

POLICY NAME	POLICY ON RESEARCH ENTITIES
Approving Body	Senate Board of Governors
Initial Approval Date	Senate (November 15, 2023) Board of Governors (December 14, 2023)
Date of last review	n/a (Replaced the <i>Policy on Research Centres</i>)
Date of next review	December 2028
Executive Sponsor	Vice-President (Research and Innovation)
Related Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Procedures for Research Units - Procedures for Core Facilities - Policy Relating to the Naming of University Assets

1. Preamble

McGill University proudly supports the advancement of stimulating and collaborative research environments through the establishment of formally recognized research entities. Such entities play a central role in the University’s research mission while supporting institutional and Faculty strategic priorities. Research entities have clearly defined research goals and objectives and are established to serve compelling, strategic research priorities and needs that have been identified through planning and consultation with stakeholders.

Research entities contribute to academic life at McGill by complementing and enhancing the University’s academic organizational structure. Whereas departments and Faculties are enduring academic units that offer for-credit educational programs with provincial oversight, research entities are accountable to the University to address specific current or longer-term research priorities. They may be housed within a specific Faculty or span multiple Faculties and focus on a targeted research area. Research entities increase the visibility and reputation of the research mission of the University, nationally and internationally, and contribute to its measurable output and impact. They are overt expressions of the University’s research strengths and priorities, and are instrumental to securing research funding, attracting and retaining expertise via leading researchers, highly-qualified specialised staff and trainees, providing training opportunities for students, promoting collaboration with other entities, partnership opportunities with industry, and disseminating knowledge to stakeholders and the public.

The *Policy on Research Entities* (“Policy”) provides a framework to guide the establishment, oversight, review, and operations of research entities, while ensuring accountability and clear governance. This Policy aims to decouple nomenclature from function, placing emphasis on the distinguishing features of a research entity and allowing flexibility in the categorization of research entities.

2. Scope

- 2.1** The purpose of this Policy is to set University-wide general principles for two categories of research entities, hereby designated as Research Units and Core Facilities.
- 2.2** Specific protocols with regard to the establishment, governance, leadership, membership or usership, resource allocation, reporting, review and termination for each category of research entity are found within the *Procedures for Research Units* and the *Procedures for Core Facilities*.
- 2.3** Existing research entities previously under the scope of the *Policy on Research Centres* will keep their McGill recognized status and will follow the protocols outlined in the *Procedures for Research Units*.
- 2.4** Informal research groups or research labs are not within the scope of this Policy.
- 2.5** Non-research entities that may use the nomenclature of centre or institute are not within the scope of this Policy.

3. Categories of Research Entities

The two categories of research entities that are within the scope of this Policy are outlined below.

3.1 Research Units

Research Units, generally categorized as research centres or research institutes, are approved by University governance bodies and are established to bring together relevant researchers and increase focus on a specific area or topic. They enhance research and training activities through clearly defined objectives while providing a structure to support their activities that complements the academic goals of Faculties. They foster partnerships both nationally and internationally with academic and industry stakeholders and may promote interdisciplinary research and knowledge translation. Research Units are expected to have and sustain external funding to support their activities and serve as vehicles for fund-raising campaigns of the University and other strategic initiatives. They are initiated by researchers within a single Faculty or multiple Faculties, in which case a Lead Faculty is selected to ensure accountability.

3.2 Core Facilities

Core Facilities are research platforms that provide access to specialized equipment, expertise, training, services, technologies, and scientific and technical personnel that are accessible to multiple investigators. Core Facilities are meant to foster collaborations, maximize the use of equipment and services and lead to increased scientific productivity, while aiming to facilitate cost efficiency of operations and management. Generally, a Core Facility is housed within a Faculty and is accountable to a Lead Faculty, however, there may be some exceptions.

4. General Principles

The following general principles will apply to both categories of research entities that fall within the scope of this Policy.

- 4.1 Research entities uphold the University's mission and principles and group the collective efforts of multiple researchers.
- 4.2 Research entities aim to interact with scholars at other universities and/or institutions and, when relevant, create collaborations with non-academic stakeholders including industry and community groups.
- 4.3 Research entities endeavour to enhance research training of highly qualified personnel including post-doctoral fellows and students at the graduate level.
- 4.4 Research entities are expected to have a life cycle extending beyond the term of a single grant and are established with long-term research objectives.
- 4.5 Research entities will receive designation as one of either a Research Unit or a Core Facility. In cases where a Core Facility may be associated with a Research Unit, the designation as a Core Facility will be a separate designation.
- 4.6 Designation as a research entity does not allow for the hiring of faculty members or the offering of for-credit courses. However, a research entity may contribute to undergraduate, graduate, or other training, including through seminar series, specialized workshops, and internships, related to ongoing research programs. For-credit courses could result from the activity of a research entity. In such cases, these would become part of an existing Department or Faculty's course offerings, following established University protocols.
- 4.7 Research entities and their members shall conform to all applicable University policies and procedures.

5. Naming and Nomenclature

- 5.1 Subject to governance approval, research entities may use nomenclature to name or refer to themselves that is best suited to their unique goals and objectives but are formally classified either as a Research Unit or Core Facility according to their distinguishing features as outlined in Section 3.
- 5.2 Only research entities formally approved under the provisions of the present Policy and its Procedures may use the McGill name and/or logo in combination with their name and/or logo.
- 5.3 Research entities may be named honorifically following the protocols of the *Policy Relating to the Naming of University Assets*.

6. Establishment, Oversight, Review and Termination

6.1 Research Units

- 6.1.1 A proposal to establish a Research Unit must be reviewed and approved by the Lead Faculty, Research Advisory Council, the Academic Policy Committee, the Senate, and the Board of Governors.
- 6.1.2 The Vice-President (Research and Innovation) is responsible for:

- (i) reviewing proposals prior to their submission to the University's governance bodies to ensure suitability and fit with the present Policy;
- (ii) determining the representation of the Office of the Vice-President (Research and Innovation) in the governance of the Research Unit; and
- (iii) providing an annual report on the status of Research Units to the Senate and the Board of Governors.

6.1.3 The Lead Faculty Dean is responsible for:

- (i) receiving requests and making a determination on proposals seeking provisional status prior to seeking full governance approval as defined and described in the *Procedures for Research Units*;
- (ii) establishing a governance body to oversee a Research Unit once it has been established;
- (iii) determining resource allocation such as space, human resources, and financial support to Research Units;
- (iv) requesting and receiving annual reports, determining performance metrics, and performing reviews of scientific productivity and financial operations to assess the relevance and impact of Research Units against their stated objectives and fit with the present Policy; and
- (v) submitting annual reports to the Vice-President (Research and Innovation).

6.1.4 Research Units will receive their designation for a six-year term. New Research Units will undergo a midterm review at three years, followed by a final review at six years, following the protocols outlined in the *Procedures for Research Units*. After the initial term, reviews will take place every six years to coincide with any external assessments as appropriate.

6.1.5 Following consultations with the Lead Faculty Dean, the Vice-President (Research and Innovation) may elect to terminate the activities of a Research Unit following review.

6.1.6 A Research Unit's governance body may recommend to the Lead Faculty Dean to close voluntarily, following protocols in the *Procedures for Research Units*.

6.2 Core Facilities

6.2.1 A proposal to recognize a Core Facility must be reviewed by and receive approval from the Lead Faculty.

6.2.2 The Vice-President (Research and Innovation) is responsible for:

- (i) providing an annual report on the status of Core Facilities to the Senate and the Board of Governors.

6.2.3 The Lead Faculty Dean is responsible for:

- (i) establishing a governance body to oversee a Core Facility once it has been recognized. The extent of the oversight is decided by each Faculty Dean, taking due regard of the Faculty context and the Core Facilities under its purview;
- (ii) determining resource allocation such as space, human resources, financial support and ensuring that the Core Facility has sound management and operations of any assets under its responsibility; and
- (iii) requesting and receiving annual reports, determining performance indicators, and organizing formal reviews of Core Facilities to assess their relevance and impact against their stated objectives and fit with the present Policy.

6.2.4 The Lead Faculty Dean can terminate the activities of a Core Facility following review.

6.3 A Lead Faculty Dean may request that the Vice-President (Research and Innovation) conduct an arm’s length review on the status of any research entity within the scope of this Policy at any time.

6.4 The Vice-President (Research and Innovation), following consultation with the relevant Faculty Dean, reserves the right to terminate a research entity at any time due to institutional risks such as those involving financial exigencies, non-compliance with regulations, or any other serious concerns, with due consideration to human resources, policies, contractual obligations, and employment standards.

7. Procedures

The Vice-President (Research and Innovation) has the authority to establish and amend Procedures associated with this Policy.

8. Policy Review

This Policy will be reviewed following five years of its approval by a working group established by the Vice-President (Research and Innovation) with broad representation from Faculties and the Office of the Provost and Executive Vice-President (Academic). The working group may make recommendations for modifications to this Policy.

Legislative History:		
<u>Approved:</u> Policy on Research Entities		
Senate	November 15, 2023	Minute IIB2
Board of Governors	December 14, 2023	Minute 13
<u>Repealed:</u> Policy on Research Centres		
Senate	November 15, 2023	Minute IIB2
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