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PRESIDENT'S VOICE

How Is Queen's Performing in NSERC Discovery Grant Competitions?

Queen's is fairing somewhat poorly in NSERC competitions compared to other institutions, especially for early-career and returning researchers

By Kayll Lake
 President QUFA



One of the major sources of individual research funding in Subatomic Physics; Genes, Cells and Molecules; Biological Systems and

Functions; Evolution and Ecology; Chemistry; Physics; Geosciences; Computer Science; Mathematics and Statistics; Civil, Industrial, and Systems Engineering; Electrical and Computer Engineering; Materials and Chemical Engineering; and Mechanical Engineering is the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC) Discovery Grant Program. In this article, I will examine the performance of Queen's researchers in this program over the last seven years, based on publically available information.¹

The sample is uniform to the extent that only Discovery Grants are

QUFA IMAGES

World Day for Decent Work



Lesley Jamieson

QUFA Member Jordan Morelli waves the QUFA flag with Faculty of Law student Andrew Hill at the "\$15 and Fairness" table in recognition of World Day for Decent Work, 7 October 2017.

analyzed. This program is carried out in three distinct ways by virtue of three distinct application groups: 1) established researchers returning with a grant, 2) early researchers applying for their first grant, and 3) returning researchers who have held a grant in the past but who do not currently hold a grant. There is an important variation in the numbers of researchers in each group. Typically, the number of established/early researchers is about 3, and the

number of established/returning researchers is about 1.6. There is considerable variation year to year for the two smaller groups. In what follows, I compare the results for Queen's to four other manifestly research-orientated universities. Shown in the following three graphs are: Queen's (thick solid line), Toronto (thin solid line), Waterloo (dash line), UBC (dash-dot line), and McGill (long-dash line). In all three graphs, the x-axis has 1 = 2011 and so on to 7 =

2017. The y-axis gives the average success rate. I have used the same range for the y-axis in all three cases. The results for established researchers, early-career researchers, and returning researchers are shown in the three graphs on the right. At first glance, these graphs look ridiculously noisy. However, I believe that they do convey some important messages.

As regards established researchers (Fig. 1), there is no significant message other than, perhaps, 2017 was a somewhat disappointing year for Queen's (and Toronto). By contrast, the data for early-career researchers and returning researchers send messages. As regards early-career researchers (Fig. 2), we are not doing well, and we have never done well. If we wish to lay blame, we really don't have to look far. If you are an established researcher at Queen's, I think that you should consider it part of your service to offer help to your less-experienced colleagues (read their grant applications and offer advice). I am certain that this is what is happening at other institutions. Raising success rates for our least-experienced colleagues will benefit all of us at Queen's. The data for returning researchers (Fig. 3) is harder to interpret. For the last three years running, we have gone from the most successful institution (of those considered) in re-establishing research grants to the least successful. Whereas a number of possible reasons come to mind, none is really clear, at least to me. It is again, in our own interest, to have these returning researchers funded.

Notes

¹http://www.nserc-crsng.gc.ca/Professors-Proesseurs/DiscoveryGrants-SubventionsDecouverte/Index_eng.asp

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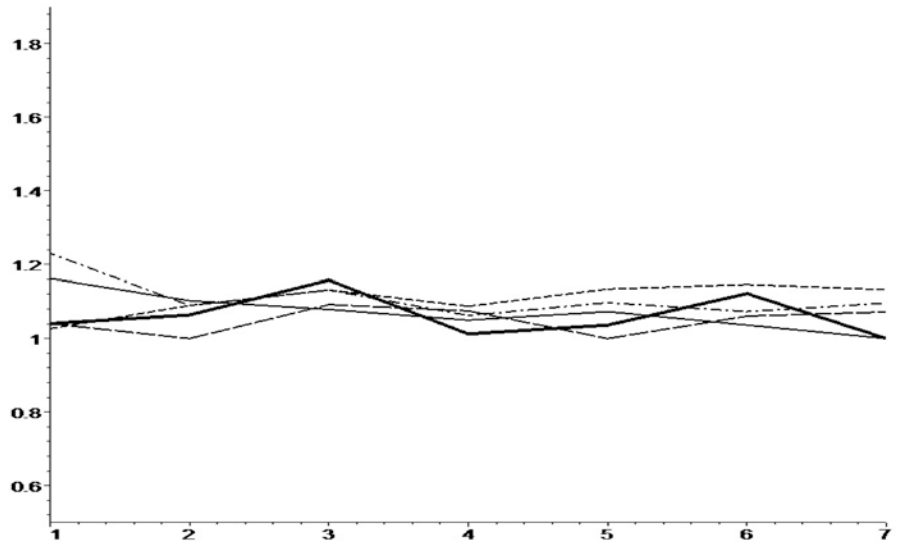


Fig. 1: Success rates for established researchers

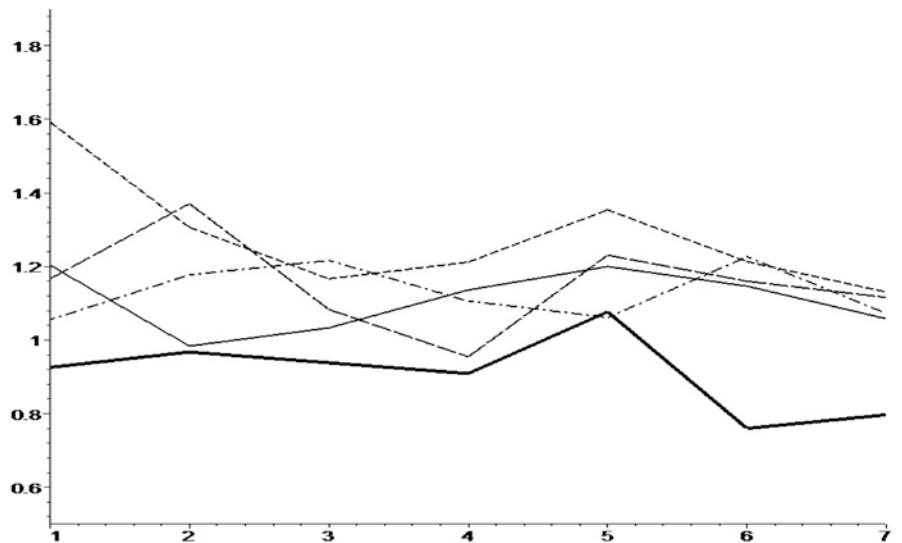


Fig. 2: Success rates for early-career researchers

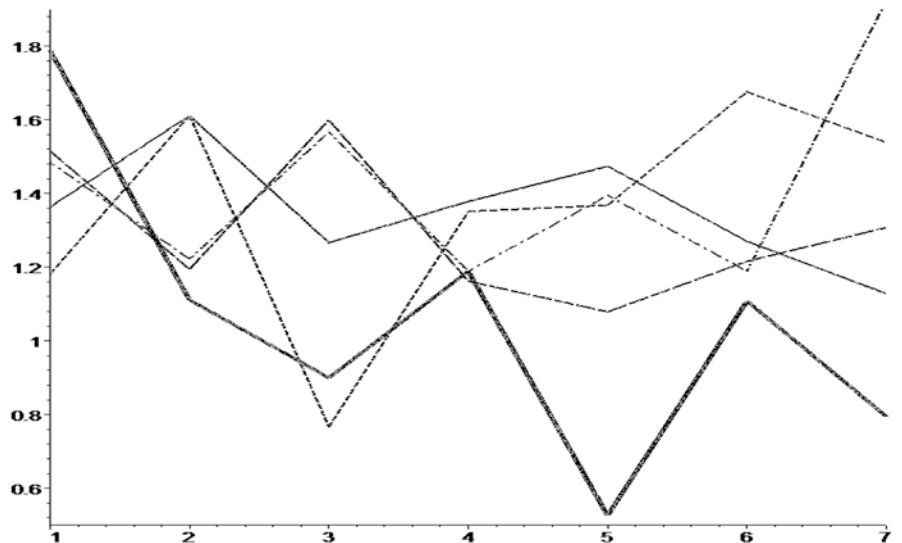


Fig. 3: Success rates for returning researchers

FYI

Predatory Publishers: Good News and Bad News

Beall's List of Predatory Journals has been resurrected by an anonymous academic in Europe

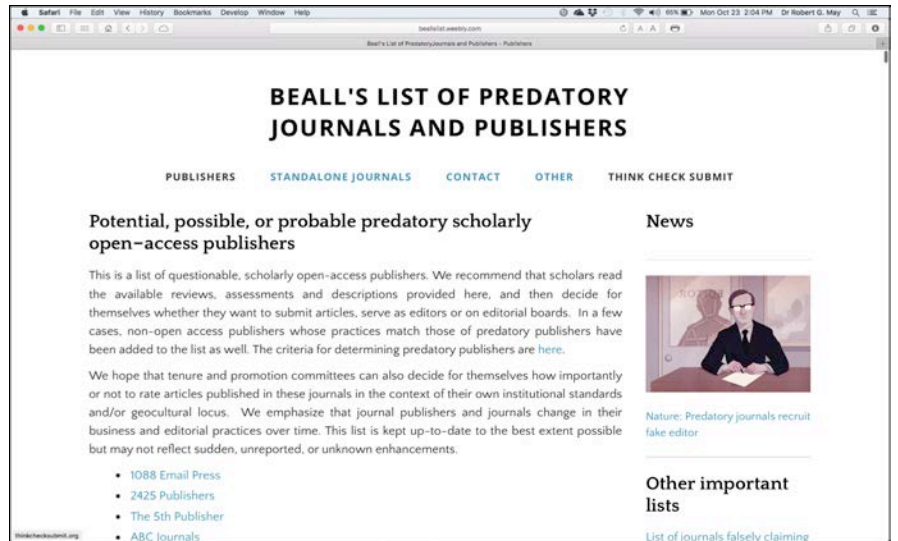
By Leslie Jermyn
Executive Director, QUFA

Do you want the good news or the bad news?

The good news is that Beall's list of predatory journals and publishers has been resuscitated by a brave but anonymous postdoctoral colleague in Europe and can be found on the Web.¹

The anonymous hero cautions that they do not have the time to dedicate to keeping the lists up to date, so they will become less and less current as time goes on. What will remain useful for some time is the very cogent pointers offered to identify (and avoid) publishing predators.² Anyone who is considering publishing with a "new," open-access, or unknown journal or publisher is well-advised to become familiar with these tell-tale signs of academic illegitimacy.

The bad news is that we continue to see QUFA Members being penalized during renewal, tenure, and promotion processes because of their engagement with publishers who are considered to be vanity presses (i.e., a press where the author pays for



weebly.com

Beall's List of Predatory Journals and Publishers has been resurrected online by a postdoctoral colleague in Europe. Find it at <http://beallslist.weebly.com/>

printing costs), or to have questionable or no peer review processes in place. The collective agreement criteria for renewal, tenure, and promotion processes include "high quality scholarly or creative work" (renewal), "high quality and expert peer-assessed scholarly or creative work" (tenure), and "high quality" or "distinguished" scholarly or creative work (full professor) (see Article 30).

An RTP committee cannot be faulted if they suspect a problem with a publisher or journal, and ask for proof of collegial and expert review. If the candidate cannot supply that proof, the published work in question may not be considered to have met these bars.

If in doubt about a press or open-access site, consult with colleagues and use the checklist on the Web site to do your due diligence. Keep good records to prove that there was scholarly review of your work if you have any doubt about the press's wider reputation. Be careful with your academic and creative output: it's valuable. If it weren't, there wouldn't be a world full of predators out there trying to get hold of it.

Notes

¹<http://beallslist.weebly.com/>

²<http://beallslist.weebly.com/uploads/3/0/9/5/30958339/criteria-2015.pdf>

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QUFA Voices publishes QUFA-related news and information for QUFA Members and provides QUFA Members with a forum to express their QUFA-related ideas and opinions. We want to hear from you! Please send your QUFA-related story ideas, news items, opinion pieces, letters to the editor, photographs, and other submissions to the editor.

QUFA Voices is edited by Robert G. May. He can be reached at mayr@queensu.ca.

GRIEVANCE CORNER

Family Status

Eldercare or childcare may or may not entitle you to workplace accommodation, depending on the circumstances

By Ramneek Pooni
Grievance Officer, QUFA



Family Status is an enumerated ground in the Ontario Human Rights Code (hereafter referred to as the Code)¹ and includes both eldercare and

childcare. QUFA Members have raised questions about how far the university must go to accommodate childcare or eldercare. What if a teaching schedule conflicts with a child's extracurricular activities? What if a parent is hospitalized and requires family assistance in recovery? Like most things legal, these two situations might entitle you to family status accommodation or they might not, depending on the circumstances.

The test was established in 2014 at the Federal Court level in Canada (Attorney General) v. Johnstone.² It required the following (paragraphs 94-97; paraphrasing is mine).

The claimant must demonstrate:

ANNOUNCEMENT Preparing for Bargaining in 2019

QUFA will bargain a new collective agreement in 2019. The executive committee invites QUFA Members who are interested in getting involved in any aspect of the bargaining process to get in touch. Please contact Executive Director Leslie Jermyn if you wish to volunteer, or if you have questions:

jermynl@queensu.ca

QUFA IMAGES

QUFA in Solidarity with OPSEU



Jordan Morelli

QUFA Members John Holmes and Ken Ko fly the QUFA flag in solidarity with striking OPSEU faculty at St Lawrence College.

- that a child is actually under his or her care and supervision;
- that an obligation exists which engages the individual's legal responsibility for the child;
- that reasonable efforts have been expended to meet those childcare obligations through reasonable alternative solutions and that no such alternative solution is reasonably accessible; and
- that the impugned workplace rule interferes in a manner that is more than trivial or insubstantial with the fulfilment of the childcare obligation.

In 2016, Vice-chair Jennifer Scott of the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal modified the test in *Misetch v. Value Village*³ because, in her view, the Johnstone test was more onerous than for discrimination under other protected grounds, as it required engagement of legal liability of the claimant. It also does not easily lend itself to application for eldercare to which the protection has expanded. Finally, she points out that some decisions have erroneously used it to

conflate discrimination and accommodation.

Vice-Chair Scott first describes the general test for Code-based discrimination, which is:

- the person is a member of a protected group;
- the person has experienced adverse treatment; and
- discrimination was a factor in the adverse treatment, taking account of social, political,

ANNOUNCEMENT Queen's Tuition Support Benefit

The deadline for the Queen's Tuition Support Benefit is 1 November 2017.

More information can be found on the Queen's Human Resources Web site:

<http://www.queensu.ca/humanresources/wellness-accessibility/employee-benefits/tuition-support-plan>

QUFA EVENTS

QUFA Adjunct Workshop and Social

Please join us for an informal workshop on term adjunct rights of appointment and promotion:

Wednesday 25 October 2017
1.00 p.m. – 3.00 p.m.

The E-Classroom, Douglas Library

Following the workshop, we're holding a special "Quaff with QUFA" social event to honour the continuing struggle for fairness for contract academics in Canada:

Wednesday 25 October 2017
3.00 p.m.
The Grad Club

The first "quaff" is on QUFA, and all are welcome. No RSVP is required for either event. Hope to see you there!

economic, and historical factors concerning the protected group.

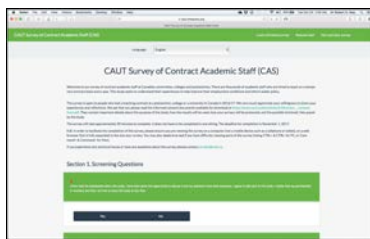
She goes on to say that family status discrimination is more than simply a negative impact on a family need; rather, that the negative impact must result in real disadvantage to the caregiving relationship and the responsibilities that flow from it, and/or to the employee's work, in a significant way. Context, such as available supports, is also important to assessing the impact of an impugned rule.

In addressing the issue of self-accommodation that seemed implied in earlier decisions, Vice-Chair Scott explains that the employee should not bear the onus of finding solutions in order to prove discrimination, rather that consideration should be given to "the extent to which other supports for family-related needs are available in the overall assessment of whether

ANNOUNCEMENT

CAUT Term Adjunct Survey

The Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) is conducting the first ever national survey of term adjunct academic staff. It will collect much-needed data on the experiences of academic staff who work without continuing contracts. Please find more information here and, if you're a term adjunct, please take the time to complete the survey:



<https://caut.limequery.org/>

an applicant has met his or her burden of proving discrimination."

Only after the employee has proven discrimination is the employer's requirement to provide Code-related workplace accommodation triggered.

Unlike a ruling from the Federal Court, which has the legal weight of precedent, a ruling from a human rights tribunal does not, and its arguments are considered potentially persuasive only. Misetch has been cited in subsequent decisions at the BC Human Rights Tribunal and the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal, so it seems that litigants are using it to further their positions. It remains to be seen whether a court will adopt any of Vice-Chair Scott's argument; the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal does have some gravitas within the legal world.

All parties—employer, employee, union if it exists—have an obligation

to cooperate and provide sufficient information during the process to aid in figuring out a reasonable and appropriate accommodation. Accommodation rights are not absolute. Once triggered, the employer must accommodate to the point of undue hardship considering cost, health, and safety. It is important to note that your employer is Queen's University, not your department or faculty.

The law on family status has not been litigated enough for certainty on the definition or tests, but it is clear that simply having to juggle your life because of childcare or eldercare obligations is insufficient to establish discrimination based on human rights grounds, and does not trigger legal workplace accommodation.

Notes

¹http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/code_grunds/family_marital_status

²Canada (Attorney General) v. Johnstone, 2014 FCA 110
<https://www.canlii.org/en/ca/fca/doc/2014/2014fca110/2014fca110.html>

³Misetch v. Value Village Stores Inc., 2016 HRTO 1229
<http://www.canlii.org/en/on/onhrt/doc/2016/2016hrto1229/2016hrto1229.html>

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QUFA VOICES Voice Your Views!

If you have an opinion about anything you read in *QUFA Voices*, send us a letter to the editor!

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