York Research Chairs Program

Guidelines

York University is committed to meeting the priorities articulated in the White Paper and the University Academic Plan including strengthening academic quality, student success and community engagement. The Strategic Research Plan has been developed to help advance these priorities and identifies research intensification as a key goal that broadly enriches the Institution. As articulated in these documents, our research, scholarship and creative activities enhance the quality of our academic programs and the student learning experience through curricular innovation and research opportunities for students, and the sharing of knowledge with community partners to empower a new generation of entrepreneurial, socially conscious Ontarians with the critical skills to guide our province to a world-leading sustainable future.

In order to achieve the objective of research intensification, it is essential that our faculty members are supported for their scholarly, research and creative activities. Among other initiatives, broad-based assistance is offered for faculty members applying for grants as well as the administration of research projects, support and feedback is provided for multidisciplinary, large-scale projects, research partnerships are facilitated, and there is a recently expanded program for research-based teaching releases.

Developing research chairs is another way for the University to expand its support of research and to make York competitive as a destination of choice for top quality faculty. In addition to endowed chairs and Canada Research Chairs, it has become common for universities to establish a term-based chairs program intended primarily for internal candidates (i.e., including potentially an award to a planned tenure stream appointment) to complement and enhance other research programs.

This proposal thus sets out the terms and procedures for York Research Chairs (YRCs) intended as an internal term-based research support program for established faculty research leaders and more junior emerging research leaders that will enable and enhance York’s research success and international recognition for its research achievements.

They are envisioned as an internal twin for the national Canada Research Chairs program, to broaden and deepen the impact of research chairs at York in building and intensifying world-renowned research across the institution. Thus the level of support and recognition provided to York Research Chairs is expected to be aligned with supports and recognition provided through the Canada Research Chair (CRC) program.

York Research Chairs will be awarded competitively based on criteria of excellence in research and scholarship, and contributions to research leadership. They are expected to broadly to support research...
in all areas and disciplines, with the role of Chairs expected to be addressed in Unit, Faculty and Institutional research plans.

York Research Chairs would be available at two levels analogous to CRC chairs. Tier I York Research Chairs are open to established research leaders at the rank of Full Professor\(^1\). Tier II York Research Chairs are aimed at emerging research leaders within 15 years of their first academic appointment and at the rank of Assistant or Associate Professor. Both will have 5-year terms that are renewable in the context of open competition based on peer review and the continuing availability of resources. Expectations for YRC candidature are set to meet or exceed those for CRC candidates and nominations will utilize CRC templates modified to suit the internal nature of the program.

York views its investment in York Research Chairs as an essential component of its coordinated effort to promote the intensification of research. YRCs are expected to be complemented in their deployment by Canada Research Chairs, endowed research chairs and York research professorships as well as other programs.

While the primary intent for YRCs is to recognize and enable internal research excellence, as an outward-looking institution seeking to grow its international reputation for research, external candidates (i.e., as an enhanced provision in the case of a planned tenure stream hire) will not be excluded from consideration\(^2\).

**Investment and Distribution of York Research Chairs**

The York Research Chairs program will provide explicit time-limited strategic investments in building research capacity amongst existing Faculty complement in areas of research excellence and opportunity. The program will ramp up over a five year period to a total of 20\(^3\) chairs. It may also be possible for Faculties to develop additional chairs, based on the availability of funding and subject to approval by the Provost.

The Vice President Research and Innovation is charged, in consultation with the Provost and Faculties, with developing standards and expectations for York Research Chairs and for hosting Institutional-level review of Chair nominations.

York is committed to equity and the promotion of minority groups, women and people with disabilities. Therefore, it is expected that the Chair selection process will be proactive in acknowledging differences in the career paths and career development for women, minority faculty and faculty with disabilities so as to achieve an appropriate balance.

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\(^1\) Candidates at the rank of Associate Professor at the time of nomination must successfully apply for promotion at the earliest opportunity following their nomination.

\(^2\) External candidates refers in this context to new recruits hired in accordance with all of the University’s procedures and practices for the hiring of faculty members

\(^3\) A total of 20 centrally subsidized chairs will initially be available in the program. The normal expectation is that 2 Tier I and 2 Tier II YRCs will be available in open competition annually.
Solicitation and Review of York Research Chairs

York Research Chairs will be awarded on a competitive basis based on the excellence and demonstrated leadership of the candidates. Annually, the VPRI will coordinate a YRC competition based on the nomination of candidates by the Faculties. The VPRI and Provost will invite Faculties to nominate York faculty members in accordance with Faculty nomination processes governed by all applicable Faculty policies and practices, and according to a procedure to be established by the Faculty. It is minimally expected that a Faculty-level committee will review nominations and forward recommendations to the Dean who will submit a final slate to the VPRI and Provost.

Nominations will be submitted according to the CRC application template, with modifications to suit internal requirements. It is highlighted that Faculties must be realistic in their expectations in developing nominations for their scholars. They should also be cognizant of the number of YRCs available in a given cycle in determining their nominations. Where Faculties make more than one nomination in a category (Tier I or Tier II), they will be asked to rank their nominees and provide a rational for their ranking. For all nominations, Faculties will be asked to explain how the nominee meets the expected recognition and profile for York YRCs.

The Major Awards Advisory Committee (MAAC) supported through the VPRI will receive the YRC nominations from the Faculties and will offer Institutional-level internal peer review on YRC nomination files. Feedback and advice will be provided to inform the recommendations of the CRC Selection Committee. The CRC Selection Committee will undertake a ranking of the nominations and make a recommendation on the nominees for YRCs for approval by the President. Feedback, explaining the basis for recommendations will be provided to all nominees and their Faculties.

Expectations for York Research Chairs

Tier I York Research Chairs at York University are identified and recognized leaders of scholarship, research and creative activities (SRCA). Tier II Chairs are identified as SRCA emerging leaders. As such, there is an expectation on the part of the University that York Research Chairs will exhibit leadership in promoting the overall development of SRCA at York that extends beyond their personal research programs.

Thus Tier I Chairs are expected to be active SRCA mentors within their units and disciplines and to provide leadership in the development of large-scale strategic research projects and/or other programs appropriate to their discipline.

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While it is natural to expect that at least some of York’s maturing Tier II Canada Research Chairs will meet the criteria for YRCs, it is stressed that Faculties should nominate their top candidates regardless of previous research chair benefits they may have received at York and that maturing CRCs should neither be advantaged nor disadvantaged in the nomination process.
Tier II Chairs are expected to contribute to and participate in similar activities in a manner that builds and develops their SRCA leadership skills over the period of their chair.

All York Research Chairs are expected to be highly active in the training of graduate and postdoctoral trainees, and to provide leadership in the development of graduate and postdoctoral training programs within their disciplines. Chairs are also expected, as appropriate, to be sensitive to the importance of translating their scholarship, research findings and/or creative activities into tangible benefits to society through the translation and mobilization of the knowledge developed through their scholarship, research and creative programs.

Recognizing that York’s external reputation and research standing depends to an important degree on our share of Tri-Council funding, York Research Chairs are strongly encouraged to be active beneficiaries of Tri-Council funding, and to seek out other funding opportunities as may be appropriate to disciplines and opportunities.

York University prides itself on being comprehensive in its approach to education and in the contact of all faculty with undergraduate and graduate students. At the same time York offers a number of means through which research intensity beyond normal expectations can be recognized through provision of teaching release time. Thus, York Research Chairs will normally be expected to receive teaching release equivalent to 50% of the normal teaching load in their home Faculty as part of their Chair package. However, the sum total of teaching release for York Research Chairs may not exceed an amount that reduces their total teaching expectations below a course load of 1.0. This minimum student contact expectation may be expected to be divided equally between undergraduate and graduate assignments. Responsibility for funding the teaching release will lie with the home Faculty.

**Expectations for Faculties and Units**

Faculties and Units are expected to provide York Research Chairs with enhanced physical and HR supports for the successful development of their research programs for the duration of their terms.

**Guidelines for Additional York Research Chair supports**

For the duration that recipients hold the position, Tier I York Research Chair holders will be provided with a minor research grant of $25,000 annually to be employed in support of their research program and research leadership activities.

For Tier II Chairs, $20,000 will be provided annually to the chair as a minor research grant to be employed in support of their research program and research leadership activities. For researchers successful in obtaining an Early Researcher Award (ERA), the minor research grant will be used as a contribution towards meeting the institutional matching contribution to the award.

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5 Additional Tier I and Tier II YRC supports, while ultimately the responsibility of the Faculty, will be subsidized by the VPRI. The level of the subsidy may vary from time to time, but will be publicized in advance.
External York Research Chair recruits may also be prioritized for CFI Leaders Opportunity Fund applications as required, with the same expectations as for incoming Canada Research Chairs (maximum LOF of $200,000 for Tier I Chairs, $125,000 for Tier II Chairs). In all instances the hiring Faculty will be responsible for providing any outstanding matching funds required to meet the LOF program requirements.

Internal York Research Chairs are also eligible for CFI LOF participation, but will not be prioritized.

**Linkage to Advancement Opportunities**

As focal points for the best in individual SRCA at York and its translation to the benefit of society, York Research Chairs present advancement opportunities to bring together community interests with cutting-edge research. Thus Faculties are encouraged to articulate their York Research Chair goals and to develop support structures and long term plans for their York Research Chair holders through the development of naming opportunities, term support, scholarship and fellowship, among others.

**Renewal and Career Planning**

York Research Chair renewal is subject to open competition and dependent on the continuing availability of resources. Thus Faculties and Units are expected to work closely with Chair holders to provide for appropriate expectations and to be proactive in planning for the transitioning of faculty to and from York Research Chair positions.