# GUIDANCE FOR

**UNIVERITY RESEARCH AND INNOVATION INSTITUTES, RESEARCH CENTERS, and RESEARCH CORE FACILITIES**

# DEFINITIONS OF INSTITUTION-LEVEL RESEARCH ADMINISTRATIVE UNITS

University Research & Innovation Institutes, University Research Centers, and University Research Core Facilities report to the Vice President for Research & Innovation (VPRI) under the auspices of the Office of the Vice President for Research &Innovation (OVPRI). These administrative units are led by a Director who is appointed by the Vice President for Research and Innovation. In addition to the Research Centers and Institutes supported through OVPRI, the University of Oregon has many other centers, institutes, and research-related groups on campus: <https://research.uoregon.edu/centers-and-institutes/other-centers-institutes-and-research-related-groups>

1. **UNIVERSITY RESEARCH & INNOVATION INSTITUTE:** A University Research & Innovation Institute is a unit that is organized to support multi- and interdisciplinary research and innovation involving a number of faculty, staff, and students. As such, University Research & Innovation Institutes are expected to include faculty of three or more departments/units and/or from two or more schools, and/or include substantial research and innovation portfolios. Such units are broad in scope and are characterized by their programmatic autonomy from an individual discipline or college, by having a budget that is fiscally independent of other academic units and requiring independent administrative support. Furthermore, University Research & Innovation Institutes often are the drivers of multi- or interdisciplinary graduate education and also require specialized infrastructure (e.g., space, facilities or equipment). University Research & Innovation Institutes are expected to have substantial external funding from either extramural sponsors or donor resources. A University Research & Innovation Institute is hereafter referred to as an “Institute.” These Institutes report to the VPRI and are administered under the auspices of the OVPRI.
2. **UNIVERSITY RESEARCH CENTER**: A University Research Center is a unit organized to support multi- and interdisciplinary research in a manner that is less comprehensive than an Institute, but that still requires and/or benefits from specialized support mechanisms beyond those provided by a department or college. University Research Centers rely primarily on other existing units for their administrative support and typically are characterized by less programmatic and fiscal independence than University Research & Innovation Institutes. University Research Centers focus on broader themes that draw on multiple departments. They have a moderate level of extramural sponsors or donor resources. These Centers report to the VPRI and are administered under the auspices of the OVPRI. A University Research Center is hereafter referred to as “Center.” University Research Centers may be housed within an Institute. Other research centers that focus on a specific topic or theme would typically report to, and be administered by, the affiliated department or college.
3. **LAB**: A lab is a research unit typically organized around one or two faculty members’ individual research activities. They may or may not have external or donor resources.
4. **SERVICE CENTER**: A service center is a facility, center, operation, function, or activity whose output is measurable on a workload or other quantitative basis and the costs associated with these activities are separately accounted for and charged to users in proportion to services rendered. The primary purpose of a service center is to provide specific services to the UO community, although services may also be provided to external users.
5. **UNIVERSITY RESEARCH CORE FACILITY:** Research Core Facilities (RCFs) are OVPRI-affiliated service centers. They provide shared access to research instrumentation and services for a broad research community, including internal and external users. The primary purpose of RCFs is to support and advance the research and training missions of the university’s researchers. RCFs are administered by the OVPRI and report to the Assistant Vice President for Research Facilities. Please consult the specialized guidance provided for the administration and operation of RCFs by the OVPRI: <https://research.uoregon.edu/research-cores/core-guidance>

# CRITERIA FOR CATEGORIZING INSTITUTES AND CENTERS

Centers and Institutes are classified annually by the VPRI into ‘highly intensive,’ ‘high,’ and ‘medium’ groupings. The criteria underlying a unit’s level are based on the following factors: overall financial activity including, but not limited to, sponsored award, endowment and general fund dollars that flow through the unit; operating budgets (ICC, endowment, auxiliary, or general fund dollars or some combination thereof); number of administrative employees; total number of external awards managed by the unit; and total number of discrete programs run by the unit (seminars, faculty grants, graduate training programs, etc.).

# ESTABLISHMENT OF A UNIVERSITY RESEARCH INSTITUTE OR CENTER

1. In general, new Institutes or Centers will be created in circumstances where research, intellectual, and/or academic goals cannot be met adequately by existing university structures, such as a department or college.
2. Proposals to create an Institute or Center should be submitted to OVPRI for review. Proposals for new Institutes and Centers must include:
   * Name of proposed Institute or Center
   * Mission
   * Goals
   * Justification for establishment
   * Governance and organizational structure
   * Membership
   * Operating procedures
   * Budget and financial plan
   * Risk assessment and university liabilities

Because Institutes and Centers support intellectual interests of faculty that transcend a single department, college, or mission, ongoing discussion among faculty, department heads/directors, and deans is expected in developing the proposal to establish a new Institute or Center. A formal recommendation for establishment of a new Institute or Center by the cognizant department heads, directors, and college deans is expected to be obtained by the Institute or Center faculty prior to approval by the VPRI and implementation.

1. Budget plans to establish an Institute or Center must be developed in consultation with the OVPRI leadership and formally approved by the VPRI. Additionally, an assessment of potential university liabilities by the campus legal counsel must accompany the request for establishment. Early discussions with the VPRI and pertinent OVPRI leadership before initiating the proposal process are strongly encouraged.
2. All Institutes and Centers must identify the structure and staff with primary responsibility for the oversight and management of the organization’s financial operations. All Institute and Center faculty, staff, and students are expected to follow applicable university, state, and federal policies regarding administration and operation. Institutes and Centers are expected to operate within available allocated resources and not accrue budget deficits at the end of each fiscal year. Violations of these expectations may result in administrative action by the University, including, but not limited to, dissolution of an Institute, Center or Facility.
3. Proposals for the establishment of new Institutes and Centers will be reviewed by the Research Advisory Board (RAB) and, if endorsed, will then be reviewed by the executive team in the OVPRI.
4. New Institutes and Centers must be approved by the VPRI. New Institutes and Centers will be authorized for an initial germination period of three years, at which time they will be reviewed by the RAB following the review procedure described in section III.
5. Following germination and successful meeting of milestones determined by formal programmatic review, the VPRI will formally authorize the continued operation or the sunsetting of the institute or center. Review criteria for continued authorization include, but are not limited to: 1) success in the accomplishment of the unit's mission and its specific goals; 2) depth and breadth of impact in scholarship and innovation; 3) the Institute’s or Center’s support of the University research and/or innovation mission; and 4) maintenance of fiscal solvency.

# IV. REVIEW PROCEDURE

Program review, coupled with strategic planning, is essential to advancing academic excellence. Program review is a primary means to maintain and improve quality and evaluate whether the Institute or Center is well-positioned to respond to opportunities and is meeting the needs of faculty. As a result, Institutes and Centers can realize many benefits from a thorough program review. The goals of the review process are to:

* Evaluate the unit’s present research excellence in terms of discoveries, technologies, and/or creative output that impacts the academy, the region, the nation, and the world
* Evaluate the unit’s research mission and its relevance at the national and international levels presently and in five years. Determine how choices made now for resource distribution, training, faculty support, and faculty hiring will impact that standing
* Provide insight into the opportunities and challenges facing the research unit that leadership at local and central levels could address to make the research unit more successful in its stated goals and mission

Some of the most positive outcomes include:

An examination of the quality and value of the unit's activities by the faculty and students

A clarification, evaluation, and perhaps revision, of unit goals, strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities

An improved source of information to help guide the unit’s future actions, activities, and decisions on resources

An assessment of unit’s objectives and how they enable achievement of the University's strategic priorities and goals

An assessment of how the OVPRI can advocate for the needs of the unit, if external to OVPRI

The review process is a positive approach focused on self-examination and critical feedback in order to advance the research and innovation mission of the University of Oregon. It supports programs' desires to develop, evolve, and reaffirm their own and the University's commitment to academic excellence.

In addition to formal review, the OVPRI facilitates an annual process by which research-active Centers & Institutes create roadmaps for research engagement and key impact goals. These are developed in partnership with the Assistant VP for Strategic Research Initiative and faculty Associate Vice Presidents for Research. The goal of these roadmaps is to articulate short-, medium-, and long-term strategy to accelerate research, scholarship, and impact. These are used in annual C&I review and would be relevant documentation guiding the formal review process.

There are two components to program review: 1) internal self-study and 2) review of the unit by members of the RAB.

The VPRI is responsible for coordinating the necessary periodic review of University Research & Innovation Institutes and University Research Centers. As such, the OVPRI is the main point of contact for units being reviewed and has responsibility for oversight and implementation of the review process.

A formal review procedure has been established to ensure institutional consistency and to provide the necessary data to facilitate strategic planning. Reviews are scheduled typically on a 6-year cycle, in the last year of the authorized operating period, which reflects the faster time- scale of responsiveness for Institute/Center in comparison to departments, and allows for a manageable number of units to be reviewed each year. Program review also can be initiated by the director or VPRI at any time.

1. By October 1, the VPRI notifies the Centers and Institutes who will be under review.
2. The OVPRI appoints RAB committee members to review teams. Each review team will be co-chaired by the RAB faculty co-chairs.
3. Review team meets to discuss the process and identify unit-specific questions that the review team would like to ask.
4. The OVPRI staff provides the following materials to the review team and unit director:
   * Stated mission and internal governance documents of the unit
   * Five year review of financial information and trend analysis, if possible, for key financial indicators
   * Relevant roadmaps and updates
5. Unit provides responses to questions (see Appendix 1) to review team.
6. Review team reviews materials, identifies any outstanding questions for the unit.
7. Review team meets with unit faculty and staff.
8. Review team writes up evaluation based on the unit’s self-study, mission, internal governance, responses to any supplemental questions, and meetings with unit faculty and staff. Review team shares this evaluation with the unit.
9. Unit provides feedback on the evaluation and the review team can make edits to the evaluation accordingly.
10. The chair of the review team will report to the whole RAB during the May meeting.
11. The review team makes edits to the report based on RAB input. The final report is submitted to the VPRI and to the director.
12. The VPRI meets with the unit director to discuss the report.
13. At the end of authorized operating period, Institutes and Centers have the opportunity to seek renewal authorization, consider redefining their mission and/or emphasis (e.g., reforming as a new unit), or move toward orderly dissolution. Institutes or Centers that are not renewed and/or specifically reauthorized will be ‘sunsetted’ and may not continue their operations beyond the authorized period. In circumstances where more protracted planning and discussion may be needed, Institutes or Centers also may be deemed inactive and ‘mothballed’ pending further review or action.

# ANNUAL REVIEW

# In addition to the review process outlined above, each Institute, Center, and Facility is reviewed on an annual basis on a smaller scale. Each summer there will be a meeting between the VPRI, director, and business manager. Prior to this meeting, the unit will conduct a SWOT analysis to be discussed at the meeting. In addition, the divisional budget director will work with the business manager to align on the financials, as a financial review is also part of the meeting. The unit will also provide its membership as part of the annual review.

# CHANGES

Institutes or Centers may request a change in designation based on these definitions at any time. Such requests will include a rationale for the proposed change in designation and will be reviewed and approved by the appropriate approval authority as if it were a newly created organization. Name changes to Institutes or Centers must be approved by the VPRI.

**ANNUAL BUDGET TEMPLATE**

***INSTITUTE/CENTER NAME:***

***FY: Director:***

1. List of membership

* Faculty: including school/college/departmental affiliation, level of membership, whether or not they have active grants, and year of hire
* Career limited duration research faculty, including postdocs, research assistants, research associates, other research staff (e.g., temps, OAs)
* Administrative OA and classified staff
* Graduate students: Total number of Master’s and PhD students
* Undergraduate: Total number of undergraduate students

2. Institute/Center staff & FTE

3. Non-grant summary (index, fund, fund description, index description, YTD budget, YTD activity, YTD committed, YTD Balance)

4. Grant Summary for each FY

* Proposals (requested budget for proposals submitted, number of proposals submitted, how many awards received, percentage of awards to proposals)
* Awards (total dollar amount of awards, total dollar of awards received, federal or federal flow-through, percentage of dollars from federal sources)
* Expenditures (total expenditures from sponsored funds, total expenditures from federal funds, expenditures for each of the top five sponsors)
* Employment (number of external grant funded grad students, number of external grant funded post docs)

# University Research & Innovation Institute or University Research Center

**PROGRAM REVIEW BY RESEARH ADVISORY BOARD**

***INSTITUTE/CENTER NAME:***

***FY: Director:***

**Program Review for the [Center/Institute]**

Presented to the Office of the Vice President for Research and Innovation (OVPRI)

Date:

**Overview**

* Purpose of review
* List of review committee members

1. **Process**

* Summary of meeting dates and activities in the review process

1. **Summary of Self-Study**
2. Background
   1. Mission
   2. Brief history
3. Composition and Organizational Structure
4. Research Standing and Accomplishments
5. External Outreach
6. Product Development (as relevant)
7. Contributions to the UO’s Academic Mission
8. Budget
9. **Committee’s Assessment of Unit’s Strengths and Weaknesses**
   1. Scientific Vision/Mission
   2. Composition and Organizational Structure
   3. Research Standing and Accomplishments/Productivity
   4. External Outreach
   5. Product Development (as relevant)
   6. Contributions to UO’s Academic Mission
   7. Fit with Requirements to be a OVPRI Research Center/Institute
   8. Budget
10. **Summary and Recommendations**

**Appendices**

* Unit’s self-study
* Unit’s budget documents
* Unit’s internal governance documents

**Appendix 1: Questions to be to be answered in writing by the unit as part of the RAB Review**

**Please describe accomplishments facilitated by the unit that would have been difficult under a traditional departmental structure (e.g., if unit personnel only held departmental affiliations).**

1. What is the national and international standing of the research activities pursued by the unit? What are its areas of particular research strength? Please provide relevant evidence.
2. How does this unit compare to its peers (and who are those peers)?
3. Which other units/departments/programs/centers are your key collaborators within UO and beyond?
4. How does the unit foster diversity and inclusion?
5. Please describe public outreach activities and their impact.
6. Does the unit have formal responsibilities for mentoring and training graduate students? What is the plan to encourage support of graduate education and research experiences for graduate students in the academic area of the unit?
7. What current and future opportunities is the unit poised to take advantage of?
8. What is the five-year plan for the evolution and growth of the unit?
9. How does this plan address the financial viability of the unit?
10. How is the unit situated with regards to emerging funding opportunities?
11. How can the unit promote excellence in interdisciplinary research?
12. What are the major barriers to continued growth in excellence? What challenges does the unit face?
13. Does the current administrative organization of the research activity match the current and future research needs of the unit’s faculty?
14. What infrastructure needs, if any, are holding back unit progress? Which investments might best catalyze new research areas? Are there shared instruments or facilities that are needed to support existing and emerging research strengths in the unit?
15. Is this unit currently taking advantage of philanthropy and are there opportunities for philanthropy that could be expanded or enhanced?

OVPRI representatives are part of each review team to help address questions from the chair of the review team or C&I directors and brining the questions back to the VPRI when clarification is needed. They are there to remind the group of the purpose and process when/if things get off track and to help read drafts of the report.