

REGIONAL RESEARCH PROJECTS

Applied Research Decision-making Brief



BACKGROUND

The RDI undertakes research that is focused on supporting strategic, regional level decision-making. The RDI tackles emerging research questions that advance our collective understanding of topics that will impact the future of the region. Research efforts are targeted to best meet the needs of decision-makers, including local and provincial government and leaders in the educational, business, and non-profit sectors.

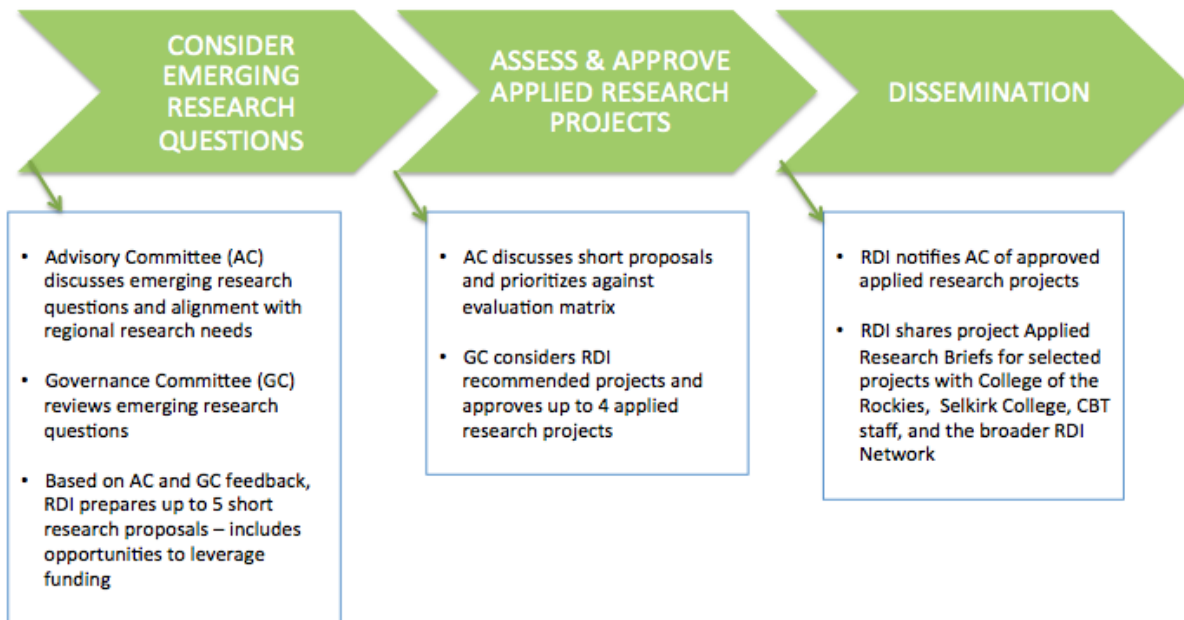
APPROACH

The RDI will lead various applied regional research projects each year that are aligned with the RDI Strategic Plan, informed by consultations processes, discussions with the RDI and CBT staff, the RDI Governance Committee and the RDI Advisory Committee, evaluated based on a set of criteria (see applied research selection matrix), and informed by end user groups that will use the research. Some applied research priorities may require substantial effort and may span several years depending on project scope. Depending on ongoing research projects and RDI capacity, the RDI may lead approximately up to 4 applied research projects. The number of research projects depends upon RDI capacity, work plan, and focus in that year. The audience for each RDI project may vary depending on the nature of the applied research and data/information products. The RDI will seek external funding from respected¹ national, provincial and regional agencies (i.e. Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, BC Real Estate Foundation, Southern Interior Beetle Action Coalition) in support of approved applied research projects. The purpose of leveraged funding is to expand the scope of prioritized projects.

PROCESS



RDI Applied Research Project Selection Process



¹ funding will not impede the RDI's ability to act as an objective research body

DECISION-MAKING STEPS

1. Advisory Committee (AC) discusses emerging research questions important to the region and considers alignment with regional research needs
2. Governance Committee (GC) discusses emerging research questions - checks topics against institutional mandates, the political lens, and the original scope and intent of the RDI
3. Based on feedback from AC and GC, RDI creates a short proposal for up to 5 research projects. At this stage, there should be an indication of whether leveraged funding is being sought or is available and a discussion of the implications, and it should be clarified that leveraged funding opportunity did not influence prioritization.
4. AC discusses short proposals and prioritizes against evaluation matrix
5. GC to review max. 5 short proposals (300 words) and provide approval of recommended² top up to 4 projects (dependent of capacity of RDI team that year) – GC to also provide approval of broad research themes to guide decisions related to emerging research partnership opportunities

PROPOSAL EVALUATION MATRIX

CRITERIA	1	2	3	4	5
ALIGNMENT WITH RDI PRIORITIES					
RDI Strategic Plan					
5: The research subject aligns with RDI strategic priorities as identified in the Strategic Plan					
1: The research subject does not align with strategic priorities as identified in the Strategic Plan					
ALIGNMENT WITH REGIONAL RESEARCH NEEDS					
Regional Applicability					
5: The research subject is important across the RDI's entire area of interest					
1: The research subject is only important to select communities or organizations					
Relevance					
5: The research program addresses the most important questions about the research subject and addresses fundamental issues of rural sustainability, resilience, economic and social development					
1: The research program does not addresses the most important questions about the research subject and addresses fundamental issues of rural sustainability, resilience, economic and social development					
Decision-support					
5: The research provides information that is useful to decision makers					
1: Decision makers do not need the research, or do not have the capacity to put it to use					
Concreteness/Specificity					
5: The research questions are clearly defined					
1: The research questions are complex and vague					
Understandability/Accessibility/Support/Interest					
5: Users readily understand the research subject and information products					
1: The research subject or information products are poorly understood by users					
Partnerships					
5: The research involves broader community partnerships with other organizations, can build capacity, and strengthen relationships across the region					
1: The research does not involve broader community partnerships with other organizations, does not build capacity, and does not have the potential to bring stakeholders together					

² Informed by advisory feedback and the evaluation matrix