

## University of Waterloo Guidelines for the Establishment of Centres/Institutes

A centre/institute is normally formed to promote and encourage research and related activity in an area that is not accommodated conveniently within a single academic unit or when an affiliates program is involved. The area of academic activity may be broadly based and may include several related but independent research foci. The function of the centre/institute is to facilitate the development and promotion of the particular academic area and, in pursuit of this objective, the centre/institute may establish links inside and outside the university, organize seminars and symposia, solicit funds<sup>1</sup> and maintain an appropriate infrastructure.

Official recognition and designation of all centres and institutes is at the approval of Senate following review of a proposal and recommendation to Senate by the Senate Graduate & Research Council (SGRC). Included are umbrella or super-centres/institutes and sub-centres/institutes, whether named in the original proposal or subsequently proposed and submitted.

Prior to the requisite review and approval, the centre/institute title should not be used for purposes of promotion (e.g., on a website, in a grant proposal) unless the centre/institute is clearly identified as "proposed" or "subject to Senate approval."

Proposals are submitted to the vice-president, university research, and are expected to include, identify or address the following:

1. Name of centre/institute and any sub-centres/institutes under its umbrella.
2. Overview: Rationale, background, importance and benefit, mission, director and expected interactions with other positions to be established, scope of activities envisaged including an indication of opportunities (research, student) that are likely to result.
3. Constitution: Objectives, organizational structure, responsibilities and roles of the centre/institute committees and/or board, criteria for and categories of membership, privileges and responsibilities of membership, voting procedures, terms and conditions of an affiliates program (if any).<sup>2</sup>
4. Management: University officer(s), normally a faculty dean(s), to whom the director and centre/institute will report and where financial responsibility is vested. See [Template for the Organization and Management of UW Research Centres and Institutes](#).
5. List of Proposed Members: Director designate; other members grouped according to category of membership, if applicable (e.g., associate, corporate, affiliate, external community). Abbreviated cvs (last five years) should be provided for each primary member.

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<sup>1</sup>In accordance with university policy, centres/institutes may apply for grants or contracts, or receive gifts-in-kind only with prior approval of the appropriate university officer ([Policy 7](#)).

<sup>2</sup> A centre/institute may be established with or without an affiliates program; however, if the centre/institute has external members or an affiliates program, the centre/institute shall have a board. Subsequent introduction of an affiliates program by a centre/institute requires submission to SGRC and approval by Senate. An affiliates program requires that external agencies contribute an annual fee in return for certain services and privileges available to all affiliate members.

6. Research/Educational Component: Benefits and opportunities as well as difficulties and challenges. For example: How will creation of the centre/institute advance the frontiers? What is the impact of that advancement expected to be? How will success be measured? Provide examples of specific research topics that will be studied and of collaborative (multi-disciplinary and multi-institutional) research. Who will fund these research projects, and who will receive and apply new learning from these studies?
7. Facilities: Available research facilities, strengths and weaknesses in the inventory, future requirements and a proposed strategy for obtaining such facilities.
8. Budget: A detailed five-year table indicating how the centre/institute will sustain itself financially, including anticipated income from all sources (university, government, industry, overhead, royalties), and proposed expenditures and disbursements.
9. Statements of Sanction and Commitment:
  - Department Chair/School Director and Dean. Approval and support for the establishment of a centre/institute must be provided and signed by relevant chairs/directors and faculty deans. Any commitments or agreements to provide space, teaching relief or other resources, including overhead from contract research, should be documented and signed by those authorized to make such commitments.
  - Library and other UW Service Departments. A statement of anticipated requirements for UW must be prepared and signed by the senior administrator of any academic support unit(s) undertaking to fund their provision; in the absence of such statements, it will be assumed that there are no such requirements, commitments or agreements.
  - IST Support Requirements. Any new software or extraordinary network requirements associated with the centre/institute must be indicated, and a statement of support from the associate provost, IST included with the proposal.

#### Approval Procedure

Centre/Institute proponents are asked to send an electronic version of the proposal to the Secretariat at [senate@uwaterloo.ca](mailto:senate@uwaterloo.ca), to the attention of the [SGRC secretary](#). The director designate is expected to attend the SGRC meeting at which the proposal is considered to make some brief, introductory remarks and respond to [members'](#) questions. He/she is excused while council deliberates, and is contacted by the secretary after the meeting. If council accepts the proposal, it then recommends that Senate approve the establishment of the centre/institute, normally for a five-year period. The director is also invited to attend the relevant Senate meeting to respond to Senators' questions (no presentation is required).

#### Review and Renewal

**Any annual report prepared for a centre/institute's board of directors, or equivalent body, shall also be submitted to the vice-president, university research at that time.** All centres/institutes shall be formally reviewed by SGRC at least once during each five-year period of existence. Notice of the review will be communicated to the director of the centre/institute by the vice-president, university research at least nine (9) months prior to the end of the mandate of the centre/institute. See [Guidelines for the Review of Centres/Institutes](#).

If a report has not been received by the end of the centre/institute's mandate, the director (together with department chair(s), dean(s), and others, as appropriate) is informed that SGRC will recommend to Senate that the centre/institute be removed from the approved list. Re-approval can be sought via the SGRC and Senate route. Mitigating circumstances will be considered by SGRC on a case-by-case basis, and can result in the granting of an extension of up to 12 months beyond the approval period.

Guidelines approved: 1986

Guidelines revised: 1989, 1992, 2003, 2005, 2010

Contact information revised: 2024 (editorial)