



CREATION OF NEW RESEARCH CENTRES AND INSTITUTES

Call for expression of interest (letter of intent and full application)

The University of Ottawa is committed to research excellence and innovation. Research centres and institutes provide valuable platforms for the exchange of ideas among researchers, both within and across traditional disciplinary boundaries. Knowledge creation and transmission within these collaborative environments fuels advances in research and innovation, while providing a common point of focus for researchers and students.

The Office of the Vice-President, Research and Innovation (OVPRI) invites **teams of interdisciplinary and multi-faculty** researchers to submit a letter of intent if they wish to establish a research centre or institute as designated by the University, and to receive annual funding from the OVPRI for its operations. Funding is conditional on a satisfactory report that must be submitted once every two years to the OVPRI.

- A **research centre** is a **multi-faculty and interdisciplinary unit** whose main objective is to foster research excellence through its activities and to support knowledge mobilization activities.
- A **research institute** is a **multi-faculty and interdisciplinary unit** whose main purpose is to foster research excellence through its activities and to support knowledge mobilization activities, while engaging in training activities (e.g., development and implementation of interdisciplinary study programs, professional development programs, internship opportunities in collaboration with partner organizations, mini-courses, etc.).

Equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI)

The University of Ottawa is committed to fostering a research environment that respects and values diversity and inclusion and provides equal opportunity for everyone. Research centre and institute administration and activities must comply with the principles of equity, diversity, and inclusion.

Eligibility

- The principal investigator must be a **regular professor** at the University of Ottawa.
- The research team must include regular professors from **at least three faculties**.
- The faculties involved must be ready to contribute to centre or institute operations (e.g., financial contribution, course releases for the director, workspace, administrative support).
- Alignment of activities of the member researchers with the research areas of at least two of the three funding agencies is an asset.

Selection criteria

The evaluation of letters of intent and final applications (by invitation only) is guided by the following criteria:

Letters of intent:

- The proposal demonstrates that the centre's or institute's objectives align with the University's and with participating faculties' strategic areas of research, while supporting cross-cutting themes outlined in the strategic plan.
- The vision and mission of the centre or institute are clearly defined.

- The centre or institute brings together a critical mass of researchers as part of an **interdisciplinary** research program and adds value to the research activities beyond what might be expected from each of its individual members.
- The proposal is strongly supported by at least three faculties, and if applicable, by one or more affiliated hospital research institutes.

Final applications (maximum of two, by invitation only)

In addition to the above-mentioned criteria, the final application must demonstrate that the centre or institute:

- Has a core of permanent members who will enhance long-term collaborations between members (including co-publications and co-supervision).
- Will contribute to the training of graduate students and postdoctoral fellows.
- Has strong potential and a well-defined strategy to develop large-scale projects with external funds.
- Will facilitate cooperation with scholars from other universities and/or institutions and collaborations with industry partners or community groups.
- Is based on a governance structure that includes the active participation of many members.
- Has a plan to ensure that the centre or institute is financially sustainable and can secure sufficient funding to support its operations and research activities (e.g., through grants, contracts or external donations).
- Has resources designated according to its needs, such as space, administrative and technical staff or shared equipment.

How to apply

Interested research teams must submit a letter of intent, according to the guidelines outlined in **Appendix 1**. Only teams whose letters of intent have been selected are invited to apply, according to the guidelines outlined in **Appendix 2**.

Appendix 1

Guidelines for the creation of a research centre or an institute — Letter of intent (maximum three pages + letter of support)

1. Name of principal investigator

Name, title and academic affiliations

2. Name of the research centre or institute

The proposed name of the research centre or institute should be provided in English and in French.

3. Description and rationale (two pages)

Briefly describe the objectives and vision of the research centre or institute and explain how they relate to the University's strategic areas of research as well as to the strategic plan of each participating faculty. Explain the importance of establishing this centre or institute in light of what already exists nationally. Indicate how the centre or institute will promote its researchers and what benefits are expected for the University and society. Justify the creation of the centre or institute by describing the current expertise at the University of Ottawa on which it is based.

4. People consulted, including the list of founding members: names, titles, academic affiliations (one page)

Briefly describe the consultation process undertaken at this stage and indicate the members who have confirmed their intention to actively engage in the governance and/or activities of the centre, as well as their affiliations.

5. Letters of support

Include one letter of support for the creation of the centre or institute signed by the dean of the host faculty. The letter must indicate which faculties have confirmed their interest in supporting the creation of this centre or institute.

Appendix 2

Guidelines for the creation of a research centre or institute — Final application (by invitation only) (maximum 10 pages + appendices + letters of support)

1. Name of principal investigator

Name, title and academic affiliation

2. Name of the research centre or institute

The proposed name of the research centre or institute should be provided in English and in French.

3. Description and rationale

Describe the objectives and vision of the research centre or institute and explain how they relate to the University's strategic areas of research and to the strategic plan of each participating faculty. Explain the importance of establishing this centre or institute at the time of application, by comparing it with what already exists nationally and internationally. Indicate how the centre or institute will promote its researchers and the benefits that can be expected for the University and society. Justify the creation of the centre or institute by describing the current expertise at the University of Ottawa and the initiatives on which it is based.

4. Governance

Describe the governance structure and procedures, as well as the operational plan and the role of proposed committees, including any external committees, if applicable (Provide an organizational chart if possible.).

Confirm the name of the professor approved by the participating faculties and members to act as the centre or institute director for the first five-year term.

For subsequent terms, the process of reappointing the director or selecting a new director must be initiated in accordance with the *Guidelines for the creation and management of research centres and institutes*, as per the official designation of the body.

5. Members

Describe the different categories of members (see Appendix 3) and their roles. Include the list of founding members in an appendix, with their affiliations and areas of expertise. Briefly indicate how they will participate in interdisciplinary research.

6. Infrastructure and resources

Submit an inventory of currently available infrastructure and resources. Include a list of future needs (e.g., space, administrative support, teaching releases).

7. Budget

Submit a preliminary operating budget for the first five years detailing all anticipated expenses and sources of revenues, including fundraising, in-kind contributions, donations, etc.. Research centres and institutes are expected to strive for financial autonomy as much as possible.

8. Letters of support

Include a letter of support for the establishment of the centre or institute signed by the dean of each participating faculty. These letters must clearly indicate the financial and in-kind contributions of each of the faculties. The letter from the host faculty must include support for the appointment of the director through a teaching release.

As well, you may include letters from stakeholders, for example, external partners and potential sponsors (optional).

9. Appendices

- List of confirmed founding members with titles, academic affiliations, and areas of expertise (mandatory)
- List of members external to the University of Ottawa: confirmed or potential (optional)
- For an institute: brief description of the training offered (optional)

Appendix 3

Membership categories for a research centre or institute

The Office of the Vice-President, Research recognizes multiple membership categories within research centres and institutes. The following list is not exhaustive.

1. Principal researcher

- Holds a regular faculty appointment at the University of Ottawa.
- Is a principal or co-investigator on at least one research grant related to the thematic priorities of the research centre or institute.
- Has authored or co-authored academic research papers in an area relevant to the research centre or institute. The number of papers must meet the excellence criteria in the area.
- Makes a minimum of one presentation each year (e.g., conference, symposium, seminar) in an area of relevance to the research centre or institute.
- Contributes to the training of highly qualified colleagues, students, and postdocs by teaching, supervising and mentoring.
- Actively participates in the research centre or institute's activities, including knowledge mobilization.

2. Affiliated researcher

- Holds a regular or adjunct faculty appointment at a university in Canada or abroad.
- Is a co-investigator or active collaborator on a research project within the research centre or institute.
- Actively participates in the research centre or institute's activities, such as knowledge mobilization.

3. Visiting researcher

- Holds a visiting faculty appointment.
- Is a principal or co-investigator, or active collaborator, on at least one research grant related to the thematic priorities of the research centre or institute.
- Has authored or co-authored at least one academic research paper annually in an area of relevance to the research centre or institute. The number of papers must meet the excellence criteria in the area.
- Makes a minimum of one presentation (e.g., conference, symposium, seminar) during the period of appointment in an area of relevance to the research centre or institute.
- Actively participates in the research centre or institute's activities, such as knowledge mobilization.

4. Postdoctoral fellow

- Is a postgraduate researcher supervised by a principal researcher of the research centre or institute.
- Actively participates in the research centre or institute's activities, such as knowledge mobilization.

5. Student (undergraduate, graduate)

- Is an undergraduate or graduate student supervised by the principal researchers of the research centre or institute.
- Actively participates in the research centre or institute's activities, such as knowledge mobilization.

6. Support staff

- Is an employee at the University of Ottawa (regular or contractual).
- Supports the activities of the centre or institute, either as a research staff member (e.g., research associate, research assistant, technician) or other staff member (e.g., administrative assistant, communication officer).

7. Other partners

- Are not members of the research community but participate in the activities of the research centre or institute.