

Frequently Asked Questions

It is understandable that questions may arise as a result of change. In this section, we address some of the questions we have heard. Additional questions may be sent to univrs.support@usask.ca.

General FAQs

The University Research System (UnivRS) is a web-based central repository for research-related activities and CV data management. It is intended to simplify the pre-and post-award and compliance processes, while producing reports and CV documents as needed. The data stored in UnivRS will help facilitate a research network among the faculty, finding shared research interests and building collaborations at the University of Saskatchewan. Additional information about the UnivRS project is available in the [project charter](#).

The implementation of UnivRS will address the infrastructure required to support, sustain and expand the University of Saskatchewan research enterprise. It is intended to be a central tool to collaboratively manage some research activities, including pre-and post-award, compliance processes (i.e. human ethics, animal care, biosafety and radiation safety) and clinical trials. This will also make research management more efficient and powerful by complying with reporting requirements from funding and other regulatory agencies.

UnivRS is intended to:

- replace older, separate database systems with one centralized research and CV management tool at the University of Saskatchewan. The data stored within those separate systems will be migrated to UnivRS, including all research grants and contracts administered by the University of Saskatchewan since 1998, to preserve existing data and populate the University of Saskatchewan Standardized CV and Forms 1 and 2.
- integrate with other systems at the University of Saskatchewan, such as AboutUS (the human resources system), PAWS (the university portal), the UDW (the university data warehouse) and the University's identity management services. UnivRS plans to integrate with the Canadian Common CV (CCV) to streamline efforts needed to prepare funding applications.
- Develop reports for academic unit(s) to promote research, scholarly and artistic work, and assist with annual reports and metrics. Administrative units may also have access to institutional metrics, such as publications per year, teaching activities and research funding history. Units can work with the UnivRS Team to develop reports in the system, which they can access and generate at any time.
- increase transparency and optimization of business processes, and improve service delivery by integrating business processes and technology
- develop inherent standards and controls within the system to ensure compliance with the [Tri-Agency Agreement on the Administration of Agency Grants and Awards by Research Institutions](#), [Controlled Goods Regulations](#) and other known requirements.
- enhance data sharing, accuracy and trust of information, and dynamic reporting increase support for communicating research to raise the University of Saskatchewan profile worldwide

The implementation of UnivRS was projected to cost \$7.538M. Operational costs are being reallocated to support UnivRS throughout its implementation.

Save you time! UnivRS can be used to:

- Generate your University of Saskatchewan Standardized CV and Forms 1 and 2. Faculty can add information to their CV from many sources, importing data from online publication databases such as PubMed, Web of Science and Scopus, while uploading information from personal BibTeX, Endnote (X1/X2/Tag), Reference Manager (RIS) and Refworks files. CV documents may be downloaded into a Word or PDF document at any time. The CV documents are pre-formatted to reduce administrative burdens and keep the information consistent.
- Reduce the amount of time spent obtaining internal approvals for research grants and contracts. Those paper-based approvals are now obtained electronically in UnivRS to reduce administrative burdens on faculty and staff, and revert time back to research.
- Comply with the [Tri-Agency Framework: Responsible Conduct of Research](#) and related policies, [Controlled Good regulations](#), and other internal and external requirements.
- Monitor research projects and generate information to assist with annual reports or reviews.

UnivRS plans to:

- Interact directly with the Canadian Common CV (CCV) to minimize the amount of effort needed to apply for funding (e.g., CIHR, NSERC and SSHRC) and keep CCV information up-to-date.
- Generate CV documents in a variety of formats to adhere to accreditation standards and funding agency requirements.

- Maintain your online web profile on your College/School/Centre website to promote research, scholarly and artistic work, and facilitate collaborations with colleagues and students.
- Integrate with the University of Saskatchewan institutional repository to make research, scholarly and artistic work accessible to the public thereby complying with external requirements, such as the [Tri-Agency Open Access Policy on Publications](#).

Yes, the software – CONVERIS - was purchased from [Clarivate Analytics](#), who will jointly implement the system with the UnivRS team at the University of Saskatchewan.

The goal is to fully implement UnivRS by 2021 in stages. A general progressive implementation plan for UnivRS is as follows:

- Stage 0: Set up of Standard System

- Stage 1: Pre-and Post-Award Management

- Implement grant and contracts data module and associated workflows
- Implement identity management, delegation and electronic approvals
- Implement preliminary research reporting
- Preliminary integration with internal system (e.g., Research Ethics, Biosafety, IDM)

- Stage 2 and 3: Compliance, CV and Advance Reporting

- Implement ethics review workflows and meeting management
- Implement publications data module and associated workflows
- Implement public web capabilities and services
- Implement advance reporting capabilities
- Incorporate data exchange capabilities with agency(ies)

- Stage 4: Clinical Trials and Graduate Students

- Implement clinical trials data module and associated workflows
- Implement graduate students data module and associated workflows

There are no foreseen disruptions in service during implementation. Existing systems will remain active until UnivRS has been thoroughly tested.

Yes, UnivRS will address Tri-Agency compliance requirements by ensuring internal controls are in place to monitor and track controlled goods, conflicts of interest and ethical compliance requirements for research projects. It will also support internal initiatives, such as: the internal approval processes for Tri-Agency funded research; institutional policies for research administration, eligibility and institutional costs of research; and the development of an institutional repository for the University of Saskatchewan.

Yes, the information entered or migrated into UnivRS will be secure because it is stored on University of Saskatchewan servers. It does not require any plug-ins or third party software, and can be used on mobile devices with support for Android, iOS and Windows Phones.

User accounts in UnivRS are maintained through the University's identity management services. These services assign authenticated permissions to faculty and staff through role-based access in UnivRS. Each role allows a faculty or staff member to carry out a range of tasks, such as approving a research grant or contract. Role-based access can be created and/or modified as the business needs of the University of Saskatchewan evolve, without having to update the permissions of each end user. Additional information about the types of roles in UnivRS is available on [UnivRS resources webpage](#).

Yes, UnivRS connects to other systems on campus to simplify processes and avoid duplication, such as AboutUS (the human resources system), PAWS (the university portal), the UDW (the university data warehouse), and the University's identity management services. These connections also provide information necessary to comply with the University's [Eligibility to Apply for, Hold and Administer Research Funding](#) policy and sponsoring agency requirements. Connections to other internal and external systems, such as the Canadian Common CV, ResearchGate and Google Scholar may be included in a future release.

All faculty, staff and affiliates of the University of Saskatchewan can request improvements to UnivRS. To submit a request, please send a completed [UnivRS Continual Improvement Form](#) to univrs.support@usask.ca. The UnivRS team will then review your request and provide updates, when applicable.

Compliance (Animal Ethics, Biosafety, Cannabis Safety, Human Ethics and Radiation Safety)

The Compliance module effectively manages and reports on projects involving human participants, biological materials and radioisotopes at the University of Saskatchewan. It also ensures the University of Saskatchewan aligns with external regulations and guidelines, including those set by Health Canada, Public Health Agency of Canada, Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Canadian Nuclear Safety Commission and the Tri-Agencies. Software for projects involving animals and/or animal tissues is scheduled to be released in 2022.

All faculty and staff will continue to submit their human ethics, animal ethics, biosafety and radiation safety forms to the respective unit via e-mail. Additional information about research ethics is available at: <https://vpresearch.usask.ca/researchers/ethics1.php>

Human ethics software was released internally to select research ethics staff and their centralized review committees on **May 7, 2018**. Biosafety and radiation safety software is scheduled to be released internally to the Safety Resources staff and their centralized review committees on **December 10, 2018**. The staff and their centralized review committees will pilot the software before it is released to the campus community in 2022.

During the internal release, the Compliance module will only be accessible by select research ethics and Safety Resources staff, and individuals associated with their centralized review committees.

Since 2016, many stakeholders have been consulted to develop the Compliance module. These stakeholders include, but are not limited to, the following: Office of the Vice-President Research staff; Safety Resources staff; Chairs of ethics review committees; the Research Systems Steering Committee and UnivRS Reference Group; and other internal and external stakeholders. Since November 2016, over fifty (50) stakeholders actively beta tested human ethics, biosafety and radiation safety software.

Faculty and staff are encouraged to complete the new and/or revised paper-based forms for projects involving human participants: <https://vpresearch.usask.ca/researchers/ethics1.php>. These forms are intended to: 1) provide opportunities for the campus community to share early feedback about the forms; and 2) to streamline the transfer of paper-based forms into UnivRS by the research ethics staff.

The biosafety and radiation safety forms have not been modified. These forms can be downloaded at: https://safetyresources.usask.ca/procedures_forms/index.php

Yes, data entered into the Research Excellence and Innovation (formerly Research Services and Ethics Office) and Safety Resources legacy Access databases will be migrated to UnivRS prior to each scheduled launch. There are no foreseen disruptions to submitted or active projects during the migration.

Minor disruptions may occur as the research ethics and Safety Resources staff become familiar with the Compliance module. Resources have been hired to assist with the transition and to provide dedicated support during the rollout.

Some of the possible risks include: resistance to new and/or modified paper-based forms for projects involving human participants; and changes in external policies and/or regulations that may impact business processes and associated software.

Curriculum Vitae (CV)

Please visit the the [USask knowledge base](#) to access information about how to enter and update your USask Standardized CV and Forms 1 and 2. Further information about the USask Standardized CV and Forms 1 and 2 is available on the [Office of the Vice-Provost, Faculty Relations website](#).

Pre-and Post-Award Management

Please visit the [USask knowledge base](#) to access information about how to submit and approve research grants and contracts in UnivRS. Further information about the grants and contracts process is available on the [Office of the Vice-President Research website](#).

UnivRS

Knowledge Base

Need technical assistance? Contact [UnivRS Support!](#)