

# Standing Operating Procedure (SOP)

Draft document initially prepared by RSSC Institutes Policy Working Group  
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## **Establishment and Recognition of Research Collaborations other than Institutes at Mount Royal University**

### PURPOSE

Mount Royal faculty members often collaborate on research and scholarship informally bringing together scholars from different disciplines and/or areas of specialization within a particular discipline. These activities may not fit within departmental structures as they seek to address societal issues holistically and in line with Mount Royal's strategic directions. In some situations, several faculty members may request that the collaboration's profile be raised through explicit recognition by the University. Those collaborations, however, are typically less formal, may have shorter anticipated lifespans, or are less in need of both internal and external forms of support than institutionally recognized Institutes.

The purpose of this document is to define the terms under which these research collaborations are established and operate at Mount Royal University.

### GUIDELINES

In situations where faculty may wish to have collaborations recognized by the university, the collaborative may petition the Associate Vice-President Research, Scholarship & Community Engagement (AVP RSCE) and the Research and Scholarship Committee of GFC (RSC) for recognition. The proposal will include the following information:

- the proposed name of the entity (exclusive of the term "Institute," and the names of established academic units such as departments, faculties or schools at MRU);
- the purpose of the entity, including a rationale for why the entity needs formal recognition;
- a short description of the anticipated research or scholarly activities of the entity;
- a list of faculty and other collaborators within the entity; recommended minimum is 3 from different disciplines.

- the identification of, and a letter of support from, a local university officer (e.g., chair, dean) to whom the entity will be responsible; and,
- an outline of the proposed structure and functioning of the group.
- recommended review/renewal cycle for the entity.

These collaborations will not normally require dedicated additional support such as space, staffing, or university funding. If there are any such commitments, the letter of petition must specify these along with a supporting letter from the unit providing the support.

The AVP RSCE will review the petition and will forward it to RSC with a recommendation for approval. Unlike Institutes, recognized collaborations will not normally require full General Faculties Council (GFC) sanction. They should, however, be shared with Deans' Council for review and final approval.

Upon approval, the collaboration may use the approved name on letterhead, in promotional material, in applications to external agencies, and so forth. The Mount Royal University logo must exist along side the approved name.

The entity will submit a brief annual report to the AVP RSCE and Dean(s) by September 15 of each year. The report will include the following information:

- a summary of activities and scholarly output over the past year;
- a discussion of any changes in the mode of operation; and,
- the name of the person(s) responsible for overseeing the entity for the next year.

Any collaboration not reporting in this manner shall be considered inactive and may have its recognition withdrawn if they do not submit a report within 30 days of the due date for the annual report. RSC will review the status of each group at the end of the term described in the letter of petition every three years and, if appropriate, approve the continuation of the group for an additional three years.

RSC will include a listing of recognized collaborations in its report to GFC each year.

## RELATED POLICIES

Institutes at Mount Royal University

## DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this SOP, the term **Research Centre** is normally reserved for formally structured organizations established to support Mount Royal strategic objectives through research, scholarship or artistic, scientific or technology activities.

**Research Centres**, under this SOP, would normally have access to funding or in-kind support and include at least 5 or more faculty representatives from diverse disciplines or external collaborators. **Research Centres** may include partnerships between the university and external organizations, including other universities, governments, industry, and public good organizations. A **Research Centre** will normally have a designated leader; clearly defined goals and objectives; and some degree of permanence, transcending collaboration on a particular limited project.

Note: The term **Centre** in Mount Royal is also used for initiatives financially supported by the University; eg. The Academic Development Centre (ADC) and the Mokakiiks Centre for Scholarship of Teaching.

**Research Collaborations** are multidisciplinary groups that gather in response to an emergent research or scholarship need or to incubate ideas. The purpose is to promote and facilitate communication and collaboration among members, and to establish the legitimacy of the research collaboration both inside and outside the university. They are not at the stage where they require the formalization and resources of a centre. The AVP RSCE along with the appropriate Dean will provide final approval of the **Research Collaboration** name. Examples, include but are not restricted to: Lab, Hub, Group, Collective, Circle, and so on.