

COVID-19 Research Recovery

The health and safety of the Nipissing University (NU) research and campus community is the University's priority. Please find below the stage in model for resuming research activities during COVID-19. The transition from one stage to the next will be guided by public health advice and in accordance with the appropriate Federal and Provincial directives.

The Nipissing University Research Ethics Board (NUREB) continues to accept applications, and the Office of Graduate Studies and Research (OGSR) promotes the continuation of research; however, all protocols must follow Health and Safety guidelines, and best practices. Please email research@nipissingu.ca with all questions regarding research during the COVID-19 pandemic.

A guiding principle for research recovery is should you be able to continue conducting research from home, please do so to limit the number of access requests and face-to-face interactions.

Field Work: For requests to resume fieldwork, please complete the “Research Recovery – Field Work” application in ROMEO under Office of Research Services. To create an account use this [link](#).

Library Services: For requests regarding library research resources please contact Nancy Black using nancyblack@nipissingu.ca.

On Campus Access: For on campus access, please follow the staged approach below.

Stage 0: Current state of affairs.

- University staff and faculty members work remotely
- Access to campus is strictly prohibited

Stage 1: Temporary ONE TIME access

Researchers may request temporary access to the Nipissing University campus **strictly to retrieve data necessary to continue working remotely**. Students are not permitted to request access at this time. If temporary entry is approved, researchers must first agree to the access terms set out by Facilities and Health and Safety, as well as complete self-assessment set out by Health and Safety. Researchers are to arrive alone on the designated date and time as set out in the access approval and must adhere to social distancing requirements. Please follow the steps below for Stage 1 temporary access.

- If you do not already have a Romeo account, please create one using this [link](#).
- Complete the “Research Recovery Stage 1 – Temporary Access” application under Office of Research Services
- Your request will be forwarded to the OGSR, Facilities, and Health and Safety for review.
- If your request is approved, the OGSR will contact you with your access date a time.
 - Note: Entry is strictly to retrieve data necessary to continue working and analyzing data remotely.
- Subsequently, Health and Safety will contact you with information on how to complete the mandatory self-assessment before re-entry.
 - Note that Health and Safety will have a list of approved applicants and will only provide training to those on the approved list.

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Stage 2: Limited access to campus and research spaces

Researchers may request limited access to a designated space for themselves and for students/research assistants **to analyze data otherwise unable to be analyzed remotely**. This includes research laboratories housing software only available on laboratory computers, equipment unable to transport home, data that cannot leave the laboratory, etc. If the analyses can continue remotely, access will be denied. Stage 2 strictly involves the analysis of data collected remotely, or previously collected before working remotely. No face-to-face contact with human participants or non-human animal models for the collection of new data are permitted at this stage. The size of each lab space will dictate the number of individuals allowed in the space. If limited access is approved, all personnel who will be entering the lab will have to complete the employee re-entry training. All approved researchers must strictly abide by social distancing guidelines and ensure their students are entering the lab voluntarily. Please follow the steps below for Stage 2 limited access.

- If you do not already have a Romeo account, please create one using this [link](#).
- Complete the “Research Recovery Stage 2 – Limited Access” application under Office of Research Services
- Your request will be forwarded to OGSR, Facilities, and Health and Safety for review
 - Priority will be given to researchers with projects involving graduate students who require data for completion of their degrees.
- If your request is approved, all members included in the application will be contacted by Health and Safety with information on how to complete re-entry training.
 - Note that Health and Safety will have a list of approved applicants and will provide training to those on the approved list.
- Once all members included on the application have completed the mandatory health and safety training, a confirmation email will be sent to you and Facilities.
- Facilities will then provide you with a date and time for entry and reentry.
 - Note: A schedule for individuals with limited access will be created through Facilities and will require strict adherence to social distancing guidelines.

Researchers and their students must complete health-screening questions upon each reentry. Students are not to enter the laboratory without their supervisor present.

Before Stage 3.1

Should you consider requesting stage 3 access (see below); the following steps must be completed prior to your request. Stage 3 involves data collection using human participants, which requires further safety precautions.

- Plans to modify traffic flow within your laboratory space, signage, barriers, PPE, etc.
- The above plans must be shared with Facilities and Health and Safety during a walkthrough of your space and be approved using the “Transition to Stage 3 form” prior to the walk through. This form is found on ROMEO.
 - This form will include descriptions on how researchers plans to ensure student participants have complied with COVID self-assessments and instructions on entry.
- Amendments to already approved REB protocols to highlight modified data collection procedures in order to adhere to social distancing practices, Health and Safety guidelines, and recommendations made by Facilities are to be expected. Should any amendments be made (i.e. consent forms) your REB approval notification will need to be attached in your Stage 3 request.

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Stage 3.1: Restricted access to campus and research spaces (ftf w/ Nipissing students/staff participants)

As social distancing guidelines are adjusted to permit larger gatherings, researchers may apply **to work, and collect data from research spaces at Nipissing University**, while continuing to follow social distancing and Health and Safety protocols. Requests must be made to, Facilities, and Health and Safety to determine the maximum occupancy of a space at any given time. Individuals working within the lab but **not** collecting data with human participants are welcome to request an adjustment in number of personnel allowed in their space. This request can be made through following the modification to an already approved protocol process within ROMEO for an already approved Stage 2 request. The size of each laboratory space will dictate the number of individuals allowed in the space at any time. If restricted access is approved, all **new** personnel who will be entering the space will have to complete the employee re-entry training (this does not include human participants). Please follow the steps below for Stage 3.1 restricted access.

- If you do not already have a Romeo account, please create one using this [link](#).
- Complete the “Stage 3.1 – Restricted Access (face to face w/ Nipissing participants)” application under Office of Research Services
 - This application will require:
 - Protocol numbers for research projects being conducted. Including approved modifications or amendments to these protocols.
 - An attached signed “Transition to Stage 3 form” from the completion of your walk through.
- Your request will be forwarded to OGSR, Facilities, and Health and Safety for review
 - Priority will be given to researchers with projects involving graduate students who require data for completion of their degrees.
- If your request is approved, all new members included in the application will be contacted by Health and Safety with information on how to complete re-entry training.
 - Note that Health and Safety will have a list of approved applicants and will only provide training to those on the approved list.

NOTE: Stages 3.2 and on will include the use of community member as participants and their access to campus, the collection of biological samples, as well as the recovery of research protocols using non-human animal models. Protocols involving the collection of biological samples will require further training coordinated through Health and Safety and will be identified during the request process.

This plan has been developed consistent with the principles established by the Ontario Council on University Research working group on research recovery.