



Research Committee Minutes

Date: June 16, 2022
Time: 3:30 p.m. – 4:15 p.m.
Place: Google Meet
Attendees: K. Atkinson, S. Brown, B. Chang, S. Forrester (Vice-Chair), J. Freeman, L. Jacobs (Chair),
M. Lemonde, B. Murphy, R. Ruttenberg-Rozen, V. Sharpe (secretary)
Regrets: C. Davidson, S. Downing, S. Rahnamayan

L. Jacobs welcomed everyone and commenced the meeting.

1. **Approval of the agenda**

Moved by M. Lemonde. Seconded by R. Ruttenberg-Rozen. Approved by consensus.

2. **Approval of previous meeting's minutes**

Approved by M. Lemonde. Seconded by B. Murphy. Approved by consensus.

3. **Report of the Vice President Research & Innovation**

L. Jacobs noted that he has participated in many full day meetings recently that included many university Vice-Presidents of Research. He noted that the federal government is not paying an immense amount of attention to universities. Their current focus is on the war in Ukraine and issues like inflation, housing, etc. Question is whether that will change in the next year or two. The only specific new budget item in the new budget is around the \$25 million commitment to support universities for national security and risk assessment for tri-council research grants. Applies now to NSERC Alliance Grants (working with industry partners) and has proven to be quite onerous for universities. The government has stepped up to provide some funding.

L. Jacobs noted that there is apprehension about where the \$25 million will go. The most vocal universities are the U15. The trepidation from non-U15 is that the money would only go to U15. There is a good indicator that they'll fund 30 universities and we'll be among those. Likely pro-rated. This is generally probably good news for the ORS team.

L. Jacobs reported on another piece of news that the government is going to extend and pilot its CIHR programs, which may be more disruptive than in NSERC because you could guess which companies were going to be subject to scrutiny and it is less clear for CIHR partners.

L. Jacobs noted that the government is still committed to spending on innovation in particular the strategic innovation fund. Although it doesn't go directly to universities we're involved in a number of applications. There haven't been any decisions since the election but hopefully we'll hear results soon and then the money will flow to us. Project Arrow is one of these projects.

S. Forrester asked about the success rate of the NSERC Alliance applications. J. Freeman stated there is about a 90% success rate. NSERC Alliance applications have to go through security clearance first now. 5% of apps have been halted out of national security concerns. Some date back a full year in purgatory. NSERC will make the final decision about whether they are satisfied about the risk mitigation plans. Or may decide not to fund them due to the partners.

4. **Report of the Executive Director, Office of Research Services**

J. Freeman provided and circulated a presentation that included information on/about:

- Hiring – Research Business Analyst starting June 20
- Funding Factbook
- 2022 Undergraduate Research Awards Program
- Research Ethics Board and the Animal Care Committee

5. Canada Excellence Research Chairs (CERC) update

L. Jacobs noted that we've had the first selection meeting on Monday and the committee includes the Deans and the Provost. We are guided for the application process by our EDI requirements for the CRC program. We were trying something new for the first time – put out a blanket call for the CERC program, rather than specifying a faculty/research direction. Looking for research superstars at the Associate Professor or full Professor level. Many applications from junior researchers who would not be competitive for this position. A follow up meeting is scheduled for the last week of June to shortlist and move to next steps. Likely in July Les will make a judgement call on whether we should proceed with an application.

K. Atkinson asked if we don't go ahead with an application if we miss out or if it is possible to re-advertise? L. Jacobs replied that the deadline is October and were constrained by some EDI requirements from the CRC EDI plan. The general feeling at a lot of universities that the criteria was narrowed so significantly and combined with tethering it to CRC EDI plan it's difficult to move on the applications.

Our allotment is \$1 million. At the senior level \$1 million per year or more junior faculty who can be promoted to full professor within a year or two at Ontario Tech is \$500,000. (Tier 1 \$200,000 year and Tier 2 \$100,000 year). He noted that these are high stakes awards and are not meant to poach high talent from other Canadian universities.

M. Lemonde asked if someone can apply if they are already a CRC. L. Jacobs replied that they can but again, universities are not supposed to be poaching. To be successful a strong argument would need to be made about what good they would do for our university and for Canada. The broad vision is to bring high quality researchers from outside Canada, Canadian or not, to Canada.

6. Canada First Excellence Research Fund (CFREF) update

L. Jacobs reported that we submitted the LOI in April on Integrated Energy Systems. We should hear by the end of June. The deadline for the full application is Aug 31. This is a very short timeline. The proposed budget submitted was for \$90 million. We asked for \$60 million from CFREF. We convened researchers to work on the full application in anticipation of the LOI succeeding including hiring an external expert advisor to work with us to strengthen the application.

7. Research Entities Annual Reports

Annual reports were submitted by Advanced Energy Systems Research Group, Forensic Science Research Group, Institute for Disability Rehabilitation Research, Institute for Cyber Security and Resilient Systems, maxSIMhealth, Power Electronics and Drives Applications Laboratory, and the Digital Life Institute.

8. 21-22 Mitacs-Ontario Tech Annual Report

Mitacs provided an annual report.

9. **Faculty Exchange**

HSCi – No report from the Age with Dignity Research Centre but M. Lemonde will be working on it while on research leave. She noted that faculty have put in many applications for funding.

SGPS – There is more funding to support international students – now 30 available (GITS: Graduate International Tuition Scholarship).

FESNS – Summer conference season is starting. There have been industry visits and collaboration meetings. There will be a FESNS merger into FEAS over the summer.

FBIT – Convocation last week gave us the opportunity to see each other in person. B. Change will be going on research leave as well.

Education – Education just finished a faculty & student conference with external participants as well. The Education Diploma is starting in September and 2 new teaching faculty being hired.

FSci – The wastewater surveillance for Covid 19 is continuing. There is some hiring for some TTT and TF for the Computer Science program.

FEAS – S. Rahnamayan not present.

FSSH – S. Downing not present.

S. Brown noted an uptick in travel claims. CARA noted that tri-agency grants may be allowing emission off-set costs eligible.

L. Jacobs thanked B. Chang, M. Lemonde and S. Rahnamayan for their participation over the past year and thanked everyone for serving. He suggested that everyone enjoy their summer and get some rest as it is safe to assume September will be on us before we know it and it will be busy. The new enrollment numbers are looking very busy. He noted that we will aim for 6 or so meetings next Academic Year.

10. Other Business

None.

11. Next meetings – September 2022, to be scheduled

12. Adjournment – 4:15 p.m.