Major Awards Advisory Committee (MAAC)
Terms of Reference

Mission

In fulfilling University Academic Plan commitments to intensify, promote, and celebrate research and creative activity across the disciplines, and to build the University’s research reputation, outstanding achievement must be appropriately recognized through awards and prizes. While the University is already home to many recipients of distinguished honours, moving forward it is critical that we be proactive and take maximum advantage of opportunities to identify and nominate our most accomplished researchers for the full range of prestigious awards, and to ensure that all nomination files are developed to a high standard of quality. Further, where the University is restricted in the number of candidates it can put forward or select for particular awards or chairs, greater clarity and transparency are needed in the process for assessing and choosing among nominations. The Vice-President Research & Innovation is therefore establishing the Major Awards Advisory Committee (MAAC) to leverage collegial expertise, solicit broad advice, and strengthen communication, coordination, and transparency in the development and selection of nominations for research awards and chairs.

Mandate

The mandate of the MAAC is to:

- provide feedback and recommendations to strengthen nominations for major external awards that require University endorsement, and where necessary provide advice to inform institutional decisions on which nominations are most likely to succeed
- provide feedback and recommendations to strengthen internal processes and increase the University’s success in securing prestigious external awards for its researchers

Membership

Each Faculty will be invited to nominate a faculty member with relevant experience for appointment to the MAAC. Members will serve for an initial appointment of one year which can be extended by up to two years with the agreement of the member’s Dean and the VPRI, in order to allow for staggered turnover in the Committee’s membership. Normally members will not serve more than two consecutive three-year terms. The Office of the Provost will be invited to nominate a representative to the Committee. The VPRI or designate will serve as Chair.

Meetings

MAAC will meet at the call of the Chair at times to be determined based on the nomination cycles for:

- Royal Society of Canada honours and awards (institutional nominations only)
- Trudeau Fellowships
- SSHRC Impact Awards
Other major institutional awards as to be determined

Proceedings

The MAAC will conduct its proceedings in confidence. Reflecting its advisory capacity, MAAC will not be a voting committee. Recommendations will normally be arrived at by consensus. The formal and public record of proceedings shall take the form of the University standard of executive minutes whereby only outcomes are described. More detailed records of recommendations and rationales will be retained but will be kept in strict confidence to members. Nominees and/or nominators, as appropriate, will receive prompt feedback with respect to the perceived strengths and weaknesses of individual nominations as well as advice and recommendations relevant to strengthening nomination files.

Conflict of interest: To ensure the integrity of recommendations developed by the group, members must excuse themselves from discussion of nominations in which they are directly involved in any capacity, and should declare any close associations with nominees or nominators so that conflict of interest can be avoided.

Support

The MAAC is supported by staff members in the Office of the VPRI and the Office of Research Services who will:

- Work with the Faculties to identify and promote nominations
- Establish the dates and times of meetings
- Establish due dates for submission of nomination files that require MAAC review
- Circulate an agenda and documentation prior to each meeting
- Prepare and distribute minutes after the completion of each meeting
- Work with the office of the VPRI to ensure appropriate feedback is distributed in a timely manner to those involved in preparing nomination files
- Track institutional success with major awards programs