

Protocol – Creation, Renewal, and Closure of Research Centres & Institutes

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A. Purpose

The purpose of this document is to provide a standardized framework for creating, evaluating, renewing, or closing Research Centres and Institutes throughout their existence to ensure that these entities remain relevant, accountable, and aligned with institutional priorities.

B. Administrative Structure

1. This Protocol is issued under the authority of the Research Centres and Institutes Policy under the accountability of the Vice President, Research and Innovation.
2. The authority to create, rename, reclassify, renew, or close a Research Centre or Institute resides with the Board of Governors.

C. Procedures

1) Designation of Research Centres and Institutes

- a) Proposals for the creation of a Research Centre or Institute are normally approved by relevant faculty councils before being submitted to the Associate Vice President, Research (AVPR). Proposals are transmitted from the AVPR to the Research Sub-Committee (RSC), and to the Senate through the Senate Academic Programs and Research Committee (SAPRC).
- b) Proposals for creating a new Research Centre or Institute must include the requirements described in Schedule A to enable assessment of merits and feasibility.

2) Annual Reporting Requirements

- a) To facilitate regular operational awareness and review of Research Centres or Institutes, the Director of each Research Centre or Institute will provide an annual report to their Governing Council as well as the AVPR using the template provided in Schedule B.

3) Renewal of Research Centres and Institutes

- a) All Research Centre and Institutes must receive Senate and Board approval to be renewed for an additional limited term. In the annual report for year 4 of the limited term, the Director will submit a notification to the AVPR that either the Research Centre or Institute will or will not apply to renew for another term. In the case of non-renewal, the Governing Council will proceed with the steps outlined below for the closure of Research Centres & Institutes.

In the case of renewal, the Director will submit a Renewal Proposal to their Governing Council and the AVPR using the template provided in Schedule C by August 15th. Based on this proposal as well as a review of annual reports, the Governing Council will determine whether a formal, independent review committee shall be struck to conduct a full review of the Research Centre or Institute. Reasons why a full review may be warranted include, but are not limited to, if a Research Centre or Institute has undergone significant changes in mission, funding structure, and/or membership within the preceding term.

If Research Centres or Institutes are also seeking redesignation or renaming, the Director will submit a name or designation change proposal concurrently with the Renewal process (by August 15th), using the template provided in Schedule D.

If a full review of the Research Centre or Institute is not warranted, the Governing Council will recommend to the RSC via the AVPR that the Research Centre or Institute be renewed for an additional term, or that it be closed without further review.

- b) If a full review is required, the Governing Council will provide the AVPR recommendations for Review Committee members. The Review Committee members will be appointed by the AVPR at least six months prior to the end of the limited term and composed in the following way:
- i. The Chair will be a tenured Dalhousie faculty member
 - ii. Members should include researchers both internal and external to the Faculty or University chosen on the basis that they reflect the skills needed for the review.
 - iii. Members must be arm's length from the Research Centre or Institute and declare any conflicts of interest before being appointed.

Reviewers external to Dalhousie will be given an honorarium for their services and have their reasonable expenses paid if invited for a site visit. The lead Faculty(ies) for the Research Centre or Institute will be responsible for providing the honorarium consistent

with the normal amount provided for review activities. All coordination and expenses related to external reviewer visits will be the responsibility of the lead Faculty(ies).

- c) The Review Committee will assess the Renewal Proposal using criteria in Schedule E. The mechanism by which the Review Committee conducts the review shall be at the discretion of the Committee in consultation with the AVPR. Notwithstanding, the review process should include meetings with the Director and Governing Council, and collection of feedback from Research Centre or Institute stakeholders, including members, non-members from related fields, and external partners.
- d) All material, written or oral, collected or created on behalf of the Review Committee shall be treated as confidential. The only exception will be the sharing of the Review Report in accordance with the steps outlined below.
- e) The Review Committee will prepare a Review Report per Schedule E by December 15th. The Director will be given an opportunity to propose factual corrections on the final draft of the Review Report. The Director will also have an opportunity to provide comments on the Review Report before it is submitted to the AVPR by January 15th. The AVPR will then transmit the final Review Report and any comments from the Director to the Governing Council.
- f) The Governing Council will consider the Review Report and either:
 - i. Recommend to the Research Sub-Committee of SAPRC via the AVPR that the Research Centre or Institute be renewed for an additional term
 - ii. Proceed with closing the Research Centre or Institute and notify the AVPR
- g) Where the Governing Council recommends renewal, the Renewal Proposal and Review Report will be transmitted to the AVPR to provide to the RSC to consider for recommendation to Senate via the SAPRC.
- h) Senate and the Board of Governors will consider the proposal to renew for approval.

4) Closure of Research Centres and Institutes

- a) The Governing Council will provide formal confirmation/acknowledgment to the AVPR and plan for closure that includes timelines for notifying key stakeholders and ceasing operations. The Governing Council must also assign a Lead, normally the Director, to oversee closure with support of relevant Faculty/ies.

- b) The Lead will identify parties/assets impacted by Research Centre or Institute closure and actions taken by completing a Closure Report per Schedule F. The Closure Report will be submitted to the AVPR.
- c) The AVPR will update internal records and applicable website listings within Research & Innovation.

Schedule A. Creation Proposal template

Creation proposals must be signed by both the proposed Director and Dean of the hosting Faculty and submitted as a PDF to Research Centres and Institutes rescandi@dal.ca.

Suggested length for proposals is 5-10 pages, excluding attachments.

Section 1: General Information

Proposed Research Entity Name:

Type (Centre or Institute):

Proposed Director (Name, Affiliation):

Administrative Contact for Proposal:

Host Faculty/ties:

Section 2: Research Plan

Mission and Vision - Describe the mission and vision of the Research Centre or Institute and expected impact and contributions to the University and wider community, if applicable

Alignment with Dalhousie's Strategic Research Plan - Describe how the proposed Research Centre or Institute aligns with Dalhousie's strategic priorities and research themes.

Goals and Objectives - Describe the measurable goals and objectives of the Research Centre or Institute for its first 5-year term. Outline expected activities or outputs planned for the initial term that can be used as key performance indicators.

Trainee Involvement - Provide details on how students/trainees will be involved with the Research Centre or Institute.

Partnerships and Collaborations - Describe the expected external collaborators/partners and how these relationships will benefit the Research Centre or Institute.

Section 3: Operations Plan

Governance - Detail the proposed membership of the Governing Council.

Facilities - Describe any space and infrastructure that will be required and whether these are expected or have been secured.

Indigenous Treaty and Territorial Recognition

Dalhousie University operates in the unceded territories of the Mi'kmaw, Wolastoqey, and Peskotomuhkati Peoples. These sovereign nations hold inherent rights as the original peoples of these lands, and we each carry collective obligations under the Peace and Friendship Treaties

These Treaties establish ongoing relationships and shared responsibilities that guide how we conduct research and collaborate with communities. Proposals should reflect these relationships not merely symbolically, but as part of ongoing, reciprocal commitments.

- *Treaty Responsibilities. How will the Research Centre or Institute acknowledge Dalhousie's location within Mi'kmaw, Wolastoqey, and Peskotomuhkati territories and how will treaty-based responsibilities inform the Research Centre or Institute's research activities?*
- *Respectful Research Relationships. How will the Research Centre or Institute build or maintain respectful relationships with Indigenous partners, consistent with Dalhousie's requirement that research with Indigenous communities be grounded in respectful engagement?*
- *Alignment With Indigenous Knowledge & LawWays. Note how principles shared across Indigenous knowledge systems of the Peoples whose territories Dalhousie operates in—such as sustainability, reciprocity, relationships with land and water, and responsibilities to future generations—will shape the Research Centre or Institute's research activities and outputs.*

African Nova Scotian Community-Defined Priorities and Engagement

Dalhousie University recognizes that African Nova Scotians are a distinct people whose histories, legacies and contributions must be respected and meaningfully reflected in the research activities of faculty, staff, and students.

Research Centres and Institutes at Dalhousie are encouraged to describe how their broader activities, partnerships, and operational practices will support and align with Dalhousie's [African Nova Scotian Strategy](#).

- *Relationships and Engagement. How will the Research Centre or Institute engage with African Nova Scotian communities, organizations, or leaders to understand and incorporate community defined priorities?*
- *Ethical and Inclusive Research Practices. How will the Research Centre or Institute promote ethical, respectful, and nonharmful research practices related to African Nova Scotian communities—such as training, guidance, or supports provided to affiliated researchers?*
- *Outcomes and Community Benefit. How will the Research Centre or Institute's activities, outputs, or initiatives create meaningful benefits, knowledge sharing, or opportunities for African Nova Scotians?*

Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDIA) Describe goals for integrating EDIA principles into areas such as composition of membership/leadership/committees, research design, methodology, and epistemological inclusiveness. Please consult the [Research and Innovation EDIA Resources](#) website for additional information.

Budget Provide a projected budget for the first five years including confirmed or potential income and expected expenses.

Section 4. Approval

Proposed Director:

Date:

Proposed Chair of Governing Council:

Date:

Required attachments include:

- Letter of Support from the Dean of the proposed Research Centre or Institute's Faculty.
- Recommendation for Approval from applicable Faculty Council(s)
- Letter(s) of Support from external partner(s), if applicable
- Abbreviated CV of the proposed Director.
- List of proposed members (name, title, affiliation)

Schedule B. Annual Reports for Centres and Institutes

Annual reports for Centres and Institutes are due May 31st. If the due date falls on a weekend or statutory holiday, the deadline will be extended to the next business day.

Feel free to use bullet points where appropriate.

Section 1: General Information

Name of Centre/Institute:

Year of Limited Term (1-5):

Current Director:

Term of Current Director (MM/YY-MM/YY):

Host Faculty/ies:

Administrative contact, if different from Director:

Section 2: Research

Summary of Activities and Achievements Provide a brief overview of key research activities and achievements in relation to goals and objectives outlined in the Research Centre or Institute's research plan. This should not include activities of individual members but rather the activities that occurred directly because of the Research Centre or Institute's involvement.

Impact Provide at least one example of impact of the Research Centre or Institute. It is understood that "impact" will be interpreted differently by each research group; reporting should reflect the focus area of the centre/institute's research mission.

Training Discuss training, mentorship, or professional development activities facilitated by the centre/institute.

Partnerships and Collaborations Describe key research partnerships, network development, and/or collaboration efforts.

Future Research Directions Briefly describe planned initiatives or strategic goals for the Research Centre or Institute in the upcoming year.

Section 3. Operations

Governance

Governing Council Chair:

Governing Council Members:

Meeting dates since last report:

Attach most recent Terms of Reference for the Governing Council

Indigenous Treaty and Territorial Recognition

Dalhousie University operates in the unceded territories of the Mi'kmaw, Wolastoqey, and Peskotomuhkati Peoples. These sovereign nations hold inherent rights as the original peoples of these lands, and we each carry collective obligations under the Peace and Friendship Treaties

These Treaties establish ongoing relationships and shared responsibilities that guide how we conduct research and collaborate with communities. Annual reporting should reflect these relationships not merely symbolically, but as part of ongoing, reciprocal commitments.

- *Treaty Responsibilities. How did the Research Centre or Institute acknowledge Dalhousie's location within Mi'kmaw, Wolastoqey, and Peskotomuhkati territories and how did treaty-based responsibilities inform the Research Centre or Institute's research activities?*
- *Respectful Research Relationships. How did the Research Centre or Institute build or maintained respectful relationships with Indigenous partners, consistent with Dalhousie's requirement that research with Indigenous communities be grounded in respectful engagement?*
- *Alignment With Indigenous Knowledge & LawWays. Note how principles shared across Indigenous knowledge systems of the Peoples whose territories Dalhousie operates in—such as sustainability, reciprocity, relationships with land and water, and responsibilities to future generations—shaped the Research Centre or Institute's research activities and outputs.*

African Nova Scotian Community-Defined Priorities and Engagement

Dalhousie University recognizes that African Nova Scotians are a distinct people whose histories, legacies and contributions must be respected and meaningfully reflected in the research activities of faculty, staff, and students.

Research Centres and Institutes at Dalhousie are encouraged to report annually on how their broader activities, partnerships, and operational practices support and align with Dalhousie's [African Nova Scotian Strategy](#).

- *Relationships and Engagement. How did the Research Centre or Institute engage with African Nova Scotian communities, organizations, or leaders to understand and incorporate community defined priorities?*
- *Ethical and Inclusive Research Practices. How did the Research Centre or Institute promote ethical, respectful, and nonharmful research practices related to African Nova Scotian communities—such as training, guidance, or supports provided to affiliated researchers?*
- *Outcomes and Community Benefit. How did the Research Centre or Institute's activities, outputs, or initiatives create meaningful benefits, knowledge sharing, or opportunities for African Nova Scotians?*

EDIA Progress Describe any new initiatives and progress toward EDIA goals in areas such as composition of membership/leadership/committees, research design, methodology, and

epistemological inclusiveness. Please consult the [Research and Innovation EDIA Resources](#) website for additional information.

Operational Challenges Identify challenges/risks faced and any mitigation strategies implemented.

Financial Summary Summarize the financial position of the Research Centre or Institute over the past year and complete the detailed budget tables below. Report only on expenses incurred and revenue received directly by the Research Centre or Institute.

Expenditure	\$
Salary	
Equipment	
Supplies/Materials	
Knowledge Mobilization	
Other	
Total Expenditure	
Revenue	
Grants	
Contracts	
Donations	
Internal funding (Dept, Faculty, University)	
Other	
Total Revenue	
Net (Revenue-Expenditure)	

Section 4. Acknowledgment

I have reviewed and approved this information as complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge and confirm that this report has been circulated to the Governing Council.

Director:

Date:

Chair of Governing Council:

Date:

Schedule C. Renewal Proposal Template

Renewal Proposals are due August 15th of the final year in the limited term. If the due date falls on a weekend or statutory holiday, the deadline will be extended to the next business day.

Suggested length for proposals is 5-10 pages, excluding attachments. Sections 1-3 correspond to information collected in Annual Reports.

Section 1: General Information

Name of Research Centre or Institute:

Type (Centre/Institute):

Year of Creation:

Current Director:

Term of Current Director (MM/YY-MM/YY):

Host Faculty/ies:

Administrative contact, if different from Director:

Background Provide a brief overview of the Research Centre or Institute including why it was established and its mission and vision

Section 2: Research

Summary of Activities and Achievements Summarize key accomplishments of the Research Centre or Institute over the past term and describe how the Research Centre or Institute has performed in relation to its stated goals. Please provide outputs and other measurable outcomes to support research impact.

Training Discuss training, mentorship, or professional development activities facilitated by the Research Centre or Institute over the past term

Partnerships and Collaborations Discuss key research partnerships, network development, and/or collaboration efforts over the past term.

Section 3. Operations

Governance

Governing Council Chair:

Governing Council Members:

Meeting dates since last report:

Attach most recent Terms of Reference for the Governing Council

Indigenous Treaty and Territorial Recognition: Describe efforts and progress made toward Indigenous commitments over the past term.

African Nova Scotian Community-Defined Priorities and Engagement: Describe efforts and progress made toward African Nova Scotian commitments over the past term.

Progress on EDIA Goals Describe efforts and progress made toward EDIA objectives over the past term.

Challenges Describe challenges faced over the past term and mitigation strategies.

Financial Overview Provide a summary of income and expenditures over the term (note: the table provided corresponds to the annual report template)

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5*
Expenditure					
Salary					
Equipment					
Supplies/Materials					
Knowledge Mobilization					
Other					
Total Expenditure					
Revenue					
Grants					
Contracts					
Donations					
Internal funding					
Other					
Total Revenue					
Net (Revenue-Expenditure)					

*projected to end of year 5

Section 4. Strategic Plan for the Next Term

Future Research Direction Outline the research mission and development plans for the Research Centre or Institute over the next term. Describe the measurable goals and objectives of the Research Centre or Institute, including expected activities or outputs that can be used as key performance indicators.

Alignment with Dalhousie's Strategic Research Plan Describe how the research plan for the next term will continue to align with Dalhousie's strategic priorities and research themes.

Facilities Describe any space and infrastructure that will be required for the next term and whether these are expected or have been secured.

Budget Provide a projected budget for the next five-year term including confirmed or potential income and expected expenses.

Schedule D. Name or Designation Change Proposal template

Proposals for name or designation change must be submitted with scheduled Renewal Proposal (Schedule C).

Section 1: General Information

Current Name of Research Centre or Institute:

Current Designation (Centre/Institute):

Proposed Change(s) to existing Research Centre or Institute (select all that apply)

☐ Name, proposed new name:

☐ Designation, proposed new designation:

Section 2. Rationale

Explain why this change is needed

Section 3. Operations

For changes in Centre or Institute designation, describe changes to the host Faculty(ies) and/or Governing Council

Section 4. Approval

Chair of Governing Council:

Dean of the Research Centre or Institute's host Faculty(ies):

Schedule E. Review Report Template

Guidance for Reviewers

The following criteria must be considered in the evaluation of Research Centre or Institute goals and performance. Criteria may be weighted differently depending on the complexity or maturity of the Research Centre or Institute under review.

1. Strategic alignment – how well the Research Centre or Institute’s mission, stated goals, and research plan align with broader institutional objectives.
2. Research excellence and impact – the quality and effectiveness of activities, including research, training, and stakeholder engagement.
3. Internal and external relationships – the efficacy of internal structure and collaboration among constituent units, level of interdisciplinary collaboration within the University, and partnerships with regional and other external organizations.
4. Resources and sustainability – the adequacy of physical facilities and other resources necessary for operations, sources and stability of funding, and plans for future sustainability.
5. Community engagement and service – the quality and effectiveness of community service, professional contributions, and educational outreach, where applicable.
6. Indigenous and African Nova Scotian Commitments – efforts and progress made toward commitments to Indigenous treaty responsibilities and territorial recognition, and to African Nova Scotian Community-Defined Priorities and Engagement
7. Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, and Accessibility (EDIA) – commitment to EDIA practices and plans, recognizing their importance in enhancing research quality and impact.
8. Additional considerations – other relevant issues identified by the Review Committee during the review process.

The review committee must provide a recommendation about renewal of the Research Centre or Institute:

1. Recommend renewal of the Research Centre or Institute;
2. Recommend renewal of the Research Centre or Institute, with some suggested changes to governance, mission, activities, etc.;
3. Recommend non-renewal and closure of the Research Centre or Institute.

Review Report Template

Review Reports for Centres and Institutes are due January 15th. If the due date falls on a weekend or statutory holiday, the deadline will be extended to the next business day.

Reports must be signed by the Review Committee and submitted as a PDF to Research Centres and Institutes rescandi@dal.ca.

Suggested length is 10 pages, excluding attachments

A. Executive Summary

B. Assessment Criteria

1. Strategic Alignment and Mission
2. Research Excellence and Impact
3. Internal and External Relationships
4. Resources and Sustainability
5. Community Engagement and Service
6. Indigenous and African Nova Scotian Commitments
7. EDIA
8. Additional Considerations (if applicable)

C. Recommendations

D. Appendices

- Reviewer signatures

Schedule F. Closure Report Template

Reports must be signed by both the Director/Lead and Chair of Governing Council and submitted as a PDF to Research Centres and Institutes rescandi@dal.ca.

Section 1: General Information

Name of Research Centre or Institute:

End date of limited term:

Director or Lead overseeing Closure:

Reason for Closure:

Date of Closure (MM/YY):

Section 2: Research

Summary of Achievements and Legacy Highlight the contributions and legacy of the centre/institute.

Knowledge Mobilization and Archiving of Outputs Explain how research outputs will be preserved and shared.

Section 3: Operations

Transition Plan for Staff, Trainees, and Projects Describe how ongoing responsibilities have been or will be transitioned.

Financial and Asset Reconciliation Detail the plan for financial status and disposal/transfer of any assets.

Lessons Learned and Recommendations Summarize key takeaways and suggestions for future initiatives.

Section 4. Acknowledgement

I have reviewed and approved this information as complete and accurate to the best of my knowledge.

Director/Closure Lead:

Date:

Chair of Governing Council:

Date:

Schedule G. Decision tree

