

## Statement regarding the protection of personal and confidential information in applicant and funding holder files<sup>1</sup>

**This Statement describes how the Fonds de recherche du Québec (Fonds de recherche du Québec – Nature et technologies, Fonds de recherche du Québec – Santé, Fonds de recherche du Québec – Société et culture, hereinafter the “FRQ”) process the personal and confidential information<sup>2</sup> collected on forms<sup>3</sup> through the FRQnet system and other means.**

### **1. The Fonds process the information I provide in accordance with this Statement and the Act respecting Access to documents held by public bodies and the Protection of personal information.**

The personal and confidential information collected on forms is treated confidentially, in accordance with this Statement and the *Act respecting Access to documents held by public bodies and the Protection of personal information* (CQLR c.A-2.1, hereinafter the “Act”).

Personal and confidential information includes scientific information, which may be collected on the following forms and annexed documents, if applicable:

- Application for funding
- Funding related forms, which include all forms filed during the application and funding periods (status report, progress report, bank transfer form, etc.)
- Financial, scientific and final reports

Certain forms provide additional information as details are entered. Applicants and funding holders should take note of this information.

#### **a. The Fonds to which I am applying for funding collects the personal and confidential information I provide on the forms. This information is then shared between the three Fonds de recherche du Québec**

When an applicant fills in a form, the Fonds de recherche to which the application is addressed collects the information. The FRQ share administrative services (article 33, *Act respecting the Ministère de l’Enseignement supérieur, de la Recherche, de la Science et de la Technologie*, CQLR, c. M-15.1.0.1), and the information entered by applicants and funding holders is therefore shared with the Fonds whose collaboration is required to review the application or oversee eventual

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<sup>1</sup> Note for FRQnet system users: This Statement does not apply to the information entered when you create your profile (MY PROFILE tab). In view of the nature of this information, it is subject to more stringent use, keeping and release measures.

<sup>2</sup> In this Statement, “confidential information” includes the scientific information provided by applicants.

<sup>3</sup> In this Statement, “form” includes the forms set out in Section 1 of the Statement and all related documents.

funding. It is also shared between the three Fonds to ensure the optimal management of the funding programs and public funds.

***b. Where applicable, the Fonds will share certain personal and confidential information collected from the forms with their financial partners.***

When a program receives financial support from a partner, the Fonds de recherche to which the application is addressed may share the personal and confidential information provided on the forms with its financial partner(s) in the program to which the applicant has applied (see Section d. of this Statement for further details on the financial, scientific and final reports). The individuals who are given access to the information undertake to respect its confidentiality.

***c. The information collected by the Fonds will be used to review my application for funding and manage my funding.***

The personal and confidential information that applicants must include in their application for funding and in funding related forms is used to review and process applications at all stages leading to funding. In addition, the information will be used to manage funding (administer, ensure compliance with funding use and accountability rules, review funded projects).

The FRQ will provide the reviewers designated by the Fonds and the observers and representatives designated by the FRQ's financial partners, who must all sign a confidentiality agreement, with access to the personal and confidential information of applicants and funding holders.

***d. The information collected by the Fonds will also be used in the reporting that is expected of the FRQ as public bodies and the attainment of the FRQ's mission to promote and financially support research in Québec and knowledge dissemination.***

The FRQ are public bodies. As such, they must demonstrate transparency and be accountable with regard to the public funds invested in research (e.g. annual management reports, examination of estimates of expenditure, audits by the auditor general, etc.).

As a result, certain information pertaining to funding offers and funding will be released, on the websites of the FRQ among others. This information includes first and last names, fiscal year, start of the funding period, program focus, funding category, program code, program details, file number, name and address of the institution, title of the research project, research area, research field, research topics, fields of application, key words, amount dedicated to research, amount dedicated to indirect research costs and total amount dedicated to research. When a summary for public dissemination is required, the text may also be released.

In addition to the above-mentioned details, the personal and confidential information on the form will be used to generate statistics and compile data on the benefits of the funded projects. They will also enable the FRQ to assess their programs, performance and impacts of the projects they support, particularly in Québec. Finally, aggregated data may be used to generate statistics,

inventories, assessments and analyses in connection with the FRQ's mission to promote and financially support research in their respective areas (see the mission of the FRQ, CQLR c. M-15.1.0.1, art. 39 to 41).

These analyses may be released in accordance with the Act. Applicants and funding holders will not be identified in these analyses, unless:

- a) they have consented to be identified;
- b) they have received a funding offer or are funding holders and the information is related to the offer or funding (see Sub-section d., prg. 2);
- c) the information is public (e.g. in a scientific publication or on the website of the institution or research team).

*Financial, scientific and final reports:* Funding holders must file financial, scientific and final reports when the award or grant period has ended, in accordance with the program rules. The information is required to demonstrate the responsible use of public funds, assess the results and measure the impacts of the funding.

Funding holders consent that certain information will be made public. The following details may be released: project title, summary and impacts, scientific publications, congresses, seminars and conferences (when the information is public), interventions, media activities and publications and those aimed at the general public and artistic and literary works and performances that have been released.

Other information will be shared between the three Fonds. In addition, certain details may be communicated confidentially to the Fonds' financial partners when the funding is under a jointly funded program (e.g. information on success factors, names of the trainees who receive funding through the project, partner organizations, transfer activities and the pursuit of the funded activities).

Finally, the FRQ will remain in regular contact with the applicants, funding holders and former funding holders in order to assess the agencies' programs and services, develop their strategic plans and consult with applicants and funding holders on topics related to the FRQ's awards and grants programs and mission.

Former applicants and funding holders may be contacted by the FRQ to serve as reviewers on the scientific review committees assembled by one or several Fonds de recherche du Québec.

## **2. The information required by the Fonds on all forms must be provided.**

The collection of information on forms is required to analyze and review the applications for funding and ensure applicants are eligible to receive other types of funding. Applicants who fail to provide the information required by the Fonds shall not be eligible to apply for or receive funding from the FRQ.

## **3. Certain individuals will access information, which they shall keep confidential, to review applications for funding, manage funding and, more generally, ensure that the FRQ fully carry out their mission.**

Information will be provided to individuals whose collaboration is required to review or process an application or manage funding.

More specifically, the information will be provided to staff members of the Fonds to which the application is addressed, its scientific advisors and other consultants and agents and authorized FRQ staff members whose collaboration is required to review the application or manage funding.

Relevant elements of the applications for funding will be made available to reviewers and, if applicable, to observers and representatives of the Fonds' financial partners in the program for review purposes.

*Award applications:* The funding applications will also be made available to the individuals who endorse them (e.g. director, mentor, supervisor, recommender). The student's home institution will also be made aware of summary information on the application (e.g. name of the applicant, type of application, etc.). When an award is granted, the funding holder's home institution may request to read the funded application (and only the funded application).

*Grant applications:* The grant applications will also be made available to the managing institutions and co-investigators via FRQnet as soon as the institutions and co-investigators are designated as such on the application form (even if the application is not yet filed). Once an application is filed, the relevant elements will remain available to the institutions and co-investigators, including, in some cases, the co-investigators' home institution(s). When a grant is awarded, the employer of the principal investigator or co-investigators or the managing institution may request to read the funded application (and only the funded application), as well as all other funding related form.

Throughout the funding period, the Fonds that manages the funding will share administrative, personal and confidential information with the designated managing institution and, if applicable, the employer of the principle investigator and co-investigators (if the employer is not the managing institution) or the teaching institution (college or university) in which the award holder is enrolled to ensure the optimal management of the review and granting processes (e.g. ensure ongoing compliance with eligibility requirements, make payments, etc.). These exchanges with the Fonds may be via FRQnet or other means of communication. The individuals and institutions

that access the information undertake to respect its confidentiality. To ensure the greater security of these exchanges, access to personal and confidential information by managing institutions, the FRQ's partners and the reviewers will chiefly be provided through FRQnet's secure portals developed for this purpose, which require user authentication.

**4. I consent to the Fonds seeking information on me from the managing institution, my employer (if it is not the managing institution) or my teaching institution.**

To determine applicant eligibility and properly manage funding, the FRQ and the teaching or employing institution, where relevant, must exchange administrative, personal and confidential information.

*Award applications:* The Fonds will ask the teaching institution to confirm the status of the funding holder's registration by providing the FRQ with the funding holder's permanent code from the Ministère de l'Éducation et de l'Enseignement supérieur. The same applies in cases in which a funding holder asks to suspend an award for an authorized reason (e.g. parental leave).

*Grant applications:* The managing institution must confirm an applicant's eligibility to receive funding from the Fonds based on his/her status in Canada (see the *Common General Rules*). The FRQ may verify the information with the managing institution or employer (if different from the managing institution) and any other authority that oversees immigration cases in Québec or Canada. The same applies in cases in which a funding holder asks to suspend an award for an authorized reason (e.g. parental leave).

**5. Should there be breach of responsible conduct research allegations, the Fonds will share information with the managing institution.**

All applicants and funding holders must undertake to comply with the *Policy for the Responsible Conduct of Research* of the FRQ, as well as the institutional policies that apply to their research activities.

When filing an application for funding, the applicant consents to the Fonds sharing his/her personal information with the managing institution (or employer, if applicable) or teaching institution (see the *Policy for the Responsible Conduct of Research* of the FRQ for further details).

**6. *The Fonds will retain my personal information as long as necessary to review or manage my grant, including throughout the required reporting process.***

The FRQ will retain the information on its secure servers located in Québec for a period consistent with the Fonds' document management policy (available on the websites of each Fonds). Even when a file is not available in the portal, the Fonds may still retain the data.

FRQnet is not an archiving system. Applicants and funding holders must save their files for their personal use.

**7. *I may access my personal information and request corrections***

All persons may access their own personal information held by the Fonds. They may also request corrections when the information is inaccurate, incomplete or ambiguous. To do so, they must contact the person responsible for access to information for details on the procedures to access, correct and protect the personal information held by the FRQ and the remedies provided under the Act.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, no corrections shall be made to applications that are under review. It is the responsibility of the applicant to file documents that are complete and up to date. Filing an incomplete or inaccurate document may result in the application being rejected and may constitute a breach of responsible conduct of research.