

Jan. 13, 2022

OFFICE OF THE
VICE-PRESIDENT
RESEARCH &
INNOVATION

4700 KEELE ST.
TORONTO ON
CANADA M3J 1P3
T 416 736 5479

VPRI@yorku.ca

Dear Colleagues,

As the situation continues to evolve around COVID-19, I want to thank our community of researchers, students and staff for their patience, diligence, and flexibility. Over the course of the Winter 2022 term, please be assured that York University remains committed to the safe return of more on-campus learning, other co-curricular opportunities as well as returning more researchers to campus. With the rollout of the booster vaccine and continued measures of social distancing, mask-wearing and COVID-19 screening, we remain hopeful that we will be able to increase on-campus research and scholarly activities in 2022. We are committed to ensuring that on-campus research and scholarship is undertaken as effectively and efficiently as possible while protecting the health and safety of our community and in coordination with Public Health guidelines and recommendations.

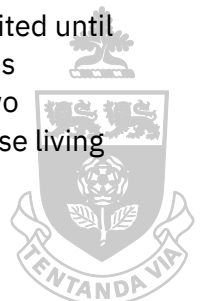
The [YU Better Together](#) website remains a centralized community resource. This site includes regular updates on current COVID-19 measures, guidance, frequently asked questions, and related materials to help guide and support our community members as we continue towards returning to life on our campuses. I strongly encourage you to visit the website for the latest information.

Our Research Continuity Group (RCG) is working diligently on your behalf with our colleagues and Associate Deans Research from York Faculties, Council of Research Directors of the Organized Research Units, and our York COVID-19 Planning and Recovery team. We continue to coordinate our university planning and operations groups to ensure that we are ramping up research and scholarship plans as seamlessly as possible and meeting the needs of all York researchers, both those on campus and those continuing their research remotely.

On-campus and face-to-face research

On-campus research can continue but researchers are encouraged to conduct research activities remotely where possible, avoid close contact interactions whenever possible and follow approved health and safety plans. Research involving human participants can also continue, though researchers are strongly encouraged to consider using online tools to conduct such activities. *Face-to-face on-campus research with unvaccinated human participants is prohibited for the immediate future.*

All in-person research with participants from vulnerable populations is prohibited until at least January 31st, 2022, or until otherwise advised. Vulnerable populations include unvaccinated and under-vaccinated (e.g. have not received at least two COVID-19 vaccines), immune compromised, long term care residents and those living



in congregate situations and Indigenous communities. Questions about whether your population is vulnerable should be directed to ore@yorku.ca.

Research conducted off campus and in other countries

For researchers who are conducting research off campus and/or in other countries, it is strongly advised that, where possible, researchers consider online research options. Where that is not possible, researchers must abide by their approved Health and Safety Plan and adhere to local health guidance, including potential cessation of face-to-face research activities if stipulated so by local public health authorities. Further, York is advising all of its community members to follow the [Government of Canada's travel advisory](#) to avoid all non-essential travel to address the COVID-19 Omicron variant. As international travel advisories begin to lift, this guidance will be re-assessed, and additional information will be provided.

As many researchers resume their research activities for the Winter 2022 term, it should be noted that any **face-to-face human research activity** must include additional ethics compliance requirements. For further information consult Alison Collins-Mrakas, Director, Office of Research Ethics at acollins@yorku.ca.

The dynamic nature of the pandemic means that we must continue to remain flexible, and we are doing all that we can to provide quality support and resources to help achieve academic success, whether remotely or on campus. Our [Division staff](#) are available and remain committed to helping you navigate and assist with the continuation of your research activity.

I thank you all for your continued contributions, dedication to research and flexibility in adapting to and navigating the new circumstances of research and scholarship in these unprecedented times.

Sincerely,

Amir Asif
Vice-President Research & Innovation