

 DALHOUSIE UNIVERSITY Research Centres and Institutes Policy	<i>Policy Sponsor:</i> Senate	<i>Approval Date:</i> Senate: June 20, 2019 Board: June 25, 2019
	<i>Responsible Units:</i> University Secretariat, Office of Vice President Research & Innovation	<i>Revisions:</i> Senate: June 14, 2021 Board: June 22, 2021

A. Background & Purpose

The purpose of this Policy is to provide structure, accountability and transparency for groups of researchers who wish to be formally recognized by the University (in communications, webpages, funding applications, etc.) by the special designation “Centre” or “Institute”.

Formal recognition of Centres and Institutes is intended to strengthen, coordinate, or facilitate collaborative scholarly purposes or activities not readily undertaken within the University's departmental and unit structures, and is intended to offer new areas of activity consistent with the University's research mission, including the strategic direction and priorities. The University values the strengths and many contributions of existing Centres and Institutes and seeks to ensure their ongoing success.

To this end and in keeping with good governance, the University has a responsibility to establish the appropriate mechanisms to give assurance of relevance and continued viability and value in a changing environment, and to acknowledge the high demands for accountability and transparency.

The University recognizes formal creation and recognition of Centres and Institutes as indicative of the vitality, creativity, and inventiveness of its research community, and supports such enterprise to the fullest extent possible.

The University encourages the establishment of Centres and Institutes to promote interdisciplinary research endeavours, to further the research interests, and to meet the needs of the University community in the pursuit of research broadly understood. For purposes of orderly functioning, this Policy sets out definitions and principles for Centres and Institutes, including the establishment/termination and review of such groups.

B. Application

This Policy applies to groups of researchers who wish to be formally recognized by the University, (in communications, webpages, funding applications, etc.) by the special designation of “Centre” or “Institute.”

This Policy does not apply to situations where the name of a Research Team is required by a funding organization, or the Research Team is operating in an *ad hoc* and/or collegial manner and wishes to use a designation other than “Centre” or “Institute”.

C. Definitions

For purposes of this Policy:

Centre means a Research Team established pursuant to this Policy that involves research activities, primarily in one Faculty, that complement and enhance the work of three or more faculty members and could involve multi-disciplinary and multi-faculty work that has been approved by the University.

Institute means a Research Team established pursuant to this Policy that involves research activities that complement and enhance the work of many researchers across more than one Faculty and involves multi-disciplinary and multi-faculty work that has been approved by the University.

Governing Council means the body responsible for the oversight of the operations of the Centre or Institute. In the case of a Centre, as defined above, the Governing Council will consist of the Dean of the relevant Faculty, and others at the Dean’s discretion. In the case of an Institute, the Governing Council will consist of the Deans of all Faculties involved, and Vice President Research and Innovation (VPRI), or a representative.

Procedures means the Procedures for Centres and Institutes (Appendix A) that is administered by the Associate Vice President Research (AVPR).

Research Sub-Committee means the Research Sub-Committee of the Senate Academic Programs and Research Committee (SAPRC).

Research Team is a group or cluster of researchers who have aligned research interests which is not a division, department or college, but which is established for the pursuit of research.

D. Policy

1. This policy applies to any Research Team that have developed a structured organization and aims to use the designation "Centre" or "Institute".
2. Any Research Team that seeks to use the designation “Centre” or “Institute” in any form of communication associated with the University shall comply with this Policy and attached Procedures. For the purposes of this section, “communication” includes, but is not limited to, publications, webpages, postings, funding applications, public affairs materials, and correspondence.

3. Creation of a Centre or Institute The process for submitting a proposal and seeking approval to establish a Centre or Institute is set out in the Procedures. In addition to meeting the requirements set out in the Procedures, proponents must demonstrate the following:
 - a. Evidence of sufficient funding to cover infrastructure and operating costs for a period of at least five years;
 - b. Endorsement of the applicable Dean(s), including any financial commitments necessary to support the Centre or Institute;
 - c. Confirmation that a Director is available to be appointed for a minimum of three years, or, alternatively, that an acting Director is available for at least one year during which time a search for a Director will be conducted;
 - d. A proposed governance structure that complies with the governance framework for Centres and Institutes and is approved by the SAPRC;
 - e. An appropriate fit with the research mission of the University.

4. Approval of Centres and Institutes Prior to using the designation of Centre or Institute, the following approvals are required:
 - a. Applicable Faculty Council(s);
 - b. Senate, on the recommendation of the SAPRC; and
 - c. Board of Governors.

5. Conversion Where the breadth of the research activities, nature of the researchers or funding sources of an approved Centre changes such that the character of the Research Team has evolved to more accurately fall within the definition of an Institute, the Research Team may apply to convert the Centre to an Institute following the process set out in the Procedures. The same process shall apply to an Institute that requires conversion to a Centre. As part of their conversion application, the Research Team shall be required to demonstrate the same elements as listed above in Section D.3.

6. Termination Senate may terminate a Centre or Institute on the recommendation of the SAPRC in one of the following circumstances:
 - a. A majority of faculty members within the Centre or Institute, all having been polled, request termination;

- b. A qualified person willing to serve as Director of the Centre or Institute has not been found within 18 months of initial approval by the Senate or upon resignation of the Director followed by a failed search;
 - c. There is clear evidence that the Centre or Institute is not fulfilling its stated objectives and is unlikely to be able to do so in the near future;
 - d. There is clear evidence that the Centre or Institute has fulfilled its stated goals and has no plans for future activities;
 - e. There are serious or repeated instances of substantial non-compliance with laws, regulations or University policies, regulations and procedures;
 - f. If the Centre or Institute has failed to provide an Annual Report at least twice;
 - g. The Review report as accepted by Senate recommends termination; or
 - h. Where the Governing Council requests termination on the basis that the funding has terminated and there is no plausible future source of funding or for any of the reasons listed in (a) through (g).
7. Annual Reporting Centres and Institutes shall provide an Annual Report on **May 31st** of each year in a form consistent with the Procedures to their Governing Council and to the AVPR. The AVPR will forward all reports to the SAPRC through the Research Sub-committee for review and consideration. The goal of the Annual Report is to communicate opportunities and barriers that the Centre or Institute may have faced over the past year and to provide an opportunity to demonstrate the on-going vitality, creativity, and inventiveness of the research organization. The SAPRC will report to Senate. In the event there is failure to submit Annual Reports:
- a. The Research Sub-Committee will contact the Governing Council to request the Annual Report. It will be the Governing Council's responsibility to provide the Annual Report in a timely manner;
 - b. In the event that no Report is received from the Governing Council, the Research Sub-Committee will report the failure to submit the Annual Report to the SAPRC. Failing to submit an Annual Report in two consecutive years will result in the SAPRC reviewing the Centre or Institute for Termination as described in the Procedures.
8. Review Centres and Institutes shall be reviewed on a regular basis, in accordance with the Procedures, to assess their research plan, current performance, relationships, and contribution to the mission of the University. Reviews should consider, and where appropriate, make explicit recommendations on the following matters:
- a. The appropriateness of the Centre or Institute's mission, priorities, and research plan;

- b. The performance of the Centre or Institute, particularly in light of its mission and research plan. The review should address the extent and quality of the Centre or Institute’s activities, taking into account the performance and satisfaction of faculty, staff, students, the research programs, and relations to other stakeholders;
 - c. The organizational structure, effectiveness, and efficiency of the Centre or Institute, including governance, administration, human resources and financial management;
 - d. Implications of trends in the Centre or Institute’s environment and its role in the region;
 - e. The relationship between and among the constituent units, if any, of the Centre or Institute;
 - f. The relationships between the Centre or Institute and other units and programs at the University, including the Centre or Institute’s involvement in interdisciplinary collaboration in teaching, learning, and research activities;
 - g. The relationships between the Centre or Institute and other units or programs in the region;
 - h. The physical facilities available to the Centre or Institute, if needed;
 - i. Community and professional service activities, and education where applicable;
 - j. Recognizing that Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) strengthen research communities and the quality, social relevance and impact of research, the new Centre or Institute shall provide an assessment of its EDI practices and plans;
 - k. Compliance with health and safety regulations and requirements;
 - l. Reported instances of non-compliance with laws, regulations, University policies and regulations;
 - m. Any other issues which are identified as part of the initial mandate of the Review Committee established under the Procedures or which arise during the deliberations of the Review Committee, provided that these are consistent with the general objectives of the Senate Centre and Institute Review process.
9. Pre-Existing Centres and Institutes Pre-existing Centres and Institutes that do not conform to the definitions in Section C of this Policy are required to provide the AVPR within one year of the Policy approval date, a plan for how to achieve conformity which may include a request to be exempt from certain aspects of the Policy based on past operations. Such a plan could include a

name change from 'Centre' to 'Institute' or vice versa; an appropriate change in single Faculty versus multi-Faculty involvement; or an appropriate change in Governance.

E. Administrative Structure

1. **Authority** This Policy falls under the authority of Senate and is administered by the VPRI and the University Secretariat. The VPRI may delegate to a designate any responsibilities assigned to the AVPR under this Policy. The AVPR is responsible for creating, managing and publishing the Procedures for Centres and Institutes document (Appendix A) and the Normalized Schedule for Review of Institutes (Appendix B).
2. **SAPRC** The SAPRC shall be responsible for:
 - a. Approving and publishing a governance framework for Centres and Institutes;
 - b. Considering and making recommendations to Senate regarding the creation, conversion, termination and reviews of Centres and Institutes;
 - c. Establishing and publishing metrics for reviews of Centres and Institutes;
 - d. Receiving reports from Centres and Institutes arising from a review;
 - e. Receiving an Annual Report concerning Centres and Institutes from AVPR;
 - f. Reporting to Senate on matters pertaining to this Policy and related Procedures.
3. **Research Sub-Committee of SAPRC** The Research Sub-Committee shall be responsible for:
 - a. Reviewing proposals to create, convert and terminate Centres and Institutes and making recommendations to SAPRC;
 - b. Other activities to support this Policy as assigned by the SAPRC;
 - c. Reviewing and advising the AVPR on the Procedures document and recommending revisions to SAPRC where these are proposed.
4. **Record-keeping** The record keeping pertaining to this Policy will be the responsibility of the University Secretariat and will follow the Secretariat's Records Management Policy.
5. **Reporting** The SAPRC will provide an annual summary report to Senate concerning the creation, conversion, termination and reviews of Centres and Institutes.
6. **Review** This Policy shall be reviewed every three years.

Appendix A – Procedures for Centres and Institutes

1. Creation of Centres and Institutes

- a. Those wishing to create a Centre or Institute must first discuss plans with and obtain approval from relevant Deans and Faculty Councils.
- b. Subsequent to the approval of the relevant Deans and Faculty Councils, proposals to create a Centre or Institute shall be submitted to the Office of the Vice President Research and Innovation. New Centres or Institutes will provide a clearly written proposal that addresses the following:
 - i. the mission, priorities and research plan for the new Centre or Institute;
 - ii. Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI);
 - iii. a. through e. of Section D.3 of the Research Centres and Institutes Policy (“the Policy”);
 - iv. other relevant materials that would assist in understanding the new Centre or Institute.
- c. Research Teams intending to propose a new Centre or Institute will meet with the AVPR to discuss the planned Centre or Institute. The AVPR will work with the Research Team and the VPRI leadership team to identify synergies with existing researchers and research teams, as well as potential funding opportunities.
- d. The AVPR will forward proposals for new Centres and Institutes to the Research Sub-Committee for its review and recommendations.
- e. The Research Sub-Committee will recommend approval of the Centre or Institute to the SAPRC where the proposal has been completed to the satisfaction of the Sub-Committee, and where the proponent has confirmed that the requirements of Section D.3 of the Policy have been met.
- f. The SAPRC will consider the proposal for a Centre or Institute and may recommend approval to Senate.

2. Conversion of Centres and Institutes

- a. Subsequent to the approval of the relevant Faculty Councils, proposals to convert a Centre or Institute shall be submitted to the Office of the Vice President Research and Innovation. The AVPR will forward proposals to the Research Sub-Committee.
- b. The Research Sub-Committee will recommend conversion to the SAPRC where the proposal has been completed to the satisfaction of the Sub-Committee, and where the proponent has confirmed that the requirements of Section D.3 of the Policy have been met.

- c. The SAPRC will consider the proposal for conversion of a Centre or Institute and may recommend approval to Senate.

3. Review of Institutes

- a. Initial Review Newly-created Institutes shall undergo an initial review within their fifth year of existence or earlier if deemed necessary by the Governing Council, followed by full reviews as outlined below. The initial review shall involve two External Reviewers and shall be based on the Institute's Annual Reports. The purpose of the initial review will be to assess the ability of the Institute to address its goals given its available resources, to assess its progress against metrics identified during the proposal phase and to ensure that the Institute, through its Governing Council, remains supportive of its mission and direction.
- b. Review Timing An Institute shall be reviewed as a stand-alone unit on a regular cycle normally five but not exceeding seven years as published by the SAPRC. Governing Council may also request that the SAPRC approve a special review of an Institute outside of the published cycle.
- c. Appointment of the Review Committee The Review Committee shall be established prior to the commencement of a review following the process set out in this section. Appointments shall be made in consideration of the principles of equity, diversity and inclusion recognized by the University at the time of the review. The process for selection of Review Committee members is as follows:
 - i. The AVPR in consultation with the Director of the Institute will determine a mutually agreed upon list of potential nominees for the position of Chair of the Review Committee as well as members of the Review Committee.
 - ii. The AVPR will approach the potential candidates in order of priority until the position is filled. The Chair of a Review Committee shall be a Dalhousie tenured faculty member who is not a member of the Institute under review.
 - iii. The AVPR will then approach three additional faculty members none of whom shall have a principal appointment in the Institute under review.
- d. Timelines Reviews shall be conducted in accordance with the timelines listed in Appendix B.
- e. Components The review shall comprise five components:
 - i. Self-Study;
 - ii. External Review;
 - iii. Assessment by Review Committee;
 - iv. Submission of the Review Committee report; and
 - v. Consideration of the Review Committee report.

f. Self-Study (completed by June 15):

- i. The AVPR shall set a deadline for the Institute's submission of a Self-Study. The Self-Study shall provide an assessment of the criteria listed in D.8. (a. through m.) of the Policy and include copies of the Institute's three most recent Annual Reports.
- ii. Upon request by the Director or the Review Committee Chair, and in consultation with the AVPR, Dal Analytics, to the extent possible, will engage in customized data research and analysis for the Institute under review.
- iii. The Institute shall submit the self-study to the Governing Council and the AVPR who shall review it to ensure that it meets the requirements of this Policy. The Self-Study will be forwarded to the Review Committee and External Reviewers.

g. Review Committee Process (June – December):

- i. Before commencing their review, the Review Committee shall consult with the Chair of Senate, the Governing Council and other relevant administrators to identify specific issues that should be addressed in the review.
- ii. The Review Committee shall widely communicate its existence to all faculty and staff, and to all students associated with the Institute under review; it will indicate its purpose and encourage input into the review process through individual and group meetings and written submissions.
- iii. In addition to the Self-Study provided by the Institute, the Review Committee shall collect other pertinent information, including written and oral input from individuals and groups within and, where appropriate, outside the University.
- iv. In reference to the Self-Study, the Review Committee will meet with members of the Governing Council, faculty, staff, students (graduate and undergraduate), and, where applicable, representatives external to the Institute or University.
- v. The Review Committee shall identify any factors over and above those listed in Section D.8 of the Policy that they would like the External Reviewers to consider.
- vi. At all stages of the review process, all material, written or oral, collected or created on behalf of the Review Committee, shall be respected as confidential.

h. External Reviewers (June – November 15):

- i. In consultation with the Director of the Institute, the Review Committee shall provide the AVPR with a list of potential External Reviewers from outside the University. The AVPR and the Review Committee shall select External Reviewers (normally two) from this list. If the Review Committee and the Director are unable to reach an agreement on the list of potential External Reviewers, the AVPR will select reviewers from names proposed separately by the Review Committee and by the Dean.
- ii. External Reviewers shall undertake a review of the Institute taking into consideration the factors identified in Section D.8 of the Policy and those identified by the Review Committee for special consideration.
- iii. External Reviewers will conduct a site visit with a normal timeframe of 2-3 business days. During this time, they will meet with members of the Governing Council, faculty, staff, students (graduate and undergraduate), and, where applicable, representatives external to the Institute or University.
- iv. Within two weeks of the site visit, the External Reviewers will submit a single report to the AVPR; this report will be based on the Self-Study and information gained through the site visit. The report is to provide commentary and recommendations. The report will be made available to the Review Committee and will form an Appendix of the Review Committee Report.
- v. External Reviewers will be paid an honorarium and reimbursed for travel expenses by the Faculties represented on the Governing Council as per University travel policies.

i. Review Committee Report (Draft submitted by Jan. 15):

- i. Based upon its review of the Self-Study, the External Reviewers' report, information provided by Dal Analytics, oral and written submissions, and other materials it has received, the Review Committee shall prepare a confidential Draft Report, with the view that the final report will be made public. The Draft Report shall:
 - a. address the assessment criteria;
 - b. contain explicit recommendations to the Institute, to the Governing Council, and to other bodies as appropriate;
 - c. attach the External Reviewers' report as an Appendix;
 - d. include a table of contents; and
 - e. include an executive summary that includes the recommendations.
- ii. The Review Committee Chair shall submit the Draft Report to the AVPR, who shall ensure the Draft Report meets the requirements of this Policy.

- iii. The Review Committee shall transmit its Draft Report, along with the External Reviewers' report, to the Director who shall respond within two weeks with corrections to errors of fact, any concerns regarding personal references, and comments on the implications of the proposed recommendations. Since the Draft Report is confidential, it is not to be shared with others; the Director may consult with other members in the Institute regarding the accuracy of specific details in the reports, should such consultation be helpful.
 - iv. Within two weeks of receiving the Director's comments, the Review Committee shall finalize the report and submit the Final Report to the AVPR. All personal references will be deleted.
 - v. The AVPR shall ensure that the Final Report meets the requirements of this Policy and will then forward the Final Report to Research Sub-Committee, and to the Governing Council.
- j. Response to the Report (Submitted by Jan. 31):
- i. The AVPR shall forward the Final Report to the Director of the Institute, along with any requirements and recommendations for the Institute which will inform its response to the Final Report.
 - ii. The Director shall make the Final Report available to all members of the Institute and coordinate the response to it. Within six weeks from the date of receipt of the Final Report, the Director will forward the Institute's response to the Chair of SAPRC.
 - iii. The Director and members of the Review Committee will be invited to meet with the SAPRC to discuss the Final Report, the Institute's response and its proposed action plan. The Review Committee Chair or designate will present the Final Report and recommendations.
 - iv. The SAPRC shall consider the Final Report, paying particular attention to university-wide implications. The SAPRC may:
 - a. report to Senate;
 - b. identify additional recommendations and report to Senate;
 - c. send the Final Report back to the Review Committee for further consideration;
 - or
 - d. reject the Final Report and constitute a new Review Committee.
 - v. The SAPRC shall advise Senate of the completion of the review and the Institute's response to the Final Report. The SAPRC will highlight recommendations of

significance and any actions recommended to or required of Senate. The Final Report will be made available to members of Senate.

- vi. The Institute's subsequent Annual Report will provide a status update to SAPRC on actions taken based on the recommendations made in the Final Report and by SAPRC. The AVPR will also report on the outcome of the review and recommendations.
- vii. The AVPR and the SAPRC may make recommendations to Senate on matters arising from the Annual Report referenced in j.vi. (directly above).

4. Review of Centres

- a. The Dean of the relevant Faculty will be responsible for initiating a review process for Centres that is commensurate with the process described in Section 3 of the Procedures. The Dean should conduct the Centre review with the following principles in mind:
 - i. Regular review cycles for Centres shall normally be five but shall not exceed seven years;
 - ii. Composition of the Review Committees for Centres shall be made with consideration for principles of equity, diversity and inclusion and shall accommodate input from the Centre;
 - iii. Self-study documents will be submitted by the Centre to the Dean in a manner consistent with Section 3.f. of the Procedures;
 - iv. In consultation with the Director, the Dean may consider an external review that is conducted through site visit or off-site through conference calls, the provision of paper-based materials or other media;
- b. The Dean shall provide a copy of any review report of a Centre, or relevant portions of a Faculty review report relating to any Centre as applicable, to the AVPR and the Research Sub-Committee, which in turn will report to the SAPRC. The SAPRC may invite the Director of a Centre to a meeting to discuss any issues or questions raised in the report.
- c. All costs of the review of Centres shall be borne by the relevant Dean(s).

5. Termination of Centres and Institutes

- a. Recommendations to terminate a Centre or Institute must be submitted by the Governing Council to the Research Sub-Committee.
- b. The Research Sub-Committee will recommend termination of the Centre or Institute to the SAPRC where it is satisfied that one of the criteria for termination as set out in Section D.6 of the Policy has been met.

- c. The SAPRC will consider the evaluation of the Research Sub-Committee and may recommend termination to Senate.

Appendix B Normalized Schedule for Review of Institutes

YEAR 1

Preparation

January	Dean (Centres) or AVPR (Institutes) appoints Chair of Review Committee
January – March	Dean (Centres) or AVPR (Institutes) appoints members of Review Committee
January – June	Centre/Institute prepares Self-Study
March – April	Review Committee identifies specific issues for query
March – June	Review Committee selects External Reviewers
End of June	Review Committee and External Reviewers receive Self-Study

Review

Sept. – October	Review Committee interviews and conducts deliberation
October	Site visit by External Reviewers
Mid-November	Review Committee receives External Reviewers' report
Nov. – December	Review Committee completes interviews and prepares Draft Report

YEAR 2

January 15	Review Committee submits Draft Report to Director of the Centre or Institute
January 31	Director responds to Draft Report
February 15	Review Committee submits Final Report to Dean (Centres) or AVPR (Institutes)
	Review Committee Final Report is distributed to Director of the Centre/Institute who in turn shares it with Centre/Institute members
March 31	Centre/Institute responds to Final Report

April Dean (Centres) or AVPR (Institutes) considers Final Report and response from the Centre/Institute and reports to SAPRC

Follow-Up

May-June The Dean or AVPR informs the Centre/Institute of needed actions and the date by which these actions should occur

YEAR 3

May 31 Annual Report provides a status update on actions taken based on the review