

Eight Myths about Applied Research – Dispelled!

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The Applied Research team often hears about faculty who are interested in participating in applied research but do not because of perceived barriers. This short article identifies eight myths about applied research at Seneca and presents the facts in response.

1. Myth: With all my teaching commitments, I don't have time to work on applied research.

Fact: As a Principal Investigator (PI), your primary role is to guide, mentor, and supervise student research assistants (RAs) who will execute the majority of the research activities. Most projects require fewer than 10 hours per week of PI time. ARIE works with Chairs to arrange time on your SWF each semester, ensuring you have sufficient time to work on the project.

2. Myth: If I work with a company on an applied research project, I give up ALL my IP rights.

Fact: Given that a key objective of applied research is to help an industry or community partner address a business challenge, these partners typically will be provided the rights to any IP developed during the project. They do not gain rights to IP that existed before the project starts. You will retain publication rights (the partner will be able to review in advance of publication to remove business confidential/intelligence information) and academic use rights (you may use the IP for internal academic/teaching and learning purposes). You are encouraged to promote the fact that you worked on the project, including basic project details, on your CV, etc.



3. Myth: Applied research projects require a lot of administrative time and effort, including preparing budgets, developing grant applications, hiring students, managing timesheets, negotiating contracts, liaising with external partners, and reporting to funders.

Fact: ARIE assumes the majority of the administrative burden. Each project is assigned a Research Manager who works with you one-on-one and takes care of all aspects of research administration and project management. As PI, you are primarily responsible for the technical aspects of the project, including technical aspects of project development and grant writing, and for guiding, mentoring, and supervising the student RAs.

4. Myth: Only full-time faculty can work on applied research projects.

Fact: Applied research is not limited to full-time faculty. Full-time faculty are provided SWF time appropriate to the project work plan, which may affect teaching contact hours. Non full-time faculty are hired on a non-academic contract specifically to conduct applied research based on the actual number of hours per week designated in the project work plan. Our experience finds faculty time required on the project typically to be in the range of 6-10 hours per week, depending on the complexity of the project.

5. Myth: Non full-time faculty are paid less to work on applied research projects than for teaching.

Fact: Non full-time faculty working on applied research projects are hired under separate, non-academic contracts; these contracts do not affect the academic contract or position. ARIE research contracts provide direct compensation for the time designated in the project work plan.

6. Myth: I won't have any opportunities to present my work to colleagues and others.

Fact: Seneca encourages the promotion of applied research activities. All faculty members working on applied research are invited to present at Seneca's Applied Research showcases, and/or our internal showcase events. In some cases, grant funds may be available to cover travel expenses to present at a conference or other events.

7. Myth: If I decide to lead an applied research project, I don't have any input about who the research assistants (RAs) will be.

Fact: The PI is integrally involved in RA selection. The PI works with the partner to establish the research plan and determine required resources. The PI defines the expertise RAs need, may suggest specific students for the project, and sits on the interview panel. ARIE is there to support and facilitate.

8. Myth: If I join ARIE at a meeting with an external partner, I'm obligated to work on the project.

Fact: Joining a meeting creates no obligation on your part. The purpose of the first meeting with a partner is for you to get to know the company, understand their research

needs, and ask questions. From there, you decide if you would like to work on the project or not.

If you have further questions, please contact ARIE (arie@senecacollege.ca).

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