the outcome of the projects, but the WCB retains the right to use all material gathered or produced in any manner it desires.

Any disclosure of information by the WCB in support of a project is subject to WCB policies on the disclosure of WCB data, file information, and the applicable confidentiality and disclosure provisions under *The Workers Compensation Act*, *The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA)* and *The Personal Health Information Act (PHIA)*.

RWIP Funding Streams

RWIP has two main funding streams: Workplace Innovation, and Training and Education.

Workplace Innovation

The workplace innovation funding stream supports and fund projects that:

- Provide direct benefits to the workplace health and safety of a specific workplace or workplaces, including injury prevention and safe return-to-work;
- Lead to innovative, practical, shop-floor solutions to improve workplace health and safety or foster successful rehabilitation and return-to-work of injured or ill workers;
- Apply new information and technology to address workplace safety and health issues;
- Use existing knowledge in new ways to solve problems in workplace safety and health;
- Transfer new knowledge to the workplace through the development or provision of education and training materials or programs in workers compensation issues or workplace safety and health.

Projects with potential to meet these objectives will be assessed on their merit, relevance, and the ability to complete the project, including any requirements listed in the Call for Applications or equivalent.

To be eligible, projects must demonstrate how they are novel and innovative by showing that objectives cannot reasonably be met through existing mechanisms, systems or technology. Projects must also have demonstrated support from all relevant workplace parties. The project Budget must demonstrate that RWIP funds along with any financing from other sources will provide adequate financial support to achieve the objectives of the proposal.

Training and Education

The Training and Education funding stream supports and funds projects that:

- Develop or expand capacity for training that will benefit Manitoba workplaces, industry sectors or occupations;
- Address gaps in the delivery of training and education;
- Promote cultural and language sensitive training to immigrant workers and workers at risk;
- Improve training in workplace risk assessment and hazard identification related to health and safety, injury prevention and safe return to work;
- Apply new information, technology, work processes or other factors to address injury prevention, safe return to work and occupational illness.

Projects with potential to meet these objectives will be assessed on their merit and relevance, demonstrated knowledge, expertise and proficiency in the development and delivery of training and educational projects, and the ability to complete the work. The Budget must demonstrate that RWIP funds along with any financing from other sources will provide sufficient financial support to achieve the objectives of the proposal.

GOVERNANCE

Roles and Responsibilities

Board of Directors

The WCB Board of Directors has oversight of RWIP, including responsibility for:

- Setting the mandate and direction of the program;
- Determining total annual RWIP funding amounts (RWIP Budget);
- Approving, amending or rejecting projects recommended by the Administration;
- Ensuring unspent/uncommitted RWIP funds are accounted for and reported;
- Ensure the integrity of the program by putting in place appropriate administrative controls.

The Administration

RWIP is administered by the WCB, reporting to the Board of Directors. The Administration:

- Issues the annual Call for Applications
- Review, evaluate and recommend projects for RWIP funding to the Board of Directors;
- Develops funding agreements with successful grant recipients;
- Monitors, evaluates, and reports to the Board of Directors on the progress of grants;
- Ensures grant recipients' compliance with funding agreements;
- Provides guidance to grant recipients when needed;
- Facilitates the release of WCB data to grant recipients as permitted by law and WCB policy.

REFERENCES

The Workers Compensation Act, sections 97.1(1), 97.1(2), and 101(1)

The Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, sections 42, 43, 44(1), 46, 47

The Personal Health Information Act, sections 3, 18, 19, 20, 22, 24, 59

Policy 21.50.10, *Disclosure of File Information*

Policy 21.50.50, *Release of Statistical Data*

History:

1. Policy on Research and Development originated by Board Order 164/89, effective January 1, 1990.
2. Policy 52.10 replaced by Board Order 14/97 on September 30, 1997, effective October 1, 1997.
3. Policy amended on February 20, 1998, by Board Order 1/98 to reflect role of Board of Directors in approving funding and budget.
4. Policy amended on April 29, 1999, by Board Order 16/99 to reflect a change in the name of the committee responsible for approving grant funding requests.
5. Amendments made to the Administrative Guidelines effective May 31, 2001.
6. Policy amended on October 30, 2001, by Board Order 26/01 to allow, at the discretion of the Board of Directors, for the funding of projects for terms exceeding 5 years.
7. An amendment to Section A, Item 10 “Exit Clause,” was approved by the Board of Directors on February 28, 2002, by Board Order 08/02.
8. Policy amended on January 31, 2006, by Board Order 02/06 to include changes in the administration of the Community Initiatives and Research Program.
9. New Policy 52.10, *Research and Workplace Innovation Program*, approved by Board Order 32/08 on September 25, 2008, effective January 1, 2009, reflecting creation of the RWIP program.
10. Policy amended on January 27, 2011, by Board Order No. 03/11, effective January 1, 2011 to reflect changes in the accounting and reporting of unspent/uncommitted funds.
11. Minor formatting and grammatical changes were made to the policy June 27, 2012.
12. Policy was amended on December 19, 2013 by Board Order No. 35/13, effective January 1, 2014, to include a training and education funding stream, clarify eligibility criteria, allow for capital funding up to certain limits, allow RWIP to approve additional funding up to certain limits, and mandate a program review every five years.
13. Policy amended by Board Order No. 45/14 on December 18, 2014 effective January 1, 2015, to change the level of additional project funding for which Board of Directors approval is required.
14. Policy amended by Board Order No. 05/16 on January 28, 2016, effective February 1, 2016, to streamline the Administration of Scientific Research proposals.
15. Policy amended by Board Order 44/19 on December 18, 2019 to reflect modified mandate (removal of scientific funding stream).