

2024–25 Research Support Fund Communications Plan

Overview/Purpose

As a requirement of receiving instrumental [Research Support Fund](#) (RSF) funding from Canada’s tri-council of granting agencies—NSERC, SSHERC, and CIHR—the University of Prince Edward Island must develop an annual communications plan, which outlines measurable communications goals, strategies that will help us achieve them, and tactics that acknowledge RSF assistance.

Audiences

1. University and research communities
2. Policy makers/external stakeholders
3. General public

Objective/Strategies

Our objective is to promote the RSF’s value and impact to our various audiences by conveying UPEI research success and acknowledging RSF support across our many communications channels. Our strategies include:

1. To write 15 feature articles and/or news releases to share across UPEI channels such as the Campus Connector, upei.ca, traditional media, and social media
2. To develop four “spotlights” (may also be video) highlighting RSF-supported projects/programs and their success for use on social media channels and upei.ca
3. To build the number of assets in digital photo gallery for use across communications channels
4. To update and improve a research experts list to provide to media as possible commentators

Tactics, Tools, and Timelines

- *Mass Media / Campus Connector / Social Media / UPEI.ca (on average, one per month)*

The communications team will write 15 stories, news releases, and/or articles about the projects and programs supported by the RSF. The 250–500-word stories will include acknowledgement of RSF funding and link to the RSF website.

News releases will be pushed out to our media list for possible amplification and also published on upei.ca, the University’s website. These releases will also be published in UPEI’s weekly electronic newsletter, the subscription-based *Campus Connector*, which reaches more than 2,000 subscribers from the campus community and beyond, including policy makers/external stakeholders. The articles will also

be pushed out across UPEI's social media channels, i.e., Facebook and X (formerly Twitter), which reach a combined 50,000 followers.

- *Video content and photo capture*

The communications team will coordinate with the members of the content marketing team (web writer, videographer and photographer) to capture marketing/digital content.

UPEI will develop four spotlights (may include video) that highlight RSF-supported projects/programs for use on social media channels and upei.ca. RSF funding acknowledgement will be included in either the video notes or credits.

The photographer will be commissioned to capture photos for use in news articles, videos, and on upei.ca. This coordinated effort will allow us to build the number of up-to-date research stock photos in our digital photo gallery.

- *RSF web page*

UPEI maintains a [dedicated RSF web page](#) that includes RSF impacts, plans, and reports. UPEI will update the site on an annual basis (by September 2024) to reflect current data and objectives.

- *Pitch UPEI researchers to the media as experts for topical subjects in the news (ongoing)*

UPEI maintains Island Scholar, a database that features faculty profiles and their research expertise/interest. In addition to using news releases as "pitches", the UPEI Communications team will continue to identify topical research areas and proactively pitch (as well as reactively offer) researchers to serve as expert opinions in the media.

Evaluation and Monitoring

The effectiveness of our communications activities will be determined through media monitoring and consultation with the Office of the Vice-President Academic and Research.