

 BRANDON UNIVERSITY	RESEARCH CENTRES AND INSTITUTES (RCI) POLICY AND PROCEDURES		
Board of Governors Policy	Policy Sponsor:	Vice-President (Research & Graduate Studies)	First Approved: 15 MARCH 2011
	Primary Contact:	Manager of Research Services	Last Updated: 21 MARCH 2026
	Approved by:	Board of Governors	Review Scheduled: 2031

1. PURPOSE

The Brandon University Research Centres and Institutes (RCI) Policy and Procedures shall govern the establishment, administration, and dissolution of institutional RCIs.

2. SCOPE

RCIs focus primarily on research and research-related activities, such as research projects, training of highly qualified personnel (HQP), collaborations, and knowledge mobilization activities. The Policy and Procedures are administered by the Office of the Vice-President (Research & Graduate Studies) in collaboration with the Senate Research Committee. An RCI must have formal Brandon University approval before using the word “Centre” or “Institute”.

3. DEFINITIONS

Contract: A legally binding and enforceable agreement to perform a defined scope of work on behalf of or in partnership with an external sponsor on a fee-for service basis.

Grant: Funds that are awarded by an external sponsor to enable the performance of self-directed research, normally through a competitive application process.

Highly Qualified Personnel (HQP): Individuals who receive training or work under the supervision of a researcher, including undergraduate, graduate, and doctorate students, postdoctoral fellows, technicians, and research assistants.

Knowledge Mobilization: The process of turning research findings into tangible social, health, or economic benefits for Canadians.

Overhead: Costs that cannot be directly attributed to contract activities but are a result of contract activities and the costs associated with administering and managing the research.

Policy: Research Centres and Institutes Policy.

Residual Balance: The funds remaining in a research grant or contract account that has terminated or expired, after all outstanding expenses have been paid.

Sponsor: The agency, organization, institution, government department, etc. that has provided research funds to the University via a research grant or contract.

Strategic Research Plan: Outlines the institution's research vision, priorities, and goals to build capacity, foster excellence in specific research areas, and maximize impact, usually updated every five years.

University: Brandon University (BU).

4. POLICY

a) Research Centres and Institutes

An RCI is a formally structured organizational unit of the University. It is established under the authority of the Brandon University Board of Governors, normally on the recommendation of the Senate of the University. The purpose of an RCI is to engage in research that is focused in a specific area and to encourage collaborations and interdisciplinary research. RCIs attract funding from external agencies, provide unique training opportunities for students, seek out various avenues for knowledge mobilization, and serve as a valuable information source for the community-at-large.

RCIs are created and operated in manner that is consistent with the [Brandon University Strategic Research Plan](#) and the institution's strategic direction. RCIs strengthen, coordinate, or facilitate research and scholarly/creative activities not readily undertaken within the University's department structure, building upon the existing expertise, competence, and staff interest.

Note that for the purpose of this Policy, Research Centre and Research Institute are used interchangeably.

b) RCI Responsibilities

A Research Centre or Institute is expected to:

- i) have clearly identified goals and objectives;
- ii) have some degree of permanence, transcending collaboration on a particular, limited project;
- iii) bring together scholars from different disciplines and/or areas of specialization within a particular discipline;
- iv) incorporate equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI) into the RCI's mission, procedures, and projects;
- v) maintain a high level of research productivity;
- vi) disseminate research outputs and data as widely as possible and as appropriate, in line with research data plans;
- vii) foster the training of future researchers, especially in regard to research skills;
- viii) attract postdoctoral fellows, visiting professors, and other scholars;
- ix) cooperate with scholars at other universities and institutions; and
- x) seek external funding to operate on a cost recovery basis.

In undertaking its goals and objectives, an RCI is expected to establish communication links both internal and external to Brandon University, organize seminars and symposia, and develop collaborations. An RCI may, on occasion, involve formal partnerships with other universities and/or institutions. Brandon University involvement in such joint ventures is subject to formal agreement approved by the Vice-President (Research & Graduate Studies) by recommendation of the Dean.

c) Reporting Structure and Accountability

Every RCI within the University is accountable through its Director to a University Dean. Financial responsibility for the RCI is vested with the Dean. Faculty/School Deans shall report to the Vice-President (Research & Graduate Studies) on all matters related to RCIs. The RCI Director will exercise general supervision over the operation of the unit with specific responsibilities varying with the size of the unit as well as the complexity of its policies and operations. The Director is responsible for the administrative and financial oversight of the RCI and the projects that the RCI undertakes. Note that oversight does not extend to researchers' individual grants. For any joint faculty/school initiative, the Director shall be responsible to whichever Dean is so designated, either in the initial proposal to create such a unit or as subsequently recommended and approved. A Director, upon recommendation of the Dean, may be removed by the Vice-President (Research & Graduate Studies) which is understood to be in relation to the duties of the Director as described herein. Causes may include negligence, incompetence, unprofessional conduct, and inability to maintain the confidence of the members. An RCI shall be financially secure with core funding derived from either the University or other sources. In this regard, while the University may provide support to an RCI through its operating budget, the RCI is expected to seek external funding to support its activities, through grants, contracts, fees-for-services, or donations, with an ultimate goal of self-sufficiency.

d) Director

The Director of an RCI must be a continuing member within the Professorial or Professional ranks of Brandon University. An RCI shall not normally require hiring new full-time academic faculty. Each member, including the Director, should hold an appointment in an academic department. The selection of an RCI Director is the responsibility of the Dean to whom the Director will report in consultation with the Vice-President (Research & Graduate Studies).

e) Advisory Committee

While the organizational and administrative structure of an RCI varies as a function of its objectives, size, and funding arrangements, all RCIs shall have an Advisory Committee. The specific terms of reference of such committees may vary from one RCI to another but the general purpose of the Committee is to provide advice on the RCI's activities and programs.

f) Approval Process

The authority to establish an RCI resides with the Board of Governors, normally on the recommendation of the Senate of the University. A proposal for an RCI is reviewed by the Senate Research Committee (SRC) with a recommendation to the Senate. Prior to submission to the SRC,

a proposal is normally supported by the department and faculty council, and ultimately the Dean, as appropriate. A proposal shall be formally submitted to the Vice-President (Research & Graduate Studies).

It is expected that a group of researchers will already have discovered the advantages of collaborative work and academic interchange before proposing a formal establishment of an RCI. Researchers should have an established record of research, scholarship, and knowledge mobilization in their fields, as well as success in securing external support for their research.

g) Annual Report

The RCI Director shall provide an annual report to the Dean to whom they report, Vice-President (Research & Graduate Studies), and Chair of the Senate Research Committee by the anniversary date of RCI establishment/approval.

h) Renewal of an RCI

To ensure that all research is consistent with the goals of Brandon University and that an RCI reflects positively on the general reputation of the institution, every five years an RCI shall submit a report to be reviewed by the SRC upon seeking renewal.

Based on the report, the SRC shall determine whether a formal, independent review committee should be struck to conduct a **Full Review** of the RCI. If a Full Review of the RCI is not warranted, in that it is clear the RCI either qualifies for continuation or that it does not, the SRC will recommend to the Senate that the RCI continue for a period of five years, or that it be terminated without further review. The report and the recommendation of the Senate will be brought forward to the Board of Governors for approval. Any legal agreement that affects the status of the RCI must be taken into consideration in the formal recommendation.

i) Overhead and Residual Balances

A University RCI must conform to institutional policies and procedures. In particular, an RCI shall adhere to the [Brandon University Research Contract Policy](#) with respect to the recovery of overheads on research contracts. In this regard, Brandon University will allow an RCI to retain 60% of the overhead amount received from contracts undertaken and grants awarded (where applicable), with 40% going to the Office of the Vice-President (Research & Graduate Studies). In the case of an RCI, the institution will reinvest any residual funds at the end of a contract or grant back into the RCI. Where Brandon University overhead is captured at an amount less than the required institutional 30%, any residual funds remaining at the end of a project will first go towards re-cooping the overhead amount to the 30% maximum, after which time any remaining residual funds will go to the RCI. The RCI shall use funds to advance the mission of the RCI.

j) IT Governance

RCIs shall adhere to the [Brandon University IT Acceptable Use Policy](#) and IT Account Provisioning Procedures. As best practice for cybersecurity, RCIs shall collect, disseminate, and store information using Brandon University IT resources and websites, allowing for unique data

processing requirements and management of sensitive data as appropriate. All new RCI websites will be created under the brandonu.ca domain. Existing RCI websites and information storage locations will be reviewed with RCI Directors and Deans to inform future migration and long-term storage plans.

k) Dissolution of Research Centres and Institutes

Brandon University reserves the right to close an RCI during an approved term for reasons of financial exigency or other reasons. Normally, on recommendation of the Senate, the Board of Governors will formally dissolve an established RCI. In the event that an RCI decides to dissolve its operations or that Brandon University does not recommend the continuation of an RCI for an additional term, the activities of the RCI will be wound down and the RCI will be closed. Dissolution can occur in circumstances such as:

- a. when there is evidence that the RCI is not fulfilling its stated goals;
- b. the RCI has no plans for future activities;
- c. upon resignation or retirement of an RCI Director followed by a failed search;
- d. due to serious or repeated instances of non-compliance with laws, regulations, Brandon University policies and procedures, etc.; and
- e. when there is an absence of financial support or no plausible future source of funding to maintain the RCI.

5. POLICY AUTHORITY

- **Policy Sponsor:** Vice-President (Research & Graduate Studies)
- **Primary Contact:** Manager of Research Services
- **Approval Authority:** Board of Governors

6. RELEVANT LEGISLATION

- Secretariat on Responsible Conduct of Research
- Tri-Agency Guide on Financial Administration

7. RELATED POLICY DOCUMENTS

- Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Strategic Plan
- IT Acceptable Use Policy
- Policy on Academic Integrity and the Responsible Conduct of Research
- Postdoctoral Fellow Policy and Procedures
- Research Contract Policy
- Research Data Management Strategy
- Residual Balances in Research Accounts Policy
- Strategic Research Plan

APPENDIX: RESEARCH CENTRES AND INSTITUTES PROCEDURES

The purpose of the RCI Procedures is to outline the processes for establishing and reviewing an RCI.

1. Proposal Requirements for an RCI

A proposal for a new RCI must be comprehensive enough to allow the merits and feasibility of establishing an RCI to be clearly assessed and shall include the information listed below. The items listed are to be addressed and used as proposal sub-headings:

a. Name of the RCI

- i. Will begin with Brandon University
- ii. Will be reflective of the mission of the RCI

b. Description and Justification

- i. Concise statement of the mission, goals, and objectives of the proposed RCI
- ii. Alignment with the [Brandon University Strategic Research Plan](#)
- iii. An EDI Plan for the RCI and research projects/activities undertaken
- iv. A Knowledge Mobilization Plan
- v. [Research Data Management \(RDM\)](#) Plan for projects and initiatives undertaken
- vi. Identification of the scope of activities expected
- vii. Description of the research benefits and opportunities likely to result from the establishment of the RCI, including an indication of how the proposed RCI will facilitate research among scholars within the University and in the wider community, including evidence of existing collaborations and anticipated collaborations
- viii. Community outreach and impact
- ix. Training and development of HQP

c. Governance Structure

- i. Detail the organizational structure of the proposed RCI, including the roles and responsibilities of its various members and committees
- ii. Identify the University Dean to whom the proposed RCI reports and in whom financial responsibility is vested
- iii. Proposed Director:
 1. Outline qualifications, including CV
- iv. Proposed membership:
 1. List of the proposed membership of the RCI broken down by the various membership categories, where applicable. For each proposed member, an abbreviated curriculum vitae shall be provided that details their research excellence and expertise, including professional preparation, employment experience, professional activities, research interests, research funding record, and record of research achievements
 2. Categories of membership and the criteria for each of these categories
 3. Procedures whereby appointments will be made for each membership category
 4. Privileges and responsibilities of membership

5. Membership termination and removal
- v. Advisory Committee structure and role:
 1. Advisory Committee is comprised of:
 - i. Responsible Dean
 - ii. RCI Director
 - iii. RCI Members
 - iv. Three External Members
 2. Members appointed by applicable Dean
 3. Membership to reflect EDI considerations
 4. Terms of membership
 5. Members must adhere to Brandon University policies and procedures
 6. External Members are recommended
 7. Advisory Committee provides advice and guidance to the RCI Director and Dean. The decision-making authority on all aspects of the RCI is retained by Brandon University. Specific duties and input of the Committee should be listed, such as:
 - i. Strategic Plan and direction of the RCI
 - ii. Branding of the RCI
 - iii. Fulfilling objectives and plans
 - iv. Proposals for grants and contracts
 - v. Recruitment of Advisory Committee members
 - vi. Input into plans and reports:
 - vii. Knowledge Mobilization Plan
 - viii. Financial Plan
 - ix. Annual Report
 - vi. Personnel/staffing plan for the administrative duties of the RCI, for example, administrative and technical support
 - vii. Outline the reporting relationships of the RCI and organizational structure of the RCI within BU
- d. Physical Space and Resources**
 - i. Detail where the RCI will be located and the amount of space available
 - ii. Provide a list of available research resources, for example, library holdings, laboratories, equipment, website to be created under the Brandon University domain, IT support, email accounts required, collaboration sites, and OneDrive location
 - iii. Include an indication of current strengths and weaknesses
 - iv. Plan for ongoing operations and maintenance of research equipment and facility, if applicable
 - v. Indicate future requirements, including a proposed strategy for obtaining these resources and long-term information and data storage, using BU resources such as [Brandon University's Institutional Repository \(IRBU\)](#), where applicable
- e. Operational Plan and Accompanying Financial Resources**
 - i. The Operational Plan will provide a clear administrative and oversight structure for the RCI

- ii. The Plan is to be developed with the goal of self-sufficiency, i.e., no central support from the institution is provided. The Plan should also ensure that no liabilities are created for the institution.
- iii. A detailed budget that includes:
 - 1. Itemized list of expenses and accompanying budget justification detailing the need for the expense and how the cost was arrived at for the first five years that includes the anticipated revenue from all sources (University, government, industry, recovery of indirect costs, royalties, etc.) and proposed annual operational costs
 - 2. Plan for seeking external funding
 - 3. An RCI is expected to be self-sufficient and generate revenue for operations and maintenance independent of Brandon University. This must be demonstrated through both actual and anticipated sources of income and accompanied by letters of support from potential users/clients who will make use of fee-for-service agreements.
- iv. Risk Management Plan that addresses potential risks to the RCI and risk mitigation
- v. Reporting requirements and expectations
- vi. Dissolution and closing procedures
- vii. Others, as applicable

f. Letters of Support and Commitment

- i. Letters should be provided and signed by the appropriate University Officer(s), for example, Dean, Department Chair, etc.
- ii. Any cash and in-kind commitments or agreements to provide space, amended teaching appointments, or other resources, including the recovery of indirect costs from contract research, should be documented and signed off on by those authorized to make such commitments. Note that in the absence of such statements, it will be assumed that no such commitments or agreements have been made.

2. Annual Report

The annual reporting requirements shall detail:

- a. The activities of the RCI and its personnel
- b. Research accomplishments and meeting of objectives
- c. Undergraduate, graduate, and post-graduate training activities
- d. Knowledge mobilization activities
- e. Other research-related activities
- f. List of members and personnel
- g. List of postdoctoral fellows, visiting professors, and other scholars and details of their involvement
- h. Description of partnerships and collaborations
- i. Community outreach and impacts
- j. Balance sheet for the year in review, including details on all funding received and pending
- k. Advisory Committee membership and recommendation
- l. Plan for the upcoming year

3. Renewal of RCI

Prior to the end of the penultimate year of the established term, the Director of the RCI must indicate whether they intend to renew the term for another five years. Notice of the intent to renew will be forwarded to the Dean, Vice-President (Research & Graduate Studies), and Chair of the Senate Research Committee and submission of the report will be within the first six months of the final year.

a. Renewal Report

The Director shall submit to the Chair of the SRC a report that contains the following:

- i. Description of how the RCI has achieved or revised its original goals and objectives
- ii. Detailed listing of its research training accomplishments
- iii. Current membership list
- iv. Advisory Committee list
- v. Detailed financial statement
- vi. Five-year plan that identifies the future research direction of the RCI, development strategies, goals and objectives
- vii. Scope of activities expected
- viii. Knowledge Mobilization Plan
- ix. EDI Plan
- x. Operational Plan for the RCI that is in line with the proposed five-year plan
- xi. Letter of support indicating continued commitment to the RCI from the appropriate Dean
- xii. Names and contact information of three (3) individuals who can provide external assessments of the RCI

b. Full Review

In the event that a full review is required, a Review Committee will be appointed by the Chair of the SRC, in consultation with the SRC, at least six (6) months prior to the end of the term of the RCI. The membership of the Review Committee shall include:

- i. a senior researcher with administrative experience and no direct involvement in the RCI (preferably a former Dean or Department Chair) who shall act as Chair of the Committee
- ii. the Director, or designate, of another RCI at Brandon University
- iii. a researcher who is not affiliated with the RCI but is knowledgeable in the field of its research activity
- iv. the Chair of the SRC, or designate, to assess financial matters and institutional concerns
- v. other members as deemed appropriate

The mechanism by which the Review Committee elects to conduct the review shall be at the discretion of the Committee in consultation with the Chair of the SRC. Notwithstanding, the primary focus of the review shall be an assessment of:

- i. the extent to which the RCI has fulfilled its goals and objectives;
- ii. the appropriateness of its future goals and objectives; and
- iii. its current and projected financial viability.

The review process shall involve meetings with the Director and members, and include the solicitation of external assessments, as well as discussion with non-members of the RCI from related departments and fields.

The Review Committee shall provide a written report to the Chair of the SRC within four months of being established. Before submitting this report, the Chair of the Review Committee shall provide a copy of the report to the Director of the RCI under review to ensure that the report contains no factual errors. Following the Director's review, they will be invited to submit a written commentary on the report to the Chair of the SRC.

The SRC will consider the report of the Review Committee, consulting with the Committee and Director of the RCI, as necessary, before making a recommendation to the Senate concerning the future of the RCI. The recommendation may be one of the following:

- i. continuation with a five-year term
- ii. continuation with subsequent review by the SRC in 1, 2, or 3 years
- iii. termination

Any legal agreement that affects status of the RCI must be taken into consideration in the formal recommendation. The recommendation of the Senate will be brought forward to the Board of Governors for approval.

Note on Research Groups

A Research Group is an association of Brandon University scholars who share research interests and engage in collaborative or closely related research activities. The purpose of a Research Group is to promote and facilitate communication and collaboration among its members, and to establish the legitimacy of the Group both internally and externally to Brandon University. If the Brandon University name is formally used in the Group name, approval of the Vice-President (Research & Graduate Studies), on recommendation of the appropriate Dean is required. Research Groups do not fall under the RCI Policy and Procedures.