

City Institute at York University (CITY) Governance Document

A. MANDATE

The mandate of the City Institute (CITY), since its inauguration in 2006, has been to facilitate critical, diverse, interdisciplinary and collaborative research on a wide range of urban matters and to promote dialogue on Canada's urban agenda at York and beyond. It is the explicit goal of CITY to increase the research performance of the university through an assertive program of obtaining sponsored research income that can help fulfill the goals set under the mandate of the ORUs. The Institute is also a primary body for developing a community of urban scholars at York University. Through these initiatives, CITY will enhance the reputation of York University and its urban researchers in the region, nationally and globally. CITY is positioning itself as a national leader and an internationally recognized reference institution in urban research. While academic excellence is of prime importance for CITY, the Institute also considers effective intervention in the public policy process and in processes of community activism locally and globally a salient aspect of its mandate.

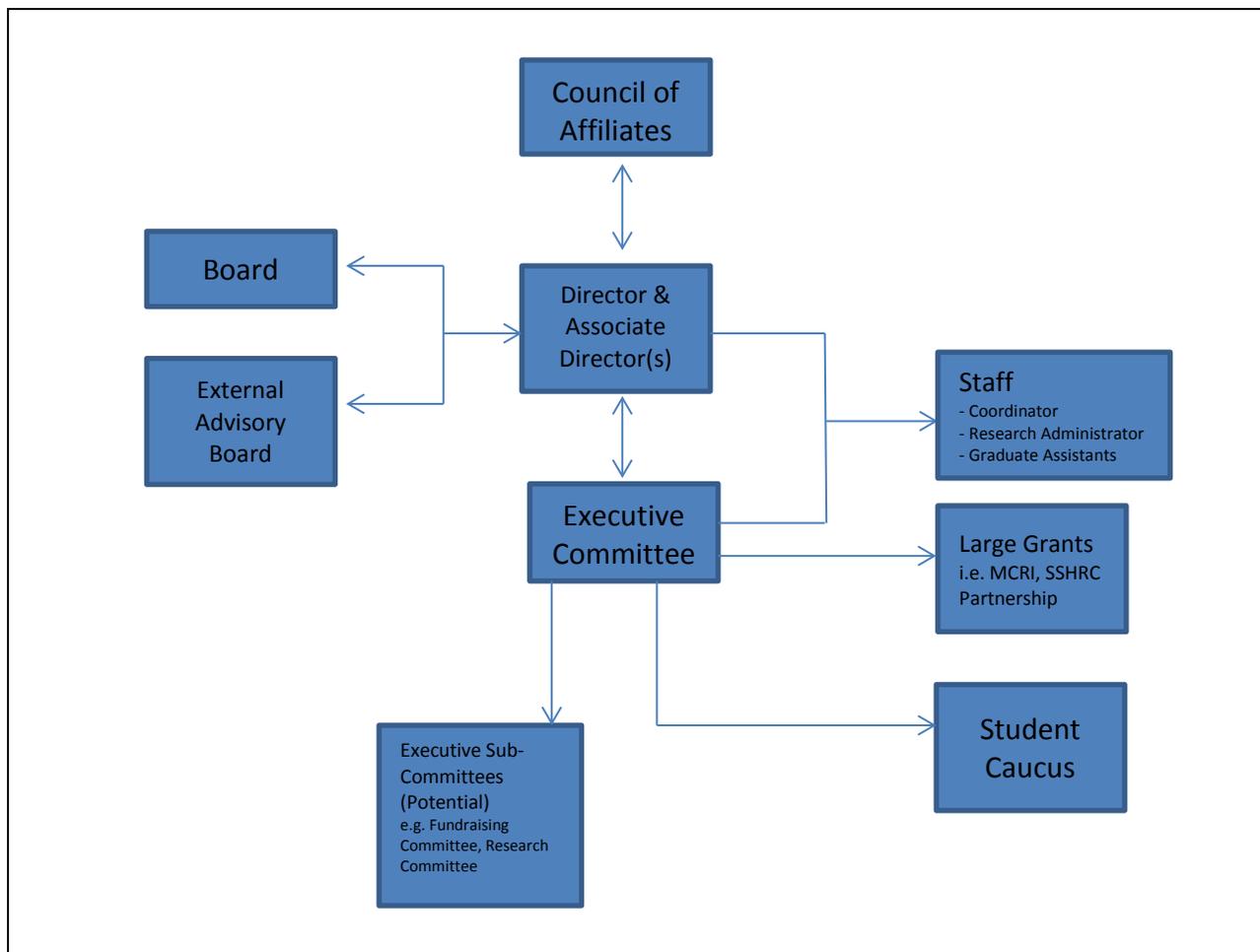
CITY carries out its mandate through a number of activities. It aims to engage in **intellectual exchange**, promoting interaction between urban oriented scholars at York, and between York researchers and a global community of urban scholars. It promotes such engagement by sponsoring conferences, seminars series and workshops as well as fostering research networks and by hosting visiting scholars. It also provides **research support** by assisting in the development of individual and collaborative external research grants, and administering such projects. It also supports **graduate training** and research by creating an interdisciplinary intellectual hub, and involving graduate students in all its activities. Its doors are also open to undergraduate students at York University. Finally, through **knowledge mobilization** it provides a public point of access to York's collective research expertise on urban issues, and ensuring the wider dissemination of York urban based research to academic and non-academic audiences in Canada and around the world.

CITY's commitment to York University's policies and procedures includes its equity practices. CITY strives for the representation and participation of people of colour, queer

folks, women and those differently abled in its activities and governance, including in its Executive Committee.

B. GOVERNANCE

At the heart of CITY are the people who make it work and these comprise an overlapping set of faculty, staff, students and outside members who also form the membership of its governing bodies. Decision-making in CITY is collegial and is accountable to the University, the membership and to the larger university community. Formal accountability to the University is achieved through CITY's Internal Board and Senate. Accountability to the Institute membership is accomplished by the following structure:



1. Director (and any Associate Directors that may be appointed)
2. Executive Committee and any sub-committees
3. Council of Affiliates
4. Internal Board
5. External Advisory Board
6. Student Caucus
7. Co-ordinator (and any other staff members who may be appointed)

1. Director (and any Associate Directors that may be appointed):

The Director is responsible for the overall direction, functioning and viability of the Institute. S/he is normally appointed for a five-year term and reports directly to the Vice-President Research and Innovation. The stipend and course release attached to the Director's position are determined by the YUFA Collective Agreement.

Directorial responsibilities include:

- being responsible for the overall research life of the Institute and for fostering an active research program and research partnerships by CITY;
- helping to pursue funding for such research, and ensuring that the Institute's obligations to funding agencies are fulfilled;
- working with the PIs of grants held in CITY;
- representing the Institute in the public domain in Toronto, Canada and abroad as well as building and maintenance of strategic relationships with partners in business, civil society and government;
- maintaining contact with Faculties and interested units of the University to ensure ongoing support for CITY and, in consultation with the Office of the Vice-President for Research and Innovation and relevant authorities, establishing contacts and representing the interests of CITY with funding agencies and other institutions in Canada and abroad;
- making an annual report of all activities to the Council;
- representing CITY at the Council of Research Directors meetings;
- organizing and chairing the administrative bodies of CITY, including the Executive Committee and External Advisory Board as well as implementing decisions of the Executive Committee, keeping them informed of directorial actions, and making proposals to them;
- planning and administering the organizational and academic activities of CITY, including the assignment of office space and the allocation of CITY resources;
- overseeing the coordination of events (e.g. the City Seminar and CITYTALKS seminar series, workshops, conferences etc.); hosting the speaker(s) and moderating the events; and fundraising when necessary to support these activities;
- administering the financial affairs of CITY and developing an annual budget for approval by the Executive Committee and reporting to them twice yearly on the Institute's finances;
- development of new funding sources for administrative, outreach and research purposes;

- maintenance and expansion of CITY's relationship to the media both at York and beyond including the development and expansion of a social networking presence for the Institute (e.g. Twitter, Facebook, etc.);
- broadening CITY's involvement in graduate student training;
- management and supervision of CITY's administrative staff and assisting with the hiring of required staff or arranging to do so.

Some of these responsibilities (e.g., fundraising, research) may be assigned to an Associate Director, but the final responsibility rests with the Director (unless otherwise directed by the Executive). If an Associate Director is to be appointed, the Director will consult with the Executive Committee and the Vice-President of Research and Innovation about any pending appointments. The successful candidate will require ratification by the Executive Committee. The terms of the appointment, including any compensation, require Executive approval, but the Associate Director reports to the Director, for a term not normally to exceed that of the Director.

The Director is appointed for a specified term by the President of York University, on the recommendation of a search committee, which is duly constituted under University rules and which includes two members of the Institute determined by the Executive Committee. During the search process, all members of the Institute's community are to be invited to meet with the candidates and to submit their insights to the search committee.

2. Executive Committee and any sub-committees

The members of the Executive Committee, other than the Director and any Associate Directors, will be appointed by the Executive Committee. At least once a year, the Executive will solicit faculty at York to seek nominations for appointments to the Executive. Appointments will start on July 1st of each year and be for three years, although students including post-doctoral fellows, will be appointed for one year terms. Student members may also run again for re-election the following year or in later years. However, students may not hold the position for more than two terms consecutively (i.e., they must not run for third re-election in a row). Appointments will be staggered so that normally no more than half of the Executive Committee shall change in a given year. If a member of the Executive Committee misses three consecutive meetings, the Director may ask the person to voluntarily step down. Vacancies due to resignations, departures or other contingencies are to be filled by the Director in consultation with the Executive.

The executive consists of 6 to 8 CITY Faculty Affiliates, including the Director and the Coordinator, and the following:

- (i) at least one faculty member from each of the Faculty of Environmental Studies and from the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies.
- (ii) the Coordinator of the undergraduate Urban Studies (URST) program.
- (iii) one or two members from other faculties.
- (iv) one or two graduate students or post-doctoral fellows.

(v) a representative from any major research grant administered by CITY. These members will comprise both senior Faculty Affiliates to ensure continuity and more junior Faculty Affiliates to ensure renewal and growth. Particular concern is also paid to equity issues in determining the composition of the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee provides support and guidance to the Director, and is the ultimate decision-making body of the Institute on all significant matters pertaining to institutional relationships, policy, project and program development, and fundraising. It is responsible for matters of regular management and serves in a consultative and monitoring capacity in relation to the Director (and any Associate Directors). More specifically, the Executive Committee is responsible for:

- i) advising the Director regarding the management of CITY, including reviewing decisions and actions of the Director;
- ii) participating in and contributing to the life of the Centre to a notable degree;
- iii) approving new projects and major events such as conferences / workshops, that would involve a major commitment of time or resources;
- iv) reviewing the financial situation of CITY;
- v) making membership decisions;
- vi) approving the Annual Report;
- vii) electing two members to the search committee, when there is a search for a new Director;
- viii) providing agreement for any financial commitment of over \$1000. Members of the Executive will be given five working days to respond to such a request, and non-responses will be understood as agreement with the proposal. On a day-to-day basis, the Director and the Co-ordinator will decide on financial commitments less than \$1000.

The Executive meets at least once a semester in the fall and winter and when necessary in the summer semester. Quorum is necessary for a meeting to proceed (quorum is a majority of the members on the Executive Committee, 50% plus 1). Its meetings are called by the Director, but it may also be convened by a majority of the Executive Committee. The Institute's Co-ordinator will participate in the Executive Committee meetings in a non-voting capacity. The Executive Committee may invite any persons to participate in a non-voting capacity. The Executive normally reaches decisions by consensus, but votes may be held at the request of any two voting members. A vote is carried by a simple majority of Executive members present and voting, with the Director casting the deciding vote in the event of tie. At the Director's bequest, consultation on issues may take place by email, rather than requiring a full Executive meeting.

The Executive Committee may form sub-committees and task forces at its discretion, subject to review by the Director. Sub-committees may include CITY members other than members of the Executive Committee, as determined by the latter. Examples of potential Committees are illustrated below:

Executive sub-committee - Fundraising

This committee will develop and pursue mid- to long-term strategies to render CITY self-financing by securing donations to build endowments (core as well as activity- and program-specific) as well as to support prizes, awards, scholarships and so on. Membership will comprise three faculty (maximum), one graduate student and a staff member. The committee will meet at least once a semester upto once monthly if required.

Responsibilities include: devising a fundraising plan; working on fundraising strategies with the Advancement / Development office; mobilizing fundraising efforts among Affiliates; identifying possible donors; identifying new funding opportunities, working with members of the External Advisory Board and the Internal Board to identify possible funding sources and planning donor “courtship” activities.

Executive sub-committee - Research

This committee will develop and pursue mid- to long-term research strategies for CITY. Membership will comprise three faculty (maximum), one graduate student and a staff member. The committee will meet at least once a semester upto once monthly if required.

Responsibilities include: identifying research interests among Affiliates; working with Affiliates to submit grant applications; identifying possible research funds and other funding opportunities; working with members of the External Advisory Board and the CITY Board to identify possible funding sources.

3. Council of Affiliates

The Council has ultimate decision-making authority for the Institute (within the rules of the University) at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Its membership consists of all CITY members. However, in conformity with York University rules for the governance of ORUs, only York faculty, staff, and students have voting rights at Council AGMs. The quorum for Council meetings will consist of 15% of the total Council including at least 15% of CITY Faculty Members. The Council meets at least once each academic year, usually in April. Its meetings are normally called by the Director, but it may also be convened by a majority of the Executive Committee or by a majority of the Council.

In particular, the Council is responsible for:

- discussing and referring back to the Executive Committee for final approval the Annual Report of the Institute;
- approving the annual budget;
- reviewing decisions of the Executive Committee;
- forming other committees;
- discussing and ratifying proposed amendments to the governance procedures;
- making recommendations regarding Director candidates in a search for a new Director

All City Institute members (including staff) present at the AGM have an equally weighted vote.

4. CITY Board

The CITY Board is intended to expand the accountability of ORUs beyond the Office of the Vice President Research and Innovation. It is a venue for the VPRI and the Dean's Offices' of CITY's two sponsoring faculties, FES and LA&PS, to meet together with other institutional stakeholders (eg., Advancement) where appropriate, to review the ORU's Annual Report with a view to providing feedback and support to the Director. The Board will receive and respond to the Annual Report and budget, provide input to directorship appointments, advise on strategic planning, etc. The Board meets once a year in the spring/summer and the meetings are called by VPRI.

5. External Advisory Board

The City Institute's External Advisory Board consists of approximately 6 to 8 individuals from public life, the private sector, the arts, and from Toronto's diverse communities who have shown enthusiasm for or have accomplishments in the urban realm broadly defined and who join our commitment to critical urban research. Membership is for a period of three years and is renewable. Normally the Board will meet once each academic year although the Director will be in touch with its individual members on an ad-hoc basis.

The External Advisory Board has two main functions:

- (i) CITY relies on this Board for substantive advice on issues related to urban research; Board members bring their wisdom and experience to the Institute. In addition, the Board members help us identify emerging issues, problems, and trends that need the Institute's attention.
- (ii) We also count on the Board members to project the Institute into their worlds. This can take the form of spreading the word about CITY and its activities in their communities.

6. Student Caucus

The Student Caucus consists of all CITY Graduate and Undergraduate Affiliates. This committee concerns itself with the needs and interests of student members of CITY by providing a venue for supporting their engagement in CITY activities. It organizes activities of value to students, foments student involvement, develops mechanisms to support and promote student research and build student community.

The Student Caucus determines its own governance and mode of operation, although it is expected to meet formally at least once each semester. It also elects up to two

representatives to the Executive Committee. The criteria for qualification will require a statement of interest, past involvement in the Institute, and a resume. Based on this information, the Caucus will appoint one or two representatives, subject to final approval by the Executive Committee.

7. Co-ordinator

The Co-ordinator reports to the Director who has responsibility for assigning tasks and establishing priorities and supports them in planning and coordinating urban-related activities, and with the promotion of the Institute's urban research to both the campus and the wider community. The Co-ordinator is specifically responsible for providing administrative support to the Institute Director and research projects of the Institute. On issues related to human resources, the Co-ordinator reports to the Office of the Vice President Research and Innovation. Hiring for this position is in accordance with the guidelines established by the YUSA collective agreement. The Co-ordinator is specifically responsible for:

(i) Grant and Project Development and Management

- Is responsible for all aspects of grant management
- Prepares, under the guidance of the Director, interim and final narrative and financial reports on grants to granting agencies.
- Under the guidance of the Director helps prepare research project and conference funding proposals, including preparing budgets, compiling CVs, following-up with York University departments and Faculties on funding commitments, corresponding with researchers, copyediting applications and facilitating the arrangement of partnerships with external organizations. Initiates, develops and maintains effective consultative and collaborative relationships and partnerships with internal and external partner organizations.
- Coordination of conferences, workshops, meetings, and other events, ensuring that appropriate arrangements (booking rooms, catering, accommodation, travel, etc.) are made.

(ii) Public & University Liaison

- Establishes and maintains liaison, in accordance with instructions from the Director, with the Institute's key external contacts, including partner universities, partner NGOs, institutes, governmental and non-governmental agencies, the private sector and involved individuals.
- Establishes and maintains liaison with key internal contacts for the City Institute, including the Office of the Vice-President Research & Innovation, Research Accounting, Advancement, the Office of Research Services, the Knowledge Mobilization Unit, the Faculty of Environmental Studies and the Faculty of Liberal Arts and Professional Studies.

(iii) Communication

- Manages the communication strategy of CITY.
- Contributes and oversees the maintenance of the City Institute's internal and external profile. This responsibility entails: attending both internal and external events on behalf of the Institute, website maintenance, management of the Institute's listserv and preparation of the Institute's Annual Report.

(iv) Financial

- Works with the Director on budget planning; prepares short-term and long-term budget plans, in accordance with specific guidelines and requirements of York and external funding agencies.
- Acts as liaison with Finance Departments at York and external funding/accounting departments.
- Oversees the Institute's operating and research account budgets.
- Supervises grant administration, including the receiving and depositing of payments, overseeing budgetary details and any reports (e.g. interim and annual expenditures) to granting agencies as required.

(v) Work with the Executive Committee

The Co-ordinator will act as the Secretary, Treasurer, and provide administrative support for the Executive under the Director's directions. More specifically, their responsibilities on the Executive Committee shall include:

- recording the minutes of all meetings of the Executive Committee;
- ensuring copies of minutes of all meetings are distributed to Executive members;
- keeping copies of email decisions made by the Executive Committee;
- receiving and preparing correspondence on behalf of the Executive Committee;
- maintaining a current list of officers and members for all CITY committees;
- overseeing all fiscal matters of CITY on behalf of the Executive Committee, as Treasurer;
- submitting the annual forecast and operating budget to the Vice President of Research and Innovation on behalf of the Executive Committee;
- completing any tasks required for the work of the Executive Committee as assigned by the Director.

(vi) Other responsibilities as delegated by the Director

C. MEMBERSHIP

Membership in CITY is determined by the Executive Committee, which approves applications for membership. Decisions are guided by criteria determined by the Executive, including the promotion of equity and of diversity of membership according to discipline and stage of career. Members will be known as Affiliates and their names and information on their research interests and expertise will appear on the CITY website.

Responsibilities of members

Building a collaborative and multidisciplinary community of urban-based scholars at York University is central to the Institute's mandate. As a result, members are expected to maintain a substantial relationship with the Institute. This may take numerous forms, including active involvement in CITY projects or programs, participation in CITY governance, attendance at CITY events such as conferences and seminar series, submission of research funding applications through CITY, and participation in CITY-administered research projects. In addition to having an active research agenda, they should also be willing to allow the Institute, through its website, to publicize their research achievements and successful grant applications. All affiliations must comply with York University's policies and procedures, particularly around grant applications.

Privileges of members

Alongside the intangible advantages of involvement in a community of urban researchers, membership can provide members with various privileges including administrative support (with the Director's approval), access to shared office space and meeting rooms, use of the CITY website to disseminate information, the opportunity to apply for funding in association with the Institute, and the right to associate themselves publicly with the Institute.

Membership review

The Executive Committee monitors the CITY membership annually to ensure that relevant constituencies are represented and members are fulfilling their responsibilities. If not, the Director takes appropriate action, which may range from friendly reminders to revocation of privileges and termination of membership. The Executive also identifies gaps in the current membership that could be filled by recruiting new members.

Membership in CITY consists of different categories. These categories and their appointment conditions are as follows:

(1) CITY Faculty Affiliates

These are part-time, full-time or emeritus faculty members at York University. They are engaged in research in the field and are expected to participate in the intellectual life of the Institute. For York faculty members (tenured, emeritus, tenure-track, or contractual), membership is by invitation or application for a five-year term, which will align with the ORUs chartering process. There is no limit to the number of core Faculty or the number of times their membership may be renewed. Five years after last indicating a desire to be affiliated with the Institute, members in all categories will be asked if they wish to remain affiliated with the Institute. If there is no reply, their information will be taken off the Institute's website.

(2) CITY External Affiliates comprise two groups:

(i) Community members, activists, public officials, researchers or policy analysts not affiliated with a university whose activities (work or non-work) relate substantively to the research concerns of CITY. This membership category recognizes the important contributions public intellectuals make to the on-going scholarly life of the Institute. Members are expected to participate in the research and intellectual life of the Institute. Membership is by invitation or application for a temporary and limited time period, renewable if appropriate.

(ii) Faculty members at other universities, for whom membership is either through invitation, or by application, and requires substantive and continuing participation in the intellectual life of the Institute. Appointments of faculty external to York are made for up to three years, renewable.

(3) CITY Post-doctoral Fellows

Post-doctoral fellows are researchers who work on projects based at CITY and are usually supervised by a CITY Faculty Associate. They have either been awarded external post-doctoral funding (e.g. SSHRC, Banting) or are directly employed by the university on a CITY based research project. Their membership is determined by the duration of their funding, upon completion of which, they can apply for CITY Affiliate status, which will need to be approved by the CITY Executive Committee.

(4) CITY Graduate Affiliates (masters and doctoral) form two groups:

(i) Graduate students at York University whose program of learning and research intersects with urban-based research and who wish to participate in the activities of CITY. Following application, membership status is subject to the approval of the Executive Committee. Upon receiving membership, this status is valid while the student is formally enrolled at York University. As members, they have the ability to propose initiatives and to benefit from administrative assistance in organizing events, subject to the approval of the Director;

(ii) Graduate / Research assistants employed either directly by CITY or working on CITY projects are given automatic membership for the period of their employment.

(5) CITY Undergraduate Affiliates are York University students who are:

(i) employed in CITY projects;

(ii) volunteering in CITY activities;

(iii) involved in York University's international programs;

(iv) are members of the Federation of Urban Studies Students Executive; or

(v) interns from the SOSC 4710 Urban Studies Field Experience course.

In each case, membership status is automatic and for a temporary and limited time period, subject to verification by the Executive Committee.

(6) CITY Visiting Scholars:

There are two categories:

- (i) The City Institute is able to accommodate a limited number of visiting scholars each year, each with varying lengths of appointments. There are three types of visiting scholar:
 - a. Emeritus Visiting Scholar (emeritus faculty members);
 - b. Senior Visiting Scholar (full-time or part-time faculty members as well as active senior researchers not affiliated with a university);
 - c. Junior Visiting Scholar (post-doctoral fellows and graduate students from other institutions who are visiting York University through an international exchange as well as active junior researchers not affiliated with a university).

Normally, we can provide visitors with a shared workspace, Internet access, and library privileges. There is no monetary funding available for visiting scholar appointments. These researchers are engaged in urban-based research and are expected to participate in the intellectual life of the Institute. If possible, they will give a presentation during their stay. Applications are posted on the Institute's website. Appointments are for a temporary and limited time period, subject to verification by the Executive Committee and space being available for their accommodation.

(ii) Visiting Scholar in Critical Urban Studies (Post-doctoral or Professor level). This visiting position is in partnership with the Urban Studies Program at York University. Applicants must have a Ph.D in any discipline with a focus on critical urban studies. The position is available for a one year period or for one or two semesters. The Urban Studies program will offer the opportunity to teach a (remunerated) upper level undergraduate course. The City Institute will offer an office space, library privileges, and limited administrative support. Visiting scholars will be expected to present their research at a seminar or public lecture organized by the Urban Studies Program and the City Institute. Appointments are subject to approval by a joint committee of two members of the Urban Studies program and the CITY Director.

(6) CITY Staff Members

These are, staff employed, including contractually, by CITY to perform functions other than to conduct research. Appointments are made by the University in conjunction with the Director. The membership status is automatic, subject to verification by the Director.

D. ASSIGNMENT OF OFFICE SPACE AND INSTITUTE RESOURCES

Office space and CITY resources are assigned by the Director, subject to policies directed by the Executive Committee. Please see CITY Policy for Allocating Space for more details.

E. INSTITUTIONAL AFFILIATIONS

CITY may enter into institutional affiliations with other organizations. Any affiliation must be approved by the Executive Committee. These may take the form of:

1. Membership in umbrella organizations.
2. Partnerships with other organizations for the purpose of conducting research projects or for other forms of collaboration.

F. AMENDMENTS TO THE GOVERNANCE PROCEDURES

Major changes to the Governance Procedures can be amended or replaced by the Council of Affiliates. This requires a majority vote of the Council. Changes required by the Senate policy for ORUs, policies of the Office of the Vice President of Research and Innovation, or minor changes can be approved by the Executive. Notification of a proposed amendment will be given at least one week in advance of a Council meeting.

April 2017

Amendment to City Institute Governance Document (April 2017)

In part **C. Membership** it is stated that:

Membership in CITY is determined by the Executive Committee, which approves applications for membership.

This is amended as follows:

Membership in CITY is determined by the Director and the Executive Committee, which approve applications for membership. Membership of applicants based at York will be reviewed and approved by the Director. Applicants external to York will require the approval of the Executive Committee.

December 21, 2021