



researchNS

Mission-oriented
research: Applying for
RNS funding

January 13, 2022

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Overview of RNS

- Established April 1, 2019 to “support, organize and coordinate” research in NS.
- Predecessors: Nova Scotia Health Research Foundation; Nova Scotia Research and Innovation Trust; Research Nova Scotia Trust
- Mandate: RNS research must produce opportunities and outcomes to advance either:
 - Inclusive economic growth
 - A healthy population and a strong healthcare system
- Tied closely to government priorities



Overview: Activities

- Professional team oversees approximately 500 grants.
- We work with partners, government departments, federal funders, and we create our own programming.
 - Student support, including Scotia Scholars and student challenges
 - Capacity building support e.g. New Health Investigator Grants
 - Matches for federal grants (CFI, etc.)
 - Convened research projects
 - Other opportunities
- We forge partnerships, work with end-users, and represent Nova Scotia to federal funders.

Overview: Limitations

- Limited budget
- RNS must demonstrate value to government funders – reporting relationship with Department of Advanced Education
- Mandate dictates two priority areas; strategy expands upon these, but we can't fund everything
- In lean years, or without additional funding, we must make careful choices
- RNS is not the gatekeeper of all research; rather, a mechanism of provincial support for a selection of projects





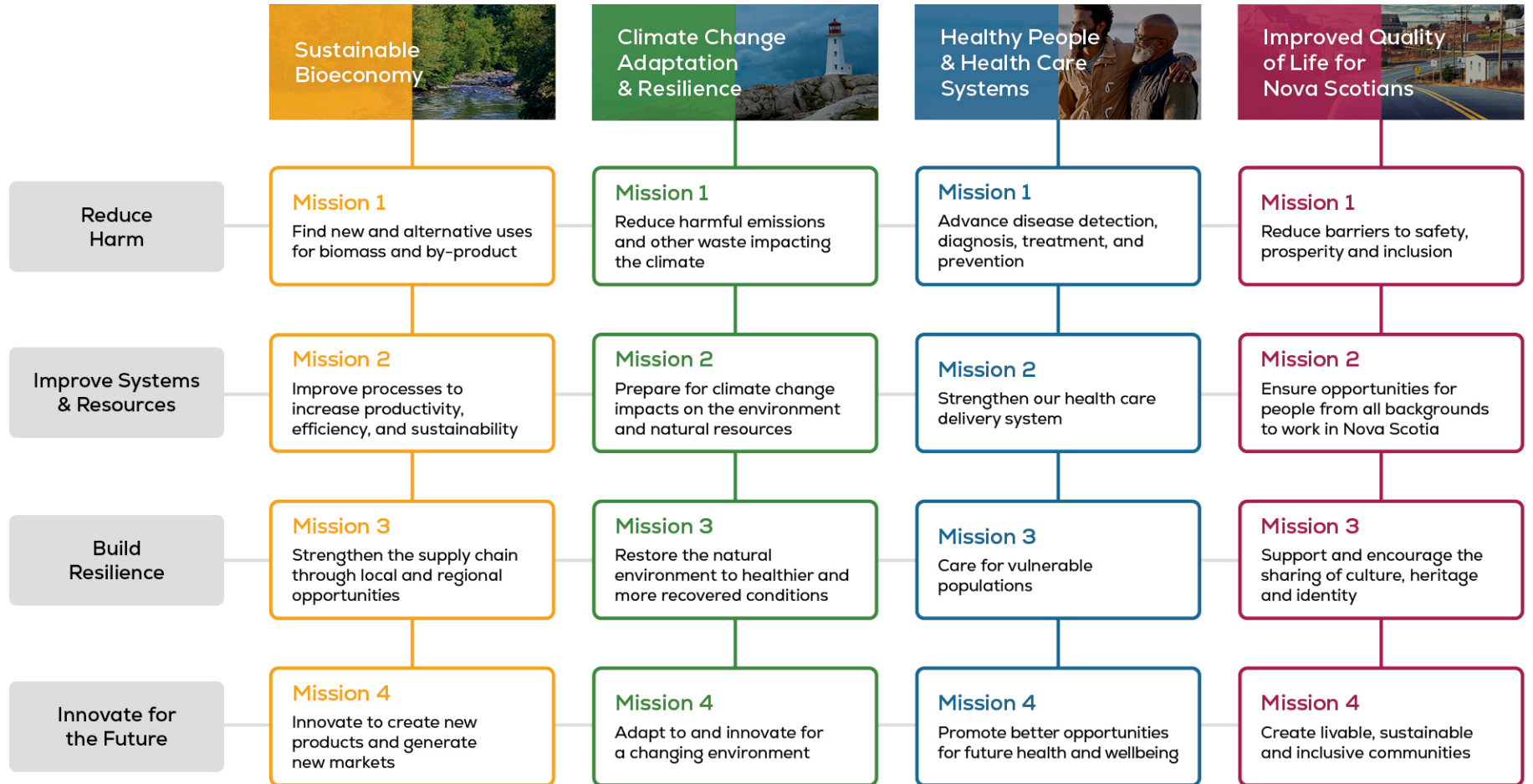
Mission-Oriented Research

“A portfolio of actions across disciplines to achieve a bold, inspirational and measurable goal with impact for society and policy-making.”

– Dr. Mariana Mazzucato, IIPP (UCL)

- Start with what we want to accomplish (what is the need or gap?), then convene researchers and partners to reach the goal
- Join researcher capacity and expertise with government and societal uptake
- Co-creation, integration (not end-of-grant)

RNS Strategy



Applying to RNS

- Not just about checking boxes, or categorizing projects into colours
- We want to know:
 - How will your research help to *achieve* the missions?
 - Why is this project/equipment/lab/etc vital to the bigger picture?
 - How does funding this work benefit Nova Scotia?
(beyond research expenditures like HQP, direct/indirect economic impact)
- But don't panic. There are many ways to demonstrate connection and value.



Connecting to Mandate

1. Direct connection: Your research will directly contribute to a mission.

- Tell us how. What gap will this address? Why is that important to success? Note: not just about categorizing!

2. Related, but not direct: Your research could lay the foundation for a mission, but is not directly addressing it.

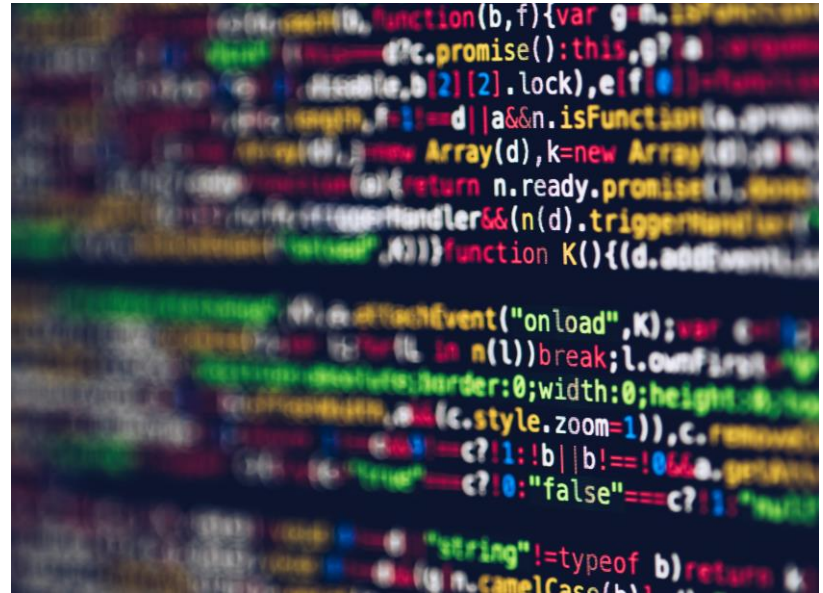
- Position your work within the broader context. How could it help? What is the broad context?



Applying to RNS: Connecting to Mandate

3. Not clearly connected, but important: Your research is vital for NS, but falls outside the strategy.

- Why is this significant? How will it benefit NS?
- Why should the province contribute?
- There is good, valuable and important research that falls outside of our strategy
- Funding is limited, and we can't fund everything, so we have to make choices
- We can help find other funders and partners



Demonstrating Research Potential

- For all applications, we want to see how it fits within the bigger picture:
- What other funding might this unlock?
 - Could it help leverage later private sector funding, other grants? Will it establish a lab that leads to a later IF or NSERC grant?
- Is there an opportunity for training?
 - Will it contribute to building new professionals in a key workforce?
- How does it fit with other researchers, equipment/infrastructure and projects in this field, in NS or outside of it?



Demonstrating Research Potential

- What's the longer term plan?
 - Will it build a new area of expertise? Build on existing strengths? What other projects or researchers might be involved?
- How will it get into the hands of those who can use it?
 - Partners, end-users, future opportunities?
 - Co-creation and integration?
- How can RNS support your success?
 - Introductions? Connections to gov't? Support as part of project team (for larger scale projects)?





How RNS Can Help

- We want to be part of the proposal process, as early into the process as possible. Reach out through your research office and work with us early on.
- We need to justify our choices to government: clear applications that demonstrate value help us do that.
- Collaborative approach: if your application comes to us for funding, we may want to meet with you to discuss and ask questions
- We see ourselves not as a funder, but as a partner. Bring us into the conversation, and keep us part of the project.

Questions?

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