

## Survey on Research Activities and Commercialization of Intellectual Property in Higher Education (SRACIPHE) 2025 Reporting Guide

This guide is designed to assist respondents in completing the **Survey on Research Activities and Commercialization of Intellectual Property in Higher Education (SRACIPHE)**.

If you require additional information or clarification while completing the survey, please contact Statistics Canada:

**Help Line:** 1-877-949-9492

**Email:** [statcan.sraciphe-earcpies.statcan@statcan.gc.ca](mailto:statcan.sraciphe-earcpies.statcan@statcan.gc.ca)

## Confidentiality

**Your answers are confidential.**

Statistics Canada is prohibited by law from releasing any information it collects that could identify any person, business, or organization, unless consent has been provided by the respondent or disclosure is permitted under the *Statistics Act*.

Information collected through this survey will be used for statistical purposes only.

## Survey Purpose

The purpose of this survey is to collect information about commercialization activities undertaken within the higher education sector.

## Survey Coverage

This survey focuses on the higher education sector, including applied research and technology transfer organizations or units that carry out basic commercialization activities on behalf of postsecondary education institutions.

### 1) Higher education sector

The higher education sector, as defined in the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Frascati Manual, consists of institutions that provide formal postsecondary education programs such as universities, colleges, collège d'enseignement général et professionnel (CEGEPs), institutes of technology and polytechnics.

Research activities under the direct control of, or administered by, a postsecondary institution performed at another institution such as a hospital or research institute are considered part of the higher education sector. These activities are to be included in this survey and should be reported by the associated higher education institution.

For the purpose of this survey, research also includes experimental development, where applicable to the institution completing this form.

The terms research and research and development (R&D) used in this survey encompass basic, applied research and experimental development, as described by the Frascati Manual.

To reduce respondent burden, only postsecondary institutions performing more than \$500,000 of R&D in the 2025 fiscal year are being asked to complete this survey.

## 2) Applied research and technology transfer organizations

Technology transfer offices (TTOs), Technology access centres (TACs) and centre collégial de transfert de technologie et de pratiques sociales novatrices (college centres for the transfer of technology and innovative social practices; CCTTs) are included in the survey population, including those that are external to or independent of a higher education institution. This ensures that relevant commercialization activities undertaken by some institutions are not excluded from the survey solely based on how these services are owned, organized or accessed by a postsecondary institution.

## General information

### General reporting principle

Information for this survey may be distributed across research offices, technology transfer offices, commercialization units, faculties, departments, affiliated organizations, and finance offices. Respondents are encouraged to coordinate across these units to provide the most complete response possible.

When deciding whether to include an activity, legal entity, agreement, intellectual property asset, or commercialization activity, include it if the activity is under the control of, administered by, owned by, or formally managed by the reporting institution during the reporting period. If the activity is managed and reported by another organization, do not report it unless specifically instructed elsewhere in the questionnaire.

## Reporting

Postsecondary institutions should report for themselves wherever possible. Combined reporting is permitted where it is more practical for the institutions involved, provided that the activity of each legal entity is reported only once and is not double counted across multiple reports. If you provide information for more than one institution, please indicate the legal units included in this report in Questions 9 and 10.

The activities of TTOs, TACs and CCTTs that are administrative units of a postsecondary education institution should be reported by the postsecondary education institution. All TACs should fall into this category.

TTOs and CCTTs that are registered as a not-for-profit organization and are affiliated with one or more postsecondary education institutions, as subsidiaries or other legally distinct entities, will receive the survey. These institutions should report for themselves unless their activities are reported by their affiliated postsecondary institution as noted in Question 9.

Hospital(s) that conduct research and affiliated research institute(s) or research centre(s) whose research is not majority controlled and administered by a higher education institution are not considered part of the postsecondary sector and therefore will not receive a survey questionnaire. Postsecondary institutions affiliated with these organizations should however report the portion of research activities carried out at the affiliated hospital, research institute or research centre that are under their direct control or administration. This research is typically overseen by professors cross-appointed to the affiliated body and undertaken by graduate students of the higher education institution. Research activities that are not under the control or administered by the postsecondary institution should not be reported. This approach ensures that only the activities attributable to the higher education sector are included.

In cases where a postsecondary institution manages commercialization activities for another institution, such as fostering technology transfer or managing intellectual property (IP), pertinent questions will enable the respondent to indicate how these activities are organized and how they will be reported by this institution.

## Reporting Period (Question 8)

All questions in this survey should be answered in reference to this institution's fiscal year that ended between April 1, 2025, and March 31, 2026, inclusive. The start date of the fiscal year does not matter; only the fiscal year end date is used to determine the reporting period. This period represents the **Reference Year for the survey (2025)**.

For example:

Fiscal year April 1, 2024, to March 31, 2025, → Do not report (end date is before April

1, 2025).

Fiscal year July 1, 2024, to June 30, 2025, → Report (end date falls within the reporting period).

Fiscal year January 1, 2025, to December 31, 2025, → Report (end date falls within the reporting period).

Fiscal year April 1, 2025, to March 31, 2026, → Report (end date falls within the reporting period).

All information reported in this survey should correspond to the institution's fiscal period identified above. Financial information, including commercialization revenues and other reportable activities, should be reported for that period. Personnel counts, full-time equivalents (FTEs) and other institutional measures should also relate as closely as possible to the same reporting period. Where exact alignment is not possible, respondents should use the best available information from institutional records and apply reasonable estimates where necessary. Please note any significant departures from the reporting period or estimation methods in the survey comments section.

If the institution underwent structural changes during the reference period (e.g., amalgamation, transfer of functions, or dissolution), respondents should report data consistent with the institutional boundary applicable during the stated fiscal year and provide clarification in the comments section.

## Use of Comment Boxes

Comment boxes are provided at the end of each module. Respondents are encouraged to:

- Clarify or qualify responses,
- Explain assumptions or estimation methods used,
- Identify data limitations or reporting challenges, and
- Provide suggestions to improve question wording, definitions, or response options.

Comments are reviewed by Statistics Canada and used to improve future versions of the survey.

Providing detailed and constructive feedback helps ensure that the survey remains clear, relevant, and aligned with institutional practices across the higher education sector.

## General reporting instructions

### Four data types

The questions in the questionnaire fall into four categories: date, categorical, numerical and currency (dollar amounts).

Date questions require a specific date as the response (**e.g.**, DD/MM/YYYY).

Categorical questions require selecting one or more predefined response options (**e.g.**, Yes/No, multiple choice categories).

Numerical questions require a number as the response, such as counts or percentages.

Report all dollar amounts in thousands of Canadian dollars (\$CAD '000), rounded to the nearest whole thousand. For example, \$55,417 should be reported as 55.

If exact figures are unavailable, provide your best estimate based on institutional records, sampling, extrapolation, administrative data, or professional judgment. Estimates are preferred to leaving responses blank whenever a reasonable estimate can be produced.

### Reporting federal business numbers

Providing a federal business number is **optional**. If a business number is not available, you may leave this field blank and continue filling out the other fields in the question.

### Reporting zero

Please respond to each question whenever possible. If the data are unavailable, leave the question blank—do not enter zero unless the correct value is zero.

### Reporting incomplete or unavailable information

If precise figures are not available, please provide your best estimates.

The survey questionnaire includes non-mandatory checks in the form of pop-up windows that remind respondents of unanswered questions. By closing the pop-up window, respondents can skip the question and proceed to the next question. However, it is important to note that missing responses are considered non-responses and may result in imputation or follow-up.

### Response option – not applicable

In this survey, the **"Not Applicable"** option means that the institution does not carry out the activities in question and that this option should be selected. Leaving responses blank will be interpreted as the information being **"not available"** or **"unknown"** and may lead to **follow-up**. In the event a respondent is unable to provide an answer (i.e.,

the information is unknown and cannot be obtained or estimated), respondents are advised to skip the question (i.e., submit a blank response) and indicate in the relevant comment box that the question could not be answered.

If a question includes a **"Not applicable"** or similar response option, select the option that best applies. For quantitative questions that do not include a **"Not applicable"** option, leave the response blank if there was no activity, activity was negligible, or a reasonable estimate cannot be provided. Please explain any omitted responses in the comment box at the end of the applicable module. This will assist Statistics Canada in interpreting your submission.

Responses, including additional information provided in the open comment boxes, will be analyzed to inform future iterations of the survey.

## The Questionnaire

### Module 1: Institutional Information (Question 7 - Question 11)

#### Question 7 – Institution Type and Structure

This question asks the respondent to confirm the type of the reporting institution. Question 7 is a filter question that all respondents are asked. It serves to minimize response burden for smaller institutions, or for those who perform more modest levels of R&D. Only institutions that are reflected in one of the three answer categories are required to complete the full questionnaire.

The response **"None of the above"** in Question 7 should be selected only if the institution type and structure is not reflected in the preceding answer categories.

#### Definition: Research and Development (R&D)

R&D includes systematic, creative activities undertaken to increase knowledge and to develop new or improved products, processes, services, or technologies.

#### Include:

- Salaries and benefits of employees employed by the institution conducting R&D (including permanent, temporary, or casual employees)
- Payments to self-employed individuals or contractors working on-site on the institution's internal R&D projects
- Other current expenditures that directly support in-house R&D activities (e.g., materials, supplies, software, or utilities used for R&D projects)
- Capital expenditures for R&D related infrastructure and for machinery and equipment used in R&D activities
- Payments to external institutions for R&D where the tertiary educational institution administers or has direct control over the research being conducted.

**Exclude:**

- Payments for R&D performed by external organizations, individuals, or companies that are not controlled or administered by this institution (extramural R&D)
- Grants, fellowships, or contracts paid to individuals or organizations within or outside Canada
- Routine activities (e.g., standard testing, maintenance, training, or market research) should only be included if they are an integral part of a defined R&D project.

## Reporting instructions: Question 9 and 10

Many universities, colleges, polytechnics and CEGEPs have complex legal structures covering multiple legal entities that serve the core activities of the higher education institution. The following question is not an exercise to list all the legal structures that are part of an institution's organizational structure but to clarify what entities are being reported through this questionnaire to avoid double counting.

In general, this report should include all organizational units and legal entities that support the mission of the higher education institution. This includes the activities of all departments within the institution that are engaged, in whole or in part, in research, intellectual property support and management, and commercialization. For colleges and CEGEPs this includes the activities of centre collégial de transfert de technologie et de pratiques sociales novatrices (college centres for the transfer of technology and innovative social practices; CCTTs) and Technology Access Centres that are embedded within the institution.

Postsecondary institutions affiliated with research institutes or hospitals should report only the portion of research activities carried out at the affiliated hospital, research institute or research centre that is under the direct control of or administered by the postsecondary institution. Research activities that are not under the control or administered by the postsecondary institution should not be reported.

Technology transfer offices (TTOs) and CCTTs that operate as not-for-profit organizations affiliated with one or more postsecondary institutions, as subsidiaries may report independently.

### **Combined reporting**

A single combined response may be submitted for the following institutional entities or arrangements, provided that the information is held or managed by the institution completing this survey, and the affiliated institution is not submitting a report in its own name.

Examples of affiliated legal entities that may be included in a combined report include:

- affiliated or federated university colleges that do not administer research funding independently, and do not receive invention disclosures directly
- small affiliated entities whose research activities (if any) and intellectual property are fully managed by the parent institution
- established network of institutions, wholly owned and operated subsidiaries (e.g., innovation centres, affiliated research institutes)
- TTOs and CCTTs that operate as separate not-for-profit organizations affiliated with one or more postsecondary education institutions, as subsidiaries, where noted in Question 10.

In Question 9 the reporting institution should indicate whether the report covers only the institution verified as the respondent in the beginning of the questionnaire (option 1),

whether the report covers the verified respondent and other affiliated legal entities (option 2) or if the institution specified as the verified respondent is included in another institution's report (option 3). If the reporting institution is included in another institution's report, then the responding institution will be prompted to end the questionnaire.

An institution should select option 1 if the responding institution is:

- an overarching institution, such as a university, college, CEGEP or polytechnic. Include any centre *collégial de transfert de technologie et de pratiques sociales novatrices* (college centre for the transfer of technology and innovative social practices; CCTT), technology access centre or technology transfer office (TTO) embedded within the institution in this report; or,
- a CCTT or TTO that operates as a separate not-for-profit organization affiliated with one or more postsecondary institutions.

Question 10 is intended to identify all legally distinct entities whose activities are included in this report. Do not list all organizations that are affiliated with this institution. Only include affiliated higher education institutions (**e.g.**, federated or affiliated colleges), centre collégial de transfert de technologie et de pratiques sociales novatrices (CCTTs), or technology transfer offices (TTOs) whose research, intellectual property, or commercialization activities are being reported through this questionnaire. This information is used to define the reporting boundary and prevent double counting across multiple reports. Providing a federal business number is **optional**. If a business number is not available or the reporting institution is not able to provide the data, you may leave this field blank and continue to add the entity.

### Example

University A submits a combined report that includes:

- the university;
- an affiliated federated college; and
- a separately incorporated TTO.

All three entities should be listed in Question 10.

Activities should only be reported once. If an activity is reported by an affiliated institution, TTO, or CCTT, do not report the same activity again in another questionnaire. The affiliated entities should select option 3 of Question 9 **“The response for this institution is included in the report of another institution”**.

Do not list:

- affiliated foundations,
- alumni associations,
- student organizations,
- pension entities, or
- other affiliated organizations whose activities are not included in this report.

## Module 3: Intellectual property (Question 16 to Question 34)

This module collects information on **IP management and support activities** undertaken by your institution as well as **IP commercialization activities**.

**IP management** activities include identifying, protecting and managing intellectual property, such as invention disclosures, patent applications, IP portfolio management and licensing activities.

**IP support** activities include advisory, administrative or facilitation services that help researchers, inventors or institutions identify, protect, manage or use intellectual property.

### **Examples of IP management and support activities include:**

- administering invention disclosure processes;
- identifying potential applications or users of research results;
- providing IP assessments, advice or education;
- preparing documentation required to protect IP;
- supporting patent, copyright or trademark applications;
- managing institutional IP portfolios;
- providing licensing guidance or administrative support;
- facilitating collaborations related to IP development or use;
- providing commercialization support services or knowledge transfer assistance;
- providing funding for IP-related activities; and
- applying for IP on behalf of a third party or supporting an application by preparing the required documentation.

Institutions should report these activities whether they are delivered by internal staff or through external service providers or partners.

**IP commercialization** activities involve transferring, licensing, assigning, commercializing or otherwise applying intellectual property to generate economic or societal value outside the institution. These activities typically involve formal agreements, transactions or relationships with external organizations.

### **Examples of IP commercialization activities include:**

- licensing or assigning IP rights;
- executing option agreements;
- creating or supporting spin-off companies based on institutional IP (covered in module 5);
- negotiating commercialization agreements;
- generating licensing, royalty or other commercialization revenue;
- transferring technology or know-how to industry or other organizations; and
- supporting the market adoption of research-based products, services or technologies.

The key distinction is that **IP management or support activities** focus on identifying, protecting, administering and enabling the use of IP, whereas **IP commercialization activities** focus on transferring or exploiting IP to create economic or societal value through licensing, commercialization agreements, start-up creation or other forms of technology transfer.

IP-related activities may be carried out by one or more organizational units, such as an office of applied research, the vice-president (research) office, an industry liaison office or a technology transfer office.

## Module 4: Support for advancing projects toward commercialization (Question 35 to Question 39)

The questions in this section use the **Technology Readiness Level (TRL)** framework to describe the maturity of a product, process or prototype. The TRL scale is referenced in the response categories for Question 35 to help respondents identify activities conducted to help advance projects towards commercialization. Respondents who did not select the following option in Question 35: “**Final development, qualification or market-ready preparation of products, processes or prototypes (associated with TRL 7 and above)**” are not required to answer Questions 36 to 39. These follow-up questions apply only to respondents reporting activities at TRL 7 and above.

### Examples of activities typically associated with TRL 7 and above

- field testing of a prototype in an operational environment
- pilot deployment with an external client or partner
- certification, qualification, or regulatory testing
- final design refinement before market launch
- demonstration of a technology under real-world conditions.

If you provide an estimate for the number of new or improved products, processes or prototypes, please describe your estimation method and any key assumptions or calculations in the comment box for Question 38 or Question 39.

If your institution does not track activities that advanced research outcomes toward commercialization (Question 36), you may skip Question 37, which asks for the number of new or improved products, processes or prototypes.

### Definition: Technology readiness levels (TRL)

A TRL scale is used to assess the maturity of a technology, product, process or prototype as it progresses from research and development to deployment and operational use.

The following table provides a short summary of each TRL level.

| TRL | Short Definition                                                                      | Description                                                                                                                                                                                            | Examples of Activities                                                             |
|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1   | Basic principles observed and reported.                                               | Lowest level of technology readiness. Scientific research begins to be translated into applied research and development (R&D).                                                                         | Activities might include theoretical studies of a technology's basic properties.   |
| 2   | Technology concept and/or application formulated.                                     | Invention begins. Once basic principles are observed, practical applications can be invented. Applications are speculative, and there may be no proof or detailed analysis to support the assumptions. | Activities are limited to analytical studies.                                      |
| 3   | Analytical and experimental critical function and/or characteristic proof of concept. | Active R&D is initiated. This includes analytical studies and laboratory studies to physically validate the analytical predictions of separate elements of the technology.                             | Activities include components that are not yet integrated or representative.       |
| 4   | Component(s)/subsystem(s) and/or process validation in a laboratory environment.      | Basic components are integrated to establish that they will work together.                                                                                                                             | Activities include integration of "ad hoc" hardware or software in the laboratory. |

| TRL | Short Definition                                                                                              | Description                                                                                             | Examples of Activities                                                                                    |
|-----|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 5   | Semi-integrated component(s)/subsystem(s) and/or process validation in a simulated environment.               | The basic components are integrated for testing in a simulated environment.                             | Activities include laboratory integration of components.                                                  |
| 6   | System and/or process prototype demonstration in a simulated environment.                                     | A model or prototype that represents a near desired configuration.                                      | Activities include testing a model or prototype in a simulated or laboratory environment.                 |
| 7   | Prototype system ready (form, fit, and function) for demonstration in an appropriate operational environment. | Prototype is ready for demonstration in an operational environment and is at planned operational level. | Activities include prototype field testing in a real-world operational setting.                           |
| 8   | Actual solution completed and qualified through tests and demonstrations.                                     | Solution has been proven to work in its final form and under expected conditions.                       | Activities include developmental testing and evaluation of whether it will meet operational requirements. |
| 9   | Actual solution proven through successful deployment in an operational setting.                               | Actual application of the technology in its final form and under real-life conditions, such as those    | Activities include using the innovation under                                                             |

| TRL | Short Definition | Description                                       | Examples of Activities  |
|-----|------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-------------------------|
|     |                  | encountered in operational tests and evaluations. | operational conditions. |

Source: Government of Canada [Technology Readiness Levels \(TRLs\) - Canada.ca](https://www.canada.ca/en/industry/innovation/sectors/technology-readiness-levels-trl.html)

## Module 5: Business support (Question 40 to Question 46)

### Reporting instruction: Question 42

Providing a federal business number is **optional**. If a business number is not available or the reporting institution is not able to provide the data, you may leave this field blank and continue to add the spin-off.

### Definition: Spin-off

For the purpose of this survey, a *spin-off* refers to a company created to commercialize intellectual property (IP) or technology developed at this institution.

Institutions should report only spin-offs where there is a **formal and verifiable link to IP developed at the institution**.

Please consider companies that registered as a legal entity within the 2025 fiscal year.

Include only companies that meet at least one of the following conditions:

- The company has **licensed IP** (e.g., patents, software, or know-how) from this institution
- The company is based on an **invention disclosure** submitted to this institution
- The institution has **equity participation** in the company based on an IP contribution.

Exclude:

- Start-ups founded by students, graduates, or staff **without a formal IP relationship** to the institution
- Companies based on general knowledge, skills, or experience acquired at the institution, **without documented IP linkage**
- Start-ups supported by incubators, accelerators, or mentorship programs **unless they meet the IP-related conditions above**.

Only include spin-offs that the institution can **identify and substantiate based on formal records or agreements**.

### Definition: Start-ups

For the purpose of this survey, a *start-up* refers to a new company created to address a market need, typically built on a novel idea or technology and supported by a business plan and growth strategy.

Institutions should report only start-ups where there is **no formal or verifiable relationship to IP developed at this institution**. This applies regardless of whether the start-ups received support from this institution or not.

Please consider companies that registered as a legal entity within the 2025 fiscal year.

Include only companies that meet at least one of the following conditions:

- founded by students, graduates, or staff **without a formal IP relationship** to the institution
- Companies formed based on general knowledge, skills, or experience acquired at the institution, **without documented IP linkage**
- Companies supported by incubators, accelerators, or mentorship programs **unless they meet the IP-related conditions above**.

Exclude:

- Spin-offs that have **licensed IP** (e.g., patents, software, or know-how) from this institution
- Companies that are based on an **invention disclosure** submitted to this institution
- Companies where the institution has **equity participation** in the company based on an IP contribution.